

**2021-2022  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**PATHFINDERS**

501 N. Paul St.  
Dowagiac, Michigan 49047  
269-782-4471  
[www.dowagiacschools.org/schools/pathfinders](http://www.dowagiacschools.org/schools/pathfinders)

Jonathan Whan, Superintendent  
Dawn Conner, Deputy Superintendent  
Nicky Hulett, Director  
Paula Vide, Teacher  
Claudia Zebell, Teacher  
Andy Hackett, Teacher  
Denise Stockwell, Teacher  
Mark Dzakowic, Teacher (ESL)  
Andrea Hatter, Instructional Support

**PATHFINDERS HOURS**

**Monday - Friday**

Morning Session: 7:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
Afternoon Session: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Lunch - Approximately 10:45

**Monday - Wednesday**

Evening Session: 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Ronda Sullivan, President (783-0349)  
Ruth Ausra, Vice-President (782-5517)  
Terry Groth, Secretary (303-3722)  
Ronald O. Jones, Treasurer (782-3835)  
Carrie Freeman, Trustee (229-977-1829)  
Tracey Hatcher, Trustee (470-0947)  
Brett Brewer, Trustee (876-6041)

The Board of Education usually meets the third Monday of each month unless a change is posted. You are welcome to attend the meetings.

## **DISCRIMINATION DISCLAIMER**

It is the policy of the Dowagiac Union School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age\* sex, marital status\*, height\*\*, weight\*\*, or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program or activity or in employment. In addition, accommodations will be made to ensure that the lack of English language skills is not a barrier to admission and participation in activities.

Inquires or complaints regarding nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Superintendent, Coordinator for Title IX, Title VI, Title II, Section 504 and the Age Discrimination Act, Dowagiac Union School District, 206 Main Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047; or contact via telephone at 269/782-4400.

\*under the education article, age and marital status are prohibited considerations for admissions only.

\*\*in employment only.

Estimado Padre/Guardián:

Si tiene preguntas y necesita aclaración sobre este guía escolar por favor de hacer contacto con el director del edificio o personal bilingüe

## **DOWAGIAC UNION SCHOOLS CORE VALUES**

### **“Respect, Responsibility, Trust”**

**Dowagiac Union Schools** believe that all people, regardless of social or economic condition, must be prepared with an education that will allow them to pursue their dreams.

Through teaching and learning models that focus on engagement, students will be enabled and empowered to make critical decisions for their futures.

In our schools, and community, we treat everyone with respect, tolerance, a kind heart, and genuine concern for their well-being.

We believe a flexible education/business environment teaches and encourages students to be responsible, independent, and resilient while building life skills in collaboration, project management, and leadership.

We believe that we must continue to develop and preserve the Community of Trust that defines the **DUS** learning environment.

We believe in sharing our knowledge and experience with other educators and institutions in order to foster and enhance educational reform.

We believe that technology provides the opportunity to make significant, positive changes in each student's education.

We believe that the model being created in **Dowagiac Union Schools** is the future of education and must be nurtured to continue implementation of its innovative, creative approach to education reform.

We believe in a partnership between students, teachers, parents, and the community based upon respect, responsibility, and trust.

## **STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Constitution of the United States and the State of Michigan and its Amendments give all citizens certain rights. These rights are further defined by court decisions, administrative policy and procedure, and the policies of the Dowagiac Union School District Board of Education.

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or handicap, be excluded from enrollment, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any program or activity which is under the direction or control of Dowagiac Union Schools.

All rules and regulations are subject to change or revision to comply with Board of Education directives and/or State and Federal law. Rules and regulations found in this student handbook follow a student to all

school activities, home and away.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

Responsibility refers to the student's obligations to others within the school society. In order for a student to preserve his/her rights, he/she must have a sense of responsibility toward the preservation of the rights of others.

Dowagiac Union Schools recognize the following:

RIGHT – The most important right that students have is the right to a free public education.

RESPONSIBILITY – Students have the responsibility to come to school regularly, to be on time, and be prepared to learn.

RIGHT – Students have the right to be safe at school.

RESPONSIBILITY – Students have the responsibility not to litter or deface school property.

RIGHT – Students have the right to get help from a counselor, teacher, or administrator.

RESPONSIBILITY – Students have the responsibility to respect each other and staff members.

### **PATHFINDER STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To be actively engaged and put forth best effort.
- To foster and support the learning of others.
- To demonstrate respect in language and actions.
- To be dependable and accountable for one's own decisions and actions.

### **DOWAGIAC UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT** **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Board of Education, employees, community, parents, and students believe that all individuals can learn, regardless of family background, socio-economic status, race, or gender. We believe that our school's purpose is to educate all individuals to their maximum potential while fostering positive behavior and attitudes. We accept the responsibility to provide educational opportunities so students may lead productive, meaningful lives.

### **PATHFINDERS MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Pathfinders is to provide individualized educational experiences and opportunities that meet the unique needs of our students and to facilitate academic and personal growth to assist all students to achieve their highest potential.

**PRIVACY OF EDUCATIONAL RECORDS  
AND DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

**ACCESS AND PRIVACY OF EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

In accordance with FERPA, you are notified of the following basic rights:

1. **Right to Inspect** – You have the right to review and inspect your educational records maintained by the Dowagiac Union School District.
2. **Right to Confidentiality** – You have the right to prevent disclosure of your education records to third parties without your consent, except in certain limited situations.
3. **Right to Request Amendment** – You have the right to ask for a correction of any part of your education record which you believe is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of your rights. This right includes the right to a hearing to present information that the record should be changed if the Dowagiac Union School District decides not to alter the education record according to your request.
4. **Right to Protest** – You have the right to file a complaint with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Office, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202, concerning our school district's failure to comply with FERPA.

**DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Dowagiac Union School District has designated certain information contained in the educational records of our students as directory information for purposes of FERPA. Information designated as directory information will be released for publication in student directories, sports programs, dramatic and musical programs, honor rolls, and other school programs. If you do not wish to have this information available for publication, you must notify the Dowagiac Union School District, 243 South Front Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047, no later than two (2) weeks after receipt of this notice.

The Dowagiac Union School District defines student directory information as follows:

1) Name; 2) Age; 3) Parent/Guardian's name(s); 4) School the student attends; 5) Grade and/or subjects the student is enrolled in; 6) Participation in school activities; 7) Weight/height of athletic team members; 8) Dates of attendance; 9) Awards the student has received; 10) Previous schools attended.

Unless you notify our office of your objection to having any or all of this information disclosed as directory information, the Dowagiac Union School District will assume you have no objection to the release of this information.

## FILES – RECORDS

Each student has a file containing his/her cumulative educational records. These records are kept throughout the school years and for an indefinite period after graduation. These records may be examined in accordance with the Privacy Act.

## PRIVACY ACT

Parents may examine their student's records upon written request. The request will be acted upon and the parent or student notified within five days of the time and place of examination. Students over 18 years of age may examine their own records, but they also shall file a written request.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to receive a high school diploma and participate in graduation exercises, a student, at a minimum, must complete the following requirements:

- A. All graduation requirements shall meet at least the minimum standards as established by the laws of the State of Michigan.
- B. All students must attempt all portions of the State required exam to qualify for a Dowagiac diploma.
- C. For classification purposes, a Pathfinders student must have earned the following credits:

<u>Class of</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>
2020, 21,	5	10	14.5
2022 -	5	11	15

Beginning with the class of 2021-22, students must also have completed the core classes for each grade level to move into the next grade level.

Starting with the class of 2011 the Michigan Legislature is requiring a new set of graduation standards for all students enrolled in Michigan High Schools. Below are the requirements for the class of 2011 and beyond.

- A. It shall be the policy of the Board of Education to acknowledge each student's successful completion of the instructional program or a personal curriculum appropriate to the achievement of District goals and objectives as well as personal proficiency, by the awarding of a diploma at graduation ceremonies.

The Board shall annually notify each of its students and a parent or legal guardian of each of its students that all students are entitled to a personal curriculum. The annual notice shall include an explanation of what a personal curriculum is and state that if a personal curriculum is requested, the public school or public school academy will grant that request. The District shall provide this annual notice to parents and legal guardians by sending a written notice to each student's home or by including the notice in a newsletter, student handbook, or similar communication that is sent to a student's home, and also shall post the notice on the District website.

The Board shall award a regular high school diploma to every student enrolled in the District who meets the requirements of graduation established by this Board, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), and as provided by State law.

Credit may be earned by:

- A. Traditional coursework;
- B. Demonstrating mastery of subject area content expectations or guidelines for the credit;
- C. Related coursework in which content standards are embedded;
- D. Non-traditional coursework;
- E. Independent teacher-guided study;
- F. Testing out;
- G. Dual enrollment;
- H. Advanced placement courses;
- I. International baccalaureate or other "early college" programs;
- J. Michigan Department of Education (MDE) approved formal career and technical (CTE) program or curriculum;
- K. On-line class

Special education student who properly complete the programs specified in their I.E.P., or in a personal curriculum, and meet the requirements for a high school diploma, and have received the recommendation of the I.E.P.C. may participate in graduation activities as recommended by the student's I.E.P.C. Reasonable accommodation shall be made for students with disabilities, as defined under State or Federal law, to assist them in taking any required tests or assessments for graduation.

For State-mandated curriculum requirements, a student shall be granted credit toward graduation if she/he successfully completes the subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the department that apply to the credit. A student may also receive credit if she/he earns a qualifying score, as determined by the State on the assessments developed or selected for the subject area by the State or the student earns a qualifying score, as determined by the District on one or more assessments developed or selected by the School District that measure a student's understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines that apply to the credit. For subject areas and courses in which a final examination is used as the assessment for successful attainment of the subject area content, a grade of C+ or better is required.

The Board shall grant credit toward high school graduation for any student who successfully completes, prior to entering high school, a State-mandated curriculum requirement, provided she/he

completes the same content requirements as the high school subject area and the student has demonstrated the same level of proficiency on the material as required of the high school students.

For elective courses, which are not State-mandated curriculum requirements, the Board shall grant credit to any high school student who is not enrolled in the course, but has exhibited a reasonable level of knowledge of the subject matter of the course by achieving C+ or better on the final exam for the course, or, if there is no final exam, through the basic assessment used for the course, which may consist of a portfolio, paper, project, presentation or other established means.

Such credit shall be counted toward the required number of credits needed for graduation. Mastery credits shall be counted toward any subject area requirement and any course sequence requirement. Once mastery credit is earned in a subject area, a student may not receive further credit for a lower sequence course in the same subject area.

A high school student shall be granted credit in any foreign language not offered by the District providing the student meets the competency criteria established by the Superintendent.

The career and technical education credits may include work-based learning by a student working at a business or other work setting with appropriate oversight by the District over the student's experience and learning in the work setting in which the work-based learning occurs.

Commencement exercises will include only those students who have successfully completed requirements as certified by the high school principal. No student who has completed the requirements for graduation shall be denied a diploma as a disciplinary measure. A student may be denied participation in the graduation ceremony, however, when personal conduct so warrants.

### **PATHFINDER GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible to receive a Pathfinders high school diploma and participate in the Pathfinder graduation exercises, a student, at a minimum, must complete the following requirements:

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>REQUIRED</b>
Math	4 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
English	4 credits
Health	.5 credit
PE	.5 credit
Visual/Performing Arts	1 credit
World Language	2 credits



Career Development	Completion of 4/6 tasks. Tasks marked with an asterisk are required by the state.
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**Career Development Task List:**

- \_\_\_ Annual Completion of EDP\*
- \_\_\_ Participation in career education programming\*
- \_\_\_ Informational Interview
- \_\_\_ Completed Job Application/ Mock Interview
- \_\_\_ Work Based Learning Experience \*
- \_\_\_ Completed Resume/Portfolio w/ letters of reference\*

**Students wishing to walk with their cohort at DUHS must meet the graduation requirements by the date set forth by DUHS Administration.**

**GRADING POLICY**

Grades awarded will be Credit (CR) or Incomplete (NC). In order to receive credit, students must receive a minimum of 60% in the course. In addition, students must meet the following requirements to move through the course:

- Lesson Mastery Tests: 80%
- Unit Tests: 60%
- Course Tests/Exams 60%

In addition, students that show mastery of lesson material on a pre-test for a given unit, may be exempted from that lesson.

**CREDIT EARNED BY TESTING**

High school students now have the option of receiving credit for course offerings by “testing out”.

Public Act 335 requires school boards to grant credit to high school pupils attaining a grade of 75% or higher on the final exam or assessment method used in a course.

It is important to note that once students are granted credit by testing out, they may not receive credit for a lower sequence course offering in the same subject area. In addition, credits earned by demonstrating a reasonable level of mastery in the subject area are recorded as “pass” grades and will not be included in computing grade point averages. Finally, the local school board has discretion as to whether credits earned in this manner count toward graduation and course requirements.

If any students wish to exercise the testing out option they are required to sign up prior to examination dates set forth by the building administration. For further details, contact the high school guidance office.

### **HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY TESTING : GED, TASC**

**Minimum Age:** 18 years of age and class of which applicant would have been a member must have graduated.

( Individuals who are graduates of the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, National Guard Michigan Youth Challenge Program qualify for a Michigan GED® certificate if they are at least 16 years of age, and successfully complete all GED® tests in accordance with Michigan jurisdictional score requirements. Individuals who are at least 16 years of age and have been out of a regular school program for one calendar year may be tested. The calendar year waiting requirement may be waived if it is in the best interest of the individual as determined by a school district's superintendent or designee and parent/guardian and is in accordance with State approved GED® testing center guidelines. )

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Students grade 9 – 11 are permitted to enroll in up to two post secondary courses. Grade 12 students are permitted up to four post secondary courses. Students are not permitted to exceed ten post secondary courses throughout their high school career. **Students must meet all academic requirements to be eligible.** If the student fails to successfully complete the assigned course, the school may impose fines equaling the cost of course tuition, books, and support materials.

### **SMC ACADEMY/DUAL ENROLLMENT CONTRACT**

**SMC Academy/Dual Enrollment permits students to take classes in both high school and a college or university simultaneously. The purpose of this program is to provide an opportunity for students to earn college credits while attending high school. Eligible students may take certain college and university classes paid for with a percentage of state funding through the local school district.**

**Dowagiac Union High School will offer academy/dual enrollment classes for all DUHS students who qualify under the terms of the Dual Enrollment Law (SB 622 and SB 623 of 2012) as approved by the Michigan Legislature.**

### **RULES/GUIDELINES FOR ENROLLMENT**

- A. **Students who take academy/dual enrollment courses are required to follow the college's schedule/calendar.**
- B. **Students who decide to drop a course must follow the college's drop date schedule. Failure to follow proper drop procedure will result in the student being responsible for tuition cost.**

- C. **Students must earn a C (75%) or better to receive college credit or to be eligible to take college classes the following semester with school covered tuition and be in good standing with sending school.**
- D. **It is recommended that students have a minimum grade point average of 2.50.**
- E. **Students must have a passing score on PSAT, SAT, and/or SMC Placement Test.**
- F. **DUHS has no control over grades earned at SMC or other colleges.**
- G. **Students are responsible for transportation to and from the college attended.**
- H. **Students must follow attendance policy given at each school attended.**
- I. **Students must meet with their guidance counselor to initiate registration.**
- J. **Students must remain a student in good standing at Dowagiac Union High School.**

Tuition is paid by Dowagiac Union Schools for dual enrollment classes, but purchasing textbooks is the responsibility of the student. Student texts cost between \$50 and \$100 per class for classes held at DUHS or on the college campus.

**Students who fail a SMC Academy/Dual Enrollment class will be required to pay back the school the tuition cost accrued by the school.** Also, students who fail an academy/dual enrollment class **may** not be allowed to take additional courses. Seniors with outstanding debt towards DUS may not be allowed to participate in commencement ceremonies.

### **TRANSPORTATION TO VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC ACADEMIES**

**Students attending the Van Buren Vocational Technical Center are provided transportation by the school district and must use the provided transportation to and from the Center.** There are rare instances when it will be necessary, because of class work or field trips that a student must provide his/her own transportation. In these cases, a student must (1) bring a note from a parent granting permission to drive and a note from the instructor at the Van Buren Vocational Technical Center requesting the student to drive, (2) receive permission from the assistant principal or designee, (3) not take passengers to or from the Center. Permission will only be granted on the day(s) requested. No one will be given permanent permission to drive to the Van Buren Vocational Technical Center. A student violating the “no driving” rule may be suspended or removed from his/her program. This includes Cosmetology and Building Trades.

### **VAN BUREN VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL CENTER**

Students enrolled at Dowagiac High School have the opportunity to attend the Van Buren Vocational Technical Center in Lawrence. Courses available to Dowagiac students include:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Allied Health Technologies
- Auto Body Technician
- Business Management and Finance
- Cadet Teacher Academy
- Child Development
- Commercial Art
- Computer Aided Design

Computer Networking  
Construction Trades  
Cosmetology  
Electro-Mechanical  
Emergency Medical Technician  
Entrepreneurship  
Fire Science  
Graphic Arts  
Health Academy  
Hospitality Services  
Law Enforcement  
Machine Tool Operations  
Nursing and Patient Care  
Office Administration  
Phlebotomy/EKG  
Plastics  
Programming/Software Dev./Interactive Media  
Welding

Dowagiac and the Center have agreed that a student must attend his/her “home” (Dowagiac) school to be eligible to participate in the Van Buren Center program.

There are days that the Van Buren Vocational Technical Center is not open and Dowagiac schools are operating. The student is responsible to attend his/her Dowagiac classes when the Center is closed. **When Dowagiac schools are closed, students do not have to attend the Center classes.** On these occasions an announcement will be made.

**Students will not be excused from Center classes to attend assembly programs or class meetings in Dowagiac without permission from building administration.**

Disciplinary action at either school may carry over to the other school.

**DOWAGIAC UNION SCHOOLS**  
**SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION**  
**POLICY, RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Bus transportation is a service provided by the Dowagiac Board of Education and is not mandated by state law. It is understood that bus riding is a privilege dependent on the students’ good conduct.

**ELIGIBILITY POLICY:** Students in grades kindergarten through 4th, living one-half mile or more, and students in grades 5th through 12th, living one mile or more from the schools they attend, are eligible for bus transportation.

**SERVICE POLICY:** All students shall be assigned to buses and bus stop locations by the

Transportation Supervisor. Parents are responsible for students going to, from, and at their bus stops. Students in grades kindergarten through 4th are expected to walk up to one-half mile to the bus stop, and bus stops will be located at a minimum of one-quarter mile apart. Students in grades 5th through 12th are expected to walk up to one mile to the bus stop, and bus stops will be located at a minimum of one-half mile apart. Bus routes shall not be extended for babysitters. Shuttle bus stop locations for kindergarten through 4th grades in the city will be determined by the Administration.

**PARENT RESPONSIBILITY:** Parents are to insure safety and protection for their children going to, from, and at the bus stop. Parents are expected to read and discuss bus riding policies, rules, and regulations with their children. Parents should accept responsibility in cooperation with school personnel for ensuring proper conduct of their children.

**REGULATIONS:** Students must ride their assigned bus and be picked up and let off at their designated bus stop. Requests for a student to ride a different bus or use a different bus stop must be made in writing by the parent, and approved by the building Principal or designee. The requested change must not result in the overcrowding of any bus, alteration of any bus route, bus stop or time schedule. Students who are not regular bus riders are not permitted to ride any bus with friends for social activities. If a parent intends to pick up a child who normally rides the bus, the school office must be notified.

A. It is the student's responsibility to:

1. Arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled time of pick-up; buses will not wait for tardy students.
2. Walk to the bus stop facing traffic wherever possible.
3. Wait for the bus off the traveled portion of the roadway.
4. Cross 10 feet away from the front of the bus upon driver's signal.
5. Enter or leave the bus using the front door only, except in case of emergency, and only with the consent of the driver, are rear doors to be used.
6. Remain on school property once they leave the bus in the morning and to board the bus immediately after school is dismissed, after which time students can be released only to their parent or guardian.

B. The following are basic bus rules:

1. OBSERVE CLASSROOM CONDUCT. DO NOT DISTRACT THE DRIVER'S ATTENTION FROM THE ROAD.
2. Be courteous; no profanity, vulgar or obscene gestures or language.
3. Remain seated. Change seats only with the permission or instructions of the driver.
4. "Angel" seating is required.
5. Keep hands and feet to yourself, out of aisles and windows.
6. Windows may be opened only to window lines with the drivers' permission.
7. No yelling, screaming, or throwing objects, in or at the bus.
8. No eating or drinking. No possession or use of tobacco products or look-alike products, or drugs or look-alike products.
9. No radios or audio/visual equipment are allowed on the bus.

10. Keep the bus clean and report vandalism.
11. No fighting or horseplay.
12. No pets, animals, or insects are allowed on the bus. No glass bottles or containers.
13. All student projects and belongings shall be enclosed in a safe container and must be held by the student.
14. No possession or use of weapons, counterfeit or look-alike. No possession or use of squirting devices or containers.
15. No laser lights of any kind are permitted on the bus.

**STUDENT CONDUCT:** Rules for student conduct necessary to the safe operation of the buses will be developed in cooperation with the Business Manager, Transportation Supervisor, other transportation personnel, school Principals, and shall be approved by the Board of Education on the recommendation of the Superintendent. Rules will be reviewed and published annually in student handbooks.

Conduct of students on the bus is the same as required conduct in the classroom.

Bus drivers are responsible for the safety of all riders and the enforcement of all rules and regulations. This includes advising students concerning the rules, assigning seats, encouraging and praising good behavior, and other generally accepted means of maintaining and developing constructive student-school relationships.

The priority in bus rule enforcement is the safety of the student, his or herself, and the student behavior as it affects the safety of others.

Instances of misconduct will be ticketed by the bus driver in writing. The bus driver may issue a warning notice, or issue a bus riding suspension under the following conditions:

1. For violation of routine rules of conduct the bus driver will issue a Bus Misconduct Ticket warning notice to the student with a copy going to the parent, Transportation Supervisor, and building Principal or designee.
2. For repeated minor violations or an incident of gross misconduct the bus driver may issue a bus riding suspension with a copy going to the parent, Transportation Supervisor and building Principal or designee.
  - A. The student must sign receipt of the ticket. The student must have the ticket signed by the parent and present it to the driver when returning to bus riding on the day and date indicated. In the case of a student 18 or over it is required only the student be notified of the suspension.
  - B. Bus suspensions are progressive, from one (1) day up to ten (10) days.
  - C. Students receiving multiple suspensions may be permanently suspended for the remainder of the school year as determined at a meeting between the student and parent, bus driver, Transportation Supervisor, and the Business Manager.

Bus riding suspensions issued during the last days of the school year will carry over to the beginning of the next school year and the full number of days suspended will be served.

The parent shall be responsible for the transportation of the student during the effective time of suspension of the student's bus riding privilege.

Parent appeals of a bus suspension are to be made to the Transportation Supervisor, as the first step, and the Superintendent as the final step.

Suspensions for more than ten (10) days can be made with the consent of the Transportation Supervisor and the Business Manager. Appeals for suspensions of more than ten (10) days may be made to the Board of Education through the Superintendent.

Cases of mass gross misconduct or abusive behavior on the school bus will be dealt with severely and could result in all students being removed from the bus, and parents called to pick up their student at the school. Should circumstances warrant, the bus will be pulled from the route until such time as the parents can be summoned to a meeting and discuss the problem. If a bus is pulled from a route it will not run again until such time as there is sufficient parental assurance that they will be responsible for the actions of their children.

In emergency cases of gross misconduct which demand immediate action, the bus driver may request a student be removed from the bus by the Transportation Supervisor or a Principal. If individual students are requested to leave the bus and they do not comply, they will be removed by the local law enforcement agency. No underage student will be ordered off a bus alone without an adult in authority receiving them.

### **BUS MISCONDUCT TICKET PROCEDURE**

Bus drivers will explain rules and discipline procedures to students at the beginning of the year, and thereafter as new students start riding.

Bus drivers will maintain a written log of disciplinary problems for each student.

#### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE:**

##### **A. Violation of Routine Rules:**

- Blocking Aisle
- Changing Seats/Bus In Motion
- Did Not Use Angel Seat
- Eating/Drinking
- Excessive Noise
- Extended Body Through Window
- Hitting Others/Horseplay
- Interfere W/Dr. Discipline

Kicking or Tripping Others  
Left Bus W/O Permission  
Left School Prop. W/O Permission  
Littering  
Open Window W/O Permission  
Profanity/Obscene Gestures  
Refused Assigned Seat  
Standing While Bus Is In Motion  
Stealing  
Talking/Noises at RR Xing  
Vandalism  
Verbal Abuse of Others  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The bus driver will issue a:

1. Verbal Reprimand.
2. Ticket - Warning Notice, student sign and assign seat for two (2) weeks.
3. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 1-3 days; student and parent sign.
4. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 3-5 days; student and parent sign.
5. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 5-10 days; student and parent sign.
6. Ticket - Loss of Riding Privileges pending meeting between student, one parent, driver, Transportation Supervisor, and Business Manager to determine permanent suspension.

B. Gross misconduct which endangers either the students' safety or the safety of others, otherwise known as "SEVERES":

Bus Stop Safety Violation  
Counterfeit  
Defiance of Driver/Backtalk  
Fighting  
Light Matches, Lighter, Fire, Etc.  
Physical Abuse of Others  
Possession of Water/Squirt Device  
Possession of Weapon or Look-Alike  
Possession, Look-Alike Or  
(Refusal to Comply)  
Substance Abuse -- Use, Sale  
Throwing Things-In/Out of Bus

The bus driver will issue a:

1. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 3 days; student and parent sign.
2. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 5 days depending on number of routine



- violations; student and parent sign.
3. Ticket - Bus Suspension, 10 days; student and parent sign.
  4. Loss of Riding Privileges pending meeting between student, parent, driver, Transportation Supervisor, and Business Manager to determine permanent suspension.
- C. All bus suspension will be reported to the Transportation Supervisor by radio at time of issue. Drivers will make every effort to contact parents of student suspended, in grades Kindergarten through 6th, by telephone the same day.
- D. Major suspendable bus offenses such as fighting, defiance of authority, profanity towards/with driver, possession of a weapon, etc., may also mean a suspension from school.
- E. BUS STOP SAFETY VIOLATIONS:
1. Standing in the road when bus approaches.
  2. Running toward the bus before it comes to a complete stop.
  3. Shoving in the boarding line.
  4. Shoving or crowding up the bus steps.
  5. Crossing the roadway previous to driver instructions.
  6. Crossing within 10 feet of the front of the bus.
  7. Stopping, delaying or playing in the roadway while crossing the roadway.
  8. Re-crossing the roadway without driver instruction.
  9. Crossing the roadway behind the bus.
  10. Failure to cross the roadway.
  11. Touching the sides or rear of the bus while it is at the stop or while leaving the bus stop.
  12. Holding on to the bus and sliding behind when the bus pulls away.
  13. Approaching the bus after the entrance door closes.
  14. Students are not allowed to listen to any electronic devices, iPods, or talk on their cell phones once the bus leaves the parking lot.

### **VIDEO SYSTEM MONITORING**

The school district uses on-board video systems as an aid to monitoring student bus riding behavior. Cameras are scheduled on a rotating basis, although the number of incidents of misconduct or the seriousness of these reports may necessitate more frequent monitoring of a particular bus route. The tapes are periodically reviewed by the Transportation Director. If incidents are reported, or if incidents are viewed during random selection, the videos will be kept as evidence until final resolution of the problem has been reached. Persons authorized to review the videos include school administration, transportation staff, and law enforcement personnel.

## **DRIVING TO SCHOOL**

Driving to school and parking on school property is a privilege and a responsibility. You must have a valid driver's license to operate a vehicle on school property.

All motor vehicles are to be driven in a safe, sane, and reasonable manner on and around school premises. Drivers should never exceed 5 mph while driving on school property and should always be alert for other vehicles and pedestrians. Any driving that is unlawful or deemed dangerous or unsafe or as outlined by Dowagiac City Ordinance No. 5.99 may result in disciplinary action.

When in the judgment of the administration it is necessary, the police will be notified for assistance.

## **ORDINANCE NO. 5.99 CITY OF DOWAGIAC SUDDEN ACCELERATION**

No person shall drive a motor vehicle on public or private property within the City of Dowagiac in a manner which produces squealing, spinning, or other noise from tires as a result of acceleration, braking, speed, or other action of the operator of said motor vehicle. Noise made by tires in an unforeseeable emergency shall not be considered a violation of this section; provided, however, that if the operator of the motor vehicle could have or should have foreseen said emergency, said squealing or other noise made by tires shall be considered a violation. There will be a regular patrol of the parking lot by the Dowagiac police.

**The school is not responsible for accidents, theft, personal injury, or property damage or restitution for school parking lot issues.**

## **SELF-TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**

Driving to school is a privilege which can be revoked at any time. Students who are provided the opportunity to ride school transportation are encouraged to do so. Students and their parents assume full responsibility for any transportation to and from school not officially provided by the school.

Dowagiac Union Schools is not held liable and/or responsible for any damage (vandalism, accidents, theft, personal injury, etc.) done to a vehicle while parked on school property.

## **GUESTS AND VISITORS**

All guests and/or visitors coming into the building must enter through the main door and must enter the office immediately. Reasons for being in the building must be approved.

## DRESS CODE

We believe that student dress is a factor in the establishment of an educational atmosphere and that clothing should be APPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL. Standards of dress which clearly deal with the health and safety of students will be upheld. Student dress should be neat, clean, and not distract from the educational process. **The final decision as to whether dress is inappropriate rests with the administration.**

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

For the health, safety and/or educational needs of your child, information on the Health Data Insert, health appraisal, and/or emergency card may need to be shared with individuals working with your child. Typically, this would include the building administrator, secretary, teachers of your child, counselor, and school nurse.

Other people may require this information, however, only those who have a need to know will be informed. The school district will make that determination unless you indicate otherwise. If there is a medical condition/information that you do not want shared, or that you want shared on a limited basis, please contact your school office for the proper forms to restrict or deny access of specific medical information.

## HEALTH ALERT

It is the parents and/or student's responsibility to notify the school if there is any physical, mental, or emotional change in a student which may have implications on the student's safety or welfare. If a parent and/or student wishes to have the student excused from participation in any class that they feel may pose possible health consequences, a physician's statement must be provided to the school stating the necessity for having the student excused.

## MEDICATION

In order for a student to take medication at school, the following rules apply:

1. There must be written, signed permission from the parent/guardian. **A parent/guardian is required to bring the medicine to and from school.**
2. There must be written instructions, signed by a physician. This applies to all over-the-counter medicines, such as aspirin, cough medicine, stomach medicine, cough drops, etc. as well as prescription medicine.

3. All medicine to be taken at school (prescription, aspirin, Tylenol, cough medicine, cough drops, etc.) must be kept in the school office and administered by designated school personnel.
4. All medicine must come to school in its original container. (Ask the pharmacist to make up a special bottle for school.) No baggies, envelopes, etc. with medicine will be accepted. Empty bottles will not be sent home from school to be refilled.
5. All labels must be clear and bear the student's name.
6. Unused medicine is to be picked up from the school office and taken home within two weeks of being discontinued. Medicine left longer at school will be properly discarded by school personnel.
7. The school must be notified immediately by parent/guardian or physician if a prescription changes; and new instructions must be signed by the physician.

These rules are based on Michigan's state law and school procedures that have been developed to protect the safety and well-being of students.

Forms for parent/guardian permission and the physician's instruction(s) are available at the school office.

**CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DRUGS,**  
**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, MIND ALTERING SUBSTANCES,**  
**LOOK-ALIKE DRUGS, COUNTERFEIT DRUGS,**  
**AND OTHER MEDICATION**

The use of illegal drugs or over the counter/prescription drugs not in compliance with our medication policy by our students is clearly inappropriate and potentially destructive to them, their families, and Dowagiac Union High School. Any student who gives evidence of having been drinking an alcoholic beverage or using any illegal substance or is in possession of either of these or of any paraphernalia pertaining to these while attending class, on school premises, or any school-sponsored activity, home or away, shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action. Also, students are prohibited from having in possession, use, or delivery, "look-alike" beverages/containers on school property and/or at school activities home or away.

In addition, (a) no student may possess, provide, give or deliver, by sale or otherwise, any substance which he/she represents or believes to be a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind; (b) no student may possess or use any substance which the student has reason to believe, is or which has been represented to him/her as a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind; (c) students are prohibited from possessing, using,

transmitting, or being under the influence of caffeine /caffeine-based pills/ substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), stimulants, or depressants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription. Students who violate medication policy protocol, which includes over the counter medicine, are subject to the consequences outlined in the Infractions and Penalties section of the handbook; (D) Students are prohibited from possessing, using, or transferring look-alike drugs. This includes synthetics, incense, and botanicals; (E) Devices used by student to breath in inhalants of any kind are prohibited and will be considered drug paraphernalia. Most commonly, these devices are called vapor or electronic cigarettes or vapor pens; (F) Student will not be allowed to remain at school if they smell of alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs.

### **DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE**

The Michigan School Code (380-1300) and case law establish that students may be disciplined for conduct off school property in limited circumstances. **A Drug Free Zone extends 1000 feet in all directions from school property. This includes the use of tobacco.**

### **CELL PHONE POSSESSION/USE** **(Update to Public Act 451)**

Teacher discretion with clearly communicated expectations will be the norm. Teachers may allow students to use cell phones for academic purposes or to listen to music within their own classrooms. In the event that the use of a cell phone is disruptive to the educational process, the privilege of using a cell phone may be revoked.

**The school will not be responsible for cell phone theft, damage, or repair/replacement, etc.  
School personnel will not be responsible for finding missing phones.**

### **BULLYING /BULLYING RUBRIC:**

The Bullying Policy may be viewed in its entirety by referencing Board of Education Policy #5517.01.

“Bullying” is unacceptable behavior in any building, on school grounds or during any school related activity. Any student behavior which interferes with another student’s ability to benefit from educational, social and/or athletic activities may fall under the general heading of “bullying.” Student behavior which causes discomfort, causes another student to fear for his/her safety or creates an environment of intimidation can be considered “bullying.” Disciplinary measures may range from a warning up to and including expulsion where school intervention has not resolved “bullying” issues.

**Bullying is a form of violence that is intentional, repeated, and involves an imbalance of power between the people involved. Bullying can take the form of a mean gesture, word or action that hurts a person’s body, feelings, friendships, reputation, or property.**

## **CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOR:**

Rules have been established against bullying to create a positive or negative consequence for following or violating rules. The best results are obtained through a combination of generous verbal praise or other social reinforcements for positive activities and consistent negative consequences for aggressive, rule-violating behavior. Teachers should establish a positive, friendly, trusting relationship with the class and each individual student. This is especially true for aggressive, acting-out students who may have had negative experiences with adults. It is easier for a student to accept criticism if he/she feels appreciated and liked. Teachers should also be aware of their own behavior. Teachers often serve as “models” for students who respect them and may wish to emulate them. Likewise, students will not respect the teacher or classroom rules against bullying if the teacher is sarcastic, unfair, or abusive.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**Students are required to meet the attendance requirements of their individual program. A minimum requirement is participation in 2 way contact which must take place weekly. Students who do not meet these requirements may be dropped from their program.**

**Any student missing 10 consecutive school days without a documented excuse will be dropped from the program.**

### **Signing In/Signing Out of Building**

All students must sign in when they arrive at the Pathfinders building and sign out when they leave.

### **Leaving the Building**

Students leaving the building during the school day must sign out at the office. Once a student signs out and leaves the building they are not allowed to return to the building unless they have permission from the staff. Student who leave for appointments ie, medical, court, will need to provide documentation to return to the building.

## **WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES**

A weapon is defined as any instrument that is or can be used to attack or for defense. A Weapon Free Zone extends 1000 ft. from school property.

Possession, sales, or use of weapons, explosives, fireworks, incendiary or smoke devices is against state law, school policy and is prohibited. The school also does not allow the possession, sales, or use of toy or “look-alike” items stated above. This policy is in effect to and from school while riding school transportation, on school property, and at school activities, home or away.

A dangerous weapon will be defined as any object which may cause bodily harm or which may be used as a weapon which could inflict bodily harm. Some examples of dangerous weapons, but not all inclusive, would be firearms, BB/pellet guns, daggers, stilettos, knives, pocket knives, blades, clubs, chains, iron bar or brass knuckles, etc. The administration reserves the right to determine how dangerous an object/weapon is. A police report will be made on each dangerous weapon incident along with school disciplinary action.

An explosive device is defined as an agent or substance that expands, breaks into pieces, or break up violently, with or without noise.

PA 328 REQUIRES local school boards to EXPEL students carrying dangerous weapons in school. The law became effective January 1, 1995.

The law provides for the expulsion of any public school student who is found in possession of a dangerous weapon (firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches long, pocket knife opened by mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles) in a school building or on school grounds, or who commits rape or arson in a school building or on school grounds. Expulsion is mandatory unless the student can demonstrate, by clear and convincing evidence, that: 1) he/she did not knowingly possess the weapon, or 2) he/she did not possess the object for use or delivery as a weapon; or 3) he/she did not know the object was a weapon; or 4) that he/she had express permission to possess the weapon from either the school administration or the local police department.

Act No. 328 requires that children specified who are in fifth grade or lower be expelled for at least 90 school days. Children specified who are in sixth grade or above are to be expelled for at least 180 school days.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

In accordance with provision relative to New Jersey v T.L.O., 105 S. Ct. 733 (1985), the following shall apply to search and seizure: Whenever school officials have reasonable grounds to believe that a search will disclose evidence a student has violated or is violating school rules, a search may be conducted. There may be times when personal property such as purses, book bags, gym bags, hats, jackets, coats, shoes, etc. will be searched. There may even be times when a student is requested to empty his/her pockets. The manner in which a search is conducted will always maintain the highest regard and utmost concern for the dignity of the student/s involved. Personal items which are considered potentially dangerous, unsafe, disruptive and/or unhealthy to programs, or illegal may be seized.

**The school retains joint custody of its lockers, desks, and all other properties assigned to students for storage and other legitimate uses. Lockers, desks, and all other school properties are subject to periodic inspections, both announced and unannounced.**

## **INSUBORDINATION**

Insubordination has been defined as:

1. Refusing to carry out any legitimate directive of a teacher or other school personnel.
2. Deliberately failing to comply with disciplinary directives of school personnel.
3. Arguing disrespectfully and/or using abusive or profane language when reprimanded or disciplined by school personnel.
4. Withholding your name when requested by school personnel.

## **SMOKING/TOBACCO**

Smoking or being in possession of tobacco products (cigarettes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or “look-alike” products such as snuff/tobacco like containers of mint, beef jerky, gum, etc., “or smoking paraphernalia such as lighters, matches, etc.”) is a violation of school policy.

## **POTAWATOMI INDIANS**

Southwestern Michigan, in particular the Dowagiac area, has enjoyed a rich heritage related to the Potawatomi Indians. This heritage dates back to the mid-seventeenth century when white settlers first came to the area now known as the states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Congress passed the Indian Removal Act in 1830 requiring all American Indians living in the Great Lakes area to move west of the Mississippi River. However, members of the Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi Indians were allowed to remain in Southwestern Michigan because of the Treaty of Chicago signed by Leopold Pokagon in 1833.

Today there are approximately 1,500 members of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians living in Cass, Van Buren, and Berrien Counties.

The Dowagiac Union Schools have used the nickname “Chieftains” since 1928; however, there has never been an officially adopted logo. As a result, a variety of Chieftain head renditions have been used throughout the years.

In March 1990, the Potawatomi Pokagon Band Tribal Council and the Dowagiac Board of Education signed a joint resolution to ensure the spirit of mutual cooperation and respect for any future generations. Included in the agreement was the adoption of an official logo accurately depicting a Potawatomi Indian Chief. The logo was created and designed by Ron Mix, a member of the Potawatomi Pokagon Band, who lives in Dowagiac.

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indian office is located at 58620 Sink Road, Dowagiac. For information on Potawatomi history and programs available to the public call (269) 782-8988.