

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

STURGIS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

2023-2024 School Year

Student/Parent Handbook

for the

STURGIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Welcome to the Sturgis Public Schools. All the members of the staff and I are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it.

Dr. Arthur Ebert, Superintendent (269) 659-1500
Mrs. Nicole Gittinger, Assistant Superintendent (269) 659-1500

SCHOOL CALENDAR STURGIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2023-2024

August	21	First Day of School, Half day Students (Grades K-12), Full Day Staff
September	1,4	No School – Labor Day Weekend
	18	No School for Students, Teachers Full Day Professional Development
October	4	Pupil Accounting Count Day
	9-12	Secondary Parent-Teacher Conference Week
	16-19	Elementary Parent-Teacher Conference Week
	20	End of Marking Period
November	22-24	No School - Thanksgiving Break
December	22	Half day Students (K-12), Teacher Records PM / Semester Ends
	25-29	No School - Winter Recess
January	1-5	No School - Winter Recess
	8	School Resumes
	15	No School – MLK Day, Teachers Full Day Professional Development
February	9,12	No School - Mid-Winter Break
	14	Pupil Accounting Count Day
March	4-7	Parent Teacher Conference Week
	15	3rd Marking Period Ends
	22-29	No School – Spring Break
May	27	No School- Memorial Day
	31	Half day Students (Grades K-12), Teacher Records PM / Last Day Students
	31	End of Second Semester

BUILDING TIME SCHEDULES:

<u>Building</u>	<u>Start – End</u>	<u>Half Day Dismiss</u>
Middle School	7:25 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.	10:45 a.m.
High School	7:40 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.	11:00 a.m.
Congress, Wall, Wenzel, and Central Commons	8:35 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	11:55 a.m.
Eastwood	8:50 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.	12:10 p.m.

BUILDING OFFICE HOURS:

Middle School	6:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
High School	7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
K-2 Schools	7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
District Office	7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Eastwood School	7:45 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

NOTE: Dates could change due to weather or other events beyond the control of Sturgis Public Schools.

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FOREWORD

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that students and parents may have during the school year and to provide important, specific information about certain Board policies and procedures that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of August 1, 2022. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after August 1, 2022, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL

Sturgis Public Schools provides rigorous learning environments that are student focused, strategically collaborative, and taught through a variety of experiences and opportunities. We remove barriers that prevent success and cultivate lifelong learners.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer listed below:

Nicole Gittinger
Assistant Superintendent
(269) 659-1500

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260 & 2260.01. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

See specific building handbooks, building principals, and/or SPS transparency report for parent involvement policies.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program.

Adult students (age eighteen (18) or older) must follow all school rules.

If residing at home, adult students should include their parents in their educational program.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Student safety is the responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lockdown and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School Office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs along with proper documentation by a physician, to the School Office.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the building administration. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; and, present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides.

- ✓ unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.
- ✓ unless enrolling and paying tuition.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document,
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- C. proof of residency, and,
- D. proof of immunizations.

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. Office personnel will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

New students eighteen (18) years of age or older are not required to be accompanied by a parent when enrolling. When residing with a parent, these students are encouraged to include the parents in the enrollment process. When conducting themselves in school, adult students have the responsibilities of both student and parent.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT

Elementary level

The principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

Secondary level

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the building office. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need to pass prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a pass or schedule change.

Foreign students and foreign-exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal is highly discouraged, but if necessary, a written permission slip is requested.

TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT

Parents must notify the principal regarding plans to transfer their child to another school. It is expected that the student will return all school materials and pay any fees or fines that are due. The retention of any school material is considered a theft if not returned.

It should be noted that School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the building secretary.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

The Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form completed and signed by his/her parent in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each year. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student's educational program.

USE OF MEDICATIONS POLICY 5330/FORMS 5330 F1, F1A, F1B, OR F1C

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b, and F1c must be filed with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- C. All medications must be registered with the principal's office.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.

Medication may be conveyed to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.

- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

Asthma Inhalers and Epi-pens- Policy 5330/Form 5330 F1c

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan developed by the school principal and updated annually.

Non Prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications- Policy 5330/Form 5330 F1a/F1b

Elementary (Grades K to 6)

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician does not have to authorize such medication but all of the other conditions described above under prescribed medications will also apply to non-prescribed medications. The student may be authorized on the request form by his/her parent to self-administer the medication in the presence of a school staff member. No other exceptions will be made to these requirements.

Secondary (Grades 7 to 12)

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician does not have to authorize such medication. The parent may also authorize on the form that their child may self-administer the medication and may keep the medication in his/her possession.

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent authorization, s/he will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received.

Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription and instructions from the child's physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication. The parent must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS- 8450

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines.

CONTROL OF NON CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES- 8453

In the case of non-casual-contact, communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non Casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the principal to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extracurricular programs of the District. It is, therefore the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extracurricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the ESL Director at (269) 659-1500 ext. 40402 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

STUDENT RECORDS- Policy 8330

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the Board nor its employees shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:

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

A .	<i>a student's name;</i>
B .	<i>participation in officially recognized activities and sports;</i>
C .	<i>height and weight, if member of an athletic team;</i>
D .	<i>height if member of an athletic team;</i>
E .	<i>weight, if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate;</i>
F .	<i>dates of attendance;</i>
G .	<i>date of graduation;</i>
H .	<i>awards received;</i>

	I .	<i>honor rolls;</i>
	J .	<i>scholarships;</i>
	K .	<i>school photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs;</i>

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

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the District within ten (10) days after receipt of the District's public notice.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) notice which can be found on SPS's website, under "Parents" heading and "Required Parent Notification" or http://www.sturgisps.org/parents/required_parent_notification.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to inspect and review copies of all educational records. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to your building administrator. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the

student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if not an emancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that

information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose); and

- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605
Washington, D.C.
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

FERPA@ED.Gov; and
PPRA@ED.Gov.

ARMED FORCES RECRUITING

The School must provide at least the same access to the high school campus and student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. “Armed forces” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request (Form 8330 F13) to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student’s directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives then the school officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student’s directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of Directory information. Public notice shall be given regarding right to refuse disclosure to any or all “directory information” including in the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND SUPPLIES

Sturgis Public School charges specific fees for the following non curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit.

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes. (See Policy 6152)

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Their use may be needed by others.

STUDENT FUNDRAISING 5830

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules will apply to all fund-raisers.

Students involved in the fundraiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.

Students must not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members without the approval of the student's teacher or counselor.

Students may not participate in fundraising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.

Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the Principal.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the School. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

MEAL SERVICE

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents interested in being involved should contact Food Services at (269) 659-1546.

The school provides a Free Breakfast to students K-12 and participates in the National School Lunch Program. Fifty cents (50¢) for a carton of milk, and other a la carte items are available. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria.

Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes that s/he is eligible, contact the building secretary or Food Services at 659-1546 or go to our website at: www.lunchapp.com

You may view your student's account, transfer money between students or make online deposits at: www.sendmoneytoschool.com

Monthly menus are available on our website at: www.sturgisps.org

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) (http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) online, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

FIRE, LOCKDOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building if required. The alarm signal for fire drills consists of an alarm and strobe lights.

Weather drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State. The alarm signal for tornadoes is different from the alarm signal for fires and lockdown drills and consists of personal or amplified voice.

Lockdown/shelter-in-place drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of three (3) times each school year.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify the following radio and television stations:

WBET Radio 99.3 FM
WKFR Radio 103.3 FM
WWMT TV- CBS

WTHD Radio 105.5 FM
WRKR Radio 107.7 FM
WNDU TV- NBC

WLKM Radio 95.9 FM
WOOD TV- NBC
Fox 17

Social Media as found on the front page of district website (www.sturgisps.org). Our texting, and/or phone messaging systems, if parents choose to participate. Information on signing up for alerts can be found under the “Parents” tab of the district website.

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District’s *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy* and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request.

VISITORS

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal and/or proper authorities. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff,

s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the Principal.

Visitors will be asked for a picture ID.

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Students must receive the permission of the teacher before using any equipment or materials in the classroom and the permission of the Principal to use any other school equipment or facility. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and protection of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area can be found within designated locations in each building. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

STUDENT SALES

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

USE OF TELEPHONES

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in an emergency, students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call.

ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within twenty-four (24) hours of their receipt.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extracurricular program. Code of Conduct applies as if you were in school.

GRADES

Unique to individual school and report cards will be issued based upon the school calendar.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students who have displayed significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include but are not limited to academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism. Recognition for such activities is initiated by the staff and coordinated by the administration.

HOMEWORK

The assignment of homework can be expected. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the State mandated test and graduation.

Homework will not generally be used for disciplinary reasons but only to enhance the student's learning.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may take advantage of the School's computer network and the internet, s/he and his/her parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. Copies of the School District's *Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy* and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed.

STUDENT EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY

We are very pleased to bring a wide range of technologies to students and staff at Sturgis Public Schools. The internet and computers on our network are used to support the educational objectives of Sturgis Public Schools. Use of these technologies is a privilege and is subject to

a variety of terms and conditions. Sturgis Public Schools retains the right to change such terms and conditions at any time. This document also gives school staff permission to use your child's work or picture on a school web page or social media site. If you do not want your child represented in this manner, please write a note across the bottom of the AUP signature page.

Students- All levels

I understand that it is my responsibility to honor the Acceptable Use Policy and uphold the Sturgis Public Schools Technology Values both online, offline, at school and at home. I understand that my actions can affect others and that I will be accountable for my behavior. I will not engage in activities that are in violation of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and agree to follow these rules and guidelines when using technology. This applies while I am at Sturgis Public Schools as well as I when I am off campus.

Parents- All levels

I hereby release Sturgis Public Schools, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the Sturgis Public Schools network. I will instruct my child regarding the rules of use contained in this document and understand and agree that the agreements contained herein are incorporated into the contract under which my child is enrolled at Sturgis Public Schools. I understand that it is impossible for Sturgis Public Schools to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the district responsible for materials accessed on the network.

I accept full responsibility if and when my child's use of technology is not in a school setting and understand that my child is subject to the same rules and agreements while not at school. I understand that Sturgis Public Schools encourages parents and guardians to supervise and monitor any online activity. I am aware of my child's account information and passwords for the Sturgis Public Schools network and Google account.

Grades K-2 Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

1. I will work on computers under the direction of a teacher or a teacher's aide.
2. I will use the computer only for schoolwork.
3. I will treat all computer equipment and the work of others with respect.
4. If I damage equipment or cause problems on purpose, I will be disciplined.
5. I am willing to learn about the proper use of technology and also the rules of the Internet.
6. I understand that I will not be allowed to use the school computers or the Internet until my parent/guardian and I sign and return this form.
7. I will follow these rules and any other rules that may be added by the school. If I do not, I may be disciplined, and I may lose my Internet and/or technology privileges.

Grades 3-5 Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

1. Communication
I will use language that is pertinent and appropriate when submitting academic work, participating in online forums and working collaboratively. I will be thoughtful and mindful about the language I use when posting online or sending messages to someone else. I will be mindful of how my words are interpreted by others. I will not use profanity or any language that is offensive.
2. Privacy
I will be aware of the privacy settings on websites to which I subscribe. I understand that anything I do online or electronically is not private and can be monitored. I will not share any personal information about myself, family or faculty. This includes passwords, home addresses, phone numbers, ages and birth date.
3. Honesty and Safety
I will not engage in behavior that puts myself or others at risk. I will represent myself honestly. This includes accessing the network using an account other than my own. I will seek help if I feel unsafe, bullied or witness unkind behavior. I will only communicate with people I know. I will follow safety guidelines posted by sites to which I subscribe.
4. Learning
I will have a positive attitude and be willing to explore different technologies. I will evaluate the validity of information presented online and understand that not everything online is true. I agree to document and properly cite all information acquired through online sources including but not limited to images, videos and music.
5. Respect for self and others
I will not upload or publish personal information, private communications, photos, or videos of other people without permission. I will respond thoughtfully to the opinions, ideas and values of others. I will not send or share inappropriate emails or texts.
6. Respect for school and personal property
I will take care of all equipment on campus. I will report misuse and/or inappropriate content to my teachers and/or school administration. I will use the computers on campus for school related purposes only.

Grades 6-12 Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Sturgis Public Schools has taken strong precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. We incorporate filters and firewalls that block Internet access to obscene and inappropriate material for minors. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information. Sturgis Public Schools firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on the worldwide information source outweighs the possibility that users may procure material not consistent with the educational goals of the district. This document also gives school staff permission to use your child's work or picture on a school web page or social media site. If

you do not want your child represented in this manner, please write a note across the bottom of the an AUP signature page.

As used herein, the term “Computer[s]” refers to any desktop, laptop, or other mobile computing device owned or issued by the Sturgis Public School district to any student for school and/or home use. The term “Privately-Owned Computer[s]” refers to any privately-owned desktop, laptop, or other mobile computing device. The term “Computer Services” refers to the School District’s network or Internet connections used to access school or Internet-Based information.

Acceptable Use

1. Use of school computers and connection to the Internet is a privilege. Computers and computer services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the Sturgis Public School’s educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals.
2. Students are expected to comply with all Board policies, school rules and expectations concerning student conduct and communications when using Computers and/or Computer Services, whether on or off school property.
3. Students also are expected to comply with all specific instructions from school staff and volunteers when using the Computers and/or Computer Services.
4. Student use of school computers and the Internet may be taken away at any time. Students might also face disciplinary action including loss of all computer privileges if misuse of either Computers and/or Computer Services occurs.

Prohibited Uses

Unacceptable uses of Computer and/or Computer Services include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Accessing or Communicating Inappropriate Materials – Students may not access, submit, post, publish, forward, download, scan or display defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying and/or illegal materials, images (still or video) or messages.
2. Illegal Activities – Students may not use Computers and/or Computer Services for any illegal activity or in violation of any Board policy/procedure or school rule. Sturgis Public School assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using Computer and/or Computer Services.
3. Violating Copyrights or Software Licenses – Students may not copy, download or share any type of copyrighted materials (including music or films) without the owner’s permission or copy or download software without the express authorization of the Technology Director except as expressly provided below in connection with the district’s 1:1 mobile devices. Unauthorized copying of software is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. The school district assumes no responsibility for copyright or licensing violations by students.

4. Downloading “Apps” from Unauthorized Sources – Students may download apps onto mobile devices issued by the district provided that those apps do not violate the other provisions of this section regarding “Prohibited Uses” and provided they are downloaded from a school-authorized source. In the event school staff discovers inappropriate materials on a student device, the device may be confiscated and the materials removed without student permission, even if it means the loss of student purchased material, and appropriate restrictions may be placed on the student’s future computer use. The school staff also has the right to confiscate or search computers at any time with or without cause as part of an effort to deter violations of these rules and to confiscate and search Privately-Owned computers on school grounds upon reasonable suspicion of a violation of this “Prohibited Uses” section.

5. Plagiarism – Students may not represent as their own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, music, etc). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher and web site must be identified.

6. Use for Non-School Purposes – using Computers and/or Computer Services for any personal reasons not connected with the educational program or school assignments is permissible so long as those uses do not constitute a violation of the “Prohibited Uses” section of these rules and/or are not interfering with the education purpose of these devices by the students and others.

7. Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access – Students may not share passwords, use other user's password, access or use other user’s accounts, or attempt to circumvent the network security systems and/or computer services.

8. Malicious Use/Vandalism – Students may not engage in any malicious use, disruption or harm to computers and/or computer services, including but not limited to hacking activities, “jail breaking”, VPN’s, or creating/uploading computer viruses.

9. Email – School supplied email is intended for education purposes. School email should not be used for buying, selling or sending unsolicited bulk email. School email accounts should not be used to register for non-educational accounts. All students should have a personal email that can be used for non-school purposes. Sharing a school email account with another is not allowed.

10. Recording – Unauthorized video and audio recording on school grounds is prohibited.

11. Privately Owned Devices – Students must connect Privately-Owned devices using only the Sturgis Public School public wireless network and may not use a network cable for Internet or Network access.

12. Hotspots - Students may not create or maintain a wireless hotspot.

Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

The student and his/her parents are responsible for compensating the Sturgis Public School District for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school district for violations of Board policies/procedures and school rules while the student is using Computers and/or Computer Services, including the cost of investigating such violations. The school district assumes no

responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a student while using Computer and/or Computer Services. The student and his/her parents/guardians are similarly responsible if the student takes any action with a computer that has the purpose or effect of voiding any warranty in effect covering such Computer or of providing students access to apps that are available other than at the app source authorized for use by the school.

Student Privacy and Safety

A student should exercise caution, in consultation with a parent or school staff member, before revealing his/her full name, email address, physical address, telephone number, social security number, or other personal information on the Internet. Students should never agree to meet people they have contacted through the Internet. Students should inform their teacher and/or parent if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them uncomfortable in any way.

Material created and/or stored on the system is not guaranteed to be private. Network administrators may review the system from time to time to ensure that the system is being used properly. For this reason, students should expect that emails, material used on personal web pages and social media sites, and other work that is created on the network may be viewed by a third party.

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

Individual and group tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Sturgis Public Schools provide students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. A curricular-related activity may be for credit, required for a particular course, and/or contain school subject matter.

A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's extracurricular participation.

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the School curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non-school sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the Principal. The application must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. School rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as prescribed by law is not permitted. Zero tolerance will be given for any type of gang related activities.

SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE- Policy 5200

School Attendance Policy

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Many important learnings result from active participation in classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the School wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

Truancy

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant may not receive credit for school work that is missed. After ten (10) days of truancy in any grading period, a student will be considered an "habitual truant" which can result in:

Assignment to an alternative placement with loss of participation in school activities and events;

A hearing before a judge in a court of law;

A report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school for one or more of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed school work and/or tests:

Personal Illness

Illness in the Family

Quarantine of the Home

Death of a Relative

Observance of Religious Holiday

Absence During the School Day for Professional Appointments

Other "good cause" as may be accepted by the Superintendent or designee

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

Parents must provide an explanation for their child's absence soon as possible, within 24 hours. They are to call attendance line for their student's specific school and explain the reason for the absence. If the absence can be foreseen and the "good cause" must be approved

by the superintendent or designee, the parent should arrange to discuss the matter as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up the missed school work.

Students who are excusably absent for more than 5 days in a grading period, regardless of the reasons, will be considered “frequently absent”. If there is a pattern of frequent absence for “illness”, the parents will be required to provide a statement from a physician describing the health condition that is causing the frequent illness and the treatment that is being provided to rectify the condition. Without such a statement, the student’s permanent attendance record will indicate “frequently unexplained illness”, a possible sign of poor work ethic and irresponsible behavior.

During the next grading period, a “frequently-absent” student will be placed on “attendance watch” to monitor whether or not the pattern continues. If it continues, the student may be denied the opportunity to participate in noncurricular school activities and events and a notation made on his/her grading record concerning his/her frequent absence from school. Such a report may be provided postsecondary institutions and/or possible employers.

Suspension from School- 5610

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them into the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from building office beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school.

The student will be given credit for properly-completed assignments and a grade on any made-up tests.

Excusable, Non-Approved Absence

If a student is absent from school because of suspension or vacation, the absence will not be considered a truancy, and s/he may be given the opportunity to make up the school work that is missed.

Unexcused Absences

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant and the student and his/her parents shall be subject to truancy laws of the State.

Notification of Absence

If a student is going to be absent, the parents must contact the school as soon as possible, within 24 hours, and provide an explanation. If prior contact is not possible, the parents should provide a written excuse as soon as possible. When no excuse is provided, the absence

will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

The student is required to make up all work from all absences. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of school work such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

The skipping of classes or any part of the school day is considered an unexcused absence. Disciplinary action will follow.

Tardiness

Elementary Level.

Any student arriving late and/or leaving early from school is to report to the school office before proceeding to class or leaving the building. Students arriving to school at any time after the start of and/or leaving prior to the end of an attendance period are considered tardy for that period.

Secondary Level

Each student is expected to be in his/her assigned location throughout the school day. If a student is late in arriving at school, s/he is to report to the school office before proceeding to his/her first assigned location. Students who are more than 10 minutes late to class will be considered absent for that instructional period.

Students who are frequently tardy during a semester may be disciplined as follows:

Referred to administration for corrective action. (AG 5200)

Vacations During the School Year

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the principal and the student's teacher(s) to make the necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip.

Make-up of Tests and Other School Work

Students who are excusably absent from school or who have been suspended shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact individual teachers and/or office staff as soon as possible to obtain assignments.

See building handbooks for specific details.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as nonparticipants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The School will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a School activity. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at Sturgis Public Schools is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Expected Behaviors

Each student shall be expected to:

- Conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior;
- Respect the person and property of others;
- Preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

Dress and Grooming

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

Students should consider the following questions when dressing for school:

Does my clothing expose too much? (no)

Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors? (no)

Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing? (no)

Am I dressed appropriately for the weather? (yes)

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting.

Students who are representing our schools at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

Gangs

Gangs which initiate, advocate or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or which are disruptive to the school environment are not tolerated.

Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations or related activities which are likely to cause harm or personal degradation are prohibited.

Students wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures which symbolize gang membership or causing and/or participating in activities which

are designed to intimidate another student will be disciplined. Prohibited gang paraphernalia will be specifically identified and posted by the building principal.

Care of Property

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the school staff's responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

(Organized by Rule Number)

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

1. Use of drugs- Policy 5530

A student's use or sale of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and extracurricular participation.

The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3.1 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic and extracurricular participation.

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs

is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted.

The sale, distribution, possession, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs that has a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic beers and wines, and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

2. Use of Breath-Test Instruments

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

3. Use of tobacco

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

4. Student disorder/demonstration

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is a need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

5. Possession of a weapon

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item
- B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle
- C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

6. Use of an object as a weapon

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to expulsion.

7. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

8. Purposely setting a fire

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and will subject the student to expulsion.

9. Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and subject the student to expulsion.

Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

10. Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

11. Extortion

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

12. Gambling

Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

13. Falsification of school work, identification, forgery

Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false I.D.'s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

14. False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

15. Explosives

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

16. Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not

trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

17. Theft

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from school personnel. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

18. Disobedience

School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in expulsion.

19. Damaging property

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

20. Persistent absence or tardiness

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to suspension from school.

21. Unauthorized use of school or private property

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes the use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guidelines. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

22. Refusing to accept discipline

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

23. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

24. Displays of affection

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

25. Possession of Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs)

Reasonable suspicion that a communication device has been used to violate District policies or administrative guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary action and may result in the communication device being confiscated.

A student may possess a wireless communication devices (WCDs) or other electronic communication devices (ECDs) and electronic storage devices (ESDs) in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school related functions provided that during school hours, school events, and on a school vehicle its use is not disruptive or distracting to the educational process, the scheduled activity, or other participants, provided that the WCD or other ECD/ESD remains off.

Except as authorized under Board policy, use of WCDs and electronic storage devices in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions will be subject to disciplinary action.

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy.” A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

“Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the WCD.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, s/he will fail the exam and possible suspension. S/He also faces automatic withdrawal from the class depending on the severity of the incident. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.

26. Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

27. Violation of bus rules

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules.

28. Disruption of the educational process

Any actions or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

29. Harassment

Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional wellbeing. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless handheld device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or assistant principal, or may report it directly to the building or district office Compliance Officers (Nick Herblet SHS or Nicole Gittinger Assist. Superintendent). Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in

trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

- A. submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- B. submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- C. the unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

- A. verbal harassment or abuse;
- B. pressure for sexual activity;
- C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- D. unwelcome touching;
- E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety;
- G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- H. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

29a. Hazing

The Sturgis Public Schools strongly believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- A. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
- B. physical punishment or infliction of pain
- C. intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
- D. dangerous activity;
- E. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
- F. forced detention or kidnapping;
- G. undressing or otherwise exposing initiates.

29b. Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior- 5517.01

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and

contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Prevention/Training

The Superintendent shall establish a program or other initiatives involving school staff, students, clubs or other student groups, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement, community members, and other stakeholders, aimed at the prevention of bullying or other aggressive behavior.

The District shall provide, and all administrators, school employees, contracted employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students shall undertake training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and other aggressive behavior.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or

telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the

basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

"Intimidation/Menacing" includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:

Harassment, see Policy 5517;

Hazing, see Policy 5516.

M.C.L. 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011)

Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education

Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

30. Possession of a Firearm, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students shall be subject to disciplinary action (Suspension/Expulsion) as required by statute for such specified offenses as physical and verbal assault (see Policy 5610.01).

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the principal's office.

Criminal acts

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

Safety Concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Profanity

Any behavior or language, which in the judgement of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the School shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Detentions

A student may be detained after school or asked to come to school early by a teacher, after giving the student and his/her parents one (1) days' notice. The student or his/her parents are responsible for transportation.

Formal Discipline

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Removal for less than

one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense.

If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to SPS Superintendent and a formal appeal hearing will be held.

Suspension from co-curricular and extracurricular activities may not be appealed.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to attend. The Assistant Superintendent then takes testimony and determines if a recommendation to expel is to be made to the Board of Education. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

Students involved in co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the School rules.

If a student commits a crime while at school or a school-related event, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the community's legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime)

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Suspension from School

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the building Administrator. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

Suspension from co-curricular and extracurricular activities may not be appealed.

During the appeal process, the student shall not be allowed to remain in school.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meeting Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up will be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

Long-term suspension or expulsion from school

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- * the charge and related evidence;
- * the time and place of the Board meeting;
- * the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion;
- * a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- * a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- * a statement that the student and/or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired students or parents;
- * a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- * a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction;
- * the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if Board/hearing officer approved.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. Please refer to AG5610 in the District Policy Manual for further details. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Sturgis Public Schools will make a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the Assistant Superintendent.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.).

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. A material cannot be displayed if it:

1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively or vulgar,
 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
 3. intends to be insulting or harassing, intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
 4. Intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
 5. Presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.
- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the building administrator at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.

A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

The school provides transportation for all students who live farther than 1 mile for K-2 Students (Congress, Wall, and Wenzel Schools), farther than 1.25 miles for 3-5 Students (Eastwood School), and farther than 1.5 miles for 6-12 Students (Middle and High Schools). The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Transportation Office at 659-1590. All bus stops must be approved by the Transportation Supervisor.

Students may only ride assigned school buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the principal.

The building principal may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the principal's approval of a note from parent stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

BUS CONDUCT

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation.

The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain that transportation safety.

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

Previous to loading (on the road and at school)

Each student shall:

- ✓ be on time at the designated loading zone (:10 minutes prior to scheduled stop);
- ✓ stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the school transportation;
- ✓ line up single file off the roadway to enter;
- ✓ wait until the school transportation is completely stopped before moving forward to enter;
- ✓ refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe to cross;
- ✓ go immediately to a seat and be seated.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the bus driver when their child will not be aboard school transportation. The bus will not wait. Drivers will not wait for students who are not at their designated stops on time.

During the trip

Each student shall:

- ✓ remain seated while the school transportation is in motion;
- ✓ keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the school vehicle at all times;
- ✓ not litter in the school vehicle or throw anything from the vehicle;
- ✓ keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle;
- ✓ be courteous to the driver and to other riders;
- ✓ be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver;
- ✓ not tamper with the school vehicle or any of its equipment.

Leaving the bus

Each student shall:

- ✓ remain seated until the vehicle has stopped;
- ✓ cross the road, when necessary, at least ten (10) feet in front of the vehicle, but only after the driver signals that it is safe;
- ✓ be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless s/he has proper authorization from school officials.

VIDEOTAPES ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. All primary busses are equipped with video camera systems.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.

SCHOOL BUS CODE OF CONDUCT

On the bus discipline process:

1. **First Written Violation** – A written warning will be given to the student by a transportation driver or administrator. The student in turn will be required to have their parent sign the warning verifying they have received it. A copy of the warning will be sent to the building principal by the transportation department alerting them an incident has occurred. The signed notice from the parents/guardian must be returned to either the driver or transportation department within 3 days of issuance or transportation privileges' will be denied. Bus privileges will only be reinstated once the signed notice has been returned. There shall be no appeal to a written first violation.
2. **Second Written Violation** – A Written Warning will be given to the student by a transportation driver or administrator. A copy will be sent to the student's Parents/Guardian and building principal notifying them of the incident. The transportation department will also initiate direct contact with the parents/guardian. There shall be no appeal to a second written violation.
3. **Third Violation** – One day suspension from bus privileges. A notice that bus privileges will be suspended for one day will be given to the student by the bus driver, or administrator with a copy sent the school administrator and parents/guardian. There shall be no appeal for a one day suspension of bus privileges.
4. **Fourth Violation** – Three day suspension from bus privileges. A notice that bus privileges will be suspended for three days will be given to the student by the bus driver or administrator, with a copy sent the school administrator and student's parent/guardian. There shall be no appeal for a three day suspension of bus privileges.
5. **Fifth Violation** – Five day suspension from bus privileges. A notice that bus privileges will be suspended for five days will be given to the student by the transportation administrator or the student's school administrator. Notice will be sent to the parent/guardian about the suspension of bus privileges. The parent/guardian may appeal the suspension. The first step in the appeal will be for the parents to request a conference with both the transportation administrator and the student's school administrator. This must be done within 3 days of parental/guardian notification. If the parent/guardian are not satisfied with the decision, they may further request review by the transportation appeals committee.
6. **Sixth Violation** – One full semester suspension of bus privileges. A notice that bus privileges will be suspended for one semester will be given to the student by the transportation administrator or the student's school administrator. Notice will be sent to the parent/guardian about the suspension of bus privileges. The parent/guardian may appeal the suspension. The first step in the appeal will be for the parents to request a conference with both the transportation administrator and the student's school administrator. This must be done within 3 days of parental notification. If the parent/guardian are not satisfied with the decision, they may further request review by the transportation appeals committee.

7. **Seventh Violation-** Suspension for the remainder of the school year from bus privileges. A notice that bus privileges will be suspended for the remainder of the school year will be given to the student by the transportation or student's school administrators. Notice will be sent to the parents/guardians about the suspension of bus privileges. The parents/guardian may appeal the suspension. The first step in the appeal will be for the parents to request a conference with both the transportation and the student's school administrators. This must be done within 3 days of parental notification. If the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision, they may request review by the transportation appeals committee.

Violations, which can be verbal or written, will be issued due to behavior that interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of the bus. Continued violations may become suspensions of bus privileges if the behavior continues, or if the driver/transportation administrator believes actions compromises passenger or driver safety.

Below are listed some examples of activity which could result in either type of violations:

1. **Boarding or leaving the bus in an unsafe manner** – Failing to line-up properly at the bus stop. Students should be off the roadway. Pushing or shoving while boarding or exiting the bus.
2. **Consumption of food or beverages** – Eating and drinking are not permitted.
3. **Inappropriate personal property** – Possessing and or the use of personal property prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct Guidelines and otherwise disruptive to the safe operation of the bus, such as cellular phones, electronic pocket beepers, non-district approved electronic communication devices, animals, pets, or glass containers.
4. **Littering** – Scattering, discarding, or leaving refuse
5. **Sitting improperly on the bus** – Changing an assigned seat without permission of the driver. Not staying seated until arriving at the final destination. Failing to sit as directed by the driver. Saving or reserving seats
6. **Tampering with windows** – Lowering or raising windows without the driver's permission.
7. **Tardiness** – Failing to be at the bus stop at the appropriate time prior to and after school in the line-up.
8. **Unsafe riding practices** – Acting in a manner detrimental to the health or safe transportation of the student, passengers, or driver.

A suspension of transportation privileges is usually caused by more severe actions than listed above. These actions interfere with the safe operation of the bus.

Short or long term suspension of transportation privileges may happen for items listed below:

1. **Disruptive behavior** – Behaving in a manner which interrupts or interferes with the safe operation of the bus, i.e. making excessive noise, rough-housing or distracting the driver.
2. **Extending anything out of the windows** – Extending parts of the body, books, papers, etc. out of the bus windows.
3. **Bullying/harassment/verbal abuse** – Disturbing by teasing, pestering, or tormenting, including any verbal, electronic, or written intimidation because of a person's race, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or physical characteristic(s).
4. **Holding onto the outside of the bus in any manner** – Touching mirrors, fenders, bumpers, doors, etc. while stopped or moving.
5. **Improper crossing** – Crossing behind the bus (M.V.C. 257.1855 SEC.3), stopping in front or returning across the road in front of the bus. Reaching under the bus or the tires for any reason.
6. **Inappropriate use of emergency door** – Using the emergency door in a non-emergency situation without authorization from the driver.
7. **Insubordination/refusal to follow directions** – Failing to comply with a reasonable direction or instruction. Refusing to identify one's self.
8. **Physical aggressiveness** – Engaging in aggressive physical contact such as pushing, shoving, tripping, etc.
9. **Possession/use of tobacco products** – Possessing or smoking a cigarette or using tobacco products, such as smokeless tobacco.
10. **Vandalism or defacing the bus in any manner** – Writing on seats, cutting seats, etc.
11. **Tampering with any part of the bus** – Tampering with switches, doors, steering wheel, etc.
12. **Throwing objects** – Throwing objects in the bus, out of the bus, or at the bus driver or other passengers.
13. **Use of profanity** – Writing, saying, or gesturing in a manner which conveys an offensive, obscene or sexually suggestive messages.
14. **Using undesignated stop** – Getting on or off the bus somewhere other than the student's designated bus stop without a pass from the building or Transportation Administrator.

In cases of severe misconduct, any of the stated steps may be omitted. Long term suspension of transportation privileges will be enacted if the behavior is of an aggravated nature, continuous, or unlawful. At this level, discipline procedures in the Student Code of Conduct will apply.

Because of the safety-sensitive nature of school bus transportation, the bus driver, in conjunction with the transportation and student's building administrators, are vested with discretion in the issuance of discipline, and in determining to suspend students from the

bus. There shall be no appeal to a bus suspension of bus privileges not exceeding three (3) school days. In cases of suspension from transportation privileges in excess of three (3) school days, a parent or guardian may request an appeal. To make an appointment for a conference, the parent or guardian must contact the student's building administrator or transportation administrator within three (3) school days of issuance of the notice of suspension.

SECTION VI – NONDISCRIMINATION & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In Compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Sturgis Public Schools District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment.

For information, contact:

Nicole Gittinger, Assistant Superintendent
107 W. West Street
Sturgis, MI 49091
269-659-1500

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

PURPOSE: The purpose of these procedures is to secure, at the lowest possible level, prompt and equitable resolution of complaints based on:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ***prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin;***
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which ***prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;***
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which ***prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability;***
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which ***prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.***
- Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976 ***prohibits discrimination in Michigan on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status or marital status in employment, housing, education, and access to public accommodations;***
- Age discrimination act of 1975, ***prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.***

I. DEFINITIONS:

A. "Title VI" of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that: No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits, or be subjected to discrimination under any program activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

B. "Title IX" of the Educational Amendments of 1972 - No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Sex discrimination under Title IX includes sexual harassment and sexual violence.

“Sexual Harassment” – Conduct occurring between any persons, including members of the same sex, that:

- is sexual in nature;
- is unwelcome; and
- denies or limits a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from a school’s education program.

Sexual Harassment may include acts of sexual violence. Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

“Sexual Violence” - Physical sexual acts occurring between any persons, including members of the same sex, perpetrated by against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student’s age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. Sexual violence can be carried out by school employees, other students, or third parties. All such acts of sexual violence are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

C. Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 ensures that the child with a disability has equal access to an education. The child may receive accommodations and modifications.

D. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 addresses the obligation of public schools to ensure, through the provision of auxiliary aids and services, that communication with individuals with disabilities is as effective as communication with students without disabilities.

E. Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act prohibits discriminatory practices, policies, and customs in the exercise of those rights based upon religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, familial status or marital status

F. "Complainant" - A complainant is any individual who submits a complaint alleging discriminatory action or treatment prohibited by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, Title II and Elliot-Larsen.

G. Respondent" - the person alleged to be responsible for the prohibited conduct alleged in a complaint.

H. "Day" - The calculation of days in complaint processing, except as otherwise expressly provided, shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and federal, state and school holidays or closures.

I. "Complaint Submission Date" - the date on which a written complaint was received by the Responsible Administrator.

J. "Responsible Administrator" - The Assistant Superintendent, the authorized designee of these individuals, or the administrator designated by the Superintendent, as

appropriate.

K. "Neutral and objective investigator/administrator" - an administrator or designated investigator who is not the subject of a complaint or is not a Complainant

II. **PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS.**

A. **Time Limits.** A complaint under this procedure should be filed as soon as possible after the time of occurrence of the alleged violation. Failure of a complainant or appellant to comply with any time limitation in the complaint procedure may result in dismissal of the complaint and/or denial of the appeal. Dismissal shall not preclude the individual's right to pursue the complaint through other appropriate external agencies. If a district representative fails to comply with any time limitation in the complaint procedure, the Complainant may immediately proceed to the next level permitted by these Procedures.

B. **Service.** Service of any notice or decision provided for under this procedure shall be deemed effective on the person served as of the date of delivery, if personally served, faxed or emailed, or effective three (3) calendar days of deposit by first class mail if delivered by mail.

C. **Confidentiality.**

1. Confidentiality will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Any information gathered during an informal procedure may be used during a formal procedure, if initiated. While there can be no assurance of complete confidentiality, complaints under this procedure will be treated as sensitive information not to be shared with others except in limited circumstances. Examples of exceptions to maintaining confidentiality include:

- information the law requires to be reported.
- information imparted to others in supervisory positions in order to further an investigation or halt a discriminatory practice.
- information given to the respondent in order to have sufficient information to respond to the allegations.

2. The District will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to a complaint consistent with a request by the complaining party not to disclose his/her name. However, such requests for confidentiality may limit the District's ability to adequately investigate and respond to the allegations raised in the complaint.

3. Requests for confidentiality, therefore, will be evaluated in the context of the District's responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students, and the request will be weighed against whatever factors the District deems relevant, including, without limitation:

- the complainant's age;
- circumstances that suggest there is an increased risk of future acts of harassment and/or sexual violence under similar circumstances; and

- whether the District possesses other means to obtain relevant evidence (e.g., security cameras or personnel, physical evidence).

4. All parties to a grievance, including the Complainant, Respondent and witnesses, have privacy interests and, therefore, all parties should be cautioned not to divulge or publicize the nature of the proceedings or the identity of those involved outside the scope of the investigation.

III. **INFORMAL AND FORMAL PROCESSES.**

A. **INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS:**

Informal resolution may be an appropriate choice when the conduct involved is not of a serious or repetitive nature and disciplinary action is not required to remedy the situation. No formal investigation is involved in the informal resolution process, and the informal resolution process shall not be considered a precondition for the filing of a formal written complaint pursuant to Section III.B., below.

1. A written request for informal resolution must be made within ten (10) days of the date of the alleged incident. The school principal or designee shall determine whether the nature of the problem is such that it is likely to be resolved by agreement on an informal basis.

2. Methods for informal resolution may include, but are not limited to, coaching the person on how to directly address a situation which is causing a problem; mediating the dispute with the parties; developing written behavior expectations of the alleged offender to redirect conduct; assisting with the resolution of a real or perceived problem; or arranging a documented meeting with the alleged offender that involves disability-based discrimination or involves a discussion of the sex discrimination and sexual harassment policies and requirements for compliance.

3. The principal or designee shall document any informal resolution, and a copy of such documentation shall be forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent within three (3) days of resolution.

B. **FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:**

Initiation of the formal complaint procedures requires a written complaint. **All written complaints** regarding harassment or discrimination of individuals shall be submitted to:

Responsible Administrator: Nicole Gittinger, Ass't Superintendent
ngittinger@sturgisps.org

Alternate Responsible Administrator: Nick Herblet, High School Principal
nherblet@sturgisps.org

Step 1 - Reporting Complaints.

(a) The Complainant may obtain a Complaint Form from the Office of the Assistant Superintendent, school principal, or the District website at sturgisps.org. A complaint form also may be copied from a student handbook. The Complainant may attach a written narrative explaining the nature of the complaint to the Form. The Complaint Form or narrative shall contain information that describes the conduct that has violated prohibitions against discrimination and identify with reasonable particularity the respondent(s) and any witnesses to the alleged conduct.

(b) Any District employee who either reasonably believes a student has been discriminated against based on sex or who receives a complaint of sex discrimination, harassment or violence from a student must immediately submit the Complaint Form to the Responsible Administrator. This reporting obligation is in addition to a school employee's reporting obligations to appropriate officials pursuant to law and the District Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Guidelines when the employee has a reasonable belief that a student is being sexually abused or subjected to other forms of abuse and neglect prohibited by law.

(c) If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the Responsible Administrator shall ask for such details in an oral interview. In the event the Complainant is a student with disabilities, the Responsible Administrator will carefully review the reporting student's IEP or 504 plan to determine what specific accommodations that child should have to aid in their reporting.

Step 2 - Determining Applicability of the Procedures.

The Responsible Administrator shall initially review the written complaint to determine whether the matter falls within the scope of these procedures. Within five (5) days after the Complaint Submission Date, the Responsible Administrator shall initiate an investigation of the matters alleged, or inform the Complainant in writing that the matters alleged in the complaint are not within the jurisdiction or authority of the District to investigate and that the District will not carry out any further investigation. If the matter does not involve allegations of discrimination within the scope of these procedures, the Responsible Administrator shall forward the matter to the proper District administrative authority for review, if appropriate.

Step 3 - Investigation.

(a) The Responsible Administrator shall oversee that an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation of the complaint is conducted by the principal or designee of the school site where the student is enrolled, the employee is assigned, and/or where the alleged discrimination occurred.

(b) In order to provide a neutral and objective investigation, neither the Responsible Administrator, nor the principal or designee conducting the investigation shall be a party to the complaint in the investigation.

(c) In the event that the principal or his/her designee is not a neutral party, the

Responsible Administrator shall designate a neutral and objective administrator to conduct the investigation. In the event that the Responsible Administrator is not a neutral party, the Superintendent shall designate a neutral and objective administrator to oversee the investigation.

(d) In conducting the investigation, the designated investigator shall interview all parties identified in the complaint and other witnesses that the investigator determines may provide information relevant to resolving the complaint allegation(s). Both the Complainant and Respondent shall have the opportunity to identify witnesses to be interviewed and provide documentation or other evidence for the designated investigator to review.

(e) The Responsible Administrator shall consider the evidence compiled by the designated investigator and take whatever additional actions the Responsible Administrator deems necessary to complete the investigation.

(f) The Responsible Administrator will maintain documentation of all proceedings, which may include written findings of facts, transcripts, notes, or audio recordings.

Step 4 - Notice of Resolution.

(a) Notice. The Responsible Administrator shall notify both the Complainant and Respondent in writing within thirty (30) days from the Complaint Submission Date of the results of the investigation.

(b) Written Determination. The Responsible Administrator shall consider the totality of the evidence and determine whether the preponderance of the evidence establishes that the alleged discrimination occurred (i.e., it is more likely than not that discrimination/sexual harassment/sexual violence occurred).

(i) If the Responsible Administrator determines that the preponderance of the evidence does not support the allegations of discrimination, the Complainant may appeal the determination pursuant to Step 5, below.

(ii) If the Responsible Administrator determines that the preponderance of the evidence supports the allegations of discrimination by the Respondent, the Responsible Administrator shall provide written findings and conclusions supporting the determination. In addition, the written determination shall make recommendations for (A) immediately ending the discriminatory conduct; (B) ways to remedy the discriminatory effects of any discriminatory behavior on the complaining party and, if applicable, the District's educational environment, and (C) the steps to be taken to prevent the recurrence of any discriminatory or harassing conduct found to have occurred. The recommendations of the Responsible Administrator shall become final and shall be implemented unless either party appeals as provided in Step 5 - Appeal Rights.

Step 5 - Appeal Rights.

(a) A party not satisfied with the resolution in Step 4, above, may submit a written

appeal within five (5) days to the Superintendent. The written appeal shall state with particularity the nature of the disagreement, the reasons underlying such disagreement, and how the outcome would be changed by reconsideration of the determination.

(b) The Superintendent or designee shall conduct a review of the record to determine whether the preponderance of the evidence supports the determination. The Superintendent or designee shall issue a written decision and mail it to the parties within ten (10) days of the receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent's decision is a final decision.

Step 6 - Complaints to an External Agency.

A complaint can be filed at any time if a party is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision in Step 5, above, the party may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights ("OCR") in Cleveland, Ohio. More information is available at the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325. Cleveland, OH 44115.

IV. DISCIPLINE.

Employees and students may be disciplined if it is determined through this procedure that discriminatory action, treatment, harassment or retaliation for complaining, has occurred in violation of federal or state laws or District policies. The Responsible Administrator shall refer the matter to the appropriate District administrator to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the Respondent.

- A. Students. If the recommended disciplinary consequences involve either a long-term suspension or expulsion, the student is entitled to pursue the hearing and appeal rights pursuant to the District's Rights and Responsibilities Guide and Michigan state law.
- B. Employees. If the disciplinary consequence involves discharge or termination, the employee's hearing and appeal rights will be governed by Michigan law and District policies.

V. NO RETALIATION

- A. Students, employees or parents who make complaints in good faith, shall be free from retaliation, coercion, and reprisal in seeking resolution of their complaint. Furthermore, persons acting as witnesses to a complaint, in good faith, shall be free from reprisal.
- B. Retaliation is a separate violation distinct from the initial underlying harassment or discrimination allegation. Claims of retaliation, submitted in good faith and in writing to the Responsible Administrator, shall be investigated pursuant to these procedures. Individuals who engage in retaliation will be subject to discipline, regardless of whether there has been a finding of cause for the underlying complaint.
- C.

VI. FALSE COMPLAINTS.

- A. Individuals who knowingly file a false or misleading complaints alleging harassment, discrimination or retaliation are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, dismissal of the complaint.
- B. If the preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that the Complainant submitted a false or misleading complaint alleging harassment, discrimination or retaliation, the complaint will be dismissed, and the student or employee who submitted the complaint will be recommended for discipline in a manner consistent with the District's Rights and Responsibilities Guide.

VI. RELATIONSHIP OF THESE PROCEDURES AND TIMELINES TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.

- A. Nothing in these Procedures should in any way be deemed to discourage the Complainant from reporting acts subject to these Procedures, including acts of sexual violence, to local law enforcement. In the event that the Complainant files a criminal complaint, the Responsible Administrator should not wait for the conclusion of a criminal investigation or criminal proceeding to begin the District's own investigation.
- B. Although the District may need to delay temporarily the fact-finding portion of an investigation while local law enforcement officials are gathering evidence, it is important for the Responsible Administrator to understand that during this brief delay in the investigation, the District must take interim measures to protect the Complainant in the educational setting. The District should also continue to update the parties on the status of the investigation and inform the parties when the District resumes its investigation.

VII. INTERIM MEASURES PENDING FINAL DETERMINATION OF THE COMPLAINT.

- A. The District is required to take steps to ensure equal access to its education programs and activities and protect all parties as necessary, including taking interim measures before the final outcome of an investigation. The District should take these steps promptly once it has notice of an allegation and should provide the complainant with periodic updates on the status of the investigation. The Responsible Administrator should notify the complainant of his or her options to avoid contact with the alleged perpetrator and allow the complainant to change academic and extracurricular activities as appropriate. The Responsible Administrator should also ensure that the complainant is aware of his or her rights and any available resources, such as victim advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, counseling, disability services, health and mental health services, and legal assistance, and the right to report a crime to local law enforcement.
- B. The specific interim measures implemented and the process for implementing those measures will vary depending on the facts of each case. The Responsible

Administrator should consider a number of factors in determining what interim measures to take, including, for example, the specific need expressed by the complainant; the age of the students involved; the severity or pervasiveness of the allegations; any continuing effects on the complainant; whether the complainant and alleged perpetrator share the class, transportation, or extra-curricular activities; and whether other judicial measures have been taken to protect all parties (e.g., civil protection orders).

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

Updated USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at:

https://www.ascr.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Complain_combined_6_8_12_508_0.pdf, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Grievance complaint forms can be found by clicking the following link; [Non-Discrimination Forms](#)

Paper copies are also available at any school office.

Appendix to the SPS Student Parent Handbook Code of Conduct Disciplinary Steps

Prior to sending a student to the office for disciplinary action that requires administrative intervention it is required that, where warranted, teachers employ the following options with students in the classroom:

- **Redirection**
- **Use of proximity**
- **Verbal Warning(s)**
- **Use of hallway conference and/or timeout**
- **Use of behavior room**

Explanation of Disciplinary Steps (these steps are for office referred behaviors)

Step 1: Verbal Warning

Redirection, office time out, restorative practices

Step 2: Administrative Conference

An administrative conference with the student that will include reviewing the disciplinary policy and procedure.

Step 3: Administrative Conference

An administrative conference that would include the student, parent, teacher, and other pertinent staff

Step 4: Lunch and/or After-School Detention

Step 5: In-School Suspension and or Behavior Intervention room (1-3 days)

Step 6: Saturday School (when and where available, secondary only)

After School (when available, K-5)

Step 7: Out of School Suspension (1-4 Days)

Step 8: Out of School Suspension (5-9 Days)

Step 9: Out of School Suspension (10 Days)

Step 10: Long-Term Out of School Suspension (Up to 30 Days)

Superintendent's Action Required

Step 11: Expulsion from School

Board of Education Action Required

All consequences that result in loss of instructional time should involve the use of restorative practices as part of the process of restitution and re-entry.

Also understand that alternative consequences such as restitution and community service may be used as part of the discipline system.

Debriefing with the Student, Parent, Teacher, and Trained Debrief Staff shall take place after all in-school/out of school suspension and after any escalated events that are defined at the building level.

In addition to the steps provided for possession of prohibited articles, the school district may confiscate any such article and return to the student, parent, guardian, and/or law enforcement authority as the circumstances require.

Placement and movement on the step system will be proportionate to the severity of the misconduct. The administration reserves the right to deal with each offense on an individual basis, and before imposing placement on the step system, the administration shall consider, without limitation, the actual misconduct, the extent of the student’s individual involvement, and the student’s record, both academic and behavioral. This review may result in disciplinary action being more or less severe than outlined.

NOTE: Steps listed represent a range of options. It is not construed that all steps will be incorporated with each offense.

Where a range of disciplinary steps is established for an infraction, the factors that lead to more severe penalties include:

1. The actual harm or injury caused
2. The risk of harm or injury caused
3. The intent of the student
4. The number and seriousness of prior infractions committed by the student
5. The seriousness of the penalty required in the circumstances to discourage future violations by the student or others

All infractions are defined in the SHS student/Parent Handbook Pages 20-28 and the SPS Student/Parent Handbook pages 33-45. Also, see individual building handbooks for more specific disciplinary information.

INFRACTION	K-2	3-5	Middle	High School
Academic Dishonesty	Steps 1-4	Steps 1-4	Steps 3-8	Steps 1-11
Aiding and abetting violation of school rules	Steps 1-4	Steps 1 -7	Steps 3-9	Steps 1-11
Arson	Steps 9-11	Steps 9-11	Steps 11	Steps 11
Bomb Threat/False Alarms/False Reports	Steps 3-11	Steps 3-11	Steps 9-11	Steps 9-11
Bullying and other aggressive behavior/ threatening	Steps 3-9	Steps 3-9	Steps 4-11	Steps 4-11
Bus Transportation (school consequence)	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9
Bus Transportation Violation	Defined in Handbooks at building level			
Cell phones/electronic devices violation	Defined in Handbooks at building level			
Insubordination related to electronic violation	Steps 1-11	Steps 1-11	Steps 3-7	Steps 4-7
Criminal Sexual Conduct/Sexual Assault	Steps 9-11	Steps 9-11	Step 11	Step 11
Disruptive/Disorderly behavior/Pranks or Practical jokes/irresponsible acts	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-7	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Dress Code Violation	Steps 1-3	Steps 1-4	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-9

INFRACTION	K-2	3-5	Middle	High School
Driving Violation	NA	NA	NA	Steps 1-5 <i>Loss of privilege</i>
Drugs/Alcohol/Paraphernalia Use, supply, selling	Steps 3-9	Steps 3-9	Steps 8-11	Steps 8-11
Explosives/Lighter/Fireworks/Smoke Bombs Irritants (such as mace or pepper spray)	Step 1-7	Steps 3-7	Steps 2-11	Steps 2-11
Extortion	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-7	Steps 5-11	Steps 5-11
Failure to Serve Disciplinary Action	NA	Steps 1-7	Steps 3-7	Steps 5-7
Failure to report dangerous weapons or threats of violence (Substantive)	Steps 1-3	Steps 1-7	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Forgery/Falsification	Steps 1-4	Steps 1-4	Steps 2-11	Steps 2-11
Harassment	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-11	Steps 1-11
Inappropriate/Abusive Language/Profanity	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9
Insubordination/Non Compliance/Defiance	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9
Internet/Technology Violation	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-11	Steps 1-11
Larceny/Stealing/Theft	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-9	Steps 3-11	Steps 1-11
Leaving the Building (Irresponsible Act/ Leaving campus)	Steps 1-4	Steps 1-6	Steps 3-6	Steps 1-6
Tobacco Possession and/or use	Steps 1-7	Steps 3-9	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Physical Aggression and/or Fighting	Steps 1-7	Steps 2-9	Steps 3-9	Steps 3-9
Physical Assault (of staff member, volunteer, contractor, student, or any associated person with the district)	Steps 7-9	Steps 7-11	Step 9-11	Step 10-11
Public Displays of Affection (irresponsible act)	Steps 1-3	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-7	Steps 1-9
Sexual Harassment	Steps 1-7	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Skipping Class/School	Steps 1-4	Steps 1-6	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Tardiness	Step 3	Steps 1-4	Steps 2-6	Steps 2-8
Trespassing/Loitering/Unauthorized use of school/private property	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-7	Steps 2-9	Steps 2-9
Vandalism	Steps 3-7	Steps 3-9	Steps 3-11	Steps 3-11 (restitution)

INFRACTION	K-2	3-5	Middle	High School
Vaping possession/use		Steps 4-9	Steps 4-9	Steps 7-9 Steps 7-9
Verbal Assault/Threat against district employee, Including online harassment (Substantive)	Steps 1-6	Steps 2-9	Steps 7-11	Steps 7-11
Violation of individual school/classroom rules	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-5	Steps 1-9	Steps 1-9
Weapons				
Use of	Steps 9-11	Steps 9-11	Step 11	Step 11
Possession of	Steps 2-11	Steps 3-11	Steps 7-11	Steps 7-11