

# STUDENT HANDBOOK



TAWAS AREA  
MIDDLE SCHOOL  
2024-2025

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## **GREETINGS FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

### **WELCOME TO TAWAS AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Tawas Area Middle School welcomes you to the **2024-2025** school year. This handbook serves to provide our families and students with important information about our school. Please review the contents with your student, sign the parent signature page, then keep the handbook accessible for future reference. If you have questions, please feel free to call the school office for clarification at 989-984-2300.

With active parent participation, we work to make each day a positive experience for your middle school student at Tawas Area Middle School.

We are glad you and your student(s) are members of the Tawas Area Middle School community and look forward to a wonderful year.

Sincerely,

Sarah Danek, Principal, Tawas Area Middle/High School (5-12)  
Janice Tiffany, Assistant Principal, Tawas Area Middle School (5-8)

### **TAWAS AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Tawas Area Middle School will provide a safe, inspiring, and rigorous learning environment by creating positive relationships and encouraging respectful and responsible behaviors for each student.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICE PERSONNEL**

Superintendent.....	John Klinger .....	984-2250
Tawas Middle School Principal .....	Sarah Danek .....	984-2100
Tawas Middle School Asst. Principal .....	Janice Tiffany .....	984-2300
Secretary .....	Janeen Clark .....	984-2302
Special Education Supervisor.....	Nicol Timo.....	984-2166



## 2024-2025 School Year Calendar

**“For the most Up-to-date information see the calendar at [www.tawas.net](http://www.tawas.net)”**

August 13	.....	Orientation
August 21	.....	Open House 5–6:30p
August 26	.....	Student’s First Day
August 28	.....	Fall Picture Make-Up
August 30-Sept 2	.....	No School-Labor Day
September 3-13	.....	NWEA Fall Testing Window
October 2	.....	Fall Count Day
October 4	.....	½ Day – Teacher Inservice
October 9-10	.....	Parent-Teacher Conferences (4-7:00p)
October 11	.....	Picture Retakes
October 25	.....	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Marking Period
November 1	.....	No School - Teacher Inservice
November 11	.....	Veterans Day Assembly
November 15	.....	No School - Hunter Safety
November 15	.....	End of 1st Trimester
November 27-29	.....	No School - Thanksgiving Break
December 23-January 4	.....	No School – Christmas Break
January 15-16	.....	½ Days – M.S. Exams
January 16	.....	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period
January 17	.....	No School – Records Day
February 5	.....	Spring Count Day
February 28	.....	End of 2nd Trimester
March 7	.....	½ Day – Teacher Inservice
March 21	.....	End of 3rd Marking Period
March 24-28	.....	No School – Spring Break
April 7 -May 16	.....	State Testing/NWEA Window
April 18	.....	No School - Good Friday
May 26	.....	No School – Memorial Day
June 5-6	.....	½ Days – M.S. Semester Exams
June 6	.....	End of 4 <sup>th</sup> Marking Period
June 6	.....	End of 2nd Semester & 3rd Trimester
June 6	.....	Last Day of School

*\*This calendar is subject to change due to snow days, or other unforeseen events, etc.*



## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a student and a citizen, you have certain rights and responsibilities. Your teachers, classmates and others in your building also have rights and responsibilities.

Some of the more important rights you have at school are:

- A. A RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION
- B. A RIGHT TO BE TREATED FAIRLY
- C. A RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED AND TREATED WITH KINDNESS
- D. A RIGHT TO BE SAFE AT SCHOOL

## **PARENTS' RIGHT-TO-KNOW NOTIFICATION**

This notification is a requirement of Title One, Part A, of the Federal Legislation called the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) if your child attends a school that receives funds from the Title I, Part A program.) Title I, Part A is a federal supplemental program designed to help children reach high academic standards. In receiving funds from this program the district has a requirement to inform you, as parents of children attending a Title I school, of information available to you regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s). Information will be provided to you upon request and in a timely manner of the following:

- Whether your child's teacher has met Michigan qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether your child's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which Michigan qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of your child's teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

You may request additional information on the level of achievement of your child in each of Michigan's assessments. Michigan uses the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (MSTEP) to determine levels of achievement (grades 3-8) as well as the PSAT (grade 8 only).

You will also receive timely notice if your child is, for whatever reason, assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. A highly qualified teacher would be defined as a teacher that meets Michigan's qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level or subject area in which the teacher is providing instruction.

**DISCRIMINATION:** The Tawas Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, height, weight, marital status, arrest record, or disability in employment or in the provision of programs and services.



## PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS MANUAL (for Special Education Services)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires schools to provide parents of a child with a disability with a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and U.S. Department of Education regulations. A copy of this notice must be given to parents only one time a school year, except that a copy must be given to the parents: (1) upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation; (2) upon receipt of the first State complaint under 34 CFR §§300.151 through 300.153 and upon receipt of the first due process complaint under §300.507 in a school year; (3) when a decision is made to take a disciplinary action that constitutes a change of placement; and (4) upon parent request. [34 CFR §300.504(a)]

This procedural safeguards notice must include a full explanation of all of the procedural safeguards available under §300.148 (unilateral placement at private school at public expense), §§300.151 through 300.153 (State complaint procedures), §300.300 (consent), §§300.502 through 300.503, §300.505 through 300.518, and §§300.530 through 300.536 (procedural safeguards in Subpart E of the Part B regulations), and §§300.610 through 300.625 (confidentiality of information provisions in Subpart F) (*Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education, page 3*).

To obtain a complete copy of this Procedural Safeguards Manual:

1. Go to [www.tawas.net](http://www.tawas.net); select “Department” tab; select “Special Education” tab; select “Procedural Safeguards Manual” file
2. Or, please contact the Special Education Director at 984-2166 or the Special Education Secretary at 984-2197

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION AND PHOTO RELEASE PERMISSION**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Parents and eligible students have a right to opt out of the inclusion of information about the student photo/image and student work. If parents do not wish this information to be released, a request must be made in writing to the building principal.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Tawas Area Schools does not release directory information regarding its students.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Tawas Area Schools offer many extra-curricular activities to their students. Participation is a privilege. If you misbehave while in an activity or while in school, you may lose this privilege.

### **EXTRA SERVICES**

Tawas Area Schools and The Iosco Regional Education Service Agency have a large number of staff and services available to aid in the educational process. Included are school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists. Additional services are provided for speech, hearing, visually impaired, special education, and physically disabled students. Our school counselor is available to work with students and their parents who are experiencing academic, personal, or discipline problems.



## **FIRE, TORNADO, AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS**

Fire drills, tornado drills, shelter-in-place and lockdown drills will be held in accordance with the State Department of Education guidelines and requirements. Students are to follow the instructions given by the classroom teacher and the map instructions posted in the classroom. No misbehavior will be tolerated during a drill.

## **INSURANCE**

Tawas Area Schools do not provide accident insurance for students while at school and are not required by law to do so. When students are injured while at school, on school premises, or at school functions, the cost of medical attention will be borne by the parent or guardian. The school district recognizes no responsibility in this regard.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers will be issued to all students. Students are to keep the locker they are issued for the entire school year. No personal locks may be used on lockers. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the locker and keep it clean. Students should not leave any items of value (purses, money, calculators, jewelry, etc.) in the locker at any time. The school district will not assume responsibility for any items lost or stolen. Lockers must be cleaned out before the last day of school. Lockers are the property of the school. Students should not expect their assigned lockers or any locker to be private. Lockers are subject to search at any time without reason. Desks and gym lockers are also school property and subject to search at any time.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Even the most responsible of children lose things. You may help by reminding them of their responsibilities and by marking their belongings. We do make every attempt to unite students with their lost items. Lost and found is located in or near the office.

## **PARENT INFORMATION**

Periodic messages are sent home. These will, hopefully, keep you up to date on school activities, upcoming events, and items of general interest. Because information doesn't always make it home with your child; we have daily announcements read to the students during the day, as well as posted on the office window and the District website, [www.tawas.net](http://www.tawas.net). If you feel you are missing information or have questions, please contact the Middle School office at 989-984-2300.

## **RELEASING OF STUDENTS**

A note or a phone call is required if a student is to be released to a friend or a relative. A student will not be released without proper authorization.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Due to poor weather, it may be necessary for school to be closed for the day. Please do not call the school and tie up phone lines. School closing information will be broadcast over the following stations: RADIO – WIOS 1480 AM, WKJC 104.7 FM, TV - WNEM - CH. 5 and WBKB - CH. 11, and through Tawas Area Instant Messenger program.



## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Tawas Area Schools are committed to maintaining safe, orderly schools, promoting health and safety within the school setting, and to provide a school environment conducive to education. To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers, and desks, which are on or in the proximity of school premises under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. When administrators have “individualized reasonable suspicion” to believe a search is necessary for a student, they believe it may be credible that the student may possess evidence of a violation of state or federal law, a violation of school rule, or a condition that endangers the safety or health of students or others. When searching a student, in addition to conducting a normal search, administrators may operate hand-held metal detectors, in order to enable searches to become more accurate, efficient and less intrusive.

Student lockers and desks are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school district; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. School authorities for any reason may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers and desks at any time without notice, without student or parent consent and without a search warrant.

A student should not expect privacy with respect to his/her desk or locker. A student shall not have any expectation of privacy with regard to the contents of such desk or locker. This shall include searches prior to or during school sponsored trips.

A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, and athletic bag) may be searched without student or parent whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition. A dog may be brought in periodically to search lockers and/or vehicles on school grounds.

NOTE: For purposes of the “Search and Seizure” provisions, “possession” of prohibited objects or substances shall be defined in accordance with the definition set forth in the “Unacceptable Behavior” section of this handbook.

## **VAPORIZER DETECTORS**

**For the safety and well-being of Tawas Area Middle School students, vaporizer detectors have been placed in designated areas of the middle and high school. Alerts from the detectors are transmitted to administration, and searches will be conducted based upon the information.**





## **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY**

“Artificial Intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. “Intelligence” encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models. **TAWAS AREA SCHOOLS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT AI CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AS A TOOL AND RESOURCE** that may assist students with future technology and different ways learning. However, **AI IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR SCHOOLWORK THAT REQUIRES ORIGINAL THOUGHT**, and as a result, the Board of Education adopted this policy to address specifically how the district will manage the use of AI and **maintain academic honesty and integrity**.

**The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism and will fall into the same consequences as academic dishonesty:**

- Students may not claim AI-generated content as their own work.
- The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork **without the permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited**.
- In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.
- Students are also prohibited from using AI to violate school rules or school district policies (including AI image or voice generator technology).

**When can students utilize AI (Artificial Intelligence) / NLP tools (Natural Language Processing)?**

Notwithstanding the preceding, **students are allowed to use AI/NLP tools in the school setting if they receive prior permission/consent from their teacher, so long as they have the AI/NLP tools in an ethical and responsible manner. Teachers have the discretion to authorize students to use AI/NLP tools for the following uses:**

- Research assistance: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students quickly and efficiently search for and find relevant information for their school projects and assignments.
- Data Analysis: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students to analyze, understand and interpret large amounts of data, such as text documents or social media posts. This can be particularly useful for research projects or data analysis assignments - e.g., scientific experiments and marketing research.
- Language translation: AI/NLP tools can be used to translate texts or documents into different languages, which can be helpful for students who are learning a new language or for students who are studying texts written in a different language.
- Writing assistance: AI/NLP tools can provide grammar and spelling corrections, as well as suggest alternative word choices and sentence structure, to help students improve their writing skills.
- Accessibility: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students with disabilities access and understand written materials. For example, text-to-speech software can help students with specific learning disabilities or visual impairments to read texts and AI-powered translation tools can help students with hearing impairments to understand spoken language.
- Or any AI tools endorsed by teachers as an approved curriculum resource.

## **STUDENT PROGRESS**

The Staff holds parent teacher conferences each fall. An open house is also held to meet parents early in the school year. All parents are encouraged to attend both events. Progress reports are also available upon request. Report cards are issued four times a year.



## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Tawas Area Schools have a permanent record of each student called a CA 60. This file contains grade reports, immunizations, attendance, discipline notices and other information relating to the student's school performance. All records are kept under the student's legal name.

## **VISITORS**

To help provide a safe environment visitors entering our school must report immediately to the office. Students are not permitted to bring visitors onto school grounds during the school day. Incidents of unauthorized persons on school grounds will be reported to the police and may result in charges being filed.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Our schools could not be as effective without the many parents and others who give so much of their time. Merchants, professionals, parents, and others are called upon to provide additional experiences for the students that the district alone could not provide.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Upon enrollment of a homeless child or in the event a child's status changes to homeless during the school year, an appointed Liaison will coordinate with appropriate administrative staff to assure that the school last attended by a homeless child is immediately contacted to provide relevant academic or other relevant records. If upon enrollment, the homeless child is found to be in need of any immunization requirements for enrollment by State law or any other medical records, the Liaison will assist the family or student in obtaining the immunizations or necessary medical records. The Liaison will also contact the Director of Transportation to assure transportation of the homeless student is provided in accordance with the Board's Transportation Policy.

Any disputes regarding the enrollment or assignment of a homeless student will be referred to the Liaison for expeditious resolution. The Liaison should attempt to resolve disputes within five (5) school days. Any dispute which cannot be resolved by the Liaison should be reported to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth at the Michigan Department of Education. According to State guidelines, the State Coordinator has an additional five (5) school days from the time of notification to bring about resolution. Individuals dissatisfied with the State Coordinator's proposed resolution can appeal such decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction within five (5) school days for final resolution of the dispute.

As part of his/her assigned duties, the Liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for Homeless Children and other community and school personnel responsible for providing education and related services to homeless children. Such coordination should be designed to facilitate homeless children having access and reasonable proximity to available education and related support services and raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.

If you have any questions on eligibility and services under the McKinney-Vento Act, please contact our Homeless Liaison, Joy Garrison at 989-984-2241



## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT FORMS**

Emergency contact forms are to be filled out for each child. It is important that the school can reach the parents, or a responsible person designated by the parents, for emergencies or illness. For this reason, it is extremely important that any change in phone number be reported immediately to the school, either the student's home number or the emergency number. Unlisted numbers are likewise requested, with the assurance that the school releases no phone numbers unless otherwise permitted by the parent/guardian. We do not have the physical facilities for keeping a sick child at school. We request that he/she not be sent to school if you know your child is sick in the morning.

### **EXTENDED ILLNESS**

When you know your child will be absent for an extended period of time, please notify the school as soon as possible **and fill out a trip request form** so that work may be prepared for sending home.

### **HEAD LICE**

No student with untreated head lice or nits will be allowed to attend school. After one treatment, the student may return to school. Students will be checked upon returning.

### **MEDICATIONS**

1. All medications, both prescription and non-prescription, including such medications as Tylenol and Inhalers must be brought and kept in the school office where they will be dispensed.
2. No medications will be accepted by the school unless the parent/guardian brings the medication to the school office, along with specific written directions from the physician, and signs the "Authorization for Administration of Medication" form. Forms for this purpose are available at the school office and on the school website.
3. Medication must be brought to school in a pharmaceutically filled container labeled with the name of the student, medication, dosage and time medication is to be given at school. The refill of the prescription shall be the responsibility of the parent upon notification by the school.
4. Parents are to notify the school when the medication is no longer required and should pick up any remaining medication. Otherwise, the medication will be discarded.
5. In the event the physician orders change in a student's medication, the school must receive written orders from the attending physician to inform the staff directly involved with the student of the changes.
6. Phone requests for the administration of any medications, including aspirin or its substitutes, will NOT be honored by any staff person.

### **IMMUNIZATION**

The Board of Education requires that all students be properly immunized pursuant to provisions of the State Health Department regulations. Students who do not meet the immunization requirements will be refused attendance according to State Law.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS)**

We recently have been notified by the Federal government that the District is subject to new regulations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to restrict the spread of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immune-deficiency virus (HIV) in the workplace. These regulations are designed to protect employees of the District who are, or could be, exposed to blood or other contaminated bodily fluids while performing their job duties.



Because of the very serious consequences of contracting HBV or HIV, the District is committed to taking the necessary precautions to protect both students and staff from its spread in the school environment.

Part of the Federally-mandated procedures include a requirement that the District request the person who was bleeding to consent to be tested for HBV or HIV . This information would then be provided both to the exposed employee and the treating physician to determine proper medical treatment.

The law does not require parents or guardians to grant permission for the examination of their child's blood, but it does require the District to request that consent. Although we expect that incidents of exposure will be few, we wanted to notify parents of these requirements ahead of time. That way, if the situation does develop you will understand the reason for our request and will have had an opportunity to consider it in advance. These are serious diseases, and we sincerely hope that through proper precautions and cooperation we can prevent them from spreading.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your student's principal.

### **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION**

The Tawas Area Board of Education has established a program of instruction in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades for reproductive health. The program is presented by certified teachers in reproductive health education. In addition, local health care providers may be enlisted to present and or to assist with the presentation of the approved reproductive health education program.

According to the State School Aid Act for FY 94, parents have the right to review the materials and curriculum content to be used in the classroom prior to class presentation. The local board of education, in compliance with the state, has made materials and curriculum guides available for your review. If you wish to review the material or curriculum content, please contact the school. This statute allows you to excuse your child, without penalty, from participation in the reproductive health classes, if you choose. All reproductive health and HIV/AIDS education is abstinence based.

### **CONCUSSION AWARENESS**

#### **WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

**A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury** that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning or a sudden stopping and starting of the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven’t been knocked out.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a healthcare professional says they are okay to return to play.



## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is both required by law and necessary for scholarship. In the event of absence, parents are asked to call the middle school office at 989-984-2300 before 9:30 a.m. Students with an unverified absence will receive a phone call from the school, requesting parent verification of the absence. Records are kept to watch attendance patterns of excused and unexcused absences. Continuous absences will be appropriately dealt with. If extended absence is anticipated, please notify the School so that assistance may be provided in helping your child keep up with his/her class work. The School utilizes 10 days of absence per year as a standard for allowable absence. The Superintendent, or administrative designee, shall require, from the parent of each student or from an adult student who has been absent for any reason, a written statement and/or confirmation of the cause for such absence. The Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each absence. Examples of what will be considered include, but are not limited to the following:

- Past attendance history
- Current attendance
- Doctor's statement of illness

The Board or its designee shall report to the Intermediate School District infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of eighteen (18). Repeated infractions of Board policy requiring the attendance of enrolled students may result in the suspension or expulsion of the student from the District program.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

To excuse an absence parents/guardians must call the attendance office. There are no exceptions to this rule. The school phone/attendance office phone records messages 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

An absence will be considered for "excused absence" status if a parent/guardian contacts the school, and provides a reason for the absence. The absence, as well as the reason for the absence, will then be documented in our attendance system. Just because a call was made for an absence does **NOT** make that absence excused if it fails to meet the criteria and can be factored into the overall attendance numbers for a student. Excused absences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Personal injury or illness
- Family emergency
- Medical/dental/legal appointment
- Death in immediate family/funeral
- Verifiable chronic illness – statement signed by a physician
- Pre-arranged absences with proper notification
- A short term family trip or vacation with prior notification of the absence being provided to the school administrator
- College visits
- Suspension from school

Please note that long-term absenteeism, including excused absences, may lead to the failure of a course, the necessity to repeat a course, the possibility of retention, and/or the filing of a truancy petition with the intermediate school district truancy officer and Iosco County.



## EXEMPT ABSENCES

Exempt absences are absences which are not considered when counting excessive absences.

- School activities
- Legally documented court subpoena
- Homebound
- Religious holidays
- Medically verified long-term or chronic illness
- **Quarantine**

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Unexcused absences are defined as an absence for any other reason other than those listed excused or exempt. They include but are not limited to:

- Skipping school (truancy)
- Leaving the school or a designated area within the school without permission

If a student fails to attend class(es), and a parent/guardian has not called the office, the absence(s) will be recorded as unexcused.

Administrators or school personnel will make reasonable attempts to notify a parent/guardian of unexcused absences, by phone.

When a student has been absent from school for any reason, other than a school-related absence or truancy absence, the student will have one day for each day absent to get missed work completed and turned in to his/her teachers. Homework requests must be called in before 8:30 AM.

## IOSCO COUNTY POLICY FOR EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES FOR OSCODA, TAWAS, WHITTEMORE-PRESCOTT AND HALE SCHOOL DISTRICTS-- IN COOPERATION WITH THE IOSCO R.E.S.A. MICHIGAN GENERAL SCHOOL LAWS

Section 731 ... every parent, guardian or other person in the State of Michigan, having control and charge of any child between the ages 6 and 18 years, shall be required to send such child, equipped with proper textbooks necessary to pursue his or her school work, to the public schools during the school year, and such attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the district in which the child is enrolled provided, that in School Districts which maintain school during the entire year and in which the school year is divided into quarters, no child shall be compelled to attend the public schools more than three quarters in any one year; but the absence of no child shall be permitted for any two consecutive quarters.

Section 739... It shall be the duty of the attendance officer of the district, whenever notified by the teacher, superintendent, or other persons of violations of





this act, and the county attendance officer, when notified by the county superintendent of schools, to investigate all cases of non-attendance at school, and if the children complained of are not exempt from the provisions of this chapter under the conditions named in section 732, then he shall immediately proceed as provided herein-after in this chapter. When a child has been repeatedly absent from school without valid excuse or is failing in schoolwork or gives evidence of behavior problems, and after attempts to confer with the parent or other person in parental relationship to such child have failed, the county superintendent of schools may request the attendance officer to notify such parent or other person in parental relationship by registered mail to come to the school or to a place designated by him at a time specified to discuss the child's absence or failing work or behavior problems with the proper school authorities.

### **ACUTE ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS**

Tawas Area's School Resource Officer functions as our school Attendance Officer, and he/she may be notified for chronically absent students, participate in conferences, and can recommend students/families for prosecution.

1. Parents will be notified after four (4) absences.
2. Parents will be notified through an attendance letter every  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the marking period of their child's absences above four (4) absences.
3. A parent conference may be called as a result of excessive absences. Students with excessive absences (or excessive tardiness) will be placed on an attendance contract. Failure to honor that contract may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension, extra-curricular exclusion (see page 26) or expulsion for insubordination.
4. Students with excessive absences will be placed on a referral plan for truancy. Referral for truancy is based on many factors, not just unexcused absences. Other factors include 1) a history of absences, 2) academic progress, and 3) excessive tardies. Any student with excessive absences, behavioral issues, and failing grades may be placed on a behavioral/academic contract with the potential of referral to the Board of Education for additional discipline, including expulsion. Incurability may also be filed against this student by the school.
  - Students absent from school may not work or participate in extracurricular activities that same day unless their absence was "School Related" or "Pre-arranged".
  - Students must be in attendance the entire school day in order to participate in practices, meetings, competitions, or performances scheduled for that day, unless the assistant principal or athletic director grants prior approval or medical documentation is provided.
5. After nine (9) absences, the school will schedule a conference.
6. After ten (10) consecutive absences, a doctor's excuse may be required or the student may be dropped from enrollment.

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL'S STATEMENT: Opinion 05414 ISSUED 12-20-78**

"The compulsory attendance law recognizes an educational value in regular attendance at school. Presence in a classroom aids in instilling concepts of self-discipline and exposes a student to group interactions with teachers and fellow students. Such presence also enables a student to hear and participate in class instructions, discussion and other related learning experiences. These and similar considerations are proper educational values which will not necessarily be fully reflected in test results.



School authorities may determine that attendance, class participation and similar factors are proper educational values bearing on a student's academic achievement. It is, therefore, my opinion that a school district, by its agents and employees, may consider attendance in determining a student's grade in a course."

### **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

Students will be expected to attend classes regularly and be on time in order to benefit completely from the instructional program. From this they will have the opportunity to develop the habit of punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. All attendance policies will be applied with equity and consistency, keeping in mind that students are individuals, with individual needs.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PROGRAM**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a program that our school uses to improve school safety and promote positive behavior at the middle school.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **BE ON TIME FOR SCHOOL AND CLASSES**

If you are late, you miss things you need to know. The teacher may have to stop what the class is doing to help you get started. This keeps the teacher from helping all of the students.

### **BE PREPARED FOR CLASS**

Homework is meant to be completed. When you return to class, you should bring with you completed assignments and the textbooks that prepare you for the next lesson. Notebooks, pencils, and paper should be provided by your parents or guardians so that you are prepared to do class work. It is your responsibility to come prepared.

### **DO NOT KEEP OTHERS FROM LEARNING**

Parents or guardians send their children to school to learn. If you keep others from learning by bothering them, you have taken something from them which is important.

### **OBEY SCHOOL RULES**

You must learn the rules at school and obey them. All school rules are made to help everyone grow, learn, and remain safe.

### **RESPECT OTHERS**

In order to be respected you must show respect for your teacher, classmates, and others. Good manners and being polite and courteous are ways of showing respect. By doing this you will help make school a better place.

### **TAKE CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

You are expected to take care of the things the school lets you use, such as textbooks, desks, chairs, lockers, restrooms, etc. If you damage, destroy or lose school property, you will be expected to pay for the damage.





## **HOMEWORK PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

It is important for our children to develop good study habits and a positive attitude toward school. Parents can help by setting aside a specific time block each night for a review of school lessons or homework. Ask about schoolwork. Set up a regular place for doing homework. Praise your child's effort and results, emphasizing how important education is. You will be rewarded by having a happy and successful child.

The following guidelines have been established to assist parents with an understanding of the practices and procedures that are followed at various grade levels. By following these specific guidelines, good study habits are developed.

### **VACATION HOMEWORK POLICY**

Tawas Area Schools do not encourage family vacations during the school year while classes are in session. However, the schools understand that sometimes it is unavoidable.

1. Teachers **WILL NOT** be expected to provide advance lesson plans for the student.
2. Due to the high cost of textbooks, it is in the best interest of our district for the students to refrain from taking school books on vacation.
3. Upon returning from vacation, students will be given time to complete make-up work.

### **GRADES 5, 6, 7 & 8**

Assignments are made daily. Class time is given to work on them. Any assignments not completed in school become homework. Projects and reports will be assigned with ample time to complete them.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The School staff strives to maintain an orderly environment for all students. Each year the classroom teacher will review the basic rules with the students. Consequences for not following the rules will also be reviewed. The following is an outline of the rules and consequences of misbehavior.

NOTE - The rules of conduct have been reviewed in each classroom during the first week of school and this constitutes the first warning. Rules are also posted throughout the school. Disciplinary action may be taken without further warning.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR**

Each classroom may have posted rules which, in part, will be developed by the teacher and students. However, the following general guidelines for behavior will be for all rooms:

1. Bring all needed materials into the classroom after you arrive at school (this includes homework, assignments, pencils, books, paper, lunch money, or any other necessary supplies).
2. Upon arriving in class, take your seat and quietly converse with classmates or do other quiet activities until school begins.
3. Always walk in the room.
4. Be nice to one another.
  - a. Show respect
  - b. Observe rules
  - c. Listen to others
  - d. Act responsibly
  - e. Do not do anything that may physically hurt another person



- f. No public display of affection, including but not limited to hugging, kissing, or hand holding.
5. Raise your hand and speak when called upon.
6. Follow directions.

### **GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

Listed below are some very important rules everyone needs to know. It is important to know what happens if these rules are broken. Your teacher and principal will discuss with you the building rules and other areas of concern at the beginning of the school year. **YOU ARE REMINDED THAT THESE ARE NOT ALL THE RULES THAT WILL BE ENFORCED.** Disciplinary measures will be taken if you break school rules.

#### **CLASS COURTESY**

You are expected to behave in a manner that will not disturb others in the classroom.

#### **DO NOT BRING NON-EDUCATION ITEMS TO SCHOOL WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR**

Any type of glass container, radio, tape recorder, electronic game or toy, personal communication devices, animal toy, laser pens, pointers, unsafe items, valuable items, or large amounts of money are not allowed on school property unless specific permission has been granted. The school is not responsible for damage and/or theft of personal property. In addition, students are not permitted to buy, sell or trade any items at school.

#### **GENERAL LUNCHROOM RULES**

1. Practice good table manners.
2. Stand quietly while in the lunch line.
3. Keep hands to yourself.
4. Be courteous to lunchroom workers and your classmates.
5. Talk quietly and remain in seats until dismissed.
6. Make sure your area is clean before you leave.
7. Throwing food or other items is prohibited.
8. Trash is to be taken care of in an appropriate manner.
9. Please keep in mind that a student's account is not a "charge" account. Students will be allowed to charge up to five lunches only, and then the student account must be paid in full. If the student account has a negative balance and is over the said limit, the student will call home and will receive a substitute lunch that will be determined by the food service staff.
10. If a student's family is having financial difficulty, please contact the food service department to make other arrangements.
11. In order to get lunch and/or breakfast, each student must present his/her own ID card. Students with ID cards will be first in line.

#### **GENERAL PLAYGROUND/RECESS RULES**

1. Listen to and obey all playground supervisors.
2. Walk in and out of the building quietly.
3. All students are to go outside for the entire recess unless given special permission.



4. Students are to be dressed properly for weather conditions when going outdoors. Forgotten articles of clothing will not be accepted as an excuse for returning inside the building.
5. Stay in designated areas within view of the playground supervisor.
6. When the recess bell rings, line up immediately.
7. No one may leave the school grounds at any time without permission.
8. Students may not disrupt others from playing games.
9. Profane or disrespectful language, gestures, and name calling are prohibited.
10. There will be no throwing of snowballs, stones, sand, wood chips, or sliding on ice.
11. No fighting, real or play, or rough play will be tolerated.
12. No hardball or tackle games are allowed.
13. Soccer, kickball, and touch football may be played only in designated areas.
14. Playground equipment is to be used in a safe and proper manner.
15. No food may be taken outside.
16. It is the responsibility of all students to keep the playground neat and clean.

Indoor recess may be held in cases of inclement weather. Chill-factor, wind, and condition of the playground are always considered before students go outdoors for recess.

### **HORSEPLAY AND ROUGH HOUSING**

Horseplay and rough housing is not allowed at any time.

### **DRESS & GROOMING**

The District believes decorum in student dress and appearance is the responsibility of the parent and student. It is assumed, therefore, the way a student appears in school has the sanction and approval of the parent. The following minimum standards are established: Some types of clothing are not acceptable for school and are not to be worn at any time. Some examples are, but not limited to: yoga pants, tights/leggings as pants, pajamas, slippers, tank tops, open midriff shirts or tops, hats, clothing promoting alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs, clothing with words, letters, pictures or symbols which are obscene or lewd, or reasonably likely to be perceived in a sexual context or which is reasonably likely to provoke fighting, or other violent reactions, and/or which is reasonably likely to cause a distraction to other students or otherwise interfere with the establishment of an environment conducive to the educational process. Hats, hoods, bandanas, "dew rags", headscarves, masks, excess face paint/make-up, or anything that could obscure a student's identity, are not to be worn in the building during school hours. These items are to be taken off as soon as the student enters the building. Spirit Days or any special dress-up days DO NOT allow violation to the dress code without specific approval from the administration.

- Personal dress and grooming practices shall not create a disruption of the learning process.
- Jackets and/or coats are not to be worn in the classrooms during school hours.
- Students wearing these types of clothes will be told to change clothes and may be sent home to change.
- No IPODS, MP3 players, personal gaming devices, personal stereos, or the like, or headphones are to be used at any time during regular school hours unless designated by administration.
- All students must wear shoes in the building.
- The following items including, but not limited to, shorts, skirts, dresses, skorts, may be worn provided they are not shorter than Mid-thigh length.
- Students shall not wear clothing or hair styles that can be hazardous to school property, themselves, or other students in school activities such as lab work, physical education, art, etc.



- Sleeveless tops must be tight to the underarm so as not to expose the chest area or undergarments.
- Tops must have a minimum of 2 inches of fabric on the shoulder strap and cannot be cut low enough to expose the chest or cleavage, or cut short to expose the midsection.
- Undergarments must be worn at all times and be covered up. No sagging.
- Yoga Pants, tights and leggings may not be worn as pants; they may be worn under a skirt, dress, or shorts.
- Jeans with holes: These are not permitted if there is exposed skin more than Mid-thigh length.. (If jeans have holes higher than mid-thigh length, solid fabric MUST cover the skin; paper or duct tape can not be used as a replacement.)
- Not Acceptable: These include but are not limited to; tank or tube tops, open midriff, any clothing promoting alcohol, drugs, sexual innuendos, or other inappropriate subjects. Chains or other apparel that may be harmful to others are not permitted.
- Safety/good taste rule will prevail in the final decision by the administration.

#### **CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THE DRESS CODE:**

- Students will be asked to change their clothes or make accommodations to eliminate the violation.
- Failure to comply will result in referral for insubordination.
- Discipline for insubordination can range from detention to multiple-day suspension.

### **TRANSPORTATION SERVICE**

**All students will be picked up and dropped off at the same location.** The only exception to this procedure is in a situation where there is a permanent babysitter; permanent meaning, for a minimum of one (1) semester. This would also include the student who goes to the sitter consistently, i.e., everyday or the same day each week goes to the sitter, and on other days is dropped off at home.

This does eliminate all non-school related occasional babysitters, birthday parties, going to a friend's house, bowling alley, etc. We do realize that emergencies happen. In an emergency, the parents or guardian need to call the Transportation Department or school secretary **before 1:30 p.m.** to notify us of the emergency and where the child will be dropped off for that day.

Students will still be able to use the buses to go to other school buildings for school-related functions such as Science Olympics, band practice, athletic practices, class meetings, etc. Students will also be able to use bus transportation for girl scouts, boy scouts and church-related meetings if on a regular basis and seating is available. Arrangements must be made through the Transportation Department.

To summarize, children will be dropped off where they are picked up unless there is a permanent babysitter. It is expected that parents will be there for the younger children. If they cannot be there, arrangements should be made for someone to be at home or at the bus stop for them. The only exception to this would be during the kindergarten drop-off. If that bus is early, then the driver will wait or try contacting the parents to notify them of the change.

#### **POLICY FOR PUPILS RIDING BUSES**

All students who live more than 1 1/2 miles from the school they attend shall be transported to and from the Tawas Area Schools. Students in grades K-4 who live less than 1 1/2 miles from the school they



attend may be transported if they live on hazardous roads as determined by the superintendent of schools and the board of education. Consideration of hazardous areas may be secured by written requests to the board of education and the superintendent.

Transportation provided by the state and local school district is a privilege for those who wish to ride according to the prescribed rules. Failing to comply with these rules will result in withdrawal of the privilege.

### **BASIC BUS RULES**

The driver is in full charge of the bus and has the right to demand order and good discipline. Pupils are to follow the driver's directions. The school district has the right to assign seats.

### **Responsibility of Students**

1. Be Courteous to others and safety-conscious at all times...line up in an orderly manner and wait no closer to the street than the city sidewalk or the country mailboxes. Wait until the bus stops before attempting to get on/off.
2. Walk to the bus stop facing traffic arriving 5 minutes before the bus arrives.
3. Always cross at least (10) feet in front of the bus.
4. Do not fight or bully other students at the bus stop or on the bus.
5. Sit on the seat. Keep your hands, body and head inside of your seat and to yourself.
6. Do not engage in shouting, loud talking, whistling, etc.
7. No use of profane or vulgar language or obscene signs or gestures.
8. Damage to the bus or others' personal property must be paid for by the person causing the damage.
9. Smoking/possession of tobacco or any forms of illegal activities are prohibited.
10. Cell phone use on buses is a privilege, not a right, and should anyone use a cell phone to violate any rules, the driver has the right to have the student put it away or confiscate it until the student exits **to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all.**
11. Do not throw anything on, at, or off the bus.

### **Responsibility of Parents/Guardians**

1. To ensure that their children arrive at their designated bus stop on time. (At least 5 minutes before scheduled time).
2. To provide necessary protection for their children when going to and from the bus stop and while they are at the bus stop.
3. To read and discuss bus policy with their children and ensure their understanding of basic bus rules.
4. To accept responsibility in cooperation with the school for ensuring proper conduct of their children.
5. To cooperate with bus drivers for students' transportation in maintaining and carrying out discipline procedures.

### **Responsibility of Bus Driver**

1. To maintain discipline and order on the bus at all times
2. To warn and/or separate any pupil from the bus who does not obey the transportation rules.
3. To take all necessary precautions for the safety and welfare of the passengers while they are on the bus.
4. To show respect to the students, and they in turn show respect to the driver.



## TRANSPORTATION RULES & RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the policy of the Tawas Area School District to provide safe, courteous and regular transportation services to eligible students. The first and foremost consideration is the safety and care of all students. To ensure their safety, we must foster an environment on the bus that would allow the driver freedom to concentrate on driving. The bus is an extension of the school/classroom. In addition to a bus ticket for the violation, consequences according to the handbook can also be applied. It is our goal to provide a safe and pleasant bus ride to and from school. Therefore, the following disciplinary procedures have been developed.

### PROCEDURES FOR INFRACTION OF THE BUS RULES

*Anyone found in violation will be issued a bus ticket in accordance with the bus rules. (Sample bus ticket attached)*

TAWAS AREA SCHOOLS  
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
984-2160

Date Occurred \_\_\_\_\_ at AM / PM  
Bus Driver \_\_\_\_\_ Bus # \_\_\_\_\_

## BUS VIOLATION

Student \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Has been cited for an infraction of the rules marked below:**

\_\_\_\_ Persistent Disobedience      \_\_\_\_ Failure to remain seated      \_\_\_\_ Pushing, tripping      \_\_\_\_ BULLYING  
\_\_\_\_ Using profanity or inappropriate language      \_\_\_\_ Possession/use of tobacco      \_\_\_\_ Rude or distracting conduct  
\_\_\_\_ Putting hands on others or their property      \_\_\_\_ Destruction on School Bus      \_\_\_\_ Failure to cross in **front** of bus  
\_\_\_\_ Throwing anything in bus **or** out of the bus      \_\_\_\_ Fighting on the bus      \_\_\_\_ Fire of any source  
\_\_\_\_ Opening of emergency doors or windows      \_\_\_\_ Spitting or Littering

**Driver Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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*\*Parents: please note the importance of communication with your child's bus driver*

**DISCIPLINE ACTION TAKEN:** \_\_\_\_\_ **WARNING** \_\_\_\_\_ **PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCE**

\_\_\_\_\_ **1-3 DAY BUS SUSPENSION** \_\_\_\_\_ **5-7 DAY BUS SUSPENSION** \_\_\_\_\_ **10 DAY BUS SUSPENSION**  
*(including Parent conference with Admin.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ # DAYS Suspension (date) \_\_\_\_\_ Reinstated (date) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ The parent/guardian must sign below before the student will be allowed to resume or continue riding the bus. The signature also indicates the parent is aware of the warning and understands that a further violation could result in loss of bus service for the student named.

\_\_\_\_ You have previously been warned about your conduct while riding the bus. Since you have not responded favorably, you are **temporarily separated** from being a regular passenger. In addition parent must sign the form below indicating they are aware of the incident and suspension.



\_\_\_\_ Since this is a repeated/serious offense, before you may once again become a regular passenger, you and your parent(s) must make an appointment to meet with the principal of the school you attend.

**Principal  
Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parents/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: If a student loses bus services because of a discipline problem, it is the parents' responsibility to transport a student to and from school*

*Failure to do so during withdrawal of the service could be considered an unexcused absence. The intention is not to punish or to deny anyone transportation service. The intention is to provide the safest and most pleasant student transportation service possible.*

### **WALKER AND BUS LINE BEHAVIOR**

Our primary goal before and after school is to ensure the safety of each student. Therefore, it is imperative that students behave in an appropriate manner when arriving and leaving school.

1. The building will be open at 7:30 a.m.
2. Students who walk should leave the school premises immediately upon dismissal from school. Anyone remaining without reason will be placed in a specific area until all buses have left.
3. Students must stay in their own bus line.
4. Students should behave in an orderly manner. Fighting, using inappropriate language or gestures, or refusing to follow the direction of adult supervision will not be tolerated.
5. Any student being picked up after school will remain in the area designated for such use.

### **DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

The Board of Education acknowledges that conduct is closely related to learning and that an effective instructional program requires an orderly school environment, which is, in part, reflected in the behavior of students.

The Board believes that the best discipline is self-imposed and that students should learn to assume responsibility for their own behavior and the consequences of their actions.

The Board shall require each student of this District to adhere to the Code of Conduct declared by the administration and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of those rules. Such rules shall require that students:

1. conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior;
2. respect the person and property of others;
3. preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged;
4. respect the rights of others;
5. obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

The Superintendent shall declare administrative guidelines for student conduct which carry out the purposes of this policy and;

1. are not arbitrary but bear a reasonable relationship to the need to maintain a school environment
2. conducive to learning;
3. do not discriminate among students;
4. do not demean students;





5. do not violate any individual right constitutionally guaranteed to students.

Under certain conditions, it may be in the best interests of a student or the other students of the school for a student to be denied the privilege of attending school through either suspension or a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion. Suspension can range from the remainder of a school day to 10 consecutive school days. This suspension may be repeated as needed. Expulsion can only occur as a result of action taken by the Board of Education. Some of the reasons for suspension or a recommendation for expulsion are listed below.

If a student's behavior interferes with the educational opportunities or safety of yourself or others, the following disciplinary actions may take place, NOT NECESSARILY IN THIS ORDER:

1. A teacher or other staff member will talk to the student about the problem.
2. A parent or Guardian will be notified by telephone, note, or letter.
3. Lunch detention will be assigned.
4. After school detention will be assigned.
5. The student will be removed from class and placed in a supervised setting such as the school office until the student demonstrates a willingness to rejoin the class in a constructive manner.
6. ISS (In-School Suspension)
7. Suspension from School.
8. Recommendation for expulsion to the Tawas Area Board of Education.

Explanation of terminology for the following discipline code:

1. Hours (Detention hours)
2. ISS (In School Suspension)
3. OSS (Out of School Suspension)

### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

All parts of this discipline policy shall be in effect while the student is in school, on school property, or at any school-sponsored function, whether in Tawas or at another place.

#### **Level 0**

Tawas Area Schools adopts a "Zero Tolerance" policy in regards to the following unacceptable behavior. "Zero Tolerance" means that established acts of unacceptable behavior as defined below will in every instance result in the imposition of an appropriate punishment up to the maximum punishment sanction indicated. Each instance in which a student is accused or charged with unacceptable behavior shall be referred to a school administrator who shall investigate such accusations or claims by interviewing the student, any witnesses, evidence, and other procedures deemed appropriate by the administrator. Depending on the severity and nature of the claims or case, the student's parents and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies may be notified; moreover, if the particular case poses, in the administrator's sole discretion, an unreasonable risk of disruption, property damage, or physical harm to other students or school personnel, the administrator may temporarily exclude the student from





school, pending any suspension or expulsion appeal procedures provided in the sections below.

Further, in determining the appropriate punishment to impose or recommend to the School Board upon determination that a student has committed unacceptable behavior, the principal may consider factors unique to the student and the particular case including but not limited to the severity of the offense, the potential impact of the case (and the sanction imposed) on other students (including deterrence of future misconduct), the prior disciplinary record (if any) of the student-violator, whether the student influenced or encouraged misconduct by his/her actions provocation or other extenuating circumstances, and such other factors as may be relevant in any particular case.

For purposes of all rules in this handbook, the term "possession" shall mean any instance in which it is determined by the administration or an appeal by the Board of Education that:

- a. A student has actual or constructive possession and/or control of an item, and
- b. Either knows of, has reason to know of, or should have known or suspected such possession or control.

There shall be a rebuttable presumption of "knowledge" if the item is located:

1. On the student's person, or
2. Within the student's personal effects (including, but not limited to: clothing, book bags, knapsacks, instrument cases), or
3. Within the student's locker, or
4. Within the student's desk, or
5. Within a vehicle driven by the student.

This means any student whose situation meets one of these definitions will be presumed to have "knowledge" of possession or control unless he or she can prove otherwise. "Rebuttable" means the student shall, in fact, be given the chance to prove otherwise. To do so, it shall be the student's burden and responsibility to present evidence to the administration and/or Board of Education. The student must show that the clear and convincing majority of the evidence he or she presents actually rebuts the presumption of knowledge and possession. In other words, the student must prove by a clear and convincing majority of the evidence that he or she did not have knowledge of possession and control.

### **Level 0**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>
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1. Arson	Expulsion		
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Purposefully igniting a fire on school property or igniting a fire on school property as the direct result of engaging in another prohibited act.

2. Assault (School Personnel)	Expulsion		
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Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to school personnel through force or violence; or threatening school personnel with physical harm through force or violence, including any statement or act (oral or written) that can reasonably be expected to induce in any member of the school faculty or staff an apprehension of danger of bodily



injury or harm.

3. Threats	Expulsion
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Communicating in any way the intention to do damage or harm by bomb, gun, or similar destructive device regardless of actual intent to do bodily harm. Any threatening activity of this nature may result in legal consequences.

4. Caustic and/or noxious materials	Expulsion
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Including, but not limited to: mace, pepper spray.

5. Criminal Sexual Conduct	Expulsion
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In compliance with State law, the Board shall expel any student who commits criminal sexual conduct in a district building, on district property, including school buses and other school transportation, or at any school event.

6. Explosives and Incendiary Devices	Expulsion
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Use, possession, sale or distribution of any explosive or incendiary device not expressly permitted.

7. Weapons	Expulsion
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Possession, use, threatened use, sale, or distribution of any weapon or other unauthorized instrument that may be used to do bodily harm regardless of actual intent to do bodily harm.

8. Alcohol/Marijuana	Expulsion (Turn over to Law Enforcement)
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Sale, distribution, use, or being under the influence of alcohol; or marijuana or any substance that the student represents to be either:

- A. alcohol or marijuana
- B. of a nature, appearance, or effect which will allow the recipient to possess, display, sell, distribute, or use the substance as alcohol or marijuana or as if it were alcohol or marijuana.
- C. in the form of THC in a vaporizer or other devices used for sale, distribution, use, or consumption.
- D. Sales and Distribution are serious enough behaviors to warrant a disciplinary hearing in front of the School Board for both buyers and sellers on school grounds.

**Offenses in Levels 1-3 can have a range of consequences up to the consequence listed as determined by the administrator.**

Every effort will be made by the staff to solve disciplinary problems within the school setting and without excluding a student from school. If this cannot be done, exclusion may be



necessary. This exclusion may fall in the following categories:

1. Temporary separation-exclusion of a student from school for one class period, full day, or until a parental conference/telephone call.
2. Suspension - the exclusion of a student from school for a specific period of time terminating at the end of the specific period or upon the fulfillment of a specific set of conditions. Days of suspension include days of school in session. School days canceled due to weather conditions or any other reason DO NOT count as days of suspension.
3. Expulsion - the permanent exclusion of a student from school.

**Level 1**

Offense	First	Second	Third
<p>9. Alcohol/Marijuana/Vaporizer 5 OSS</p> <p>Possession of alcohol; or marijuana or any substance that the student represents to be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. alcohol or marijuana</li> <li>B. of a nature, appearance, or effect which will allow the recipient to possess or display the substance as alcohol or marijuana or as if it were alcohol or marijuana.</li> <li>C. in the form of THC in a vaporizer or other devices in possession or on display.</li> </ul>	5 OSS	10 OSS	Expulsion
<p>10. Assault (Student Population) OSS/Expulsion</p> <p>Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to other students through force or violence; or threatening other students with physical harm through force or violence, including the use of any statement or act (oral or written) that can reasonably be expected to induce in another person an apprehension of danger of bodily injury or harm.</p>			
<p>11. Drugs OSS/Expulsion (Turn over to Law Enforcement)</p> <p>Purchase, sale, distribution, possession, use or being under the influence of any controlled substance, any substance other than alcohol or marijuana, that produces abnormal behavior not validly prescribed to the intended user, and (or) any device or paraphernalia commonly known to be associated with the use of any controlled substance.</p>			
<p>12. Extortion OSS/Expulsion</p> <p>Obtaining money or value by means of violence or threats.</p>			
<p>13. False Alarm OSS/Expulsion</p> <p>Communicating in any way a false or misleading report of emergency circumstances including, without limitation, fire or unwarranted emergency calls made to 911.</p>			
<p>14. Gang Activity OSS/Expulsion</p> <p>Gang membership or association with gang members, even if only self-proclaimed; and conduct or any attribute that denotes or implies gang membership or the advocating of drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior.</p>			



15. Smoking/Tobacco/Look-Alike OSS/Expulsion (Turn over to Law Enforcement)	5 OSS	7 OSS (Turn over to Law Enforcement)
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Purchase, possession, use, sale or distribution of any substance that the student represents to be either:

- A. A controlled substance or other substance prohibited by school policy
- B. Of a nature, appearance, or effect which will allow the recipient to possess, display, sell, distribute, or use the substance as a controlled substance or as if it were a controlled substance.
- C. The use or possession of tobacco/nicotine products on school grounds, on buses, or at school-sponsored functions.
- D. Including but not limited to Chewing Tobacco, Electronic Cigarettes, Vaporizers, Vape/E Juice, any emerging nicotine delivery products (Zyn) and any look-alikes.

16. Sexually Inappropriate Behavior	OSS/Expulsion
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### Level 2

Offense	First	Second	Third
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17. Disobedience (persistent)	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS/Expulsion
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Multiple violations of the Student Handbook or classroom rules.

18. Fighting	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS/Expulsion
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Confrontational conduct involving bodily contact by mutual engagement

19. Threatening	OSS/Expulsion
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Verbally or physically threatening other students or school personnel regardless of whether the threat induces an apprehension of danger of bodily injury or harm.

20. Unlawful Interference	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS/Expulsion
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Hampering, restricting or impeding the school program or school personnel.

21. Vandalism	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS/Expulsion
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Intentional destruction of property belonging to others, or the destruction of another's property that directly results from engaging in another prohibited act.

### Level 3

Offense	First	Second	Third
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22. Academic Dishonesty and "redo" @ 60%	Zero OR ISS	Zero AND ISS	Zero AND OSS
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Violations of dishonesty on school work, such as cheating, plagiarism, and the like. Credit on a "redo" assignment is determined with a maximum grade of 60%.



23. Accessory and/or Threatening To a Fight	1 ISS	3 ISS	OSS/Expulsion
Promoting/provoking a fight and verbal actions or gestures short of physical action.			
24. Electronic Devices	End of day	Parent	ISS/Parent
Violations of use of cell phones, iPods, earbuds, MP3 players, and the like.			
25. Classroom Misbehavior	1 hours	3 hours	ISS/OSS
Violations of classroom rules as established by the teacher.			
26. Disobedience	1 hours	3 hours	ISS/OSS
Not obeying a reasonable request by a staff member or school personnel.			
27. Disrespect towards school personnel	1 hours	3 hours	ISS/OSS
28. Disruptive behavior with substitute teacher	1 hours	3 hours	ISS
29. Excessive Roughness and/or Horseplay	1 hours	3 Hours	ISS/OSS
Misbehaving on school property, including, but not limited to: running, pushing, providing excessive noise, acting in a generally unruly manner.			
30. Failure to Attend Detention	3 hours	1 ISS	ISS/OSS
Students must stay for detention every day that it is held until their time is made up. Work or extracurricular practices shall not be an excuse for missing detention.			
31. Failure to Attend ISS	3 ISS	1 OSS	3 OSS/Expulsion
32. Forgery	1 OSS	3 OSS	OSS/Expulsion
Fraudulently using, in written or verbal form, the name of another person or falsifying and/or altering time, dates, grades, addresses, or other data, including computerized information (hacking), used by the school.			
33. Gambling	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
Wagering or playing a game for money, services, or other items of value.			
34. Gross Misbehavior	1 OSS	3 OSS	5 OSS/Expulsion
Anything deemed inappropriate by the school administration. Including but not limited to the deliberate or willful conduct detrimental to the normal functioning of a program or			



activity under school sponsorship; also, including but not limited to the deliberate or willful conduct (as determined by administration) detrimental to students, staff, the school or the district through social media.

35. Hall Pass Violation	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Students out of classrooms without a pass from a staff member.

36. Harassment/Intimidation/ Bullying	1 OSS	3 OSS	5 OSS
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It is a violation of the law and school rules for any student to harass or intimidate another student or staff member. There are to be no unwanted sexual actions, comments, derogatory statements, or actions concerning his/her gender, orientation, religion, race, ethnic group, or disability.

"Bullying" is defined as any written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying (i.e. any electronic communication, including, but not limited to electronically transmitted acts, such as internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

37. Hazing	1 OSS	3 OSS	OSS/Expulsion
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An intentional knowing or reckless act by a person acting alone or acting with others that is directed against an individual and that the person knew or should have known endangers the physical health or safety of the individual, and that is done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in or maintaining membership in any organization.

38. Insubordination	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Flagrant refusal or gross disrespect towards school personnel or adults acting in a supervisory capacity.

39. Laser Lights	1 hours	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Any light, which can be directed toward an individual, which may have damaging physical or mental effects.

40. Leaving School Without Permission	1 ISS	2 ISS	OSS/Expulsion
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Leaving school grounds without permission of the administration. Students MUST obtain permission from the office if they are leaving school grounds for any reason. Students MUST sign out in the main office if and when they are given permission to leave.

41. Lighter/matches/the like	1 ISS	2 ISS	OSS/Expulsion
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Students having lighter, matches, vaporizer batteries or the like in their possession.

42. Littering	1 hours	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Improper disposal (dropping or throwing on floor, not throwing away lunch materials in the lunchroom) of papers, wrappers, lunch items and/or trash, etc. Trash receptacles are located throughout the building and the lunchroom.

43. Misuse of Technology/ AUP Violations	1 Hours	3 hours	Loss of Privilege/ ISS
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Any act committed through or by means of a computer and/or chromebooks, Kindles, or any other school-issued technology devices shall be treated as if it had been committed directly and shall be punished in accordance with the applicable section of the discipline policy. Some examples include:

- The threatening of another student by email or other computer-related means may be punishable as "assault" in the same manner as if the threat had been made directly.
- The destruction of computer hardware or software or the intentional destruction or corruption of computer data may be punishable as "vandalism."
- Using a computer-related method of communicating the intention to do damage or harm by bomb or similar destructive device may be punishable as a "bomb threat."
- Using a computer-related method to display gang symbols or to engage in gang-related discourse may be punishable as "gang activity."

The Tawas Area Acceptable Use Policy as set forth in this handbook shall regulate use of school computer and network equipment. Subject to rules concerning other punishments may apply, any student who receives his or her third notice of violation **may** lose Internet access and classroom semester credit. Any student who receives his or her fourth notice of violation **may** lose computer privileges for the duration of his or her high school tenure.

44. Obscenity and Indecency	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Offending or vulgar acts in verbal or in written form, pictures, gestures, or caricatures, against the commonly recognized standards of good taste as interpreted by school authorities.

45. Off-limits Areas	3 hours	1 ISS	OSS
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Including but not limited to high school parking lot, woods, bus garage, during school hours. High school students in the middle school area and middle school students in the high school area shall also be considered off-limits.

46. Profanity	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Using inappropriate language such as swearing in verbal or written form.



47. Public Display of Affection	1 hours	3 hours	ISS
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Kissing, hugging, and other close physical contact.

48. Restroom Abuse or Misuse	1 hour	3 hours	ISS/OSS
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Overcrowding individual stalls. Only one person per stall is allowed.

49. Smoking/Tobacco/Look-Alike	3 OSS	5 OSS	OSS/Expulsion
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The use or possession of tobacco/nicotine products on school grounds, on buses, or at school sponsored functions. Including but not limited to Chewing Tobacco, Electronic Cigarettes, Vaporizers, Vape/E Juice, and any look-alikes.

50. Stealing/Burglary	1 OSS	3 OSS	OSS/Expulsion
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Entering a restricted area and/or obtaining money, items of value, or anything that does not belong to you without the consent of both parties involved.

51. Truancy/Skipping	ISS	1 OSS	OSS/Expulsion
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Students are to be in all assigned classes and activities during the school day unless excused by the administration or designee. In addition to consequences, students who are chronically absent will be placed on Extra-Curricular Exclusion. Repeated truancy will result in a referral to the Iosco County Attendance Officer.

### ***SUSPENSION AND APPEAL PROCEDURES***

On the basis of the present status of school law, the Tawas Area Schools Administration are designated the authority to temporarily separate or suspend a student from school. Suspensions for more than ten (10) days are to be discouraged. In such actions the following precept shall be adhered to:

1. A student shall be fully informed of the charges brought against him or her including the rationale for the action and the conditions of time and termination.
2. The parents shall be immediately notified, by phone if possible, if the student is to be temporarily separated or suspended from school. Written notification of such contact shall be made in the student's cumulative file.
3. Verbal notification shall be followed by a letter to the parents or guardian, stating the charges, reasons, and conditions of the separation or suspension.
4. The superintendent, or administrative officer designated by him or her, shall be notified immediately of any separation or suspension.
5. Students will be allowed to do homework to keep up in class. Work requested and given during the suspension is due when the student returns from suspension. If a teacher does not provide work, the student has one day for every day suspended to complete the work. Tests, quizzes, and projects will be made up when the student returns.
6. Parents shall be notified of appeal procedures, which shall include:
  - A. Parents may request a conference with the principal. Such request shall be made within the period of separation or suspension. The principal shall affirm or





modify the terms of his/her action within two (2) school days from the date of the conference.

- B. Within five (5) days from the principal's decision, the parents may appeal such decision to the Superintendent of Schools or his designee. The superintendent shall affirm or modify the decision of the principal within two (2) days from hearing the appeal.
- C. The superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of Education within five (5) school days of such decision.
- D. The Board of Education shall schedule a hearing for the next regularly scheduled board meeting and shall notify the parents that such hearing shall be conducted under the following rules and procedures.
  - 1. Written notice shall be given of the time, date, and place of the hearing.
  - 2. An attorney or other advisor of his choice may represent the student or parent.
  - 3. Witnesses may be present at the hearing.
  - 4. The hearing is not a court proceeding and court rules of evidence shall not be enforced at such hearings.
  - 5. There may be present at the hearing: the principals, the Board of Education attorney, and such resource persons as the president of the Board of Education deems necessary to the proper adjudication of the case.
  - 6. The Board of Education shall render a written opinion of its determination within two (2) school days from the date of the hearing. Such written opinion shall be forwarded to all parties concerned.

### **EXPULSION AND APPEAL PROCEDURES**

The Superintendent shall recommend the expulsion of a student from school to the Board of Education. Such action is generally taken upon recommendation of the Assistant Principal or Principal. The Assistant Principal's or Principal's recommendation shall be communicated to the Superintendent in writing, signed by the Assistant Principal or Principal, and accompanied by the student's cumulative file. Except in cases stemming from extreme overt behavior, it is expected that personal conferences would have been held at the building prior to the expulsion recommendation. The following procedure is followed:

- 1. Within five (5) days from the Principal's decision, the parents may appeal such decision to the Superintendent of Schools or his designee. The Superintendent shall affirm or modify the decision of the Principal within two (2) days from hearing the appeal.
- 2. The student shall be under suspension pending the recommendation of the Superintendent to the Board and pending the Board's decision.
- 3. The Superintendent of School's decision may be appealed to the Board of Education within five (5) school days of such decision.
- 4. The Board of Education shall schedule a hearing for the next regularly scheduled board meeting and shall notify the parents that such hearing shall be conducted under the following rules and procedures.
  - A. Written notice shall be given of the time, date, and place of the hearing.
  - B. An attorney or other advisor of his choice may represent the student or parent.



- C. Witnesses may be present at the hearing.
- D. The hearing is not a court proceeding and court rules of evidence shall not be enforced at such hearings.
- E. There may be present at the hearing the principals, the Board of Education attorney, and such resource persons as the President of the Board of Education deems necessary to the proper adjudication of the case.
- F. The Board of Education shall render a written opinion of its determination within two (2) school days from the date of the hearing. Such written opinion shall be forwarded to all parties concerned.
- G. The decision of the Board of Education cannot be appealed by parent/guardian or student as the decision of the Board is final.

### STUDENT SET CONSEQUENCES

#### \*Tardies:

Students need to be held accountable for getting to class on time. Therefore, it is essential to have consequences for students who are unable to do this. Tardies will get reset with the start of each new

#### Semester.

**3rd tardy:** teacher contacts parent

**4th tardy:** referral, lunch detention

**5th tardy:** referral, principal contacts the parent, after school detention

**6th tardy:** referral, principal contacts the parent, ISS

#### \*Cell Phones:

Student cell phones should be turned off and kept in their locker. Students are not to be using their cell phones at school during the school day. Here is cell phone policy:

**1st offense:** teacher takes the cell phone; student can get it back at the end of the school day

**2nd offense:** teacher takes the cell phone, principal calls home, parent must retrieve the cell phone.

**3rd offense:** teacher takes the cell phone and gives it to the principal, principal calls home and a parent must retrieve the cell phone, referral, student gets ISS.

#### \*Chromebook Consequences:

Students will be held accountable for appropriate school usage on their chromebooks. Chromebooks should be utilized for school work only and other usage could result in a consequence. Here are the consequences:

**1st time:** teacher conversation with student, phone call home

**2nd time:** referral, teacher calls home, lunch detention

**3rd time:** referral, principal calls home, after school detention

**4th time:** referral, principal calls home, removal of chrome book for at least 1 week

**5th time:** referral, necessary action as deemed by our user agreement policy and administration.

\*Other consequences may be given by the administration based on the severity of the inappropriate usage.



**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ENHANCED LEARNING CENTER)**  
**PHILOSOPHY**

*The program is designed to administer discipline within the school program and at the same time offer educational opportunities to students who violate the Student Handbook. In-School Suspension (ISS) will not replace out of school suspensions for serious violations of the Student Handbook.*

**PROCEDURES:**

1. In-School Suspension is assigned by principals only.
2. Students will not be marked absent and will not be given zeros.
3. The student and parent will be informed in advance of the intent to place the student in ISS.
4. The student's teachers will be contacted and asked to supply class work to be completed in ISS.
5. The student will be given supervised breaks.
6. The student will be supervised at all times other than in the restroom.
7. Students who violate ISS rules will be considered for automatic out of school suspension.

**CLASSROOM RULES:**

1. Students will report promptly with all books, notebooks, paper, pencil, and Chromebook. No other items will be allowed.
2. Students will complete all work assigned by his or her teachers. The student will be responsible to return all completed work the following day to their teachers. Additional work will be supplied by the ISS instructor as necessary.
3. The student will remain seated with feet on the floor and work quietly. The student will not put his or her head down or sleep.
4. The student must stay in the assigned seat. There is no free movement within the ISS classroom.
5. The student will not leave the room without supervision of authorized personnel.
6. There will be no talking or any form of interaction between students while in ISS.

**NONDISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964  
TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT OF 1972  
TITLE II OF THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990  
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973  
AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967

**Section I – Right to Invoke Grievance Procedures:** Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity or that the Tawas Area School District or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (4) the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and (5) Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance to:

Civil Rights Coordinator - Amanda Lizotte (989)984-2305  
Title IX Building Coordinator - Amanda Lizotte - (989)984-2305  
Title IX District Coordinator - Sarah Danek - (989)984-2201



**Section II – Civil Rights Coordinator:** The district’s civil rights coordinator is responsible for overseeing legal requirements of the laws identified in Section I and provides for proper administration of this grievance procedure. The civil rights coordinator may also be contacted through the district’s administration offices: c/o John Klinger, Superintendent, 245 West M-55, Tawas City, MI 48763.

**Section III – Notice of Policy:** Notice of the existence of this procedure will be provided on a regular basis to students, parents of students, employees, visitors and applicants for employment by placement of the procedures in student handbooks, on the district’s online website, in conspicuous locations in each building and distribution of the procedure to all staff and applicants.

**Section IV – Reporting and Investigative Requirements:** All responsible employees of the district must report all allegations of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, to the civil rights coordinator even if the allegations may also raise criminal or other disciplinary concerns. The district will conduct an impartial investigation of any allegations that fall within the purview of Title IX and/or that assert that sexual harassment has occurred, regardless of any criminal investigation related to the same or similar grievance or complaint. An impartial investigation may include interviewing all witnesses reasonably likely to have relevant information and provide the parties with the opportunity to present witnesses, other evidence and review relevant records. Criminal investigations may not eliminate the need for an independent investigation of Title IX violations.

**Section V – Remediation:** The district will make reasonable efforts and take reasonable interim measures to 1) prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of any harassment, 2) provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for students, parents, employees, visitors, and applicants for employment and 3) to the extent provided by law without impeding the investigation, protect the confidentiality of complainants, the accused and witnesses. To the extent reasonably practicable, the district will take reasonable, timely, age appropriate and effective action designed to remediate the effects of any sexual harassment confirmed by the district’s investigation on any complainant or others, to eliminate to the extent reasonably possible, any hostile environment that has been created, and to prevent the recurrence of any harassment.

**Section VI – Protection Against Retaliation:** This policy and the laws in Section I prohibit retaliation against any individual who files a complaint or participates in an investigation pursuant to this procedure.

**Section VII – Grievance Procedure:** Any person who believes a valid basis for a grievance exists may discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the civil rights coordinator who shall, in turn, investigate the complaint and reply with an answer to the complainant within five (5) business days. This complaint procedure applies to complaints by employees, other students, and third parties.

Any complainant may initiate formal procedures at any time before, during, or after the informal process has been initiated according to the following steps:

### Step 1

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the local civil rights coordinator. The coordinator shall investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days. If the investigation takes longer than five (5) business days,



the coordinator shall notify the complainant in writing within five (5) days, and shall furnish the complainant with the reason for the delay and an estimation of when the investigation will be completed.

### **Step 2**

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the local civil rights coordinator, s/he may submit a signed statement of appeal to the superintendent of schools within five (5) business days of receipt of the coordinator's response. The superintendent shall meet, when appropriate, with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) days. The district recognizes that, in certain circumstances, it may be inappropriate to require an alleged victim to confront the alleged discriminator/harasser. In these circumstances, the superintendent will meet with the parties separately.

### **Step 3**

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, s/he may appeal through a signed, written statement to the board of education within five (5) business days of receiving the superintendent's response in Step 2. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the board of education shall meet, when appropriate, with the concerned parties, and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. The district recognizes that, in certain circumstances, it may be inappropriate to require an alleged victim to confront the alleged discriminator/harasser. In these circumstances, the board will meet with the parties separately. A copy of the board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of this meeting.

**Section VIII – US Department of Education Contacts:** A complaint may pursue the formal procedures (Steps 1-3) at any time before, during or after any informal process has been initiated.

Anyone at any time may contact the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights for information and/or assistance at 216-522-4970.

The local coordinator, on request, will provide the complainant with a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.

A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the civil rights coordinator's office.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TAWAS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPUTER NETWORK**

The Tawas Area Schools recognize that computers are used to support learning and to enhance instruction. Computer interaction networks allow people to interact with many other computers and networks. It is a general policy that all computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. This applies both at home and at school.

**All students using the Tawas Area Schools' local area network (LAN), Internet, E-mail and stand-alone computers and/or Chromebooks and/or Kindles including all school-issued technology devices, herein referred to as computer/s, is governed by the following rules:**



1. I recognize that all computer users have the same right to use the equipment; therefore, I will not use the computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies such as paper or diskettes. I will not alter a computer's system settings or files in any way. I will not delete any files on a computer that were not created by me. I will not attempt to damage any equipment that is part of the Tawas Area Schools' computer network physically or electronically. When using a computer, I will talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users. I will keep my computer work area clean and will not eat or drink while using a computer.
2. I recognize that copyright laws protect software; therefore, I will not make unauthorized copies of software and I will not give, lend, or sell software copies to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications, games, CD-ROM disks, or other software media to the school to be used on school equipment without the prior written permission of the Technology Department.
3. I recognize that the work of all users is valuable. Therefore, I will protect the privacy of others by not trying to learn another user's passwords or attempt to access another user's account by any means. I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without the prior permission from that user. I will not use computer systems to disturb other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications.
4. I will honor the school district's procedures for the storage of information. I understand that I am expected to save files that I want to keep within the confines of my assigned server space. I realize that, after prior notice has been given, files may be deleted from the system to protect the integrity of the network or because of space limitations on the server's hard drive. I will also undertake the appropriate procedures to stop the spread of computer viruses.
5. The use of the Internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of the school. I will not attempt to download any music, games executable files, instant messengers, zip (compressed) files, or any other files not required by an assignment. I will not attempt to access email unless it is supplied to me by Tawas Area Schools.
6. As a user of a network, I will not use bulletin boards or chat software/rooms for personal use. In addition, I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number or those of others.
7. I will not transmit any material in violation of any US regulations. I understand that this includes, but is not limited to copyrighted, threatening and/or obscene material. I understand the use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted.
8. I understand that the computer network utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor activity of students to restrict access to pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. I understand that this software may not protect me from seeing some material that I, my parents, or other users of the network may find inappropriate. I understand that I am responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive to me, my parents, or those around me. Further, I will not attempt to disable, remove or change the filtering software in any way and agree to report to the teacher if this software appears to be non-functional.





9. I understand that the use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of my privileges. I understand that vandalism will result in the cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. I understand that the school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damages caused by me directly or indirectly. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The Technology Department may close my account at any time. The school may request the Technology Department to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. I understand that breaking these rules will be dealt with seriously and that I will be subject to loss of computer privileges.
10. Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked, and disciplinary action taken against them in accordance with the Student Handbook. Users of the Board's Education Technology are personally liable, both civilly and criminally, for users of the Education Technology not authorized by this Board policy and its accompanying guidelines.
11. Even though this acceptable use policy includes many rules and regulations, it is by no means to be considered all-inclusive, but rather a policy in progress
12. Students in Kindergarten – 8th Grade will be assigned a school email account that they are required to utilize for all school-related electronic communications with limited access to staff members and students inside the district with whom they are communicating for school-related projects and assignments. Students grades 9 - 12th, as directed and authorized by their teachers, shall use their school-assigned email account when signing-up/registering for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION CODE**

It is the express intent of the Tawas Area Board of Education that participation in any Extra-Curricular activity sponsored by the District be considered a privilege and as such that students desiring to represent the District be held to a strict code of eligibility as regards in both academics and behavior. Students failing to meet these requirements will be deemed to be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity.

1. **Prior Semester Eligibility:** In order to be eligible for extra-curricular activities, students must receive credit in all of their classes. **Current Semester Eligibility:** Students' progress will be monitored every 3 weeks. Students will maintain eligibility if they are not failing any courses.
2. Students must be in attendance the entire school day in order to participate in practices, meetings, competitions, or performances scheduled for that day, unless the Principal, Assistant Principal or Athletic Director/Activities Director grants approval prior to participation.
3. Be willing to meet additional rules and regulations as set forth by the Academic Council, Faculty Advisor, or Coach.



4. Follow/Adhere to the eligibility/training code. This eligibility/training code is in effect all calendar year, whether or not school is in session.
  - a. No use or possession of tobacco/nicotine/vaporizer juice (or similar substances) in any form.
  - b. No use or possession of alcoholic beverages.
  - c. No use of possession of any illegal drugs or substances.
  - d. No use or possession of performance enhancing substances regardless of source.
  
5. Positive proof of a violation of the eligibility/training code will result in the student being immediately suspended from sports and/or extra-curricular activities for 1/3 of the current season. Any student who has been reprimanded with any of the above violations may not join any sport or activity part way through the season as a means of satisfying the suspension. The student being reprimanded must also complete the season(s) in which the suspension is being served in order to fulfill their obligation. Reinstatement will follow if that student conforms to the code during their suspension. A second offense will result in a period of suspension from athletics and/or extra-curricular activities for a period of not less than one year. Third offense will result in immediate suspension with a recommendation to the school board for suspension of athletics and/or extra-curricular activities for the remainder of career. Violations of the eligibility/training code are considered cumulative throughout the career of a student. Violation of the eligibility/training code will result in the student being immediately suspended from the extra-curricular activity.
  
6. Any student traveling to an event or competition on school owned vehicles should return to the home school in the same vehicle after the contest is over. In extenuating circumstances, an exception may be made if a parent or guardian submits a written request to the Athletic Director and receives approval in advance (before departure) to take the student home from the contest. Students will only be released to their parents or guardians. For safety purposes, no student participants, regardless of age, are allowed to drive to or from an away school event.
  
7. If a student is involved in more than one (1) extra-curricular activity at a time (after school, Saturday, Sunday, holidays, etc.), it shall be the decision of the student and the parents as to which event is attended. The student must inform the coach, director, or sponsor at least two (2) weeks in advance which event will be attended. This is in effect only when there is more than one extra-curricular event at a time in which the student is a participant, not a spectator. Students in band, choir, etc. know in advance when their performances or concerts occur. Since students receive a grade or credit for these classes, it is expected that the student will be in attendance at all such activities.
  
8. It is a violation of the Extra-Curricular Participation code to engage in any type of hazing activity. Any students engaging in hazing shall be subject to team/club and/or school discipline procedures as outlined in the student discipline policies.





9. A student deemed ineligible for any reason may practice, but not compete at the discretion of the administration, faculty advisor, or coach.
10. Any student convicted of a felony may be deemed ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity for the entire tenure of a student.
11. Sportsmanship/Behavior: Student athletes are expected to behave in a manner that favorably represents Tawas Area Schools. The coach or athletic director will address all sportsmanship breaches and inappropriate behavior and appropriate punishment measures will be taken. Anyone who is ejected from a contest by an official shall be deemed ineligible for the remainder of the game and will be suspended from future games per the rules governing ejections for that specific sport. Repeat offenses will be dealt with more severely than first time offenses.

Every student who wishes to represent Tawas Area Schools in sports competition must abide by the following rules as established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and Tawas Area Schools:

1. Participation Fees - Tawas Area Schools have instituted a "Participation Fee" for athletic participation. Athletes will be given the appropriate forms prior to the start of each season.
2. Physical Examinations - You must have passed a current year physical examination by a registered physician. Physical must be after April 15th. Records must be on file in the school office.
3. Awards - You must not have accepted any award or merchandise exceeding \$24.99 in value for athletic participation. Athletes accepting memberships, privileges, services, negotiable certificates or money are in violation.
4. Amateur Practices - You must not have accepted money, merchandise, memberships, privileges, services, or other valuable consideration for participating in any form of athletic, sports, or games, or for officiating interscholastic athletic contests, or have signed a professional baseball contract. (Reinstatement will not be considered for one (1) year).
5. Limited Team Membership - You must not have participated in any outside competition in a sport during the season after the athlete has represented their school in that sport except individual participation in a maximum of 2 individual sports meets or contests; not have participated in a so-called all-star, charity or exhibition football, basketball, or ice hockey game during the school year.
6. Extra-Curricular Activities - If a student is involved in more than one (1) extra-curricular activity at a time (after school, Saturday, Sunday, holidays, etc.), it shall be the decision of the student and the parents as to which event is attended. The student must inform the coach, director, or sponsor at least two (2) weeks in advance which event will be attended. This is in effect only when there is more than one extra-curricular event at a time in which the student is a participant, not a spectator. Students in band, choir, etc. know in advance when their performances or concerts are. Since students receive a grade or credit for these classes, it is expected that the student will be in attendance at all such activities.



# 2024-2025 Middle School

## Student Handbook & Technology User Agreement Signature Form

### Student Information: (PLEASE PRINT)

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent/Guardian Information: (PLEASE PRINT)

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*To review the following handbooks please visit: [www.tawas.net](http://www.tawas.net), under the parent resources heading.*

### Parent-Student Handbook

By signing below, you verify you have reviewed the Tawas Area Middle School Parent-Student Handbook. The Tawas Area Board of Education has approved the rules and regulations contained herein as the official policies which students must follow while in attendance at Tawas Area Middle School. This includes participation in athletics and extracurricular activities.

### Technology User Agreement

By signing below, you verify you have reviewed the TAS 1:1 Student Device Handbook. As a parent, I will make every effort to ensure that I, my child, or ward will also comply with the terms and conditions stated in the handbook.

I understand that it is impossible for the District to control and restrict access to all controversial or inappropriate materials that may be accessible through the District's student devices. I agree to hold the district and its officers, agents, and employees harmless in the event my child obtains access to controversial or inappropriate materials while using the District's technology and or student device. In consideration for the privilege of my child or ward using the TAS student device, I hereby release and hold harmless the Tawas Area School District, its officers, board members, employees and agents, and any entity affiliated with the District, from and against any and all liability, loss, expense, or claim for injury or damages that I or my child or ward may incur arising out of the use of the District's student device.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tawas Area Schools are required to provide parents a choice as to how you wish to receive information from our School Messenger "All-Call" system. Please **read** the following:

- I have placed a check in the box to indicate that I **DO NOT** wish to receive phone calls or emails from the Tawas Area School automated system. I understand that I will receive ONLY emergency-type information, which includes school closings and early dismissal.

