



# **NORTH IOWA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## ***Student Handbook***

### **2021-2022**

***North Iowa Middle School Mascot – BISON***

***School Colors – Blue & Silver***

***North Iowa Fight Song***

*NI High we love the silver blue.  
NI High we always will be true.  
To you we show our great admiration  
To the best school in the land.  
Rah! Rah! Rah!*

*Always loyal let you know we're here.  
NI High we'll bring you lots of cheer.  
Rah-Rah! Rah-Rah!  
NI High! Rah! Rah!  
Dear old NI High!*

## ***“Linking Students with Success”***

**North Iowa Middle School  
111 3rd Ave NW  
Buffalo Center, IA 50424  
641-562-2525  
[northiowa.org](http://northiowa.org)**

---

## WELCOME TO 2021-2022 NORTH IOWA MIDDLE SCHOOL YEAR!

This handbook has been designed to serve as a guide for NIMS students and families. The policies and procedures in this handbook are designed to allow for a positive and safe school environment and maximize student learning.

The staff at NIMS is dedicated to your child's academic, social, physical, and emotional development. The curricular and extracurricular activities are designed to maximize the potential of each child. Keys to success for our students include having good attendance, being respectful of self and others, completing assigned academic course work, and attempting to be involved in as many school activities as possible. Family members are encouraged to be involved in their child's educational life and support NIMS staff. As our mission states, teachers and staff are here to "link students with success" and provide an excellent education. We hope that you agree and do your best to fulfill this goal. Make your school year positive and successful and be proud to be a BISON!

With Bison Pride,  
Joann Kenny  
6-12 Principal

---

### **North Iowa Community School Mission Statement    *"Linking Students with Success"***

#### **Essential Learnings and Learning Indicators**

##### **Our students will be successful communicators. Successful communicators:**

- Express needs & ideas so others understand
- Interpret experiences
- Evaluate & analyze information
- Listen & perceive information from others

##### **Our students will use good problem solving skills. Successful problem solvers:**

- Apply skills to real life situations
- Learn from past experiences
- Use a variety of appropriate technology
- Demonstrate appropriate risk taking
- Demonstrate flexibility in their thinking
- Show conflict resolution skill

##### **Our students will be life-long learners. Life-long learners:**

- Demonstrate self-sufficiency/self-directed learning
- Demonstrate appropriate use of resources
- Demonstrate adaptability to different situations
- Demonstrate perseverance

##### **Our students will practice good citizenship. Good citizens:**

- Demonstrate responsible and active participation in the democratic community
- Show responsibility for themselves, to others, and the world.

## Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Middle School Faculty &amp; Staff</b>                  | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Middle School Daily Schedule</b>                       | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Attendance Policy</b>                                  | <b>6</b>  |
| Attendance Policy   | 6         |
| Absences  | 7         |
| <b>Tardiness/Leaving Early</b>                            | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Illness or Accident at School</b>                      | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Medication</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Parental Involvement</b>                               | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Grading</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| Grading Scale/Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation       | 11        |
| Honor Roll  | 12        |
| Progress Reports  | 12        |
| Report Cards  | 12        |
| <b>Academic Expectations</b>                              | <b>12</b> |
| General Academic Expectations                             | 12        |
| Academic Eligibility for Athletics                        | 13        |
| <b>Wednesday Study Tables</b>                             | <b>13</b> |
| <b>May Term/PBL:</b>                                      | <b>13</b> |
| <b>NIMS PBIS</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Student Conduct</b>                                    | <b>14</b> |
| General Student Conduct and Discipline                    | 14        |
| Misconduct Interventions and Consequences                 | 15        |
| Detentions  | 15        |
| In-School Suspension (ISS)                                | 15        |
| Out of School Suspension (OSS)                            | 16        |
| Expulsion   | 16        |
| Violations of Student Conduct                             | 16        |
| <b>Dress Code</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Announcements</b>                                      | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Lunchroom</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Technology Code of Conduct (Acceptable Use Policy)</b> | <b>17</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| North Iowa Electronic Technology Access   | 17        |
| Electronic Device Expectations and Consequences   | 18        |
| Cell Phones/Communication/Electronic Devices  | 18        |
| <b>Transportation</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| School Bus Conduct Policy   | 19        |
| School Bus Violation Consequences   | 20        |
| Student Driving   | 21        |
| <b>Lockers/Book Bags</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Visitors</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Activities and Good Conduct</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| Activities  | 21        |
| Family Night  | 22        |
| Good Conduct Rule   | 22        |
| <b>General Student Conduct and Discipline</b>   | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Initiations, Hazing, Bullying or Harassment – Students (refer to board policy 104)</b> | <b>24</b> |
| Bullying Policy   | 24        |
| <b>Records, Policies, Notifications, and Statements</b>                                   | <b>25</b> |
| School Cancellation   | 25        |
| Student Records   | 25        |
| Student Records Access  | 25        |
| Special Education   | 26        |
| Parent’s Rights in Special Education:   | 26        |
| 504 Rehabilitation Act/Policy   | 27        |
| EOE/AA  | 27        |
| Multicultural, Non-Sexist Policy  | 27        |
| Non-Discrimination Policy   | 27        |
| Asbestos Management Notification  | 27        |

## **Middle School Faculty & Staff**

### ***Administration***

Joe Erickson

Superintendent

Joann Kenny

6-12 Principal

### ***Middle School Faculty***

Arin Anderson

Media Specialist, Academic Technology

Garrett Arensdorf

Band

Logan Benson

ELA

Devyn Briggs

Family & Consumer Science

Brittney Christianson

Science

Abigail Frommelt

Vocal Music

Austin Guerrero

Health & Physical Education

Renae Hager

TAG/ELL

Sara Hamilton

Special Education

Laine Matson

Math

Rick Meyer

Career Technology

Amanda Lampman

6th-12th Counselor

Kari Olson

Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Anne Oppedahl

Art

Courtney Post

Spanish

Kenzie Ree

Language Arts/Reading

Teresa Schmidt

Teacher Leadership

Rylie Stanton

Social Studies

### ***Office Staff***

Lisa Mathahs

### ***School Nurse***

Cassie Petersburg

Amanda Heyer

Chris Davis

### ***Board Secretary/Business Manager***

Gwen Mathahs

### ***Activities Director***

Meggan Jacobs

## **Middle School Daily Schedule**

*1<sup>st</sup> period – 8:20-9:04*

*2<sup>nd</sup> period – 9:07-9:51*

*3<sup>rd</sup> period – 9:54-10:38*

*4<sup>th</sup> period – 10:41-11:25*

*Lucnh/Social – 11:28-11:58*

*5<sup>th</sup> period – 12:01-12:46*

*6<sup>th</sup> period – 12:49-1:33*

*7<sup>th</sup> period – 1:36-2:20*

*8<sup>th</sup> period – 2:23-3:07*

*ELT – 3:10-3:30*

*Extended Learning Time*

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Attendance Policy**

The Board of Education, administration and staff believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive.

This policy recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the students, parents or guardians, teachers and administration. This policy will assist students in attending class. The philosophy of North Iowa MS/HS is to place the responsibility on students and their parents to ensure that absences are infrequent, and that when they occur, they are caused by matters of extreme urgency. The responsibilities of the school are to provide students instruction, to inform parents of students who are not in attendance, and to enforce compulsory attendance laws as well as regulations. It is the student's responsibility to be in school. It is also the student's responsibility to attend all classes regularly and to follow the correct procedures when absent from school. Daily attendance of students is required per school board policy and state law. Students must attend school until 16 years of age.

### ***Parents:***

Parents of absent students will call the school the morning the student is absent. The school's phone answering system is active 24 hours a day. Messages can be left at any time of the day. The school will call the parent during the day if a student is not in school. These contacts will be made at the parent's residence or place of work. If the school is unable to reach the parent the day the student is gone, the procedure will be repeated the following day. If no contact is made, the absence will be recorded as unexcused, detention/suspension will be assigned, and a note sent home. Parents who are unable to follow the above procedure need to contact the middle school office.

### **When a student must leave the school during the school day:**

1. If a student becomes ill during the day they must see the nurse, MS/HS principal or counselor before leaving school.
2. If a student needs to leave school during the day for a reason other than illness, they must have a parent call or bring a note to the office. Remember that students must sign in and out when leaving/returning to the building before the end of the day. Failure to sign in or out will result in detention.
3. If students do not follow these policies, they will receive an unexcused absence and possibly other disciplinary actions. This decision will be at the discretion of the MS/HS principal.

#### When a student will be absent for the entire day:

A parent should call the school when their child is absent with the reason they will be gone. A parent can also send a note explaining why the student was absent.

1. Students should get an “Admit Slip” from the attendance secretary on the day when they return to school.
2. All students who miss class are required to show a make up slip to the teacher the following day in order to be admitted to class. The make up time for class work will be at the teacher’s discretion.

#### When a student plans to be gone from school:

1. The student must bring a note from a parent or a phone call must be made stating when the student will be gone from school and the reason they will be absent.
2. Get an “Advance Make Up Slip” from the Attendance Office.
3. The student should have teachers sign their assignment slip.

#### **Importance of Attendance**

Only through attendance and class participation do students achieve the full benefit of the educational program. Participating in class discussions, developing an appreciation for the views and abilities of other students, and forming the habit of regular attendance are important class objectives.

Learning lost due to an absence, excused or unexcused, can never be fully replaced. In order for students to learn at the highest levels, they need to be in school. Regular, consistent attendance is a top priority at North Iowa. Students are expected to be in class, and families are expected to make attendance a top priority as well. Teaching students the importance of regular attendance and being properly prepared for class not only prepares them for learning but also helps them prepare to be responsible citizens in adulthood.

#### **Absences**

Students are allowed to be absent for a maximum of **15 total days (includes excused and unexcused absences) during the school year.** It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school that their child will not be in school.

Students participating in 100% online learning through Edgenuity will also be held responsible for regular daily attendance and work completion.

#### **Reporting Student Absences**

All absences are to be reported to the school office the day of the absence or prior to the date if it is a scheduled appointment. The school office may be reached by calling 641-562-2525. If a phone call is not received, the school will place a phone call to the parent/guardian. It is important that all absences are accounted for in order to assure the safety of our students.

#### **Excused Absences**

- Death in the Family
- Recognized Religious Observances
- Serious Family Emergency

- School Sponsored Activities- All athletic events/state tournaments (North Iowa must be participating in the state tournament to be excused), school field trips, college visits for Juniors (2/year) and Seniors (4/year), etc. All college visits will require written documentation to be excused.
- Medical/Dental Appointments - (Please attempt to make these appointments outside of school hours or at the very beginning or end of the school day).
- Court. Students should bring in their court appointment card to have it excused.
- In/Out of School Suspensions.
- Illness - (Absences exceeding three days may require a physician's statement to be excused.)
- Extended Family Vacations

### **Unexcused Absences**

- Oversleeping
- Arriving Late/Leaving Early - (Arriving at school 20 minutes after the start of school or leaving more than 20 minutes before the end of the day without an acceptable reason.)
- Personal Grooming Appointments (Hair, nails, tanning, etc.)
- Shopping/Running Errands
- Needed at Home/Babysitting
- Car Trouble
- Missing the Bus/Ride
- Needing Sleep or Rest
- Anything Not Listed as "Excused" Above

### **Strategies to Improve Attendance**

North Iowa administration reserves the right to use a variety of strategies to improve student attendance.

Strategies may be, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attendance Contracts
- Verification/Notes for Each Absence (Example: A doctor's note)
- Parent/Guardian Meetings
- Special Transportation Requirements
- Referral to the County Attorney for Mediation

### **Excessive Absenteeism Procedures**

Excessive absenteeism is any absence beyond 15 days (includes excused and unexcused absences) for the school year.

- **Level 1:** When a student has been absent from school or a class for five (5) cumulative days during the first quarter, parents/guardians will be notified by the school via phone call or email to make them aware their child has reached five absences.
- **Level 2:** When a student reaches 10 cumulative absences during the first three quarters of the school year, the building principal, school counselor, or other assigned staff member will contact parents/guardians. Strategies for improved attendance will be discussed.
- **Level 3:** When a student reaches 15 cumulative days of absence, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, student, and building principal to discuss ways to improve attendance. An attendance contract and other strategies will be put into place. The county attorney will be notified of the student's attendance record and will be provided with a copy of the attendance contract.
- **Level 4:** If the attendance contract is broken, the county attorney will be contacted and truancy charges may be filed by the county attorney.



### **Tardiness/Leaving Early**

A tardy is defined as arriving at school or to a specific class period after the first attendance bell. Consequences for tardiness may include, but are not limited to, a conversation and a warning, assigned detention, parent/guardian contact, and referral to building principal for additional consequences.

### **Suspensions and Expulsions**

When a suspension or expulsion causes a student's absence, such absences will be treated as an administrative absence rather than a voluntary student absence and will not be included under this attendance policy. Students will be given the opportunity to make-up all missed work due to a suspension.

### **Truancy**

As mentioned previously, regular attendance by students is essential for them to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents/guardians and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Truancy is the failure to attend school for the minimum number of days established in the school calendar by the board. Truancy is the act of being absent without a reasonable excuse. Students are subject to disciplinary action for truancy. It is within the discretion of the principal to determine what, if any, disciplinary action is appropriate including, but not limited to, warning, detention, in-school suspension, or administrative referral.

### **Appeals**

If a parent/guardian would like to appeal an attendance decision, they may submit a written appeal to Joe Erickson, North Iowa Superintendent. Email: [joe.erickson@northiowa.org](mailto:joe.erickson@northiowa.org) Phone: 641.562.2525

### **Skipping**

A student who is not in the class they are assigned to for that particular class period. Examples could include, but are not limited to the following: a student who leaves a classroom without permission, a student who is in the building, but not where they are supposed to be, etc. If a student skips more than a period or two on first offense, administration may bypass the first or second offense if the student has skipped a large portion of the day.

Consequences for skipping/truants:

- 1) 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 30 minute Detention
- 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 60 minute Detention
- 3) 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: ½ day of ISS
- 4) 4<sup>th</sup> offense and beyond: one day of ISS per occurrence

### **Illness or Accident at School**

In case a student is ill or has a serious accident at school, the parent/guardian will be notified by school personnel. Illnesses or injuries occurring at home should be evaluated by the child's physician. Any emergency information given to us should be as complete as possible. This information will be completed by the parents each year at registration.

No student is sent home until prior arrangements have been made. In case the parents cannot be contacted, the school will attempt to locate the relative or neighbor listed with the emergency information. If no one can be reached, the school will contact the clinic or physician of the parent's choice (indicated in emergency information sheet).

A medical release is required to allow students to return to physical activity and/or athletics. If a child needs to be

excused from physical activity or athletics for more than one day, a medical excuse is required.

## **Medication**

The following medication policy applies to the North Iowa Middle School:

- If it becomes necessary for your child to be medicated at school, a form must be signed, giving school personnel permission to administer the medication, along with any necessary instructions. A physician's signature is necessary for long-term medication administration.
- Send or bring the prescribed medication to the nurse's office in the original container (plastic bags as containers will not be accepted) labeled with:
  - Child's name
  - Name of medication
  - Dosage to be given
  - Time it is to be given
  - Name of prescribing physician
- Restricted medications, like Concerta or Ritalin, must be delivered by an adult, not sent with the student.
- "Over the counter" medication, sent from home (Tylenol and like medications, cough syrups, cough drops, etc.) will be administered by the school personnel, at the discretion of the school nurse. Over the counter medication must be in the original container and specific directions sent with medication to school.
- All medications need to be brought to the nurse's office. Any medication brought in a "baggie or envelope" will NOT be given.
- School personnel can give "over the counter" medication only if there is a parent signature stating that this child may receive this medication on file. The nurse may contact parents with any questions about the administration of medication.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is an important component in a student's success in school. The board encourages parents to become involved in their child's education to ensure the child's academic success.

The Board will implement a technological student access component allowing parents to access student grades, class lesson plans, attendance, hot lunch accounts, and access to e-mail to and from classroom teachers and building administrators. This will include an electronic pay component for parent convenience. (Board Policy 505.8)

## **Grading**

### **Grading Scale/Grade Point Average (GPA) Calculation**

The following grading scale is used for calculating student grades and grade point averages:

|           |                |             |
|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| <b>A</b>  | <b>95-100%</b> | <b>4.00</b> |
| <b>A-</b> | <b>92-94%</b>  | <b>3.67</b> |

|           |                  |             |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>B+</b> | <b>89-91%</b>    | <b>3.33</b> |
| <b>B</b>  | <b>86-88%</b>    | <b>3.00</b> |
| <b>B-</b> | <b>83-85%</b>    | <b>2.67</b> |
| <b>C+</b> | <b>80-82%</b>    | <b>2.33</b> |
| <b>C</b>  | <b>77-79%</b>    | <b>2.00</b> |
| <b>C-</b> | <b>74-76%</b>    | <b>1.67</b> |
| <b>D+</b> | <b>71-73%</b>    | <b>1.33</b> |
| <b>D</b>  | <b>68-70%</b>    | <b>1.00</b> |
| <b>D-</b> | <b>65-67%</b>    | <b>0.67</b> |
| <b>F</b>  | <b>Below 65%</b> | <b>0.00</b> |

## Honor Roll

**Gold Honor Roll** = GPA between 3.670 - 4.0 with no grade below a C-

**Silver Honor Roll** = GPA between 3.0 - 3.669 with no grade below a C-

- all core classes, P.E./Health and Music will be included in the honor roll
- all classes will receive letter grades
- for Honor Roll purposes, grades will be converted to the 4.0 scale example: 22 points divided by 6 classes = 3

## Progress Reports

At mid-quarter intervals (approximately 4 1/2 weeks) reports will be emailed and/or mailed to parents in order to communicate progress that a student is making in all classes. All parents will receive these reports.

## Report Cards

At the end of each quarter, students receive report cards containing their QUARTER (9 week) grades in all of their courses. These grades are, in effect, a report of the student's progress for that grading period.

At the end of each semester, students receive report cards containing their FINAL SEMESTER GRADES in each subject. These are the grades that are recorded on the student's permanent records. All work must be completed at the end of the grading period.

## Academic Expectations

### General Academic Expectations

The Middle School Faculty/Staff has high academic expectations for its students. To help our students become successful, the following expectations need to be fulfilled:

- Students will pass all core classes (math, social studies, language arts, science and reading). Summer school may be required for students who fail a core class but wish to continue with their regular grade level.
- Students will complete assigned work in a timely manner.
- Students will utilize academic/classroom time.
- Students are encouraged to get involved in classroom discussions/activities and have the responsibility to

communicate questions or concerns to their teachers.

- Students need to keep track of their own assignments, homework, and grades. Online access to grades is provided for students to keep track of their grades.
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, with parent permission, may opt out of taking chorus and or band. Students will be assigned a study period during their regular chorus and or band time.

### **Academic Eligibility for Athletics**

At North Iowa Middle School, competitive athletics are scheduled for only 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. A student may lose her/his eligibility at any time, and for an indefinite period, due to disciplinary action.

To be eligible to participate in activities, a student must be passing all classes. Ineligibility is determined at mid-quarter (4 ½ weeks) and quarter. If a student is declared academically ineligible, he/she may request an eligibility/redemption form from the middle school office each Friday. A student becomes eligible when all teachers sign the form indicating that the student is passing his/her classes. It is up to each teacher's syllabus as to whether or not the student is passing his/her class.

All rules of the Department of Education, the IHSAA and IGHSAA apply to student eligibility for activities.

### **Wednesday Study Tables**

North Iowa Middle School provides a Study Table each Wednesday from 2:00-3:30 pm for its students. Students may get extra academic help or just have a quiet place to get work done during these Study Tables.

Students may also be required to stay for Study Tables by a teacher or principal to get work completed or get extra academic help. Families will be notified if a student is required to attend study tables. Students not attending assigned Study Tables may be subject to disciplinary action for insubordination. Wednesday Study Tables are intended to be strictly for academic purposes and not for social purposes. All students are welcome to attend Study Tables as long as they follow the rules and guidelines established for Study Tables.

- Failure to come to Study Tables when students are required, without other arrangements made in advance, will result in a required 90 minute make up time.
- If make up time isn't served before the next Wednesday, ISS may be required.

### **May Term/PBL:**

Project-based learning is a dynamic classroom approach in which students actively explore real-world problems and challenges and acquire a deeper knowledge. North Iowa students in grades 5-11 will take a May Term class starting in the 2019-20 school year.

Classroom Fees: Minimal fees will be collected for some May Term classes. Examples could include but are not limited to purchasing a theatre ticket or bringing in a consumable item (example: food item for a cooking class).

Grading/Credit: Students will be graded using the Universal Constructs Essential for 21st Century Skill Success rubric and will need to receive a minimum of a 2.5 on a scale of 4 in order to achieve a passing score. A Pass/Fail grade will be given for May Term. If a high school student fails this class, it will count towards our No Pass No Play policy.

Transportation: If transportation is needed for MS students, they will walk or be transported in a school vehicle.

## **NIMS PBIS**

We expect all North Iowa Middle School students to: Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful. We call these expectations The Bison Way. NIMS students are expected to follow The Bison Way at all times within the school. The expectations are specifically explained in our PBIS Matrix. For it to be successful, students must be taught appropriate behavior in all school settings. At the beginning of each school year, and as needed during the year, we teach our expectations to students. The Bison Way posters are located throughout the school and the busses to remind students of The Bison Way expectations.

These posters list expectations for our three focus areas - Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful.

| <u>Bison Expectations</u> | Hallways  | Cafeteria (Commons)  | Restroom   | Locker Rooms   | Classroom & Media Center  | Bus  |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| <u>Be Safe</u>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Walk</li> <li>-Stay to the right</li> <li>-Keep hallways clear</li> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Walk</li> <li>-Wait patiently</li> <li>-Stay seated</li> <li>-Dismiss as instructed</li> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> <li>-Tell an adult of any concerns</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Practice good hygiene</li> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> <li>-Tell an adult of any concerns</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Keep classroom clean</li> <li>-Keep all chair legs on the floor</li> <li>-Sign in and out; pass required</li> <li>-Keep backpacks in lockers</li> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Stay seated</li> <li>-Get on and off the bus carefully</li> <li>-Keep the aisle clear</li> <li>-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself</li> </ul> |
| <u>Be Responsible</u>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use your assigned locker appropriately</li> <li>-Keep area clean</li> <li>- Plan ahead and move promptly</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Clean up all food and trash</li> <li>-Use trays and utensils appropriately</li> <li>-Wash tables</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Flush, wash, leave</li> <li>-Throw away paper towels or trash</li> <li>-Follow electronic device policy</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Flush and wash</li> <li>-Throw away paper towels or trash</li> <li>-Follow electronic device policy</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be prepared to learn</li> <li>-Arrive on time</li> <li>-Follow class procedures</li> <li>-Use technology appropriately</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pick up after yourself</li> <li>-Report damage or problems to the driver</li> <li>-Be on time for departure</li> </ul>                               |
| <u>Be Respectful</u>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use appropriate volume and language</li> <li>-Respect others' belongings</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use good table manners</li> <li>-Show courtesy and include others</li> <li>-Use appropriate volume</li> </ul>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Honor the privacy of yourself and others</li> <li>-Use appropriate language and volume</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Honor the privacy of yourself and others</li> <li>-Use appropriate language and volume</li> <li>-Respect others' belongings</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Speak at appropriate levels</li> <li>-Listen while others are speaking</li> <li>-Be a positive learner</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Listen to the bus driver</li> <li>-Use appropriate language and volume</li> <li>-Show courtesy</li> </ul>  |

## **North Iowa Community School ~ The Bison Way**

### **Student Conduct**

#### **General Student Conduct and Discipline**

Students attending North Iowa Middle School are required to conduct themselves with respect for self and others through their actions, their language, and their dress. Student behavior will reflect favorably on the individual and on the school, will show consideration for others, and will create a harmonious learning atmosphere. Students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. When a school employee acts to assist a student in proper conduct, the emphasis shall be toward student growth in self-discipline.

High standards of conduct will translate into high standards of excellence in our classrooms and in our activities. The staff will treat all students with respect and dignity. As a result, students are required to show proper respect for fellow students and staff members.

Students are expected to comply with and abide by the school district's policies and rules. Students who fail to abide by the school district's policies will be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with educational programs; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to obtain their education or to participate in school activities; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. The discipline imposed is based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident and the student's record.

### **Misconduct Interventions and Consequences**

Any violations of school policies, expectations, and rules will be enforced as fair and as consistent as possible. All school staff members have the authority and obligation to report and/or enforce behavior violations. Serious misconduct will more than likely be referred to the middle school principal. Violations may result in any of the following consequences:

1. Notification of Parents
2. Loss of Privileges
3. Removal from class
4. Isolated Lunch and/or Study period
5. Detention (before or after school)
6. Short term In-School Suspension
7. In-School Suspension (up to 10 days)
8. Out of School Suspension (up to 10 days)
9. Community Service
10. Expulsion

### **Detentions**

Detentions may be assigned by school staff when a student violates school rules or expectations. Students are required to serve an assigned detention within 3 days of the assigned detention (at the discretion of the building principal) or detention time will double and/or further consequences will be assigned. Detentions may be served with the staff member who assigned it, with a designated detention staff member, or with the building principal. Detentions will be served before or after school. Transportation is the sole responsibility of the student/parent.

### **In-School Suspension (ISS)**

An in-school suspension means the student will attend school but will be temporarily isolated from one or more classes while under supervision.

Students who receive in-school suspension (ISS) at NIMS are required to check-in at the office the day of their suspension. The students have until 8:20 a.m. to make contact with their teachers and pick up any makeup work and day's instructions/assignments. A student who is assigned ISS is subject to the loss of playing time/performance time at the discretion of the building principal and activities director based on the severity of the action that resulted in ISS.

## **Out of School Suspension (OSS)**

Students may receive an out of school suspension (OSS) at NIMS for serious violations of school policies. Any student given an OSS is not allowed to come to the school for any of the academic day or any after-school or co-curricular activities.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion of a student may be considered if the student has violated a major school policy or has had a consistent and/or violent disciplinary record. Student expulsion is a recommendation by the building principal to the superintendent and then recommended to the school board for action.

## **Violations of Student Conduct**

It will be at the discretion of the principal or superintendent to administer consequences of any violation of North Iowa Middle School policies/rules as the severity of the infraction warrants. Every situation is unique; therefore, the administrator will have discretion to develop different strategies for different students and different situations. The consequences may be more severe or less severe than indicated for the policy, including suspensions or recommending expulsion. It is the policy of North Iowa Middle School to prohibit any actions or behavior that is disruptive or unreasonable and/or a violation of state or federal law. All offenses are subject to a referral to a counselor.

Examples of what would be considered as serious student misconduct are:

- Vandalism, damages, or destruction of school property or the same to private property on school grounds.
- Assault on a school district employee
- Physical abuse of another student.
- Possession and/or use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or a controlled substance.

Possession of or using weapons or dangerous instruments on school property or at a school function.

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to come to school looking neat, clean, and dressed in a manner considered in good taste. The administration will take steps to ensure that no attire disrupts the learning process. Clothing with tobacco, alcohol, obscenities, or innuendoes will not be allowed. Students dressed in an inappropriate manner will be required to change. **Costumes will only be allowed on special occasions or with principal approval.**

## **Announcements**

Announcements are posted online daily. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all announcement information.

## **Lunchroom**

NIMS has a closed campus during lunchtime. Students are to eat their lunch in the commons/lunchroom and remain at school. Students may bring their own lunch, but it must be eaten in the lunchroom. No pop will be allowed at lunch time.

Parents may pay into their student's account as much as they wish. When the account gets below \$5.00 an email/note will be sent home. If a negative balance of \$10.00 or more is accumulated, the student's menu will be altered.

## **Technology Code of Conduct (Acceptable Use Policy)**

Students at North Iowa have access to various forms of technology. These technologies are to be used in support of educational communication, to perform educational research, and to produce electronic assignments/work for faculty/staff. All forms of technology are to be used in a responsible, educational, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the North Iowa Community School District.

Abuse and consequences are the responsibility of the appropriate building administrator and will follow the student handbook and other appropriate existing policies.

### ***General Technology Guidelines:***

- The use of the computers and the network is a privilege, not a right; and inappropriate use may result in suspension or termination of privileges. Administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty member, or other staff member of North Iowa may request to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.
- The use of computers and the network must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the North Iowa Community School District. Using school resources for non-school related activities is not acceptable.
- At no time should anyone place program software on a school computer. Only data disks will be allowed. Unauthorized program files will be confiscated.
- Persons using the internet as an educational resource shall accept the responsibility for all material received under his/her user account. The user is also responsible for making sure that all e-mail received by him/her or web-sites accessed do not contain profanity, pornographic material, or files that are potentially dangerous to the integrity of the hardware on school premises. Forwarding of chain letters is a violation. These activities are monitored automatically by the system software.
- Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system have access to all mail. Do not allow anyone else to use your account.
- Persons using the internet as an education resource shall not access newsgroups or chat rooms. Accessing these areas of the internet is not acceptable. Use of Hotmail, Yahoo Mail or other internet based e-mail systems is not permissible. Only the school approved e-mail system can be used on the school district's system.
- Violations of the technology code will result in disciplinary steps that may lead to suspension and/or termination.

### ***Abuse Guidelines (at the discretion of the building principal):***

- **1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** suspension of technology privileges for 15 school days
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** suspension of technology privileges for 30 school days
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** suspension of technology privileges for 60 school days or rest of the school year, whichever is longer

## **North Iowa Electronic Technology Access**

NICS believes in the "many to one" philosophy and recognizes that no single device meets all of our current society's needs. This is also true with our students and their educational experience. Multiple electronic devices are often needed to complete various tasks. Therefore, NICS has decided to provide each NIMS student with an



electronic device for educational purposes. The policies and procedures for student usage of the electronic devices will be communicated to students and parents in the North Iowa CSD Electronic Devices: Policies, Procedures, and Information handbook.

### **Electronic Device Expectations and Consequences**

Devices must be brought to school each day in a fully charged condition. Students need to charge their devices each evening.

- Consequences for not having devices at school or not having devices charged
  - The teacher will notify the office.
  - The first violation per quarter is a warning.
  - Each subsequent violation requires a 30 minute detention.
  - Detentions will be served within 48 hours of the violation, before or after school (transportation is the responsibility of the student and parent).

Students who repeatedly (as determined by any staff member) fail to bring their devices to school charged will be required to leave their devices at school and check it out/in from their teacher or advisor at the beginning and end of each day.

### **Cell Phones/Communication/Electronic Devices**

North Iowa School recognizes technology is constantly evolving and many technology tools exist to help support students in their learning. This program seeks to help educate students on the effective and appropriate uses of cell phones and any other type of electronic device. These devices can cause disruptions in the learning environment of a school. Please use these procedures if a student needs to use their electronic device in our educational setting.

- Students and parents must respect the middle school's educational setting by not making or taking cell phone calls/text messages/emails during classroom instructional time.
- If a student absolutely needs to contact a parent, he or she can use a classroom phone, a phone in the main office, or ask for permission from a teacher or administrator.
- If a parent absolutely needs to contact his or her child during the school day, he or she needs to call the main office where the office will contact the student.
- If a student absolutely needs to use their cell phone during school, he or she must get permission from a middle school staff member and/or the 6-12 school principal.

North Iowa School building will be divided into instructional and non-instructional areas.

- Students will be allowed to use cell phones such as cell phones in non-instructional areas as indicated by the **“green”** signs such as the cafeteria, school buses, before and after school, and during lunch.
- Students' use of cell phones in instructional areas will *be at the discretion of the teacher* supervising that classroom or area. The teacher will designate their classroom as a **“yellow”** or **“red”** room at their discretion.
  - In a **“yellow”** classroom, students can be permitted to use cell phones for supervised educational purposes at the discretion of the teacher.
  - In a **“red”** classroom, students will not be permitted to use cell phones and may face disciplinary consequences if they fail to meet that expectation.

It is the student's responsibility to follow all posted and verbal directions indicating **green, yellow, or red** areas.

- Cell phones must be set to 'SILENT'. Noises of any kind (including vibration) are not allowed at any time, whether purposeful or not, and will result in immediate confiscation of the item.
- Cell phones may not be used to conduct any activities which violate state and/or federal law, Board Policy (Acceptable Use Policy, Academic Policy, Unlawful Harassment Policy, and Bullying Policy), or school rules.

North Iowa Community School is not responsible for cell phones that are damaged, lost or stolen on school property.

The use of cell phones are **PROHIBITED** at all times in school offices and during school crisis/emergency situations without the permission of NI staff. The school **PROHIBITS** the use of any **photography or video devices** in any restroom, locker room, or other location where students and staff have *a reasonable expectation of privacy*.

Consequences for violation or abuse of Cell phone Responsible Use Policy include, but not limited, to the following: *(For all violations or abuses, the cell phone will be confiscated by staff.)*

- 1<sup>st</sup> incident: Device can be retrieved by the student from office personnel at the conclusion of the school day.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> incident: Device can only be retrieved and/or arranged by the parent/guardian from the office personnel at the conclusion of the school day.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> incident: Device can only be retrieved and/or arranged by the parent/guardian from the office personnel at the conclusion of the school day. In addition, the student will serve a 30 minute detention.
- Further incidents may result in more severe consequences.

In order to avoid classroom disruptions that may result in disciplinary issues for students, parents are **strongly recommended** to communicate with their students by contacting the main office at 641-562-2525.

## **Transportation**

### **School Bus Conduct Policy**

Safety is the primary concern for every child that rides a North Iowa Community School bus. Therefore, every precaution will be taken to see that children arrive at their destination safely. This can only be accomplished if we have the cooperation of both students and parents. Driving a bus is a difficult and responsible task. The attention of the driver must be on the driving responsibilities, at all times, and any deviation from this task could endanger the safety of all passengers. It is absolutely necessary that students assume responsibility for their behavior, and any infraction of procedures necessary for the safe transportation of students be reported immediately to the appropriate supervisor/principal.

The following list of behaviors shall not be permitted on the North Iowa School buses. This list shall include but is not limited to the following: hitting, spitting, profanity, out of seat, throwing objects, obstructing aisles, making loud noises, hanging out of windows, assault, fighting, vandalism, insubordination, possession of a weapon, possession or use of tobacco and possession or use of alcohol and/or any other controlled substance.

If the infraction/behavior is a violation of the law, the proper authorities shall be notified and all riding privileges for the student shall be suspended for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year. If the infraction results in property damage, restitution must be paid or a plan for restitution must be agreed upon before riding privileges are reinstated.

The following guidelines will be used to ensure the safe and efficient operation of our buses.

### ***Regulations Governing Pupils Riding the Bus***

1. Students are under the authority of the bus driver.
2. Students shall be on time.
3. Students shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.
4. Students will not swear while riding the bus.
5. Students will not take property from another bus rider.
6. Students will talk in a normal voice and not shout at other students, or the driver.
7. After entering the bus, students will be moved to their seats and remain in those seats until leaving the bus.
8. Students will not destroy property belonging to another student, nor shall the student deface or destroy school property while on the bus.
9. Students will keep their feet on the floor, not on the seats.
10. Students will not threaten or strike another student while on the bus.
11. Students will keep hands and arms inside the bus and will not throw items out of the bus windows.
12. Students will not throw or spit items while on the bus.
13. If an elementary student is to leave school by means other than his/her regular arrangement, a note or phone call to the school from the parents will be necessary.

### **School Bus Violation Consequences**

#### ***Consequences for Infractions***

- **First Offense:** Driver/administrator conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and gives a verbal and/or written warning.
- **Second Offense:** Driver/administrator conference with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies given to the parent (s) and the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator contacts the parents (s), by letter or phone.
- **Third Offense:** Driver/administrator conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies to the parent (s) and the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator contacts the parent(s), reviews the incident, and may suspend the student's riding privileges for a period not to exceed 5 days.
- **Fourth Offense:** Driver/administrator conferences with the student, identifies the infraction, and writes the behavior referral with copies to the appropriate administrator. The administrator may suspend the student for up to 15 days with proper due process/procedures, hearing and review by the board of education,

administration, student, parents, and legal authorities if necessary.

- Any succeeding violations shall result in suspension of all riding privileges for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year.
- If a student performs an act that obviously jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus and endangers the safety of others on the route, the administrator may suspend the student from riding the bus the next morning. The administrator must notify the parent (s) of this action that day. A written report shall also be filled out and filed properly. Riding privileges can not be reinstated until a conference is held with the driver, parent(s), student and appropriate administrator.

## **Student Driving**

MOPEDS – Students riding mopeds to school will be required to abide by the following rules:

1. the moped will be properly parked on the school premises in the west parking lot
2. the moped will not be moved during the school day.

Bicycles will be parked in the provided bicycle rack with a security chain. Bicycles are not to be ridden during school hours.

## **Lockers/Book Bags**

Middle school students will be provided with lockers to keep books, coats, book bags, etc. Students cannot bring backpacks into the classroom. Book bags and sports bags must be stored in lockers or above the lockers.

Lockers are the property of the school and as such are subject to periodic inspection and searches by school authorities according to the Iowa search and seizure laws. Students who place contraband items or items which are disruptive to the learning environment in a locker are subject to disciplinary action.

Lockers are assigned by the building principal and may be checked periodically by him/her or by the student's advisor.

Locks placed on lockers are encouraged but need to be approved by the building principal or designee – keys or combination key needs to be provided to building principal.

Students are NOT to enter anyone's locker but their own.

## **Visitors**

All visitors must check into the Main Office upon arrival and receive and wear a "visitor" sticker. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time but need to check in with the Main Office. No visits by out-of-district students will be allowed unless permission is granted by the building principal at least two days in advance.

## **Activities and Good Conduct**

### **Activities**

A variety of school activities and organizations are available at North Iowa Middle School. All students are encouraged to participate in one or more extra-curricular activities as these opportunities can be a valuable part of the educational experience. The following regulations apply to the activity program:

- Meetings and other activities of a school organization must be approved and supervised by the group's sponsors.
- Student behavior policies apply for all school sponsored activities.
- Plans for any event must be made well in advance of the date for the event.
- No Sunday activities are held without approval of the Superintendent or his designee.
- Once a person leaves an event, it is assumed that he/she will not return.

- All posted signs and/or posters must have prior approval of the principal or designee.
- Dances are restricted to students in the grades 7-8.
- No one is admitted to a dance after the first 15 minutes of the dance without prior approval.
- Dances must be organized and sponsored by a school organization (Student Council).
- Dances must have a MINIMUM of 2 faculty/staff chaperones and parent volunteers.

### **Family Night**

Wednesday night is designated as "Family Night." The school will not schedule functions, practices, or games on Wednesday nights. All students will be out of the building by 6:00 p.m.

### **Good Conduct Rule**

The North Iowa Community School (grades 7-12) considers participation in extracurricular activities a privilege. Any student whose conduct, in or out of school during any month of the year, would make him or her unworthy to represent the ideals, principles, and standards set forth in this policy shall be declared ineligible for extra-curricular participation. He or she will remain ineligible until reinstated by the athletic director or the school administrator.

### ***Violation of Good Conduct Policy – Definition***

If it is reasonably believed by a staff member, a law enforcement official, or another adult member of a community who is willing to sign a statement that a student has been found in one of the following situations, the student will be in violation of the Good Conduct policy. If the student admits to the misbehavior or if substantial evidence of the misbehavior is found at a judicial or an administrative proceeding, the student will be in violation of the Good Conduct Rule.

- **Item 1.** Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages with knowledge, intent, or control thereof,
  - **Item 2.** Possession or consumption of controlled substances as they are defined by the Code of Iowa, without a legal prescription, and with knowledge, intent, or control thereof;
  - **Item 3.** Possession or use of tobacco, in any form;
  - **Item 4.** Committed stealing (theft); vandalism/damage to school property; or other serious offenses, including those which would violate the Iowa Criminal Code, as to make the student unworthy to represent the ideals and standards of his/her school; is in violation of the Good Conduct Rule.
- The **first offense** of a 365 day period will have a minimum of ineligibility for 1 date and up to 3 dates. Ineligibility will be enforced in chronological order for all activities a student may be participating. A student will be held to the minimum if he/she chooses to complete the Prime for Life program for a substance abuse violation or another counseling program approved by the school for any other violation. A written letter or note of verification must be provided confirming that programs/appointments will be attended within a reasonable time. Failure to comply with the requirements above will result in the student's moving to the next offense level.
  - The **second offense** of a 365 day period will have a minimum of ineligibility for 4 dates and up to 10 dates next extra-curricular activities. Ineligibility will be enforced in chronological order for all activities a student may be participating. The student/athlete must complete the Prime for Life program or other school approved counseling/educational program. A written letter or note of verification must be provided confirming that programs/appointments were attended. Failure to comply with the requirements above will result in the student's moving to the next offense level.
  - The **third and any subsequent offenses** within the original 365-day period will result in a one-year ineligibility period.
  - ***Activity advisers/coaches have the discretion to add further consequences for violations but may not lessen any consequences included in this policy.***

- **Honesty Provision:** A student should voluntarily admit to a violation within 48 hours of the violation. Students who self report will be held to the minimum ineligibility for each offense.

### ***Due Process Provision***

An informal investigation of the charges shall include, but not necessarily limited to, written or oral notice to the student of the charge made and an opportunity to respond. Should the student or his/her parents feel the penalty is unjustified or unfair, they may appeal as set forth by the due process rule adopted by the Board of Education. The student shall remain ineligible during the appeal procedure.

### ***Appeals***

Any student who is found by the administration to have violated the Good Conduct Rule may appeal this determination to the superintendent by contacting the superintendent within three (3) days of being advised of the violation. The penalty will be in effect pending the superintendent's decision, which shall be made within seven (7) days.

If the student is still dissatisfied, he or she may appeal to the school board by filing a written appeal with the board secretary at least 48 hours prior to the next board meeting. The review by the board will be in closed session, unless the student's parents (or the student, if the student is 18) request an open session. The grounds for appeal to the school board are limited to the following: the student did not violate the Good Conduct Rule; the student was given inadequate due process in the investigation and determination; or the penalty is in violation of the Good Conduct Rule and/or Handbook Rule or Board Policy. The penalty will remain in effect pending the outcome of the meeting with the board.

If the school board reverses the decision of the administration, the student shall be immediately eligible and shall have any report of the ineligibility period and violation deleted from the student's record.

### ***Students NOT Involved in Extracurricular Activities***

Students who are not involved in extracurricular activities and in violation of the Good Conduct Rule will not be permitted to attend extra-curricular activities for the same time period per offense level that students who are involved in extracurricular activities would be penalized.

- The **first offense** will be immediately enforced following the meeting date of the good conduct violation. The student will not be able to attend extra curricular activities for 15 calendar days\*. A determination of ineligibility for 1 date up to 3 dates will be determined and will apply to their next activity or sport. A student can choose to complete Prime for Life. A written letter or note of verification must be provided confirming that programs/appointments will be attended within a reasonable time. Failure to comply with the requirements above will result in the student's moving to the next offense level.
- The **second offense** will be immediately enforced on the meeting date of the good conduct violation. The student will not be able to attend extra-curricular activities for 30 calendar days\*. A determination of ineligibility for 4 dates and up to 10 dates will be determined to apply to their next activity or sport. The student must complete the Prime for Life program or other school approved counseling/educational program. A written letter or note of verification must be provided confirming that programs/appointments were attended. Failure to comply with the requirements above will result in the student's moving to the next offense level.
- The **third and any subsequent offenses** will result in a one-year period of not attending extra-curricular activities to begin immediately following the meeting date of the good conduct violation.
- \*If there is not an active season of events, the spectator privileges will not start counting until the first event of the next season.

- Honesty Provision: A student should voluntarily admit to a violation within 48 hours of the violation. Students who self report will be held to the minimum for each offense.
- At all levels, the time period to gain new offenses expires after one calendar year (365 days).
- If a student is not currently out for an extracurricular activity, the ineligibility will apply to their next activity or sport. If a student goes out for any extra-curricular activities, in order for a student to fully serve their ineligibility, they must remain out for the activity for the entire season without quitting and attending all required practices and events.

### **General Student Conduct and Discipline**

Students attending North Iowa Middle School are required to conduct themselves with respect for self and others through their actions, their language, and their dress. Student behavior will reflect favorably on the individual and on the school, will show consideration for others, and will create a harmonious learning atmosphere. Students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. When a school employee acts to assist a student in proper conduct, the emphasis shall be toward student growth in self-discipline.

High standards of conduct will translate into high standards of excellence in our classrooms and in our activities. High school students will be treated as young adults by the staff. The staff will treat all students with respect and dignity. As a result, students are required to show proper respect for fellow students and staff members.

Students are expected to comply with and abide by the school district's policies and rules. Students who fail to abide by the school district's policies will be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with educational programs; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to obtain their education or to participate in school activities; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. The discipline imposed is based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident and the student's record.

### **Initiations, Hazing, Bullying or Harassment – Students (refer to board policy 104)**

#### **Bullying Policy**

What is Bullying?

The definition below is used for bullying prevention and intervention programming in schools. This definition guides efforts to educate all constituents with common language around bullying.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. - *2014 US Department of Education office of Safe Schools*

### ***Bullying is Not***

**Conflict is not Bullying.** A conflict is a disagreement or antagonism between two or more people. All parties involved have some responsibility for the encounter. It is not bullying when two or more kids with **no perceived power imbalance**, fight, have an argument or disagree. Conflict resolution strategies can be employed to find common ground when both parties have a vested interest in resolving the conflict. Peer mediation may be appropriate in conflict situations. Bullying is peer abuse and needs to be reported and treated as such. Peer mediation is **not** appropriate in bullying.

The difficulty here is to know when a situation is conflict and when it can be relational bullying or social bullying. Relational bullying does occur within social groups of “friends.” It is critical for educators to be careful to seek to understand when “friend” behaviors that might have been conflicts turn into bullying. Be careful to:

- Understand the characteristics of relational bullying
- Educate all staff, students and parents about relational bullying
- Make sure you are addressing social and emotional development for all students
- When bullying is reported NEVER bring those involved together for the interview, *do not intervene and treat the report as a conflict without first investigating and assuring bullying is not occurring.*

### ***Bullying Defined in Iowa Law***

Harassment and bullying are defined in [Iowa Code section 280.28](#) as: Any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school

"Trait or characteristic of the student" includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status."

**Additional resources (links can be found on the school website):**

[Board policy including complaint form](#)

[Iowa Department of Education resources](#)

### **Records, Policies, Notifications, and Statements**

#### **School Cancellation**

When adverse conditions make it necessary to close school the following radio stations will be informed: KIOW (Forest City) 107.3 FM; KGLA (Algona) 92.7 FM/1600 AM; KGLO (Mason City) 1300 AM; and KBEW (Blue Earth) 1560 AM. Announcements will also be sent via our email/text alert system and on our NICS website (red banner). A variety of television stations will also be contacted.



When school is dismissed for safety reasons or because of bad weather, ACTIVITIES ARE ALSO CANCELED. This means that there will be no practices, meetings, games, or performances of any type and students will clear the building.

## **Student Records**

The North Iowa Community School District adheres to the following standards in the management of education records:

- Students' parents/guardians and eligible students (those age 18 and over) have the right to inspect and review a student's educational records.
- The North Iowa Community School District will limit the disclosure of information contained in a student's educational records except under the following circumstances:
  - o By the prior written consent of the student's parent/guardian or the eligible student.
  - o As directory information that the parent or guardian or eligible student has not prohibited from disclosure.
  - o Under certain limited circumstances permitted by FERPA.
- The student's parent or eligible student has the right to seek to correct parts of the student's educational record which he/she believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights. This includes the right to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed if the district decides not to alter it according to the parent or guardian or eligible student's request.

## **Student Records Access**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) affords parents and students over the age of 18 ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect.
2. Parents or eligible students may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to consent of disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent (school officials with legitimate educational interests, health/medical personnel, law enforcement, AEA employees, etc.).
4. The right to inform the school district that the parent does not want directory information, as defined below, to be released. Any parent or eligible student not wanting this information released to the public must make their objection know to the building principal or her/his designee by the end of the second day of school each year.
5. To file a complaint regarding student record access may be filed with **Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC, 20202-4605** (Board Policy 506.1 and 506.1E9)

## **Special Education**

The board recognizes some students have different educational needs than other students. The board shall provide a free appropriate public education program and related services to students identified in need of special education. The special education services will be provided from birth until the appropriate education is completed, age twenty-one or to maximum age allowable in accordance with the law. Students requiring special education shall attend general education classes, participate in extracurricular activities and receive services in a general education setting to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of each individual student. The appropriate education for each student shall be written in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Special education students shall be required to meet the requirements stated in board policy or in their IEPs for graduation. (Board Policy 603.3)

### **Parent's Rights in Special Education:**

Parents of a child who is receiving special education have the right to

1. inspect and review the child's education records;
2. ask for an explanation of any item in the records;
3. have copies made at a reasonable cost;
4. be informed of the locations of records being collected by the district or the AEA;
5. ask for the amendment of any record if considered inaccurate, misleading, or violating privacy rights;
6. request a hearing if the district or the AEA does not voluntarily amend records about which there are concerns;
7. give or withhold consent to disclose your child's records;
8. be told whom information has been disclosed;
9. be informed before information in your child's file is to be destroyed.

### **504 Rehabilitation Act/Policy**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requires all schools to identify students, employees, and parents who may fall under this ruling. If an individual is deemed to be eligible under the guidelines of this legislation, he or she may be allowed certain accommodations in this school to ensure equal opportunity in education, employment, or valid involvement with this educational agency. Exceptions and waivers for all school policies may be considered and granted based on the individual's meeting 504/IDEA standards or criteria.

### **EOE/AA**

The North Iowa Community Schools shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its educational programs, activities, operations, or employment opportunities. (Ref. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendment).

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI or Title IX may be directed in writing to Joann Kenny, 6-12 Principal, North Iowa Community Schools, 111 Third Avenue NW, Buffalo Center, Iowa 50424.

### **Multicultural, Non-Sexist Policy**

It is the policy of NIMS not to discriminate on the basis of gender, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Educational Amendment, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

It is also the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the culture and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in this society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce

stereotyping and eliminate bias on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, and/or religion. Respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights and duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural, nonsexist society.

Inquiries regarding compliance of Title VI and Title IX may be directed to the superintendent, North Iowa Community Schools, Buffalo Center, IA 50424. Phone (515) 562-2525.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the North Iowa Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator: Joann Kenny, 6-12 Principal, 111 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave NW, Buffalo Center, Iowa, 641-562-2525, [joann.kenny@northiowa.org](mailto:joann.kenny@northiowa.org)

### **Asbestos Management Notification**

A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes: notification letters, training of employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials, and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the district business office.

### **Complaints**

Families have an option to express complaints through the Iowa Department of Education website.

### **Distribution of Materials Regulation**

- I. Guidelines. Individuals, including students, may have the right to distribute on school premises, at reasonable times and places, unofficial written material, petitions, buttons, badges or other insignia, except expression which:
  - A. is obscene to minors;
  - B. is libelous;
  - C. contains indecent, vulgar, profane or lewd language;
  - D. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law;
  - E. constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people (e.g., threats of violence, defamation of character or of a person's race, religion, gender, disability, age or ethnic origin);
  - F. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

Distribution on school premises of material in categories (a) through (d) to any student is prohibited. Distribution on school premises of material in categories (e) and (f) to a substantial number of students is prohibited.

- II. Procedures. Anyone wishing to distribute unofficial written material must first submit for approval

a copy of the material to the building principal at least twenty-four hours in advance of desired distribution time, together with the following information:

1. Name and phone number of the person submitting request and, if a student, the homeroom number;
2. Date(s) and time(s) of day of intended display or distribution;
3. Location where material will be displayed or distributed;
4. The grade(s) of students to whom the display or distribution is intended.

Within twenty-four hours of submission, the principal will render a decision whether the material violates the guidelines in subsection I or the time, place and manner restrictions in subsection III of this policy. In the event that permission to distribute the material is denied, the person submitting the request should be informed in writing of the reasons for the denial. Permission to distribute material does not imply approval of its contents by either the school, the administration, the board or the individual reviewing the material submitted.

If the person submitting the request does not receive a response within twenty four hours of submission, the person shall contact the building principal's office to verify that the lack of response was not due to an inability to locate the person. If the person has made this verification and there is no response to the request, the material may be distributed in accordance with the time, place and manner provisions in subsection III.

If the person is dissatisfied with the decision of the principal, the person may submit a written request for appeal to the superintendent. If the person does not receive a response within three school days of submitting the appeal, the person shall contact the superintendent to verify that the lack of response is not due to an inability to locate the person. If the person has made this verification and there is no response to the appeal, the material may be distributed in accordance with the time, place and manner provisions in subsection III.

At every level of the process the person submitting the request shall have the right to appear and present the reasons, supported by relevant witnesses and material, as to why distribution of the written material is appropriate.

Permission to distribute material does not imply approval of its contents by either the school district, the board, the administration or the individual reviewing the material submitted.

- III. Time, place and manner of distribution. The distribution of written material is prohibited when it blocks the safe flow of traffic within corridors and entrance ways of the school or otherwise disrupts school activities. The distribution of unofficial material shall be limited to a reasonable time, place and manner as follows:

1. The material shall be distributed from a table set up for the purpose in a location designated by the principal, which location shall not block the safe flow of traffic or block the corridors or entrance ways, but which shall give reasonable access to students.
2. The material shall be distributed either before and/or after the regular instructional day.
3. No written material may be distributed during and at the place of a normal school activity if it is reasonably likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of that

activity.

- IV. IV. Definitions. The following definitions apply to the following terms used in this policy:
1. "Obscene to minors" is defined as: (a) The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the written material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest of minors of the age to whom distribution is requested; (b) The material depicts or describes, in a manner that is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community concerning how such conduct should be presented to minors of the age to whom distribution is requested, sexual conduct such as intimate sexual acts (normal or perverted), masturbation, excretory functions, and lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (c) The material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for minors.
  2. "Minor" means any person under the age of eighteen.
  3. "Material and substantial disruption" of a normal school activity is defined as follows:
    - (a) Where the normal school activity is an educational program of the district for which student attendance is compulsory, "material and substantial disruption" is defined as any disruption which interferes with or impedes the implementation of that program.
    - (b) Where the normal school activity is voluntary in nature (including, without limitation, school athletic events, school plays and concerts, and lunch periods), "material and substantial disruption" is defined as student rioting, unlawful seizures of property, widespread shouting or boisterous demonstration, sit-in, stand-in, walk-out, or other related forms of activity. In order for expression to be considered disruptive, there must exist specific facts upon which the likelihood of disruption can be forecasted including past experience in the school, current events influencing student activities and behavior, and instances of actual or threatened disruption relating to the written material in question
  4. "School activities" means any activity of students sponsored by the school and includes, by way of example but not limited to, classroom work, library activities, physical education classes, official assemblies and other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, band concerts, school plays and in-school lunch periods.
  5. "Unofficial" written material includes all written material except school newspapers, literary magazines, yearbooks, and other publications funded and/or sponsored or authorized by the school. Examples include leaflets, brochures, flyers, petitions, placards and underground newspapers, whether written by students or others.
  6. "Libelous" is a false and unprivileged statement about a specific individual that tends to harm the individual's reputation or to lower him/her in the esteem of the community.
  7. "Distribution" means circulation or dissemination of written material by means of handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale and accepting donations for copies. It includes displaying written material in areas of the school which are generally frequented by students.
- V. Disciplinary action. Distribution by any student of unofficial written material prohibited in subsection I or in violation of subsection III may be halted, and students may be subject to discipline including suspension and expulsion. Any other party violating this policy may be requested to leave the school property immediately and, if necessary, local law enforcement

officials will be called.

- VI. Notice of policy to students. A copy of this policy will be published in student handbooks and posted conspicuously in school buildings.