

**MIDDLEFORK SCHOOL  
AND  
THE REGIONAL SAFE  
SCHOOLS PROGRAM**



**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**

**“Providing a team of services to ensure quality programs for students experiencing  
barriers to success in Vermilion County”**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<b><u>I: General Information</u></b>	
General Information.....	4
Middlefork Vision Statement.....	4
Middlefork Mission Statement.....	4
Entrance Procedure.....	5
School Day.....	5
Visitors.....	5-6
School Volunteers.....	6
Animals on School Property.....	6
Invitations & Gifts.....	6
<b><u>II: School Breakfast &amp; Lunch Program</u></b>	
Breakfast & Lunch.....	7
Approved Beverages.....	7
Treats & Snacks.....	7
<b><u>III: Curriculum</u></b>	
Kindergarten – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade.....	8
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 Grade.....	8
Sex Education Instruction.....	8
Standardized Testing.....	9
<b><u>IV: Special Education</u></b>	
Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities.....	10
Education of Children with Disabilities.....	10
Discipline of Students with Disabilities.....	11
Certificate of High School Completion.....	11
Request to Access Classroom or Personnel for Special Education Evaluation or Observation.....	11
<b><u>V: Attendance, Promotion, &amp; Graduation</u></b>	
Attendance.....	12
Student Absences.....	12-14
Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance.....	14
Truancy.....	14-15
Grading & Promotion.....	15
Homework.....	16
Make-Up Work.....	16
Credit for Alternative Courses and Programs, and Course Substitutions.....	16-17
Home and Hospital Instruction.....	17
Exemption from Physical Education Requirement.....	18
High School Graduation Requirements.....	19

State Mandated Graduation Requirements.....	19
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Graduation Requirement.....	20
Early Graduation (High School).....	20

**VI: Student Expectations & Conduct**

Behavior Expectations.....	21
Classroom Expectations.....	21
Lunchroom Expectations.....	22
Restroom Expectations.....	22
Bus Expectations.....	22
Field Trip Expectations.....	23
Student Cars on Campus.....	23
Dress Code Expectations.....	24
Prohibited Student Conduct.....	25-27
Gang & Gang Activity Prohibited.....	28
Weapons Prohibited.....	28
Additional Prohibited Items.....	29
Student Discipline.....	29
Classroom Behavior Interventions.....	29-30
Time Out, Isolated Time Out, Physical Restraint.....	30-31
Disciplinary Measures.....	32
Corporal Punishment.....	32
Re-engagement of Returning Students Following Exclusion.....	33

**VII: Internet, Technology, & Publications**

1:1 Technology.....	34
Network & Internet Acceptable Use.....	35
Network Etiquette.....	36
No Warranties.....	36
Indemnification.....	37
Security.....	37
Vandalism.....	37
Copyright Web Publishing Rules.....	37
Use of Electronic Mail.....	38
Non-School Sponsored Publications/Websites.....	38
Annual Notice to Parents About Educational Technology.....	39

**VIII: Athletics & Extracurricular Activities**

Athletics & Extracurricular.....	40
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**IX: Health & Safety**

Immunization, Health, Eye and Dental Examinations.....	41
Student Medication.....	42
Self-Administration of Medication.....	43
Administration of Medical Cannabis.....	43
Undesignated Medications.....	43

Emergency Aid to Students .....	43
Communicable Diseases.....	44
Care of Students with Diabetes.....	44
Students with Food Allergies.....	44-45
Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention.....	45
Head Lice.....	45
Safety Drill Procedures & Conduct.....	45
Emergency School Closings.....	46
Video & Audio Monitoring Systems.....	46
Search & Seizure.....	46-47
Seizure of Property.....	47
Questioning of Students Suspected of Committing Criminal Activity.....	47

**X: Student Records & Privacy**

Age of Majority/Transfer of Rights.....	48
Student Privacy Protections.....	48
Instructional Materials.....	49
Student Records.....	49-52
Related Services Logs.....	52
Student Biometric Information.....	52
Requests from Military or Institutions of Higher Learning.....	52

**XI: Parental Right Notifications**

Family Involvement.....	53
School Visitation Rights.....	53
Teacher Qualifications.....	53
Homeless Child’s Right to Education.....	53-54
Mandated Reporters.....	54
Sex Offender Notification Law.....	54
Sex Offender & Violent Offender Community Notification Laws.....	54
Pesticide Application Notice.....	55
Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act.....	55

**XII: Policies**

Discrimination Policy.....	56
Equal Opportunity and Sex Equity .....	56
Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation & (Sexual) Harassment.....	56-58
Sexual Harassment Prohibited.....	58-59
Teen Dating Violence Prohibited.....	59
Accommodating Breast Feeding Students.....	60
Equal Opportunity and Sex Equity.....	61

## I. General School Information

This handbook is a summary of the school's rules and expectations, and is **not** a comprehensive statement of school procedures. The Board's comprehensive policy manual is available for public inspection through the District's website ([www.vase.k12.il.us](http://www.vase.k12.il.us)) or at the Middlefork School office, located at 15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd, Danville, IL 61834.

The VASE Executive Board governs Middlefork School, and is composed of the superintendents of all member school districts in the VASE cooperative. Current VASE Executive Board members are:

Dr. Jean Neal,	Chairperson
Mr. Jim Owens,	Member
Mr. Larry Maynard,	Member
Dr. Phil Cox,	Member
Mr. Nick Hipshire,	Member
Dr. Seth Miller,	Secretary
Mr. Robert Richardson,	Member
Dr. Crystal Johnson	Member
Dr. Scott Watson	Vice Chairperson

The School Board has hired the following administrative staff to operate the school:

Kristin Dunker	Director of Special Education
Nicole Provost	Assistant-Director of Special Education
Jill Fulton	Principal
Alex Goudy	Special Education Administrator

The school is located and may be contacted at:

15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd, Danville, IL 61834  
Phone: 217-443-8273 Fax: 217-443-0217

### **Middlefork School Vision Statement**

The Middlefork vision is to be the best at helping our students achieve their full potential, which is "the mark of excellence."

### **Middlefork School Mission Statement**

Middlefork School is a caring environment that promotes learning by offering hope through restoring dignity, improving self-esteem, and developing accountable, responsible citizens.

## **Entrance Procedure**

Middlefork School is a public therapeutic day school exclusively for students from Vermilion County who have been identified with special education needs. If a student is identified as being eligible for special education services, that student, after receiving services utilizing the hierarchy of appropriate special education interventions at their home school, may be referred for placement at Middlefork School. Each student will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the IEP team, with the determining factor being where appropriate services can best be provided to meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment. Students from Danville District #118 who are referred to Middlefork must be approved by the Vermilion Association for Special Education (VASE) Board.

Upon entrance into the program, the parent/guardian will complete a Student Information packet. While attending Middlefork School, the student remains a student of their home district, and must be registered at the home district in addition to Middlefork School when enrolled.

## **School Day**

The school day will begin at 8:30 and end at 2:00. Students must be at school a minimum of 5 ½ hours to meet Illinois state mandates.

## **Visitors**

All visitors, including parents/guardians and siblings, are required to enter through the Middlefork School entrance located on the North (backside) of the VASE building. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school over the speaker system at the door. Once given access to the building, all visitors are to proceed immediately to the secretary's office where they are required to sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of their arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. Approved visitors must take an identification tag identifying themselves as a guest and wear it so that it is clearly visible. Visitors will wait to be escorted to their approved location. All visitors must return to the main office to sign out and return their visitors pass before leaving the school.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself/herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespass and/or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, or any other person.
2. Use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.

4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local or county ordinance.
7. Smoke, Vape, or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).

### **School Volunteers**

All school volunteers must complete the Volunteer Information Form (see appendix) and be approved by the school principal prior to assisting at the school. Some teachers utilize parent/guardian volunteers in the classroom. The individual teachers make this decision. Teachers who desire parent/guardian volunteers will notify parents/guardians. For school-wide volunteer opportunities, please contact the school principal. Volunteers are required to check in and out at the main office and receive a visitor badge before going to their destination.

### **Animals on School Property**

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the school principal in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

### **Invitations & Gifts**

Party invitations or gifts for classmates should not be brought to school to be distributed. Items such as these are of a personal nature and should be mailed home. The office is unable to release addresses and phone numbers of students. Deliveries of flowers, balloons, and gifts are prohibited during school hours.

## **II. School Breakfast & Lunch Program**

### **Breakfast & Lunch**

Breakfast is served every school day from **8:30am to 9:00am**. Lunch is served every school day from 10:45am to 1pm, except when there is an 11:30 am or earlier dismissal. Our school lunch menu will be sent home with students each month. A copy of the menu is also available on our school website.

Middlefork School participates in an option of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program, called the Community Eligibility Provision. A healthy breakfast and lunch will be provided daily at no charge to students. Students may choose the hot lunch or may bring a lunch from home.

Students are not to carry in or have food picked up and delivered from restaurants to the school for lunch without previous permission from the principal.

### **Approved Beverages**

Beverages **must** be sealed with the intent to consume during school lunch only. The only exception to this is water. Drinks containing high caffeine and/or sugar levels, commonly known as energy drinks, and/or coffee are prohibited for all students at school and on the bus. No open container of any beverage is allowed to be brought onto the bus or in the building. Opened drinks brought into the building or discovered during check-in will be discarded at the door.

### **Treats & Snacks**

Due to health concerns and scheduling, treats and snacks for any occasion must be arranged in advance with the classroom teacher. All treats and snacks must be store bought and prepackaged in individual servings. No homemade treats or snacks are allowed at school. Treats and snacks may not require refrigeration and must have a clearly printed list of ingredients on the packaging. We strongly encourage you to select a treat or snack with nutritional value.



### **III. Curriculum**

#### **Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

At the elementary level, the student's curriculum will include instruction of the core academic subjects, social skills training, and physical education aligned with the Illinois State Standards and the Common Core Standards. Each student will also receive weekly individual and/or group counseling with a school social worker or school counselor as stated in the student's IEP. The student's report cards will be sent back to the home school to be kept in the student's file. The IEP team will decide when the student is ready to be promoted to high school.

#### **9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

At the secondary level, the students' curriculum will include instruction of all academic subjects required for high school graduation. The curriculum will follow the Illinois State Standards and the Common Core Standards. Students will also receive instruction and training that will help to meet the goals of the student's transition plan. Each high school student will receive social skills training, and weekly individual and/or group counseling with a school social worker or school counselor. Grades will be sent to the student's home school, who will assign credit toward graduation.

Each year, prior to the first day of school, the student's home district guidance counselor will provide Middlefork with an updated transcript and a credit audit showing what classes the student needs to meet that district's graduation requirements. The student's case manager will adjust the student's curriculum, as necessary, to ensure that district requirements are met. The student will take driver's education at the home school, as it is not offered at Middlefork. Whether or not a student transitions back to the home school before graduation, he/she will receive his/her high school diploma from the home district, not from Middlefork School.

#### **Sex Education Instruction**

Students will not be required to take or participate in any class or course in comprehensive sex education if his/her parent/guardian submits a written objection to the school administrator (see appendix). Topics of sex, sexuality, gender, etc... will be included in social skills training. The parent/guardian's decision will not be the reason for any student disciplinary consequences. This does not prohibit instruction in sanitation, hygiene or traditional courses in biology. Parents/guardians may, upon request, examine the instructional materials to be used in any district sex education class or course.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that students in grades 3-8 will take the IAR test. Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> will take the Illinois Science Assessment. Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> will take the physical fitness assessments. Students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade will take the PSAT. 11th grade students will take the SAT exam. A notice will be sent home in advance of testing so that parents are aware of testing dates. Parents are encouraged to cooperate in preparing students for the standardized testing, because the quality of the education the school can provide is partially dependent upon the school's ability to continue to prove its success in the state's standardized tests. Parents can help their students achieve their best performance by doing the following:

1. Encourage students to work hard and study throughout the year;
2. Ensure students to get a good night's sleep the night before the exams;
3. Ensure students eat well the morning of the exam, particularly ensuring they eat sufficient protein;
4. Remind and emphasize for students the importance of good performance on standardized testing;
5. Ensure students are on time and prepared for tests, with appropriate materials, including #2 pencils;
6. Teach students the importance of honesty and ethics during the performance of these and other tests;
7. Encourage students to relax on testing day.

## **IV. Special Education**

### **Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities**

Individuals with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to participate in all home school-district sponsored services, programs, or activities. Individuals with disabilities should notify the home school district principal if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

### **Education of Children with Disabilities**

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services.

The School provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the school. The term “children with disabilities” means children between ages 3 and the day before their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday for whom it is determined that special education services are needed, except those children with disabilities who turn 22 years of age during the school year are eligible for special education services through the end of the school year. It is the intent of the school to ensure that students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

A copy of the publication “*Explanation of Procedural Safeguards*” available to Parents of Students with Disabilities may be obtained from the school district office.

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for an individualized education program, as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and implementing provisions of this Illinois law, may qualify for services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the student (i) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of a physical or mental impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

For further information, please contact:

Jill Fulton  
217-443-8273 ext 201  
Middlefork School

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

The school will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Illinois State Board of Education's *Special Education* rules when disciplining students with disabilities. Behavioral interventions will be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability as determined through a manifestation hearing. Any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his/her disability may be expelled pursuant to the expulsion procedures.

### **Certificate of High School Completion**

A student with a disability who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) prescribing special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services beyond the student's 4 years of high school, qualifies for a certificate of completion after the student has completed 4 years of high school. The student is encouraged to participate in the graduation ceremony of his/her high school graduation class.

### **Request to Access Classroom or Personnel for Special Education Evaluation or Observation**

The parent/guardian of a student receiving special education services, or being evaluated for eligibility, is afforded reasonable access to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings. This same right of access is afforded to an independent educational evaluator or a qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a parent/guardian or child.

For further information, please contact the school principal.

## **V. Attendance, Promotion, & Graduation**

### **Attendance**

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1st) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session (unless the child has already graduated from high school). Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

There are certain exceptions to the attendance requirement for children who: attend private school, are physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), are lawfully and necessarily employed, are between the ages of 12 and 14 while in confirmation classes, have a religious reason requiring absence, or are 16 or older and employed and enrolled in a graduation incentive program.

### **Student Absences**

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

For students who are required to attend school there are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness (including up to 5 days per school year for mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday or event, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the school board, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS<sup>1</sup>, or other reason as approved by the building principal. Students eligible to vote are also excused for up to two hours to vote in a primary, special, or general election.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

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<sup>1</sup> Applies to grades 6-12 only.

Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up missed homework and classwork assignments.<sup>2</sup>

All other absences are considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal.

The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

In the event of any absence, the student's parent or guardian is required to call the school at **217-443-8273 ex200** before 9:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a call will be made home to inform the parent that the student is not at school. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent or guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

Students will follow the transportation as arranged and required by their IEP. If a student misses his/her district-provided transportation and is more than 40 minutes late, it will be counted as a ½ day absence. Upon request of the parent/guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential. **Parents/guardians must sign their child in or out of school at the secretary's office if he/she arrives or leaves while school is in session.**

The following reasons will be accepted as an excused absence:

- Doctor or dentist appointment, counseling appointment, hospitalization, or court date with written verification from that office
- Death in the immediate family (verification through obituary)
- Personal illness (no more than 8 absences may be excused by a parent per school year without a doctor's note)
- Family emergency
- Situations beyond the control of the student
- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health
- Family vacation (up to one week per year, if authorized in advance by the building principal). Vacations during school are strongly discouraged, and the building principal reserves the right to turn down authorization, if the student has missed excessively and/or is doing poorly academically
- Authorized religious holiday or activity (with written verification from church leader)
- Other reason as approved by the building principal

The following reasons are some examples (not all-inclusive) of unexcused absences:

- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Too tired, didn't feel like coming

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<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, insert a specific timeframe that students have to make up homework.

- Babysitting
- No note or phone call from parent/guardian
- Leaving school without permission
- Vacations not pre-approved by the building principal
- Going to work
- Personal reasons

### **Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance**

A student will be released from school, as an excused absence, to observe a religious holiday or for religious instruction. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to the building principal at least 5 calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s).

Students excused for religious reasons will be given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirement.

### **Truancy**

#### **Diagnostic Procedures for Identifying Student Absences and Support Services to Truant or Chronically Truant Students**

State law requires every school district to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. This review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center.

Furthermore, State law provides that school districts are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families such as those available through the State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions.

The School and District use the following diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences: Interviews with the student, his or her parent/guardian and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problems.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Insert other diagnostic procedures used by the School or District.

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include: parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services.<sup>4</sup>

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a serious issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school and district.

Students who miss 5% (9 days) or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are considered chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue. (105 ILCS 5/26-2a)

If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district will take further action, including:

- Referral to the truancy officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law, a Class C misdemeanor, which carries a maximum penalty of thirty days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1500.00

### **Grading & Promotion**

School report cards are issued to students on a quarterly basis. Mid-term progress reports are issued mid-quarter. For questions regarding grades, please contact the classroom teacher.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum, performance on formative and summative assessments, and attendance. The decision will be made by the student's home school district and the IEP team.

The grading scale used by Middlefork School is as follows:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

### **Homework**

Homework is used as a way for students to practice what they have learned in the classroom. The time requirements and the frequency of homework will vary depending on a student's teacher, ability, and grade level.

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<sup>4</sup> Insert additional supportive services used by the School or District.



## **Make-Up Work**

If a student's absence is **excused** or if a student is suspended from school, he/she will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for equivalent academic credit. Students who are **unexcused** from school will not be allowed to make up missed work.

## **Credit for Proficiency, Non-District Experiences and Course Substitutions**

### **Credit for Non-District Experiences**

A student may receive high school credit for successfully completing any of the listed courses or experiences even when it is not offered in or sponsored by the District:

1. Distance learning course, including a correspondence, virtual, or online course.
2. Courses in an accredited foreign exchange program.
3. Summer school or community college courses.
4. College or high school courses offering dual credit at both the college and high school level.
5. Foreign language courses taken in an ethnic school program approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.
6. Work-related training at manufacturing facilities or agencies in a Tech Prep Program.
7. Credit earned in a Vocational Academy.

Students must receive pre-approval from the building principal or designee to receive credit for any non-District course or experience. The building principal or designee will determine the amount of credit and whether a proficiency examination is required before the credit is awarded. Students assume responsibility for any fees, tuition, supplies, and other expenses. Students are responsible for (1) providing documents or transcripts that demonstrate successful completion of the experience, and (2) taking a proficiency examination, if requested. The building principal or designee shall determine which, if any, non-District courses or experiences, will count toward a student's grade point average, class rank, and eligibility for athletic and extracurricular activities.

### **Proficiency Credit**

Proficiency credit is available in limited subjects where a student demonstrates competency. Contact the building principal for details.

### **Substitutions for Required Courses**

**Vocational or technical education.** A student in grades 9-12 may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing related vocational or technical education courses if:

1. The building principal approves the substitution and the vocational or technical education course is completely described in curriculum material along with its relationship to the required course; and
2. The student's parent/guardian requests and approves the substitution in writing on forms provided by the District.

**Registered Apprenticeship Program.** A student in grades 9-12 who is 16 years or older may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing a registered apprenticeship program listed by the school district. Students may find a registered, but not listed, apprenticeship program with a business or organization if a registered apprenticeship program is not offered in the school district.

### **Home and Hospital Instruction**

A student who is absent or whose physician anticipates his or her absence from school for an extended period of time, or has ongoing intermittent absences because of a medical condition, may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction before the birth of the child when the student's physician indicates, in writing, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction as well as for up to 3 months after the child's birth or a miscarriage.

For information on home or hospital instruction, contact the building principal.

### **Exemption from Physical Education Requirement**

The State of Illinois requires all students to take physical education every day, unless excused by a doctor's note, or a waiver is written in the student's IEP. A student does not have to take P.E. the semester he/she is taking high school health. A student in grades 3-12 who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses if:

1. The student's parent/guardian agrees that the student must utilize the time set aside for physical education to receive special education support and services, or
2. The student's individualized education program team determines that the student must utilize the time set aside for physical education to receive special education support and services.
3. The student may be exempted from participating in PE for medical or religious reasons with official documentation.

The agreement or determination is made a part of the individualized education program. A student requiring adapted physical education will receive that service in accordance with the student's individualized education program.

A student in grades 9-12 may submit a written request to the building principal to be excused from physical education courses for the reasons stated below.

1. Enrollment in a marching band program for credit;
2. Enrollment in Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program sponsored by the home district;
3. Ongoing participation in an interscholastic athletic program (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade);
4. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for admission to an institution of higher learning (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade); or
5. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for graduation from high school, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the student being unable to graduate (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade).

P.E. waivers must be signed by parent/guardian, student, home school counselor, home school principal, and Middlefork principal and maintained in the student's temporary file.

Holding a student back from P.E. as a form of punishment or consequence is not allowed. Middlefork has a "no-dress" P.E. Uniforms are not required; however, students must wear tennis shoes (they can be the same ones worn to school or a student can keep them at school). A student may bring an extra shirt or shorts to wear for P.E. if he/she so chooses.

### **High School Graduation Requirements**

To graduate from high school, unless otherwise exempted, each student is responsible for:

1. Completing all State mandated graduation requirements listed below.
2. Completing all District graduation requirements that are in addition to State graduation requirements.

3. Passing an examination on patriotism and principles of representative government, proper use of the flag, methods of voting, and the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Participating in the State assessment required for graduation.

### **State Mandated Graduation Requirements**

1. Four years of language arts.
2. Two years of writing intensive courses, one of which must be English and the other of which may be English or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other graduation requirements.
3. Three years of mathematics, one of which must be Algebra I and one of which must include geometry content and one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science course.
4. Two and a half years of science.
5. Two years of social studies, of which at least one year must be history of the United States or a combination of history of the United States and American government. Within the two years of social studies requirement, one semester of civics is also required for graduation.
6. One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C) foreign language, which shall be deemed to include American Sign Language, or (D) vocational education.
7. One semester of health education.
8. Daily physical education classes.
9. A course covering American patriotism and the principles of representative government, as enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the proper use and display of the American flag.
10. Nine weeks of consumer education.

The above requirements do not apply to students with disabilities whose course of study is determined by an Individualized Education Program or students who are exempted from participation in certain courses in accordance with State law.

### **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Graduation Requirement**

As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, the parent or guardian of each student or, if a student is at least 18 years of age or legally emancipated, the student must comply with either of the following:

1. File a FAFSA with the United States Department of Education or, if applicable, an application for State financial aid.

2. File a waiver indicating that the parent or guardian or, if applicable, the student understands what the FAFSA and application for State financial aid are and has chosen not to file an application.

Upon request, the school will provide a student and his or her parent or guardian any support or assistance necessary to comply with this requirement

A school district may award a high school diploma to a student who is unable to meet this requirement due to extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school district, if (i) the student has met all other graduation requirements, and (ii) the principal attests that the school district has made a good faith effort to assist the student or, if applicable, his or her parent or guardian in filing an application or a waiver.

### **Early Graduation (High School)**

Students who will have successfully completed graduation requirements after seven (7) semesters may petition to graduate. Applications must be submitted to the principal prior to the student's seventh semester.

Early graduates must take full responsibility to make arrangements with the home school district's high school office for anything pertaining to the graduation ceremony. (i.e. announcements, cap and gown rental, graduation practices, etc.)

Any student enrolled in an off-campus course to fulfill graduation requirements must show documentation of such course(s) by the last day of the seventh semester. Failure to produce this documentation will result in denial of the early graduation petition.

The student and a parent will schedule a conference with the Principal and the home school district's guidance counselor and/or administrator prior to the student's seventh semester. At the conference, the student should be prepared to justify his/her request to graduate early.

## **VI. Student Expectations & Conduct**

### **Behavioral Expectations**

Middlefork students are expected to be safe, be responsible and be respectful throughout the building. This includes being respectful to students and staff, using appropriate language and voice volume, following directions and school rules, remaining in designated areas at all times, displaying good hygiene, and accepting responsibility for actions/choices.

Students are searched each morning when they come to school. They are required to empty their pockets, remove their shoes, and be electronically scanned when entering the building. All students are required to store their backpacks, purses, bags, and jackets or coats in their lockers. These items are not to be in the classrooms. Students' lockers are school property. School administrators, with reasonable cause, have the right to open and to examine lockers at any time.

### **When and Where Conduct Rules Apply**

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

### **Classroom Expectations**

During academic lessons, students are expected to follow school behavioral expectations (i.e., stay in seats, use appropriate voices, follow rules, etc...). While specific classroom rules may vary, the most important concern is that the student is able to follow teacher directions appropriately.

Students remain in seats until they are dismissed. The students use the north hallway doors when entering or exiting the building.

Failure to follow school expectations or to comply with morning check-in procedures will result in consequences according to classroom rules and the school's disciplinary procedures.

### **Lunchroom Expectations**

All Middlefork students are expected to:

1. Remain in your seat unless given permission to leave the seat.
2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
3. Use a quiet tone of voice.
4. Keep your food and drink at your seat; trading, passing or throwing is prohibited.
5. Clean up your eating area when you have finished; ask permission to get up and throw things away.
6. Use appropriate language; be respectful of others.
7. Follow the instructions of cafeteria personnel.

Failure to follow the rules will result in consequences according to classroom rules and the school's disciplinary procedures. Students may be required to have an isolated lunch, separated from peers, in the lunch room or in another designated area

### **Restroom Expectations**

When using the restroom, staff will escort all students. Students will refrain from talking, making noise, vandalizing, or general horseplay. Students will wait outside the restroom until staff inspects the restroom before entering, and will wait quietly until staff inspects the restroom after students have exited. Failure to follow these expectations will result in consequences as outlined in the school's disciplinary procedures.

### **Bus Expectations**

All Middlefork students are expected to:

1. Stay in your assigned seat.
2. Keep hands and other body parts inside the window.
3. Use a quiet tone of voice.
4. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
5. Walk when getting on and off the bus.
6. Use appropriate language.
7. Follow all directions given by the bus driver.
8. Have no open food or drinks on the bus.
9. Follow all bus rules as set forth by the home school district.

Video and audio cameras may be active on buses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

Failure to follow these rules will result in bus write-ups and in consequences at school and possibly at the district level. Students may be temporarily suspended from riding the bus for gross disobedience or misconduct or safety reasons. The student is still expected to attend school, and will be counted as an out of school suspension if he/she does not attend. However, any missed work may be made up when the student returns at full credit. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to get the student to/from school during this time. After ten out of school suspensions, the IEP team is required to hold a Manifestation Meeting.

### **Field Trip Expectations**

Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds.

Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline as stated in the school's disciplinary procedures including the loss of future field trip opportunities.

All students who wish to attend field trips must have a parent/guardian complete a Field Trip Permission Slip. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher;
- Failure to complete appropriate coursework;
- Behavioral or safety concerns;
- Denial of permission from the building principal;
- Other reasons as determined by the school.

### **Student Cars on Campus**

Middlefork students are not allowed to drive to Middlefork in personal vehicles; they are expected to ride the bus or be transported by an adult. Occasional extenuating circumstances such as an appointment after school must be requested by the parent/guardians and pre-approved by the building principal.

### **Dress Code Expectations**



For the purposes of neatness and cleanliness of its students, eliminating or reducing distractions and disruptions to the educational process, protecting and maintaining the health and safety of the students and staff of Middlefork, and respecting the rights of students and staff, the VASE Board finds it necessary and in the best interest of Middlefork School to establish and enforce a dress code applicable to all students who attend our school.

The following are **not allowed**:

- 1) Clothing or tattoos with alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substance ads or references,  
satanic or demonic images, violence, weapons, profanity, sexual images, or criminal acts
- 2) Clothing that reveals any body parts or underwear, including:
  - sagging/extra-large pants
  - tank tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps
  - see-through clothing
  - unbuttoned shirts or blouses
  - shorts or skirts shorter than “fingertip” length
  - bare midriff or shoulders
  - clothing with holes or deep cutouts
  - spandex, leggings, jeggings, yoga pants or exercise wear worn as outerwear unless a fingertip length top, skirt, or dress are worn over them
- 3) Any shoes other than sneakers or tennis shoes
- 4) Hats, visors, bandanas, do-rags, etc.
- 5) Any clothing, symbolic jewelry, tattoos, or patches depicting or symbolizing gangs, including how the clothing is worn (ex. - one leg up, one leg down)
- 6) Gang colors by any student who professes gang allegiance
- 7) Pajama pants
- 8) Sunglasses

Any type of change in appearance (such as hair color or make-up) that would distract from the normal educational process of the school day will be addressed on an individual basis by the building principal. A student whose dress causes a substantial disruption of the orderly process of school functions or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, or staff may be subject to discipline, they may have to change into school appropriate clothes, cover their clothing with additional clothing, or the parent may be called to bring appropriate clothing to school for the student to change into.

All coats, purses, backpacks, gym bags, book bags, etc will be stored in the student’s locker during the school day. Combination locks are available free of charge to any student requesting one.

### **Prohibited Student Conduct**

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes, vapes, vape pens, or other vaping related products, or e-cigarettes, matches or lighters.
- 2) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
- 3) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale:
  - a. Any illegal drug, controlled substance, cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*), or any food products containing marijuana, cannabis, hemp, hashish or byproducts thereof.
  - b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited.
  - e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.
  - f. "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.
  - g. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.
  - h. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in a tablet or powdered form.

- i. Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

4. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring a “weapon” or violating the procedures listed below under the Weapons Prohibition section of this handbook procedure.

5. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.

6. Using a cellular telephone, smartphone, video recording device, or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as “sexting.” Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all cellular phones, smartphones and other electronic devices must be kept powered-off and in a locked cabinet during the regular school day.

7. Using or possessing a laser pointer, or other nuisance item, unless under a staff member’s direct supervision and in the context of instruction.

8. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials.

Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a staff member’s request to stop, present school identification or submit to a search.

9. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.

10. Engaging in bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior.

Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network or other comparable conduct.

11. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.

12. Engaging in teen dating violence.

13. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s personal property.

14. Entering or exiting school property or a school facility without proper authorization.

15. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.

16. Being absent without a recognized excuse.

17. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society.

18. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.

19. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and hazing.

20. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property. 21.

Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.

22. Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building principal.

For purposes of these rules, the term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student’s person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student’s clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school’s student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student’s parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

### **When and Where Conduct Rules Apply**

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student’s conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property; or
5. During periods of remote learning.

### **Gang & Gang Activity Prohibited**

“Gang” is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student’s conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

### **Weapons Prohibited**

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

(1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including “look alike” of any firearm as defined above.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

### **Additional Prohibited Items**

Other items not allowed at Middlefork School:

- a) opened food or drinks brought in from outside, (including fast food) unless previously authorized by teacher or principal. Students may carry in a sack lunch from home.
- b) cell phones, unless turned off and left in locked locker at check-in
- c) money in excess of \$10
- d) any item deemed to be of a sexual nature
- e) gang-related insignia or color
- f) ammunition

- g) tools used for the purpose of picking locks
- h) lighters or matches

### **Student Discipline**

The goal of Middlefork School is to assist students who have been unsuccessful in their home schools and to help them learn appropriate replacement behaviors and make positive choices. Therefore, the school takes a very positive approach to discipline. Minor disciplinary issues are generally handled in the classroom or time to calm down and process an issue with staff in the time out room.

Middlefork does, however, teach the students that their choices bring consequences, whether good or bad. If a student violates school protocol, there will be serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or a police call. The building principal will make this decision. Parents/guardians, the home school, and probation officer (if applicable) will be notified.

The school will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) when disciplining students. Behavioral interventions will be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. No special education student shall be expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability as determined through a manifestation hearing. Any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his/her disability may be expelled pursuant to the expulsion procedures.

### **Classroom Behavioral Interventions**

Students are repeatedly given opportunities to make appropriate choices. The staff encourages these choices by motivating the students throughout the day, utilizing positive interventions, and building rapport and positive relationships with them. These positive interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- School Store
- Quarterly Incentive Activity
- Reward time on the computer or music
- Weekly Bingo Board Incentive for weekly target behavior
- Classroom incentives and rewards

When students fail to comply with expectations the following interventions may be used:

- 1) Student is given direction to follow expectations.
- 2) Student is redirected.
- 3) Student is given a verbal warning, with reminder of consequences.
- 4) Student is given a choice of a take 2, movement break, sensory break, or going to an "L" area within the classroom or in the hall outside of the classroom with a staff member.
- 5) Staff is called, as needed, for de-escalation.

- 6) Trained staff will escort student to time-out room if student is posing an imminent danger of self-injury or injury to others.
- 7) Building principal will call police if student intentionally physically attacks staff or another student or damages school property. The age of the offending student will be taken into consideration.

### **Time Out, Isolated Time Out, and Physical Restraint**

Time out, isolated time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use time out, isolated time out, or physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

The staff at Middlefork School is committed to maintaining safety and supervision of all students. For that reason, it may become necessary for staff to take steps to prevent a student from physically hurting him/herself, or someone else, if an imminently dangerous situation occurs in which the student or others are in immediate danger of bodily harm. Staff has been trained, and is updated regularly on adopted physical containment and seclusion procedures should such an incident occur that requires physical intervention. Staff will focus first on teaching appropriate and/or replacement behaviors, self-regulation skills, and coping skills. The preferred interventions for a student engaging in inappropriate behaviors will always be verbal, gestural, or through prompting rather than physical intervention. Usually, redirection is possible without the need to employ a physical protective intervention.

The following parameters govern all staff interventions with students at Middlefork School and follows Section 1.285 of the Illinois State School Code.

**Time out** is defined as a behavior management technique for the purpose of calming or de-escalation that involves the involuntary monitored separation of a student from classmates with a trained adult for part of the school day, only for a brief time in a non-locked setting.

**Isolated Time-out** is defined as the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a time-out room or other enclosure outside the classroom without a supervising adult in the time-out room or enclosure. Isolated time-out is only allowed under limited circumstances and may be used only when the adult in the time-out room or enclosure is in imminent danger of serious physical harm because the student is unable to cease actively engaging in extreme physical aggression.

**Physical Restraint** is defined as holding a student or otherwise restricting a student's movements. This does not include momentary periods of physical restriction by direct person to person contact, without the aide of material or mechanical devices, accomplished with limited force and designed to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to himself, herself, or another, or damage to property or remove a disruptive student who is unwilling to leave the area voluntarily. Physical Restraint can only be used when

a student poses a physical risk to himself, herself, or others; there is no medical contradiction to its use; and the staff applying the restraint have been trained.

- Time-out does not include a student-initiated or student-requested break, sensory break, In-school suspension, or detention, or other disciplinary measures including brief removal to the hallway. It also does not include evacuation of other students from a classroom when one student presents a risk of harm to self or others and school personnel evacuate the classroom while staff work with the student to help de-escalate his or her conduct, transport the student out of the classroom to another setting for this purpose, or await emergency responders.
- Time-out cannot be used as punishment, convenience to staff, routine safety, or to prevent property damage in absence of imminent danger.
- Only trained staff will use a physical restraint hold and/or place a student in time out or isolated time out when imminent danger is present.
- When used, time out, isolated time out, or physical restraint will last only when imminent danger is present. Students will be closely and constantly monitored for any signs of distress.
- When a situation cannot be sufficiently de-escalated so that students and staff are safe and there continues to be imminent danger after physical intervention or seclusion, a call may be made to additional crisis services such as SASS or law enforcement.
- Every time a student has 3 physical restraints within a 30 day period, the school personnel who initiated, monitored, and supervised the incidents shall initiate a review of the effectiveness of the procedures used and prepare an individual behavior plan for the student that provides either for continued use of these interventions or for the use of other specified interventions. The team will also consider the need for an IEP meeting to discuss possible change in placement or change in eligibility.
- Parents must be notified on the day that the event occurred. Documentation of the event and a log must be sent to the parent within one day of the occurrence. Notification may be emailed, hand delivered, or mailed.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. School personnel shall not advise or encourage students to drop out of school voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties. Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures:

1. Notifying parents/guardians.



2. Disciplinary conference.
3. Withholding of privileges.
4. Temporary removal from the classroom.
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property.
6. In-school suspension.
7. Late stays or Saturday school provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. (If transportation arrangements cannot be made in advance, an alternative disciplinary measure will be assigned to the student.)
8. Community service.
9. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
10. Suspension of bus riding privileges.
11. Suspension from school and all school activities for up to 10 days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
12. Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed 2 calendar years. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
13. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

### **Re-Engagement of Returning Students Following Exclusion from the School Setting**

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student & parent/guardian either in person or over the phone upon returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make-up missed work for equivalent academic credit.

## **VII. Internet, Technology, & Publications**

### **1:1 Technology**

The student laptop or iPad is a piece of instructional equipment. If a laptop is loaned to you as a student of Middlefork School / Middlefork RSSP it is solely for educational purposes and remains the property of VASE/ ROE 54. You are responsible for the care of the laptop and power supply you receive. Please note, data in any form on any district computer or saved under a district account is not private. It is accessible to VASE/ROE 54 officials at any time. These devices are monitored and filtered 24/7.

### **Physical care of the device**

No food or drink is allowed next to laptops. If food or drink damages your laptop you may be charged for the repair or replacement of the device. If you damage or lose the device due to carelessness or negligence you may be charged up to the full replacement value of the device. The laptops should not be carried while the screen is open and should be handled with care. Laptops must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, marks, or labels that are not authorized by VASE/ROE 54. Laptops must never be left in a car or any unsupervised area. Do not expose your laptop to extreme temperatures or inclement weather. Theft or claims of damage by a third party must be reported to the office immediately. Incidents will be investigated by appropriate school staff.

### **Software and Device Integrity**

It is forbidden to circumvent, uninstall, or modify district software, extensions, or security settings. Students who do so may face disciplinary action. Storage of data that violates board policy, student handbook or of an illegal nature is forbidden. Use of any software, service, device or process not expressly required by the curriculum of Middlefork School or Middlefork RSSP or intended to bypass security measures is forbidden. Do not open or attempt repair of the laptop. If a malfunction occurs bring the laptop to the designated location in your building for assistance

### **Access to Student Social Networking Passwords & Websites**

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination

### **Network & Internet Acceptable Use**

#### **Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks**

All use of the District's *electronic networks* shall be consistent with the District's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. These procedures do not attempt to state all required or prohibited behavior by users. However, some specific examples are provided. **The failure of any user to follow these procedures will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal action.**

## **Terms and Conditions**

The term *electronic networks* includes all of the District's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The District's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), District-provided Wi-Fi hotspots, and any District servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the Internet or other online resources via the District's networking infrastructure or to any District-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. District-owned and District-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

**Acceptable Use** - Access to the District's electronic networks must be: (a) for the purpose of education or research, and be consistent with the District's educational objectives, or (b) for legitimate business use.

**Privileges** - Use of the District's electronic networks is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action. The system administrator or Building Principal will make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated these procedures and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time. His or her decision is final.

**Unacceptable Use** - The user is responsible for his or her actions and activities involving the electronic networks. Some examples of unacceptable uses are:

- a. Using the electronic networks for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights or contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any State or federal law;
- b. Using the electronic networks to engage in conduct prohibited by board policy;
- c. Unauthorized downloading of software or other files, regardless of whether it is copyrighted or scanned for malware;
- d. Unauthorized use of personal removable media devices (such as flash or thumb drives);
- e. Downloading of copyrighted material for other than personal use;
- f. Using the electronic networks for private financial or commercial gain;
- g. Wastefully using resources, such as file space;
- h. Hacking or attempting to hack or gain unauthorized access to files, accounts, resources, or entities by any means;
- i. Invading the privacy of individuals, including the unauthorized disclosure, dissemination, and use of information about anyone that is of a personal nature, such as a photograph or video;
- j. Using another user's account or password;

- k. Disclosing any network or account password (including your own) to any other person, unless requested by the system administrator;
- l. Posting or sending material authored or created by another without his/her consent;
- m. Posting or sending anonymous messages;
- n. Creating or forwarding chain letters, spam, or other unsolicited messages;
- o. Using the electronic networks for commercial or private advertising;
- p. Accessing, sending, posting, publishing, or displaying any abusive, obscene, profane, sexual, threatening, harassing, illegal, or knowingly false material;
- q. Misrepresenting the user's identity or the identity of others; and
- r. Using the electronic networks while access privileges are suspended or revoked.

**Network Etiquette** - The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages to others.
- b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- c. Do not reveal personal information, including the addresses or telephone numbers, of students or colleagues.
- d. Recognize that the District's electronic networks are not private. People who operate District technology have access to all email and other data. Messages or other evidence relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- e. Do not use the networks in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
- f. Consider all communications and information accessible via the electronic networks to be private property.

**No Warranties** - The District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The District will not be responsible for any damages the user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

**Indemnification** - By using the District's electronic networks, the user agrees to indemnify the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of these procedures.

**Security** - Network security is a high priority. If the user can identify or suspects a security problem on the network, the user must promptly notify the system administrator or Building Principal. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Keep user account(s) and password(s)

confidential. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log-on to the network as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the networks.

**Vandalism** - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or any other network. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of malware, such as viruses and spyware.

**Telephone Charges** - The District assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, texting or data use charges, long-distance charges, per-minute surcharges, and/or equipment or line costs.

**Copyright Web Publishing Rules** - Copyright law and District policy prohibit the re-publishing of text or graphics found on the Internet or on District websites or file servers/cloud storage without explicit written permission.

- a. For each re-publication (on a website or file server) of a graphic or a text file that was produced externally, there must be a notice at the bottom of the page crediting the original producer and noting how and when permission was granted. If possible, the notice should also include the web address of the original source.
- b. Students engaged in producing web pages must provide library media specialists with email or hard copy permissions before the web pages are published. Printed evidence of the status of *public domain* documents must be provided.
- c. The absence of a copyright notice may not be interpreted as permission to copy the materials. Only the copyright owner may provide the permission. The manager of the website displaying the material may not be considered a source of permission.
- d. The *fair use* rules governing student reports in classrooms are less stringent and permit limited use of graphics and text.
- e. Student work may only be published if there is written permission from both the parent/guardian and student.

**Use of Email** - The District's email system, and its constituent software, hardware, and data files, are owned and controlled by the District. The District provides email to aid students in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, and as an education tool.

- a. The District reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of any account on its system, without prior notice or permission from the account's user. Unauthorized access by any student to an email account is strictly prohibited.

- b. Each person should use the same degree of care in drafting an email message as would be put into a written memorandum or document. Nothing should be transmitted in an email message that would be inappropriate in a letter or memorandum.
- c. Electronic messages transmitted via the District's Internet gateway carry with them an identification of the user's Internet *domain*. This domain is a registered name and identifies the author as being with the District. Great care should be taken, therefore, in the composition of such messages and how such messages might reflect on the name and reputation of the District. Users will be held personally responsible for the content of any and all email messages transmitted to external recipients.
- d. Any message received from an unknown sender via the Internet, such as spam or potential phishing emails, should either be immediately deleted or forwarded to the system administrator. Downloading any file attached to any Internet-based message is prohibited unless the user is certain of that message's authenticity and the nature of the file so transmitted.
- e. Use of the District's email system constitutes consent to these regulations.

### **Internet Safety**

Internet access is limited to only those *acceptable uses* as detailed in these procedures. Internet safety is supported if users will not engage in *unacceptable uses*, as detailed in these procedures, and otherwise follow these procedures.

Staff members will supervise students while students are using District Internet access to ensure that the students abide by the *Terms and Conditions* for Internet access contained in these procedures.

Each District computer with Internet access has a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

The system administrator and Building Principals shall monitor student Internet access.

### **Annual Notice to Parents About Educational Technology**

Under Illinois' Student Online Personal Protection Act, or SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/), educational technology vendors and other entities that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes are referred to in SOPPA as *operators*. SOPPA is intended to ensure that student

data collected by operators is protected, and it requires those vendors, as well as school districts and the Ill. State Board of Education, to take a number of actions to protect online student data.

Depending upon the particular educational technology being used, our District may need to collect different types of student data, which is then shared with educational technology vendors through their online sites, services, and/or applications. Under SOPPA, educational technology vendors are prohibited from selling or renting a student's information or from engaging in targeted advertising using a student's information. Such vendors may only disclose student data for K-12 school purposes and other limited purposes permitted under the law.

In general terms, the types of student data that may be collected and shared include personally identifiable information (PII) about students or information that can be linked to PII about students, such as:

- Basic identifying information, including student or parent/guardian name and student or parent/guardian contact information, username/password, student ID number
- Demographic information
- Enrollment information
- Assessment data, grades, and transcripts
- Attendance and class schedule
- Academic/extracurricular activities
- Special indicators (e.g., disability information, English language learner, free/reduced meals or homeless/foster care status)
- Conduct/behavioral data
- Health information
- Food purchases
- Transportation information
- In-application performance data
- Student-generated work
- Online communications
- Application metadata and application use statistics
- Permanent and temporary school student record information

Operators may collect and use student data only for K-12 purposes, which are purposes that aid in the administration of school activities, such as:

- Instruction in the classroom or at home (including remote learning)
- Administrative activities
- Collaboration between students, school personnel, and/or parents/guardians
- Other activities that are for the use and benefit of the school district



## **VIII. Athletics & Extracurricular Activities**

### **Athletics & Extracurricular**

Middlefork students are considered to be active students in their home districts, and may participate in or attend any sport or extracurricular activity that they would if they attended school there. Parents are highly encouraged to check their child's home school's web page for important dates regarding extra-curricular try-outs, auditions, etc. They are subject to the same rules of eligibility as any student regarding grades, attendance, behavior, Codes of Conduct, sports physicals, etc. This does not include students who are currently suspended, expelled, or attending the regional safe school program as these students are ineligible and cannot be on the school grounds of their home school.

## **IX. Health & Safety**

### **Immunization, Health, Eye and Dental Examinations**

#### **Required Health Examinations and Immunizations**

All students are required to present appropriate proof of a health examination and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases within one year prior to:

1. Entering kindergarten or the first grade;
2. Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

Proof of immunization against meningococcal disease is required for students in grades 6 and 12. A diabetes screening must be included as part of the health exam (though diabetes testing is not required). Students between the age of one and seven must provide a statement from a physician assuring that the student was "risk-assessed" or screened for lead poisoning.

Failure to comply with the above requirements by October 15 of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the school, subject to certain exceptions. New students who register mid-term have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization requirements. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by October 15, the student must present, by October 15, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by an appropriate medical professional.

#### **Eye Examination**

All students entering kindergarten or the school for the first time must present proof by October 15 of the current school year of an eye examination performed within one year. Failure to present proof by October 15, allows the school to hold the student's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15.

#### **Dental Examination**

All students entering kindergarten, second and sixth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months. Failure to present proof allows the school to hold the child's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

#### **Exemptions**

A student will be exempted from the above requirements for:

1. Medical grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the building principal a signed statement explaining the objection;
2. Religious grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the building principal a completed Certificate of Religious Exemption;
3. Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician provides written verification;
4. Eye examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist; or
5. Dental examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

### **Student Medication**

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form."

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. All medications administered will be documented and kept on file with the school nurse.

No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

No medication will be accepted or given by school personnel unless they are in the proper container or bottle. No baggies will be accepted. Prescription medication must be in the bottle in which it was prescribed. Non-prescription medication must be in the original bottle labeled with the student's name. All medication shall be kept in a locked cabinet or lockbox.

### **Self-Administration of Medication**

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin if authorized by the student's diabetes care plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students with epilepsy may possess and self-administer supplies, equipment and medication, if authorized by the student's seizure action plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students may self-administer (but not possess on their person) other medications required under a qualified plan, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

The school district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

### **Administration of Medical Cannabis**

In accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program, qualifying students are allowed to utilize medical cannabis infused products while at school and school events. Please contact the building principal for additional information. Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver pursuant to this procedure is prohibited. The District may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

### **Undesignated Medications**

The school may maintain the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use: (1) Asthma medication; (2) Epinephrine injectors; (3) Opioid antagonists; and (4) Glucagon. No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

### **Emergency Aid to Students**

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

### **Communicable Diseases**

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

1. Parents/guardians are required to notify the school if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent/guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parent/guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the communicable disease.
4. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent/guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

### **Care of Students with Diabetes**

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the school principal. Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

- a. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
- b. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- c. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
- d. Grant consent for and authorize designated School District representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

For further information, please contact the school principal.

### **Students with Food Allergies**

State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, state statutes, federal regulations and state rules.

If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify the school principal at 217-443-8036.

Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan will be developed and implemented to provide the needed supports so that your student can access his or her education as effectively as students without disabilities.

Not all students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. Our school also may be able to appropriately meet a student's needs through other means.

## **Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention**

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school's ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important goals of the school district.

The school district maintains student and parent resources on suicide and depression awareness and prevention. Much of this information, including a copy of school district's policy, is posted on the school district website. Information can also be obtained from the school office.

## **Head Lice**

The school will observe the following policy with regard to head lice:

1. Parents/guardians are required to notify the school if they suspect their child has head lice.
2. Infested students with live nits will be sent home following notification of the parent/guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to parent/guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation.
4. A student excluded because of head lice will be permitted to return to school only when the parent/guardian brings the student to school to be checked by the school staff and the child is determined to be free of the head lice and eggs (nits). Infested children are prohibited from riding the bus to school to be checked for head lice. Middlefork School will help provide lice treatment shampoo if requested by the student and/or his parents.

## **Safety Drill Procedures and Conduct**

Safety drills will occur at times established by the school board. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement lockdown drill to address a school shooting incident, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill each school year. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. The law enforcement lockdown drill will be announced in advance and a student's parent/guardian may elect to exclude their child from participating in this drill. All other drills will not be preceded by a warning to students.

## **Emergency School Closings**

In cases of bad weather and other local emergencies, please listen to any local radio or television station to be advised of school closings or early dismissals. School closings for any reason will

be announced by 7:00 a.m. If bad weather or other emergency occurs during the day, please listen to local media stations (WCIA, WDNL) for possible early dismissal information. In either case, you will also be notified by the Teacherease system using the phone number(s) you have provided us.

If the student's home school district is closed, there will be no bus service to Middlefork, even if Middlefork is open. Parents/guardians should have a plan for emergency school closings and discuss this plan with their student in advance. For your child's safety, make certain your child knows ahead of time where to go in case of an early dismissal.

### **Video & Audio Monitoring Systems**

A video and/or audio monitoring system may be in use on school busses and a video monitoring system may be in use in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the tape may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

### **Search and Seizure**

In order to maintain order safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects.

### **School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left There by Students**

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as, lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

### **Search of Students**

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of the investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination.

### **Seizure of Property**

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

### **Questioning of Students Suspected of Committing Criminal Activity**

Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) Notify or attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (including, but not limited to, a social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, or any other mental health professional) is present during the questioning; and (c) If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in promoting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

## **X. Student Records & Privacy**

### **Age of Majority/Transfer of Rights**



When a student turns eighteen (18), he/she becomes solely responsible for his/her own records and educational decisions, unless the parent/guardian continues to have court-appointed guardianship. If a student does not wish to take on this responsibility, he/she may elect to delegate rights back to the parent/guardian by signing a Delegation of Rights form.

### **Student Privacy Protections**

#### **Surveys by Third Parties**

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request. This applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a district official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Parents who object to disclosure of information concerning their child to a third party may do so in writing to the building principal.

#### **Surveys Requesting Personal Information**

School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Sexual behaviors or attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income other than that required by law to determine program eligibility.

The student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

### **Instructional Material**

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

### **Student Records**

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school busses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes, though such electronic recordings may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

1. **The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the District receives a request for access.**

The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copy rights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent/guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the District may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access. The District charges \$.35 per page for copying but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost. These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.

2. **The right to have one or more scores received on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript.<sup>1</sup>**

Parents/guardians or eligible students may have one or more scores on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript. The District will include scores on college entrance examinations upon the written request of the parent/guardian or eligible student stating the name of each college entrance examination that is the subject of the request and the dates of the scores that are to be included.

3. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/ guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.**

A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the District to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought. If the District decides not to amend the record, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information

regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

4. **The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.**

Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district. Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.

Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

5. **The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.**

The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who

graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent/guardian or to the student, if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.

6. **The right to prohibit the release of directory information.**

Throughout the school year, the District may release directory information regarding students, limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Grade level
- Birth date and place
- Parent/guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
- Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sporting or fine arts programs
- Academic awards, degrees, and honors
- Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
- Major field of study
- Period of attendance in school any parent/guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.

7. **The right to request that military recruiters or institutions of higher learning not be granted access to your student's information without your prior written consent.<sup>2</sup>**

Federal law requires a secondary school to grant military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon their request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, unless the student's parent/guardian, or student who is 18 years of age or older, submits a written request that the information not be released without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. If you wish to exercise this option, notify the building principal.

8. **The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.**

9. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington DC 20202-8520

### **Related Service Logs**

For a child with an individualized education program (IEP), the school district must create related service logs that record the type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related service that has been administered. The school will provide a child's parent/guardian a copy of the related service log at the annual review of the child's IEP and at any other time upon request.

### **Student Biometric Information**

Before collecting biometric information from students, the school must seek the permission of the student's parent/guardian or the student, if over the age of 18. Biometric information means information that is collected from students based on their unique characters, such as a fingerprint, voice recognition or retinal scan.

### **Requests from Military or Institutions of Higher Learning**

Upon their request, military recruiters and institutions of higher learning will be given access to students' names, addresses and telephone numbers. Parents who do not want their child's name to be released (or students over the age of 18 who do not want their name released) should contact the building principal.

## **XI. Parental Right Notifications**

### **Family Involvement**

Middlefork School feels that parent participation is critical to a student being successful in the program. Parent/guardian cooperation and collaboration is essential to this success. Parents/guardians will be regularly informed of student progress.

All Middlefork School parents/guardians are encouraged to attend scheduled meetings.

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum. Should parents/guardians wish to request grades, records, etc..., they will need to contact the student's home school, if the records requested are not available at Middlefork.

### **School Visitation Rights**

The School Visitation Rights Act permits employed parents/guardians, who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict, the right to time off from work under certain conditions to attend necessary school functions such as parent-teacher conferences. Letters verifying participation in this program are available from the school office upon request.

### **Teacher Qualifications**

Parents/guardians may request information about the qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

- Whether the teacher has met State Certification Requirements
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status by which state licensing criteria have been waived
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether any instructional aides or para-professionals provide services to your child, and if so, their qualifications

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the principal.

### **Homeless Child's Right to Education**

When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined at law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

(1) continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or

(2) enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

### **Mandated Reporters**

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, paraprofessionals, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, school board members, etc... are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

### **Sex Offender Notification Law**

State law prohibits a convicted child sex offender from being present on school property when children under the age of 18 are present, except for in the following circumstances as they relate to the individual's child(ren):

1. To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of their child.
2. To participate in a conference in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to their child's special education services.
3. To attend conferences to discuss issues concerning their child such as retention or promotion.

In all other cases, convicted child sex offenders are prohibited from being present on school property unless they obtain written permission from the VASE Board.

Anytime that a convicted child sex offender is present on school property – including the three reasons above - he/she is responsible for notifying the principal's office upon arrival on school property and upon departure from school property. It is the responsibility of the convicted child sex offender to remain under the direct supervision of a school official at all times he/she is in the presence or vicinity of children. A violation of this law is a Class 4 felony.

### **Sex Offender & Violent Offender Community Notification Laws**

State law requires that all school districts provide parents/guardians with information about sex offenders and violent offenders against youth. You may find the Illinois Sex Offender Registry on the Illinois State Police's website at: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/>. You may find the Illinois Statewide Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry on the Illinois State Police's website at: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/cmvo/>.

### **Pesticide Application Notice**

The district maintains a registry of parents/guardians of students who have registered to receive written or telephone notification prior to the application of pesticides to school grounds. To be

added to the list, please contact the school secretary. Notification will be given before application of the pesticide. Prior notice is not required if there is imminent threat to health or property.

### **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act**

The E.P.A. is conducting inspections in school districts statewide to determine if they are in compliance with the federal rules and regulations promulgated under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (“AHERA”). Vermilion Association for Special Education has a management plan in place. The plan will be available for inspection at any time. The plan may be seen by contacting the school office or the VASE Director.

## **XII. Policies**

### **Discrimination Policy**



Middlefork School will not tolerate any form of discrimination practiced in any area of the program. Equity in educational opportunity and facilities will be provided for all students to the fullest extent possible, in accordance with all legal requirements without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religious beliefs, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

### **Equal Educational Opportunities and Sex Equity**

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student or parent/guardian with a sex equity or equal opportunity concern should contact: Nicole Provost, building administrator 217-443-8273 ext 201.

### **Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation & Harassment**

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, immigration status, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is **prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.

4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

*Bullying* includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, nondiscrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

**Compliance Managers:**

**Nicole Provost ,Assistant Director**

**Kristin Dunker, Director of Special Education**

15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd  
Danville, IL 61834  
217-443-8273 ext 203  
provostn@vase.k12.il.us

15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd  
Danville, IL 61834  
217-443-8273, ext 103  
dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial action.

Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in bullying, intimidation or harassment will be subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in this handbook, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the school's discipline policy. Parents/guardians of students who have engaged in the above behavior will be notified. An IEP meeting may also be called to discuss the student's Behavior Intervention Plan.

Any student who, by word, act, deed, or implication attempts to intimidate any staff or student at Middlefork or their home school district may be suspended from Middlefork.

### **Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. A person engages in sexual harassment whenever he or she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and/or engages in other verbal or physical conduct, including sexual violence, of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
  1. Substantially interfering with a student's educational environment
  2. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
  3. Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
  4. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms *intimidating*, *hostile*, and *offensive* include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The term *sexual violence* includes a number of different acts. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

Middlefork School does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form, by any individual. If a student or staff believes they have experienced harassment by another student or staff, he/she should immediately inform the school principal or VASE Director, who will follow uniform grievance procedures (possible written statement of complaint, investigation, written report of investigation, appeal rights).

An employee engaging in sexual harassment will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination and the filing of criminal charges. A student engaging in sexual harassment will be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension. [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 {42 U.S.C. Sec. 2000e et seq.; 29 CFR Sec. 1604.11 (A)}.]

## **Teen Dating Violence Prohibited**

### **Harassment Prohibited**

No person, including a school or school district employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity<sup>5</sup>; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The District will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

### **Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

The school and district shall provide an educational environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law.

### **Teen Dating Violence Prohibited**

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, the term *teen dating violence* occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

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5

## **Making a Report or Complaint**

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidences of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. A student may choose to report to an employee of the student's same gender

### **Compliance Managers:**

**Jill Fulton, Principal**  
15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd  
Danville, IL 61834  
217-443-8273 ext 201  
fultonj@vase.k12.il.us

**Kristin Dunker, Director of Special Education**  
15009 Catlin-Tilton Rd  
Danville, IL 61834  
217-443-8273 ext 103  
dunkerk@vase.k12.il.us

Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.

### **Accommodating Breastfeeding Students**

Students who choose to breastfeed an infant after returning to school are provided reasonable accommodations. A student who is a nursing mother may take reasonable breaks during the school day to express breast milk or breastfeed her infant. Reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Access to a private and secure room, other than a bathroom, to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant.
- Permission to bring onto school campus a breast pump or other equipment used to express breast milk.
- Access to a power source for a breast pump or any other equipment used to express breast milk.
- Access to a place to store expressed breast milk safely.
- Reasonable breaks to accommodate the student's need to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant child.
- The opportunity to make up work missed due to the student's use of reasonable accommodations for breastfeeding.
- Complaints regarding violations of this procedure should be made to the District's Complaint Manager or Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

### **Equal Opportunity & Sex Equity**

Equal educational opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religious beliefs, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. No student shall, based on sex or sexual orientation, be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational programs and activities. Any student or parent/guardian with a sex equity or equal opportunity concern should contact the building administrator.