

# Gilbert Middle School Student Handbook



***Every Student. Every Day.***

The Gilbert Learning Community will foster a passion for learning and empower each student to become a productive citizen in today's global society.

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## ATTENDANCE

For more information, refer to Board Policy 501

Under Iowa Senate File 2435, chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10% of school days or hours within a grading period. As part of our compliance, we will monitor student attendance closely. Parents and guardians will receive certified mail notifications if a student's attendance reaches the 10% threshold.

Below are key details regarding the law and what to expect:

1. Chronic Absenteeism Notification (10%: 8 days in Semester 1 / 9 days in Semester 2)
  - When a student is identified as chronically absent, the school will:
    - Send a notification to the county attorney.
    - Notify the student, or their parent/guardian if the student is a minor, via certified mail, including: Children enrolled in Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs (SWVPP) are considered compulsory attendance age children. Students over 16 are beyond the compulsory attendance age and are excluded from the chronic absenteeism requirement under SF2435.
      - Details regarding the student's absences.
      - Information on policies and disciplinary measures for further absences.
2. School Engagement Meeting (15%: 12 days in Semester 1 / 13 days in Semester 2)
  - If a student is absent for 15% of the days in a grading period, the school will initiate a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences and work towards creating an absenteeism prevention plan. The school will notify the county attorney if the student and their parent/guardian do not attend the meeting or violate the plan.
3. Truancy (20%: 16 days in Semester 1 / 18 days in Semester 2)
  - Truancy is defined as a child of compulsory attendance age being absent for 20% of the semester for any reason (excluding specific exemptions). This will be enforced at the county level.

The district believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students. However, there may be rare and unusual circumstances created by public emergencies declared by state or local officials which temporarily prevent students from attending traditional, in-person school. In these circumstances, the superintendent will have discretion to make reasonable accommodations for students, on a case-by-case basis, to attend school through remote learning opportunities within the available resources of the district and as permitted by law. During approved remote learning, attendance will be taken, assessments may be administered, and grades will count towards students' cumulative grade point average as if they were attending in person. The provision of special education and accommodations for students who have individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans will be determined by each respective IEP or Section 504 team.

Students whose absences are approved will make up the work missed and receive full credit for the missed school work. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a procedure with the student's teacher to complete the work missed.

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored activities must attend school full day the day of the activity unless permission has been given by the principal for the student to be absent.

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The principal may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence.

### Elopement

Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day unless prior notification is given to the school office by a parent/guardian. When a student is to leave the school premises during the school day, he/she must first sign out in the office. If a student arrives at school after the school day has started, he/she should report immediately to the office to sign in and notify office staff of their presence. Failure to follow proper procedures may result in loss of privileges, the assignment of detention time, or suspension from school. Should a student leave the school building without permission and not comply with returning, law enforcement may be notified to ensure the safety and well being of all involved.

## **ABUSE OF STUDENTS BY EMPLOYEE**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 402

Physical or sexual abuse of students, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, by employees will not be tolerated. The definition of employees for the purpose of this policy includes not only those who work for pay but also those who are volunteers of the school district under the direction and control of the school district. Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

The school district will respond promptly to allegations of abuse of students by school district employees by investigating or arranging for the investigation of an allegation. The processing of a complaint or allegation will be handled confidentially to the maximum extent possible. Employees are required to assist in the investigation when requested to provide information and to maintain the confidentiality of the reporting and investigation process.

The school district has appointed a Level I investigator and alternate Level I investigator. The school district has also arranged for a trained, experienced professional to serve as the Level II investigator. The Level I investigator and alternate will be provided training in the conducting of an investigation at the expense of the school district. Individuals with concerns regarding allegations of student abuse by school employees should contact the Level 1 investigator: Vic Vanderpool, 103 Mathews Drive, Gilbert, Iowa 50105, 515-232-3740

Alternate investigators include:

Staci Edwards	Amy Griffin	Mike Danilson	Cindy Bassett
109 Rothmoor	103 Mathews	201 E. Mathews	312 Gretten
Gilbert, IA 50105	Gilbert, IA 50105	Gilbert, IA 50105	Gilbert, IA 50105
515-232-3744	515-232-3748	515-232-0540	515-232-3738

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## **BULLYING / HARASSMENT**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 104

The Gilbert Community School District is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. The superintendent is responsible for implementation of this policy and all accompanying procedures. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame. Within 24 hours of receiving a report that a student may have been the victim of conduct that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent or guardian of the student.

If as a result of viewing surveillance system data or based on a report from a school district employee, the district determines that a student has suffered bullying or harassment by another student enrolled in the district, a parent or guardian of the student may enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student's grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law related to this topic.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

## **Retaliation Prohibited**

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

## **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- "Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- "Harassment" and "bullying" mean any repeated or potentially repeated electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
  1. Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property.
  2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual's physical or mental health.
  3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's academic or career performance. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- "Trait or characteristic of the individual" includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status.
- "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

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## **COPYRIGHT**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 605

Students may make copies of copyrighted materials that fall within the following guidelines. Where there is reason to believe the material to be copied does not fall within these guidelines, prior permission shall be obtained from the publisher or producer with the assistance of the principal, teacher, or teacher-librarian. Employees and students who fail to follow this procedure may be held personally liable for copyright infringement and may be subject to discipline by the board.

Any student who is uncertain as to whether reproducing or using copyrighted material complies with the school district's procedures or is permissible under the law should contact the principal, teacher or teacher-librarian who will also assist employees and students in obtaining proper authorization to copy or use protected material when such authorization is required.

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## **DISCIPLINE**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 503

### **Student Conduct**

The board believes inappropriate student conduct causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment, interferes with the rights of others, or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. Appropriate classroom behavior allows teachers to communicate more effectively with students.

Students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Consequences for the misconduct will be fair and developmentally appropriate in light of the circumstances.

Students who fail to abide by this policy, and the administrative regulations supporting it, may be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school

district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to participate in or obtain their education; conduct that is violent or destructive; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension, probation, and expulsion.

**Removal from the classroom** means a student is sent to the building principal's office. It is within the discretion of the person in charge of the classroom to remove the student.

**Detention** means the student's presence is required during non-school hours for disciplinary purposes. The student can be required to appear prior to the beginning of the school day, after school has been dismissed for the day, or on a non-school day. Whether a student will serve detention, and the length of the detention, is within the discretion of the licensed employee or the building principal, disciplining the student.

**In-school suspension** means the student will attend school but will be temporarily isolated from one or more classes while under supervision. An in-school suspension will not exceed ten consecutive school days.

**Out-of-school suspension** means the student is removed from the school environment, which includes school classes and activities. An out-of-school suspension will not exceed ten consecutive school days unless due process is provided as required by federal and state law. A restriction from school activities means a student will attend school and classes and practice but will not participate in school activities.

The principal will conduct an investigation of the allegations against the student prior to assigning a suspension. The investigation will include, but not be limited to, written or oral notice to the student of the allegations against the student and an opportunity to respond. Written notice and reasons for the disciplinary action will be sent to the student's parents and will include the circumstances which led to the suspension and a copy of school board policy and rules pertaining to the suspension.

Both types of suspensions (in-school and out-of-school) will be treated as excused absences. If a student is suspended, it will also cause that student to be ineligible for extracurricular activities including practices for the period of suspension. In the event of a second case of suspension, the student may be refused re-entry to school until a conference between the student, parent(s), and the principal has been held.

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## **DANGEROUS WEAPONS**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 502

The board believes weapons, other dangerous objects and look-a-likes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects and look-a-likes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes will be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess weapons, dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property are notified of the incident. Possession or confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects will be reported to law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

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## **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

The cancellation of school for any reason will be announced first using the school alert system as soon as such a decision is made. The district has established a school alert system to provide notice to parents in case school is postponed, canceled, or dismissed early. Parents are automatically called/emailed upon entering that information at school registration. More information can be found under the "Parents & Students" page of our website. Parents and students are to have contingency plans for such events. Calling the school may not always be possible as phone lines may be tied up. On days of late start, do not drop off children prior to 9:45 (when it's a 2 hour delay).

## **EMERGENCY PLANS & DRILLS**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 507

Each school will periodically conduct emergency drills as a regular part of training and preparedness in the school setting. Such drills include fire, tornado, lockdown or evacuation drills. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. Students are expected to remain orderly during a drill or an emergency.

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## **FINES, FEES, & CHARGES**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 503

The board believes students should respect school district property and assist in its preservation for future use by others. Students may be assessed fines, charges, or fees for the materials needed in a course, for overdue school materials, for participating in activities, or for misuse of school property.

### **Student Fee Waivers**

The board recognizes that while certain fees charged students are appropriate and authorized, certain students and their families are not financially able to pay the fees. The school district will grant either full waivers, partial waivers or temporary waivers depending upon the circumstances and the student or student's parents' ability to meet the financial criteria.

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or who are in foster care are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Students whose families are experiencing a temporary financial difficulty may be eligible for a temporary waiver of student fees. Parents or students who believe they may qualify for temporary financial hardship should contact the Superintendent's office for a waiver form. This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.

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## **HEALTH EDUCATION**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 603

Students in grade levels one through twelve will receive, as part of their health education, instruction about personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and non-use, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; human sexuality; self-esteem; stress management; interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; prevention and control of disease; and communicable diseases. The purpose of the health education program is to help each student protect, improve and maintain physical, emotional and social well-being.

The areas stated above are included in health education and the instructions are adapted at each grade level to aid understanding by the students.

Parents who object to health education instruction in human growth and development may file a written request that the student be excused from the instruction. The written request will include a proposed alternate activity or study acceptable to the superintendent. The superintendent will have the final authority to determine the alternate activity or study.

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## **HEALTH SERVICES**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 507 and/or Board Policy 607

Health services are an integral part of comprehensive school improvement, assisting all students to increase learning, achievement, and performance. Health services coordinate and support existing programs to assist each student in achievement of an optimal state of physical, mental and social well being. Student health services ensure continuity and create linkages between school, home, and community service providers.

### **Examinations & Immunizations**

Students desiring to participate in athletic activities or enrolling in kindergarten or first grade in the school district will have a physical examination by a licensed healthcare provider and provide proof of such an examination to the school district. Students enrolling for the first time in the school district will also submit a certificate of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubeola, rubella, and other immunizations required by law. Exemptions from the

immunization requirement in this policy will be allowed only for medical or religious reasons recognized under the law. For more information, please see board policies 507 and 607

### **Illness or Injury at School**

When a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the school district will attempt to notify the student's parents as soon as possible.

The school district, while not responsible for medical treatment of an ill or injured student, will have employees present administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. An ill or injured child will be turned over to the care of the parents or qualified medical employees as quickly as possible.

For the health benefit of your child and the other children that are in contact with them, keep your child home if any of the following conditions exist:

- o Oral temperature of 100 degrees or more within 24 hours
- o Vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours
- o Earache lasting more than one day
- o Persistent cough, croup or chest congestion
- o Pain that is severe or persistent (may need evaluation by a physician)
- o Sore throat for three days, white spots, and/or fever
- o Rash that has not been evaluated by a physician
- o Moist, draining lesions on the lip or skin
- o Labored or painful breathing
- o Reddened, matted or crusty eyes
- o Untreated head lice

### **Medications**

Medication shall be administered when the student's parent or guardian (hereafter "parent") provides a signed and dated written statement requesting medication administration and the medication is in the original, labeled container, either as dispensed or in the manufacturer's container.

Disposal of unused, discontinued/recalled, or expired abandoned medication shall be in compliance with federal and state law. Prior to disposal school personnel shall make a reasonable attempt to return medication by providing written notification that expired, discontinued, or unused medications need to be picked up. If medication is not picked up by the date specified, disposal shall be in accordance with the disposal procedures for the specific category of medication.

School medication is administered following these guidelines:

1. Form signed by parents
2. Medication is in the original labeled container
3. Medication label contains the student's name, name of the medication, dose and time.
4. Annual renewal of authorization and immediate notification, in writing, of changes.

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### **INTERVIEWS OF STUDENTS BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 502

Generally, students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than parents and school district officials and employees.

Requests from law enforcement officers and from persons other than parents, school district officials, and employees to interview students are made through the principal's office. Upon receiving a request, it is the responsibility of the principal to determine whether the request will be granted. Generally, prior to granting a request, the principal will attempt to contact the parents to inform them of the request and to ask them to be present.

If a child abuse investigator wishes to interview a student, the principal will defer to the investigator's judgment as to whether the student should be interviewed independently from the student's parents, whether the school is the most appropriate setting for the interview, and who will be present during the interview.

Students will not be taken from school without the consent of the principal and without proper warrant.

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## **NONDISCRIMINATION**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 102

The Community School District does not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Vic Vanderpool, Executive Director of Student Services, 103 Mathews Drive, Gilbert, IA 50105, 515-232-3740, vanderpoolv@gilbertcsd.org.

Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, are directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, Gilbert Community School District, Gilbert, Iowa 50105; or by telephoning 515-232-3740. Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, John C. Kluczynski Federal Building, 230 S. Dearborn St., 37th Floor, Chicago, IL, 60604 (312) 730-1560, fax (312) 730-1576 OCR.Chicago@ed.gov, the Iowa Civil Rights Commissioner, <https://icrc.iowa.gov>, (515) 281-4121 or the Iowa Dept. of Education, Grimes State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319. (515) 281-5294. This inquiry or complaint to the federal or state office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

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## **ONLINE DISTRICT RESOURCES**

Information about current events throughout the district as well as important registration forms and links to staff webpages, can be found on the district website at [www.gilbertcsd.org](http://www.gilbertcsd.org). Digital Backpack is a resource found on the district webpage. All forms and announcements such as camp flyers, sports sign-ups and community events can be found there. If you have something that you would like to have added you may submit it on the digital backpack site. Once submitted, it will be approved by a district administrator and then posted. In addition, the district has developed an app for iPhones and Android.

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## **PERMISSIONS | Social Media/Photo/Video Release**

Throughout the school year, we like to celebrate our students and their successes with photos and videos that are posted to our Gilbert Schools social media accounts and website, and used in district publications, such as the yearbook. With the exception of district publications, we do not identify students by name in group situations.

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## **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 213

The board recognizes situations may arise in the operation of the school district which are of concern to parents and other members of the school district community.

The board firmly believes concerns should be resolved at the lowest organizational level by those individuals closest to the concern. Whenever a complaint or concern is brought to the attention of the board it will be referred to the administration to be resolved. Prior to board action however, the following should be completed:

- a. Matters should first be addressed to the teacher or employee.
- b. Unsettled matters from (a) above or problems and questions about individual attendance centers should be addressed to the employee's building principal.
- c. Unsettled matters from (b) above or problems and questions concerning the school district should be directed to the superintendent.
- d. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the superintendent, it may then be brought to the board for consideration. To bring a concern, the individual shall notify the board president or board secretary in writing, who may bring it to the attention of the entire board.

Parents, guardians and community members of the district who have concerns about the district or the board may refer to the student handbook for additional guidance from the Iowa Department of Education.

It is within the discretion of the board to address complaints from the members of the school district community, and the board will only consider whether to address complaints if they are in writing, signed, and the complainant has complied with this policy. The board is not obligated to address a complaint and may defer to the decision of the superintendent. If the board elects not to address a complaint, the decision of the superintendent shall be final. If the board does elect to address a complaint, its decision shall be final.

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## **PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PREMISES**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 903

The board expects that students, employees and visitors will treat each other with respect, engage in responsible behavior, exercise self-discipline and model fairness, equity and respect. Individuals violating this policy will be subject to discipline. Students will be disciplined consistent with the student conduct policies. Employees will be disciplined consistent with employee discipline policies and laws. Others will be subject to discipline according to this policy.

Individuals are permitted to attend school sponsored or approved activities or visit school premises only as guests of the school district, and, as a condition, they must comply with the school district's rules and policies. Individuals will not be allowed to interfere with or disrupt the education program or activity.

Visitors, like the participants, are expected to display mature, responsible behavior. The failure of individuals to do so is not only disruptive but embarrassing to the students, the school district and the entire community.

To protect the rights of students to participate in the education program or activities without fear of interference or disruption and to permit the school officials, employees and activity sponsors and officials to perform their duties without interference or disruption, the following provisions are in effect:

- Abusive, verbal or physical conduct of individuals directed at students, school officials, employees, officials and activity sponsors of sponsored or approved activities or at other individuals will not be tolerated.
- Verbal or physical conduct of individuals that interferes with the performance of students, school officials, employees, officials and activity sponsors of sponsored or approved activities will not be tolerated.
- The use of vulgar, obscene or demeaning expressions directed at students, school officials, employees, officials and activity sponsors of sponsored or approved activities participating in a sponsored or approved activity or at other individuals will not be tolerated.

If an individual becomes physically or verbally abusive, uses vulgar, obscene or demeaning expression, or in any way interrupts an activity, the individual may be removed from the event by the individual in charge of the event. Law enforcement may be contacted for assistance.

Individuals removed from school premises have the ability to follow the board's chain of command and complaint policies should they choose to do so. The exclusion is in effect should the individual choose to appeal the decision of the superintendent. The term "individual" as used in the policy also includes students and employees.

If an individual has been notified of exclusion and thereafter tries to enter a school building or attends a sponsored or approved activity, the individual will be advised that his/her attendance will result in prosecution. The school district may obtain a court order for permanent exclusion from the school building or from future school sponsored or approved activities.

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## **SEARCH & SEIZURE**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 502

School district property is held in public trust by the board. School district authorities may, without a search warrant, search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated. The search is in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the school district facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, will not create a protected student area and will not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility.

School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Items of contraband may include, but are not limited to, non-prescription controlled substances, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates,

apparatus used for controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco/nicotine, weapons, explosives, poisons and stolen property. Such items are not to be possessed by a student while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Possession of such items will be grounds for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to local law enforcement officials. The board believes that illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials may cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

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## **SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 711

### **Student Conduct on District Transportation**

Students utilizing school transportation will conduct themselves in an orderly manner fitting to their age level and maturity with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of the school vehicle driver and the other passengers. Students who fail to behave in an orderly manner will be subject to disciplinary measures.

The driver will have the authority to maintain order on the school vehicle. It is the responsibility of the driver to report misconduct to the building administrator.

The board supports the use of recording devices on school buses used for transportation to and from school as well as for field trips, curricular or extracurricular events. The recording devices will be used to monitor student behavior and may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. The recordings are student records subject to school district confidentiality, board policy and administrative regulations.

Consequences for continuing behavior issues on the bus can include warnings, office referrals, parent communication and suspension from bus privileges. The building principal will have the authority to suspend transportation privileges of the student or impose other appropriate discipline.

### **Transportation for Extracurricular Activities**

Students participating or attending extracurricular events, other than those held at the school district facilities, may be transported to the extracurricular event by school district transportation vehicles or by another means approved by the superintendent.

Students, who are provided transportation in school district transportation vehicles for extracurricular events, will ride both to and from the event in the school vehicle unless arrangements have been made with the building principal prior to the event. A student's parent may personally appear and request to transport the student home from a school-sponsored event in which the student traveled to the event on a school district transportation vehicle.

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## **SMOKING - DRINKING - DRUGS**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 502

The board prohibits the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine products, other controlled substances, or "look alike" substances that appear to be tobacco, beer, wine, alcohol or controlled substances by students while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

The board believes such illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials generally cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors.

Violation of this policy by students will result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Use, purchase or being in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or tobacco products and nicotine products for those under the age of eighteen, may be reported to the local law enforcement authorities. Possession, use or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol and/or of a controlled substance may also be reported to the local law enforcement authorities.

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## **STUDENT DIRECTORY**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 506

Directory information is information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The district may disclose "directory information" to third parties without consent if it has given public notice of the types of information which it has designated as "directory information," the parent's or eligible student's right to restrict the disclosure of such information, and the period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the school in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information designated as "directory information."

The district has designated the following as "directory information":

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. (A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose.)

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## **STUDENT LOCKERS**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 502

Student lockers are the property of the school district. Students will use the lockers assigned to them by the school district for storing their school materials and personal belongings necessary for attendance at school. It is the responsibility of students to keep their assigned lockers clean and undamaged.

For safety reasons, students are expected to keep their locker doors closed when not in use. Students should not decorate the exterior of their locker door without permission of a teacher, coach, or administration. Students who access the lockers of others may be subject to disciplinary action.

To ensure students are properly maintaining their assigned lockers, the principal of the building may periodically inspect all or a random selection of lockers. Either students or another individual will be present during the inspection of lockers. Student lockers may also be searched, at any time and without advance notice, in compliance with board policy regulating search and seizure.

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## **STUDENT TEACHERS**

Each year there may be student teachers from one or more of the Iowa universities working in our classrooms. Usually arrangements are made so that no classroom teacher has more than one student teacher per school year.

GMS also cooperates with universities in allowing volunteer teacher aides (students in their early years of teacher education programs) to gain experience in our buildings. Usually these college students visit 1-2 days each week for about half a day at a time.

A third way of cooperating with institutions of higher education is through various educational research projects. These projects may originate in various departments at the colleges and usually involve some kind of data gathering and student observation. These projects are limited to two per year on a first come first serve basis. The amount of time that such research takes students away from class work is strictly controlled and not allowed without parent permission.

## TECHNOLOGY AND RECORDING

For more information, refer to Board Policy 605 and/or Board Policy 804

### Internet Appropriate Use

Because technology is a vital part of the school district curriculum, the Internet will be made available to employees and students. Appropriate and equitable use of the Internet will allow employees and students to access resources unavailable through traditional means.

Students will be able to access the Internet through their teachers. Individual student accounts and electronic mail addresses may be issued to students. Students may be permitted to use district-issued email addresses and Internet-based collaboration software to send and receive messages at school.

The Internet can provide a vast collection of educational resources for students and employees. It is a global network which makes it impossible to control all available information. Because information appears, disappears and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. The school district makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Although students will be under teacher supervision while on the network, it is not possible to constantly monitor individual students and what they are accessing on the network. Some students might encounter information which may not be of educational value. Student Internet records and access records are confidential records treated like other student records. Students' Internet activities will be monitored by the school district to ensure students are not accessing inappropriate sites that have visual depictions that include obscenity, pornography or are harmful to minors. The school district will use technology protection measures to protect students from inappropriate access, including sites that include obscenity, pornography or are harmful to minors.

The school district will monitor the online activities of students and will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting on social networking sites and chat rooms. Students will also be educated on cyberbullying, including awareness and response. Employees will provide age appropriate training for students who use the Internet. The training provided will be designed to promote the school district's commitment to:

- The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Internet Safety Policy;
- Student safety with regard to:
  - safety on the Internet;
  - appropriate behavior while online, on social networking Web sites, and
  - in chat rooms; and
  - cyberbullying awareness and response.
- Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act

Employees and students will be instructed on the appropriate use of the Internet. Parents will be required to sign a permission form to allow their students to access the Internet. Students will sign a form acknowledging they have read and understand the Internet Acceptable Use policy and regulations, that they will comply with the policy and regulations, and that they understand the consequences for violation of the policy or regulations. The [GCSD Technology Agreement](#) outlines Gilbert Schools policies & expectations related to school technology, including consequences for inappropriate use of school devices.

### Personal Technology

Students are solely responsible for the care and custody of all personal electronic devices (cell phones, gaming devices, computers, tablets, smart watches, music devices, etc) they choose to possess. Students should take care to secure these devices. Gilbert Schools shall not assume responsibility for loss, damage, destruction, or theft of any electronic device brought to school.

Cellphones can cause disruption to the school learning environment and interfere with student learning. Listed below are student expectations for each building:

- **Elementary & Intermediate:** Cellphones will be stored away in backpacks or lockers while students are in the classroom setting.
- **Middle School:** Cellphones will not be used during instructional time throughout the school day unless given permission from classroom teachers. Students will not use their devices during lunch or passing time.
- **High School:** Cellphones will not be used during instructional time throughout the school day unless given permission from classroom teachers. Students may use their devices during lunch and passing times.

### Consequences:

If a student does not adhere to the regulation or is using a cellphone inappropriately, he or she will receive a verbal warning. If the device continues to be an issue, teachers will work with administration, which may lead to confiscation of the device and/or a parent meeting as needed.

Cell phones with cameras and other portable Handheld Technology Devices capable of storing and/or transmitting and/or receiving images are banned from use for any purpose in locker rooms and restrooms at ALL times. Use of such technology in these areas will result in disciplinary action.

### **Recording**

The district believes in the importance of providing a safe and enriching environment for teaching and learning. Recording devices of all kinds, including still photography, video, and audio, can be valuable teaching, learning, and safety tools. Recording also has the potential to substantially disrupt the school district environment and may invade the privacy rights of individuals present on school district property or at school district events. This policy is intended to place reasonable restrictions on recording of any kind on school district property and at school district events to maintain the safety and decorum of the school district environment. This policy is not intended to be construed or enforced in a way that infringes on any individual's First Amendment right or infringes upon employee activity protected by law.

- **District-Generated Recordings**

The District uses digital recording devices on school property, including school transportation vehicles, to help maintain safety and safeguard District property. Recording devices also have several legitimate educational purposes to enrich the curriculum and aid in student learning. Recording may be an important part of student lessons or used to facilitate employee performance review and professional development. Additionally, district-generated recordings of students and staff engaging in the district's educational and extracurricular programs are essential to engage positively with the school community, keep parents and community members informed, and promote the value of public education.

Recordings of students have the potential to be considered education records under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Recordings shall be maintained and accessed only in compliance with FERPA. Certain recordings of employees may also be considered personnel records under Iowa law and shall be maintained and accessed only in compliance with those laws.

- **Non-District Generated Recordings**

The use of non-district owned recording devices on school property and at school events will be regulated to maintain the safety and decorum of the school district environment. Students, parents, community members, and visitors will not be permitted to take recordings during school hours on school property unless the recording is authorized in advance by a staff member. This policy does not apply to recording at public events or in public spaces.

- **Regulations Applicable to all Recording**

In order to balance privacy and safety interests, no recording will be allowed on District property where individuals maintain a reasonable expectation of privacy. These areas include but aren't necessarily limited to: the nurse's office, restrooms, locker rooms, changing areas, lactation spaces, and employee break rooms. No individual is entitled to use a recording device in a way that violates any law, violates the District's anti-harassment, anti-bullying, or anti-discrimination policies, or in a way that creates a substantial disruption in the learning environment.

All questions or concerns regarding recording on school district property should be directed to the building principal.

### **Repair of School-Owned Devices**

When school-issued devices are damaged or lost, the student assumes responsibility for repair and/or replacement of the device in the following manner:

- First incident of damage - family is responsible for 50% of actual repair cost
- Second incident of damage - family is responsible for 75% of actual repair cost
- Repairs beyond the second - family is responsible for 100% of actual repair cost

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### **TOBACCO AND VAPE FREE ZONE**

School district facilities and grounds, including school vehicles, are off limits for tobacco or nicotine use, including the use of look-alikes where the original would include tobacco or nicotine is prohibited in school district facilities, including school vehicles, and on school grounds.

This policy applies at all times, including school-sponsored and nonschool-sponsored events. This ban extends to all school district personnel and visitors. Persons failing to abide by this policy are required to dispose of their tobacco materials or leave the school district premises immediately.

It is the responsibility of all school personnel to enforce this policy. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations to enforce this policy.

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## **VISITORS TO SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND SITES**

For more information, refer to Board Policy 903

The board welcomes the interest of parents and other members of the school district community and invites them to visit the school buildings and sites. Visitors, which include persons other than employees or students, must notify the principal of their presence in the facility upon arrival.

Persons who wish to visit a classroom while school is in session are asked to notify the principal and obtain approval from the principal prior to the visit so appropriate arrangements can be made and so class disruption can be minimized. Teachers and other employees will not take time from their duties to discuss matters with visitors.

Visitors will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of others while attending school events. Visitors failing to conduct themselves accordingly may be asked to leave the premises. Children who wish to visit school must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

Gilbert Schools uses the Raptor Visitor and Volunteer Management System in all of our buildings to further ensure the safety of our students and staff within the district. The Raptor system will allow us to better screen visitors, contractors, and volunteers in our schools by checking the national sex offender and criminal databases, to provide a safe environment for our students and staff. For more information about the Raptor system, please contact the school's office.

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## **MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty occurs when a student uses, or attempts to use, unauthorized information while taking an assessment or submits work prepared by another person or entity (i.e. artificial intelligence) as his/her own; and/or knowingly assists another student in such acts. Such behavior is unacceptable to the school district and students found guilty of academic dishonesty may be required to redo the work and/or receive no credit for the work involved. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action.

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### **EXTENDED STUDY HALL**

Throughout most of the school year, Gilbert Middle School offers academic support after school dismisses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This program, called Extended Study Hall, is staffed by a licensed teacher in order to provide GMS students with assistance on school assignments.

Gilbert Middle School students attending Extended Study Hall should go to the school library after school and may stay as late as 5pm. Students may leave earlier if their work is completed. Please note the district does not provide transportation home from Extended Study Hall.

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### **GRADING POLICIES**

Gilbert Middle School uses a standards-based grading philosophy that focuses instruction, assessment, and learning on established learning standards. Teachers will focus on evidence of student learning of key learning standards. Behavior standards will also be assessed and shared.

Our grading rubric is as follows:

- 3 - Meets Expectations
- 2 - Progressing Toward Expectations
- 1 - Does Not Meet Expectations

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## **INTERVENTIONS**

Gilbert Middle School has developed a strong system through which we identify and address academic skill gaps of our students. Throughout the school year, student achievement is monitored through a variety of assessments. Those in need of additional support in reading and/or math will be provided targeted interventions during Tiger Time. While in these interventions, student progress will be tracked, allowing students to discontinue interventions when no longer needed.

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## **DISPLAY OF POSTERS**

Students wishing to display posters within the school building must have these posters approved in the office prior to their being displayed. Posters should be restricted to providing factual information and may be limited in size, quantity, and location of posting. Posters that have not been approved will be removed. A limit of three posters may be posted in the middle school building.

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## **DRESS POLICY**

(For more information, see Board Policy 502)

The Gilbert Community School District believes inappropriate student appearance may cause a material and substantial disruption to the school environment or may present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors. Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting.

The board expects students to be clean and well-groomed and wear clothes in good repair and appropriate for the time, place and occasion. Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed. While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents, appearance disruptive to the education program will not be tolerated. When, in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications.

Students at Gilbert Middle School are expected to adhere to the following:

- Headwear (including hoods) for both males and females is not to be worn in the building during the school day except for medical reasons or religious exceptions. Headwear may be worn on the way to/from recess.
- Clothing/apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed.
- Shoes must be worn in the building at all times.

The following student attire is deemed inappropriate for school:

- Exposed undergarments
- Clothing that reveals cleavage, one's backside or midriff
- Clothing that calls undue attention to an individual and may disrupt the educational climate

The building principal will make the final determination of the appropriateness of student appearance. Infractions of this policy will result in progressive discipline that begins with being asked to change into clothing that meets the student dress standards. Continued infractions may result in detentions and suspensions. The intent for this policy is for students to understand that school is a workplace, and what is appropriate outside the workplace may not be appropriate at work.

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## **ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAMS**

(For more information, see Board Policy 504 and/or the district's activities handbook)

Guidelines governing student participation in extracurricular activities (including but not limited to eligibility guidelines, "good conduct" policy, and appeal procedures) can be found in the district's Athletic Handbook.



### **Eligibility - Academics**

The teachers, coaches, and administration at Gilbert Middle School believe that extracurricular activities like interscholastic athletics or fine arts performances (jazz band, musical, etc) are an important part of a young person's development. We also believe that students should be accountable for their academic work in order to participate in them.

Students with 5 or more missing assignments are demonstrating they need more time to complete their work and, therefore, may be withheld from participation in rehearsals, practices, performances and/or games at the principal's discretion until such work is completed. Students would be eligible to participate again as soon as they have fewer than 5 missing assignments. Work that is missing as a result of excused absences will have an equivalent amount of time to be made up before it counts under this policy.

### **Eligibility - Good Conduct Policy**

To maintain eligibility for participation in Gilbert extracurricular activities, students must conduct themselves as good citizens both in and out of school at all times. Students who represent the school in an activity are expected to serve as good role models to other students and to the members of the community.

Gilbert school administration will make the determination if a student has violated the Good Conduct Policy, and such determination will not require a legal conviction in a court of law. Any student accused of violating this Good Conduct Policy shall be provided an informal hearing by a school administrator at which time the student shall be informed of the allegation, informed of the basis of the allegation, and given an opportunity to tell the student's side. School administrators will determine by a "preponderance of the evidence" whether a student violated this good Conduct Policy by engaging in any of the following behaviors. Any violations also may be reported to law enforcement, to other school personnel, or to the student and/or his or her parents.

- Possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products, vapor products, or lookalike products
- Possession, use, or purchase of alcoholic beverages, including beer or wine, or participation with other students in such activities
- Possession, use, purchase, or attempted sale/purchase of illegal drugs, or the unauthorized possession, use, purchase or attempted sale/purchase of otherwise lawful drugs without a prescription, or participation with other students in such activities
- Engaging in any act that would be grounds for arrest or citation in the criminal or juvenile court system (excluding minor offenses such as traffic or hunting/fishing violations), regardless of whether the student was cited, arrested, convicted, or adjudicated for the act(s)
- Engaging in other inappropriate or offensive conduct such as assault, insubordination, refusing to cooperate with school officials or law enforcement authorities, hazing or harassment of others, etc. Note: this could include group conduct.
- Any student whose conduct, either in or out of school, is such as to make him or her unworthy to represent the ideals, principles and standards of the Gilbert Community Schools, shall be declared ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities by the administration.

Students involved in extracurricular activities are expected to familiarize themselves with the Good Conduct policy described in the district's Activities Handbook.

### **Extracurricular Eligibility - School Attendance**

Students who miss any part of a school day due to illness will not be eligible to participate in a contest, practice, game or any school sponsored event held on the same day. This includes taking part in after school practice sessions. Students missing for medical or dental appointments will be required to provide written verification of this from the provider.

Students who miss school for reasons other than illness must have their absences excused prior to the day they will miss, either in writing, by phone, or in person to be eligible for that day's events as either a participant or a spectator. The Principal or Designee has the discretion to allow participation on the day of the event, without an excused absence from the prior day, only after direct contact with the student's parents.

Truancy and unexcused absences will eliminate a student's eligibility to participate until the student resumes attendance and truancy or unexcused absence is resolved.

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## **STUDENT EXPRESSION**

(For more information, see Board Policy 502)

It is the goal of the district to protect the educational environment for all students to help ensure it is free from substantial disruption or infringement upon their rights. Student expression should be appropriate to help ensure that the students learn and meet the goals of the school activity and that the potential audience is not exposed to material that may be harmful or inappropriate for their level of maturity.

While students will generally be allowed to express their viewpoints and opinions, in certain qualifying circumstances, student speech may require administrative regulation to help ensure the safety and welfare of the school community. The district may regulate speech that: causes or is reasonably anticipated to cause a material and substantial disruption to the education environment; infringes upon the rights of others; is obscene or lewd; is school sponsored; and/or promotes illegal activity. The administration, when making this judgment, will consider whether the activity in which the expression was made is school-sponsored and whether review or prohibition of the students' speech furthers an educational purpose. The expression must be done in a reasonable time, place, and manner that is not disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the school district.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary measures. Employees are responsible for helping to ensure students' expression is in keeping with this policy. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

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## **STUDENT INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Public displays of affection on school grounds or at school activities are not appropriate. Students engaging in public displays of affection will be warned. If further issues occur, students may be subject to consequences including detention or suspension.

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## **VANDALISM**

(For more information, see Board Policy 502)

Students will treat school district property with the care and the respect they would treat their own property. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school district property may be required to reimburse the school district and may be subject to discipline under board policy and the school district rules and regulations. They may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities.