

OKAW VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK

FORWARD

Welcome to Okaw Valley Middle School. This handbook is designed to help you become familiar with the rules and procedures of Okaw Valley Middle School. These rules and procedures have been established to create the best possible learning environment for all students.

In addition to describing school rules and procedures, this handbook contains important information that will prove useful to you during the school year. You and your parents can refer to it as needed.

We believe that Okaw Valley Middle School offers a strong academic program, and that we have a talented and well-behaved student body. We encourage you to take advantage of an excellent teaching staff and the wide range of educational opportunities, academic and extracurricular, which are available to you. We also encourage you to take your responsibilities as a student seriously. Your cooperation and good behavior will contribute to a rewarding educational experience and will help us to maintain the type of school atmosphere most conducive to a good education.

It is impossible for this handbook to be all-inclusive. If changes seem advisable, they will be made by the Administration and approved by the Board of Education. The Administration will take appropriate action regarding any situation or incident not specifically covered in this handbook.

We look forward to an exciting and academically rewarding year.

Please help us maintain our gym floor. We ask everyone to take special care and not walk on it in street shoes. This will help us to maintain it and keep it looking great. Thank you.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tim Rothrock
Brooke Bartimus
Tracy Ryherd
John Vander Burgh
Greg Dickens
Grant Tice
Chelsea Beery

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES DIRECTORY

Middle School Principal: Ross Forlines.	756-8521
Middle School Secretary: Lori Robinson.	756-8521
School District Business Office	665-3232
District Superintendent: Kent Stauder	665-3232
High School Principal: Matt Shoaff	665-3631
Elementary School Principal: Heidi Vander Burgh	665-3541
Director of Transportation: Jason Fleshner	665-3232

Okaw Valley Middle School

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Findlay, IL 62534

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SUPPORT STAFF

Sid Richardson - Custodian
Kelli Creviston - Cook
Corrie Stauder - Library/Media Aide
Suzi Nolen - Custodian
Shelley Ohm - Cook
Ronda Yantis - Resource Aide
Canaan Christensen – Resource Aide

OUR MISSION

Okaw Valley Middle School is committed to a partnership of school, home, and communities working together to meet the unique physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of its students in a supportive, age-appropriate environment. This will result in students who are successful, concerned for others and good citizens.

OUR TEAMS

5th Grade Team

Emanuel Guzman - Band
 *Pam Dickey - P.E. & Art
 *Jennifer Douglass - 5th Grade Classroom
 Melody Foster - Resource
 *Ashley Christensen - 5th Grade Classroom
 Ronda Yantis - Resource Aide
 Amy Orris- Resource Aide
 Corrie Stauder- Library

7th Grade Team

Brennon Baker - P.E. & Health
 Emanuel Guzman - Band & Chorus
 Amy Orris- Language Arts
 Nicole Cunningham - Literature
 Pam Dickey - P.E. & Art
 Melody Foster – Resource
 *Jason Engler - Social Studies
 Jackie McLain - Science
 * Kristina Ledbetter - Math
 Ronda Yantis - Resource Aide
 *Canaan Christensen- Resource Aide
 Corrie Stauder- STEM

6th Grade Team

Brennon Baker - P.E.
 Emanuel Guzman - Band & Chorus
 Amy Orris- Language Arts
 *Nicole Cunningham - Literature
 Pam Dickey - P.E./Art
 Melody Foster - Resource
 Jason Engler - Social Studies
 *Jackie McLain - Science
 Kristina Ledbetter - Math
 *Ronda Yantis - Resource Aide
 Canaan Christensen- Resource Aide Corrie
 Stauder- STEM

8th Grade Team

*Brennon Baker - P.E.
 Pam Dickey- Art
 Emanuel Guzman - Band & Chorus
 *Amy Orris- Language Arts
 Nicole Cunningham – ELA/Leadership
 *Melody Foster - Resource
 Jason Engler - Social Studies
 Jackie McLain - Science
 Kristina Ledbetter - Math
 Ronda Yantis - Resource Aide
 Canaan Christensen- Resource Aide
 Corrie Stauder- STEM

* Denotes the class sponsors

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL SCHEDULE	8
School Hours	8
Attendance Policies and Procedures	8
Absences	8
Parents and Visitor Arrival	10
Appointments with School Personnel	10
 ACADEMIC RULES AND POLICIES	 11
Cheating and Plagiarism	11
Field Trips	12
Grading	
Scale	12
Homework Policy	12
Honor Roll	13
Incompletes	13
Library-Media Center Policy	14
Electronic Network	15
Make-up Work	15
Parent-Teacher Conferences	15
Physical Education - Excuse for Special Education	16
Progress Reports and Report Cards	16
Progress Reports	16
Report Cards	16
Promotion	16
Semester Exams	17
State Testing	17
 GENERAL RULES AND PROCEDURES	 18
Book Bags	18
Book/Materials Fines	18
Closed Campus	18
Dress Code	18
Fund Raising	19
Lockers and Locks	20
Lost and Found	20
Recess	20
Vending Machines	20
Student Transportation	21
Activities Bus	21

Bus Regulations	21
Electronic Recordings on School Buses	21
Telephone Calls	22
Textbooks	22
Valuables & Miscellaneous	22
CONDUCT	23
Conduct Rules	23
School	23
Classroom	24
Hallway and Corridor	24
School Activities	24
School Bus Conduct	25
Misconduct	27
Gross Misconduct	27
DISCIPLINE	29
Maintenance of Discipline	29
Imposition of Discipline	29
Corporal Punishment	30
Use of Corporal Punishment	30
Use of Reasonable Force	30
Discipline Consequences	30
Detentions	30
In-School Suspension	30
Out-of-School Suspension	30
Expulsion	32
Electronic Devices	32
Miscellaneous Discipline Information	33
Aggressive Behavior/Bullying	33
Alcohol, Drugs, Hazardous Material, and Tobacco	35
Due Process	35
Gang Activity	35
Hazing	35
Look-Alike Substance	36
Possession	36
Property Damage	36
Search and Seizure	36
Weapons	37
EXTRACURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR INFORMATION	38
Extracurricular /Co-Curricular Activities	38
Sports	38
Activities	38
Eligibility/Exclusion from Classes	38

Academic Eligibility	38
Exclusion from classes	39
Ineligibility Rules	39
Extracurricular Code of Conduct	39
Sports Season Tickets	39
HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES	40
Accidents	40
Accident and Emergency Information	40
Emergency Drills	40
Alarms	40
Emergency Codes	40
Drill and Emergency Procedures	40
Tornado Procedures	41
Earthquake Instructions	41
Illness/Injury	42
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND NOTICES	42
Activity Fee	42
AED Program	42
Breakfast/Lunch Programs	42
Change of Contact Information	43
Spectator Conduct and Sportsmanship	43
Head Lice precautions	44
Medication Policy	46
5TH GRADE HANDBOOK ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS	47

OVMS SCHOOL SCHEDULE

School Schedule:

Hours:

School hours at OVMS are from 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

After arriving at school students must go to the gym until **7:55 a.m.** Students are not allowed to participate in athletic activities in the gym before or after school unless under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Attendance Policies and Procedures:

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to see that their sons or daughters are in school regularly. To accomplish the educational objectives of the school and to accommodate special family needs, attendance policies and procedures have been developed. The school district operates under the authority, policies and laws set forth in the School Code of the State of Illinois. The OVMS school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Punctual and regular school attendance is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and is extremely important if the student is to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

Absences:

Excused absence or Excused Tardy: Absences that are reported to the office by a **parent** the day of the absence and are justifiable as defined in the Illinois State School Code and therefore excused for make-up work providing no more than **TEN** days excused or unexcused have been used:

Some examples:

Anticipated absence - approved as excused by principal

Illness - without going to the doctor

Medical & dental appointments - without doctor's note

In addition to the TEN days:

Death in the family - 3 day bereavement or principal discretion

Medical & dental with doctor/dentist note (turned in within two days of absence)

Vacation with **immediate** family with anticipated absence approved & turned in **prior** to vacation. (1 per year with a **five** school day limit)

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES or UNEXCUSED TARDIES: Missing classes for lack of sufficient

reason will constitute an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences count toward the maximum **TEN** day absences. Some examples but not limited to:

Truancy
 Suspension
 Shopping
 Hair appointments
 Birthdays or other celebrations
 Working at home
 Working at a job
 Baby-sitting
 Running late/car trouble

If the Middle School office has not received a phone call from the student's parent/guardian on the day of the absence, the student's absence will be considered unexcused.

Assignments/Quizzes/Tests:

In the event of an unexcused absence: Students will be permitted to make-up homework/quizzes/tests at the teacher's discretion. Principal will have final approval of any decisions regarding unexcused absences.

Tardy:

Students are expected to be in class before the 8:00 bell. Those students that are not in school by the 8:00 bell are considered TARDY and are expected to sign-in in the Middle School office BEFORE going to class. Note: The school will not excuse the tardy by receiving a parent phone call to excuse a student for oversleeping, missing the school bus, car trouble, shopping, missing one class to prepare for another or transportation problems. Decisions regarding special situations will be made by the building principal or designee. 3 tardy slips accumulated at any time may result in a detention.

Anticipated Absence Forms:

Anticipated absence forms need to be completed if your student knows in advance that he/she will be absent from school. Not all anticipated absences are excused absences. Reason for absence, length of absence and signature of parent/guardian must be completed before the principal will sign the form. Teacher signatures and retrieved homework is also required. Pre-arranged family vacations and out of town trips are limited to 5 days. Prior student absences, whether excused or unexcused, will count towards the 10 allowed. If you have a question whether or not the absence will be excused please call the Middle School office.

Absences-after school activities:

In order for a student to be able to participate in after school activities, the student must be in school at least one-half day immediately preceding the activity. In addition, students are expected to be in attendance daily, including days after contests. Participants who are absent may be withheld from participating in their next contest.

Parents and Visitor Arrival:

Buzz In System: We utilize a buzzer system that will be used to screen all visitors that enter the building during school hours. When arriving at OVMS between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., visitors will need to press the button on the camera located on the east side of the building. The secretary will verify your identity (you may be asked to provide ID) and purpose for entering the building. If all checks out then you will be allowed to enter.

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school grounds or in any school building; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Building Principal or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who: (1) refuses to provide requested identification, (2) interferes with, disrupts, or threatens to disrupt any school activity or the learning environment, (3) or engages in an activity in violation of School Board Policy 8:30, Conduct on School Property.

Appointments with School Personnel:

Any person wishing to confer with a staff member shall contact that staff member by telephone to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

ACADEMIC RULES AND POLICIES

Cheating and Plagiarism:

All work submitted for credit in any class is expected to be the original work of the student submitting it. If work is not the original effort of the student, that student may be found guilty of cheating or plagiarism.

Cheating: Cheating can include copying another student's work or allowing work to be copied by another student. Cheating can also include illegal notes or "cheat sheets" or in any way obtaining answers for questions from an outside source in a test-taking situation.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when material is presented as though it is original, when it actually comes from an outside source. Plagiarism is stealing another person's ideas about a subject, their method of presenting or organizing their ideas, or the actual work itself. Plagiarism includes the following:

- Failure to identify with quotation marks, words or symbols copied from another source;
- Failure to note in a footnote or a phrase the author and/or the source of material used in writing or speaking;
- Failure to provide a bibliography for a written or an oral report that requires research;
- The use of another sources' ideas or plan as the basis of a project, report, or composition;
- The use of another person's words or ideas as one's own for homework, speeches, themes, poems, musical compositions, art work, projects, and the like.

Cheating and plagiarism constitute deliberate acts of deception and dishonesty. A student found guilty of cheating or plagiarism shall receive a "0" for the assignment, quiz, or project. The "0" will be averaged into the semester grade. Make-up privileges and consequences will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the classroom teacher and principal.

Field Trips:

From time to time students will have the opportunity to take educational field trips. Parents will be asked to sign a permission form for **all** field trips at registration. The parent's signature authorizes participation in walks or trips within the district without prior notice. Parents will receive a notice of each field trip outside the district in advance of the scheduled date. All school rules and regulations will apply during school-sponsored field trips. Student misconduct during a field trip will be handled similarly to misconduct taking place during school hours on district premises. Misconduct during the school year may disqualify students from participating in field trips.

The school district also has the right to require students, staff, and parents who participate in co-curricular activities (either as a participant or in other capacities), to adhere to the District's rules and regulations, as well as all federal, state, and local laws.

If a student wishing to attend an event or trip cannot meet the monetary requirements, the parents may submit a letter to the school to that effect and the fee will be waived so that the student may participate.

Grading Scale:

The following grading scale will be used district-wide:

92 – 100	= A
82 – 91	= B
71 – 81	= C
60 – 70	= D
Below 60	= F

Homework Policy:

It is the expectation that students complete assignments on their due date. If a student fails to complete their work, they will have the Study Hall period that day to complete it and turn it in late. Teachers may give no less than 80% of points earned for late assignments completed past the due date, if it is done during the assigned Study Hall. Refusal to complete the work will result in an immediate detention and a possible zero on the assignment. Teachers will have discretion as to points earned if a student completes it during an assigned detention.

Honor Roll:

OVMS uses a point scale to calculate whether a student qualifies for Honors. The scale is the same through all 4 grade levels.

Classes on Honor Roll 6 th -8 th
Math
Science
Social Studies
ELA
PE
Elective Class

Classes on Honor Roll 5 th
Math
Science
Social Studies
English
Reading
Spelling

Point Scale is calculated as follows:

A = 4 points

B = 3 points

C = 2 points

Any student with a D/F is not eligible for Honors

	POINTS	NOTES
Straight A Honor Roll	24 points	Students can have no lower grade than an A
High Honors	21-23 points	All A's & B's - must have one A for every B (3 A's minimum)
Honor Roll	18-20 points	All A's, B's & C's - must have one A for every C

Incompletes:

A student will be given an incomplete (I) on his/her report card at the conclusion of a grading period if he/she has, for some **EXCUSABLE** reason, failed to complete his/her assigned work. If a student has an excused absence, it will be the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher for make-up work. Such make-up work will be turned in by the deadline set by the teacher. Except in extreme emergencies, all in-completes will convert to failures two weeks after the close of the grading period.

If a student has an un-excused absence, the student will make up work as directed by the teacher so that the student will not fall behind. Grades are not to be given for this type of make-up work.

Library-Media Center Policy:

- All Student-Parent Handbook policies apply in the Library-Media Center.
- The Library-Media Center will be open on a regular basis, depending on the schedule of the Librarian or Library Aide.
- Faculty and staff are asked to schedule class use of the Library-Media Center, in advance, on the schedule maintained by the Librarian or Library Aide. Priority will be given to pre-scheduled classes.
- A student, coming from a class to use the Library-Media Center or the computers there, must have a pass from the teacher indicating the student's purpose. The student should present the pass to the Librarian or Aide on duty.
- A general circulation book may be checked out for two weeks, and it may be renewed one time if there is no hold list for the book. Extended renewals are up to the discretion of the Librarian, and the number of items checked out by a single student may be limited by the Librarian. NO library material should leave the Library-Media Center without being checked out.
- Reference books, magazines, and materials placed on hold by teachers for special projects may be used in the library only. Some projects may require limited check-out of magazines and reference materials, but the teacher should discuss these needs with the Librarian or Aide before making the assignment to students.
- A student who has lost library material will be charged for it according to the age and the replacement price of the material. If the lost material is less than five years old, the full price will be charged. If the item is older than five years, the charge will be one half the replacement cost. A student may also be assessed a fine for damage to library material.
- Anytime a book is not returned or renewed by the due date, it is considered overdue, and the student will be assessed a five cent (\$.05) fine for each day until it is returned. Students will be notified of fines or overdue books, and they will be expected to clear their library obligations by the end of each semester.
- The Library-Media Center will close two weeks before school is out. Students must return all materials by that date. Teachers are asked to refer to this date when scheduling reports and assignments.

Electronic Network:

Each student and his or her parents/guardians must sign an Authorization for Electronic Network Access as a condition for using the District's electronic network, including Internet. This authorization must be signed annually. Each student is expected to follow the guidelines listed in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Violations of this policy include but are not limited to:

- unauthorized use of any instant messaging program
- minor incidents of vandalism i.e. defacing keyboards or mouse
- viewing non-educational websites
- altering present settings of machine
- viewing, copying, or altering student/teacher files
- failure to scan various media brought into the building for viruses
- not following procedures to report access to inappropriate websites
- adding or removing equipment/peripherals

Consequences for violation of the AUP could range from disciplinary action, if applicable, to one calendar year removal from the network per administrator discretion.

Make-up Work:

Excused Absence: It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for make-up work. This should be done immediately upon return to school from an excused absence. Failure to pick up homework may result in zero credit. A request for assignments may be made by the parent phoning the school office **by 10:00 a.m..** Students have a minimum of one day make-up privilege for each day of work missed. Longer periods for make-up work are at the discretion of the teacher.

Un-excused Absence: Students who are absent and un-excused will be permitted to make up tests and quizzes. Students will receive 50% of the total points earned. Students are encouraged to make up daily assignments missed. Teachers may record a zero for such daily assignments/grades or may award credit for work which is made up.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year to inform parents of their child's progress. Parents are strongly urged to attend these conferences. Additional conferences may be scheduled by the parent or teacher as needed.

Physical Education - Excuse for Special Education:

A student in Grades 3-12 who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses if the student's parent/guardian agrees or the student's individualized education program team determines that the student must utilize the time set aside for physical education to receive special education support services. The agreement or determination must be included in the individualized education program. A student requiring adapted physical education must receive that service in accordance with the individualized education program.

Progress Reports and Report Cards:

Progress Reports: Through the Skyward Online Portal, parents have access to student's grades at all times. We encourage parents to check grades early and often. If a parent does not have access or has forgotten login info, they need to contact the MS office.

Parents are encouraged to ask their student(s) about their grades/classes, and to take corrective action if recommended. Parents are urged to contact the **teacher** involved to assist in remedial action whenever mid-term grades are low. Parents should recognize the fact that it is possible for a student to have an average grade midway in the semester. It is also possible for a student to have a passing grade and still fail the semester.

Report Cards: Report cards are issued at the end of the first semester, and at the end of the second semester.

Promotion:

It is the policy of the Board of Education to strive to ensure that students meet district goals and objectives and can perform at the expected levels for their grades before being promoted.

Decisions to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, standardized achievement testing, or other testing. No student shall be promoted to the next grade level based solely upon age or any other social reasons not related to the student's academic performance. Students who receive a failing grade for the year in two (2) or more core subjects (Science, Math, Language Arts, or Social Studies) will be considered for retention. The recommendation to retain or promote will be made after a conference is held between the principal, parents, and teachers. The final decision will be made by the building principal.

Promotion Ceremonies

- Promotion ceremonies are not mandatory and students must meet requirements in order to participate.
- Students must have completed all requirements as specified by the State of Illinois and

by the Board of Education of Okaw Valley C.U.S.D. #302 in order to participate in promotion ceremonies.

- All disciplinary actions must be taken care of before promotion ceremonies or the student will not be allowed to participate in promotion ceremonies.
- ***All registration and any other outstanding fees incurred during middle school must be paid before participation in promotion ceremonies.***
- Parents will be notified of outstanding debt at registration and by February 1 of the current school year. Money owed beyond registration and book rental fees must be paid before participating in promotion ceremonies.

Semester Exams:

Semester exams may be given at the end of each semester.

State Testing:

Students are required to take the IAR tests in grades 5 - 8, based upon Common Core Standards.

Students in 5th & 8th grade must also take the Illinois Science Assessment based upon the Next Generation Science Standards.

GENERAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

Book Bags/Purses:

Book bags/purses are to remain in the student's locker and are not allowed in the classrooms. Students may use them to carry school materials to and from the school only.

Book/Materials Fines:

Students are expected to take care of textbooks, library books, and other materials provided for their use. Students will be held accountable for loss or damage to these items beyond normal wear and tear. Fines will be assessed based on the age, condition, and extent of damage.

Cell Phones:

Students are allowed to bring phones and use them prior to and after school. When in school, the phone should be **off and out of sight**. Teachers have the discretion to allow students to use phones in class for activities they deem appropriate. The school may also extend phone privileges or remove privileges on a case-by-case basis. The school may also collect phones for safe-keeping in the office. Phones will be returned at the end of the day or when needed. If a student needs to make a call, they may collect their phone. If a parent needs to make contact, they may call the school office at (217) 756-8521.

Closed Campus:

Upon entering the building, students may not go outside the school building or leave the school premises, except with permission of the principal or for an organized class activity. The school will make every effort to secure parental permission before a student is allowed to leave school for any reason.

Leaving school without school permission or being in the parking lot without permission will result in disciplinary action. Students are to report to the principal's office to sign-out before leaving the building. Students who fail to sign-out will be considered truant.

Dress Code:

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for *all* students
 - Clothes must be worn in a way such that private body parts (chest, pelvic/groin area and buttocks) are covered with opaque material.

2. Students Must Wear:*

- Top (Shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies,etc) - Clothing **must** have shoulder straps. The front, back and sides of the body should be covered in a reasonable manner. No undergarments should be visible.
- Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings- 3-4 inches in length at thighs (minimum) No undergarments should be visible.
- Shoes

3. Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language or images.
- Hats unless allowed on a specific day communicated by staff
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity) or the use of same.
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class.
- Visible underwear
- If the student's attire or grooming threatens the health or safety of any other person, then discipline for dress or grooming violations should be consistent with discipline policies for similar violations.

■

- Coats will not be worn in the classroom unless the teacher deems them necessary for warmth.
- Tennis shoes specifically for P.E. use will also be required and will be marked with a tag to designate them as P.E. shoes.

Students who violate this Dress Code will be required to change their attire immediately (school will provide clothing when necessary - large t-shirt) and will not be allowed to make up work for classes missed during the time that it takes to comply. Repeated offenses shall result in additional disciplinary measures, such as loss of privileges, detentions and/or suspensions.

Interpretation and application of the Dress Code shall be the responsibility of the staff/principal.

Fund Raising:

Any class, school-sponsored organization, or club desiring to run a fund raising event must first receive approval for the project through their sponsor and the principal. Classes and clubs

OVMS Handbook

may not use class time to earn money. Earning activities may be planned at a class meeting or during times when school is not in session.

Funds raised by each organization must be maintained in the Activity Account through the school office. Class officers and sponsors must clear fund raising activities and dates with the principal to avoid conflicts between classes and organizations.

The School Board maintains responsibility for student activity funds and annually shall appoint a student funds treasurer. Each student activity receiving money from whatever source must deposit the money with the student activity treasurer and obtain a signed receipt.

The School Board, or its designated representative, may transfer funds lying dormant in an account of a class, organization, club, and/or association at the close of the fiscal year to any other class, organization, or to the District's Education Fund.

Lockers and Locks:

Each student will be assigned a hall locker for storing books, coats, etc. Similarly, all students taking P. E. will be assigned a P. E. locker for clothes, shoes, etc. A lock will be provided for the P. E. locker. If it is lost, damaged, or has to be cut off, the student will be assessed a \$5.00 replacement fee. The staff and administration encourage all students to provide a lock for their hall lockers. Students are not to store open pop and snack foods in lockers at any time. Such items will be subject to confiscation. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers if the need should arise.

Lost and Found:

Articles of value turned in to the school office will be held until the end of the school term after which they will be discarded. Unclaimed articles of clothing will be taken to **The Gift** in Findlay on an as-needed basis.

Recess:

It is the policy of OVMS that students will take their recess outside when the weather permits. If the wind-chill temperature is below 25 degrees, the students will stay inside the building for recess. All other instances will be determined by the forecast or conditions of the outside play area.

Vending Machines:

Vending machines are located in the cafeteria and may be used by students after school. Vending machines will not be available before or during the school day unless permission is given by the classroom teacher or principal.

Student Transportation:

Activities Bus: Only school transportation means will be used unless otherwise approved by the building principal. Any student riding a bus to an event is required to ride that bus from the event unless:

- The coach, sponsor, chaperone, or administrator is provided with a written permission statement signed by the parent/guardian of the student, that student participant or spectator may ride home from the scheduled destination with the following: parent/guardian, grandparents, and parents of other students.
- The student is a participant in two separate school sponsored activities that are scheduled at nearly the same time. In this circumstance the building principal has the authority to approve alternate plans for travel to and from the events. Such alternate plans must be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian of the student.

Bus Regulations: It is the responsibility of the Okaw Valley School Board to provide transportation to the student to and from school if he/she lives more than one and one-half miles from school. Students who live closer than this distance cannot be transported in school buses except under special conditions approved by the School Board. Homeless students shall be transported in accordance with the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

Student safety is a major concern of all persons responsible for student transportation. Because improper behavior on a school bus can contribute to accidents, state and local regulations must be obeyed. State law authorizes denial of riding to those students guilty of violations.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a student boards the bus – and only at that time – does he/she become the responsibility of the school district.

School bus riders, while in transit, are under the jurisdiction of the school bus driver unless the board of education designates some adult to supervise the riders. Students who engage in serious or repeated misbehavior on the school bus will be referred to the principal for disciplinary action. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Improper conduct on the buses may result in that privilege being suspended or denied.

Electronic Recordings on School Buses

Electronic visual and audio recording may be used on school buses to monitor conduct and to promote and maintain a safe environment for students and employees when transportation is provided for any school related activity. Notice of electronic recordings shall be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle's entrance door and front interior bulkhead in compliance with State law and the rules of the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety. Students are prohibited from tampering with electronic recording devices. Students who violate this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with the Board's discipline policy and shall reimburse the School District for any necessary repairs or replacement.

Telephone Calls:

If parents or guardians need to have a message delivered, office personnel will take the message and see that the student receives it. Office phones are not for student use **except with permission in an emergency situation**. Forgotten books, assignments, etc.; are not considered an emergency. Students must receive permission from office personnel to use the telephone.

Textbooks:

Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Be sure your name is written inside the cover of each book. Unreasonable damage and wear to textbooks will result in fines. At the end of a course, the student must return the same book that was loaned at the beginning of the course.

Valuables:

All articles and valuables are brought to school at the owner's risk. Students will **leave their back-packs in their lockers** and take only those materials needed for class work to their classrooms. NO electronic items should be brought to school unless approved by staff/principal.

Miscellaneous:

Food- Food should be brought for lunch/breakfast only. There may be exceptions due to medical reasons and that must be coordinated with the school office. Teachers may also provide exceptions for classroom rewards. Food, outside of that permitted, will be confiscated and disposed of.

Drink – Water is allowed in a closed container unless otherwise specified by the teacher. No other beverage is allowed unless for a classroom reward. Drinks, outside of that permitted, will be confiscated and disposed of if brought into the classroom. Beverages may be left in lockers for lunch or breakfast.

Toys- Toys are allowed for recess and playground use. These toys should be left in lockers until the appropriate time. Any toys found outside of the time permitted, will be confiscated and sent home.

Gum – Gum is prohibited on school grounds. Students found chewing gum will be asked to dispose of it immediately. Habitual disobedience may result in disciplinary consequences.

CONDUCT

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain in the school an environment conducive to learning and to the educational process. Students at Okaw Valley Middle School are encouraged to develop discipline among themselves and to realize that their conduct reflects the pride they have in themselves and their school. Students are expected to exhibit positive behavior and to be respectful to all school personnel, visitors, and fellow students.

Conduct Rules:

The rules of conduct which follow cannot anticipate every act of misconduct which may occur. In general, any conduct which endangers health and safety or rights and property of others or is disruptive of a good learning environment is undesirable and will not be permitted.

School: Students will show courtesy and respect for each other, and for staff members. They will obey directives from staff members or school officials. They will use appropriate language, and tone of voice. They will not argue or talk back.

- Safe and appropriate conduct is always expected.
- Students will be on time, ready to work, with necessary materials, and will stay on task.
- Students will record assignments in assignment books daily and be responsible for completing their work.
- Gum chewing is prohibited in the school building. Food is eaten in the cafeteria. No open pop or food in lockers or in the classroom. (Unless approved by the classroom teacher)
- There will be no public displays of affection. (This includes, but is not limited to hugging, kissing, and holding hands).
- Students will not engage in bodily contact (hitting, pushing, kicking, shoving, tripping, etc.)
- Personal property and school property will not be damaged or stolen. Students and parents will be held accountable for damages.
- Illegal/unauthorized items are not permitted at school, on school grounds, or at any school sponsored activity. (These include, but are not limited to weapons, fireworks, tobacco products, or any products that simulates drug or alcohol related products).
- Students will not be involved in gangs or gang-related activities, including the display of gang symbols or paraphernalia.
- There will be no mental, verbal, or physical harassment or bullying of other students or staff members.
- Students will not use or possess electronic signaling devices, unless authorized and approved by the Building Principal. Electronic signaling devices include pocket and all similar electronic paging devices.
- Students will not use, display, or permit a cellular phone to ring during the school day.

Classroom: Teachers will set down reasonable rules of conduct to be followed in their own classes with reasonable consequences for non-compliance. The rules must be reasonable, fair, and applicable to all. The rules and consequences will be posted and repeated failure to comply may result in office referral. In general students are expected to:

- Be in their assigned seat when the bell rings.
- Bring pen, pencil, paper, books and other required items to class.
- Listen attentively to comments of teacher and student(s).
- Avoid comments which do not add to the discussion of the class.
- Respect the rights of others to express their opinion.
- Return all classroom equipment to the proper location.
- Leave the desks and room neat and tidy.
- Make worthwhile contributions to group problems and projects
- Be dismissed by the teacher and not the bell.

Hallway And Corridor: Students should obtain all necessary books and materials for classes at this time, go to the restroom and get drinks **between** classes. Students involved in horseplay, excessive noise, etc. will be subject to disciplinary action.

- Student traffic should keep to the right at all times.
- Do not block traffic near doorways, water fountains, stairs, etc..
- Show your respect of others by not being loud and boisterous, running, or engaging in horseplay while in the hallways.
- Properly dispose of all paper and refuse in the nearest trash container.
- Proceed to the proper classroom after getting all necessary items from your locker; do not congregate in the hallways.

School Activities: During the school year students will have the opportunity to attend assemblies, school programs, athletic events, and other school-sponsored activities. Good conduct will be expected from students at all such activities. Improper conduct will be subject to discipline consequences and may result in the privilege of attending being suspended or denied. Extra- curricular activities (i.e. games, dances, athletic events, trips) are an extension of the school day and all rules which govern students during the school day will be applied.

Assemblies/Programs: The following rules apply at all assemblies and programs:

- Students are expected to show respect and courtesy.
- Students are to remain quiet during a program.
- Students are expected to remain seated until excused or dismissed.

Athletic Events: The following rules apply at all home and away games:

- Students are to display good sportsmanship at all times.
- Students are to remain seated during the games except for intermissions when the

concession area is open.

- Students who leave the building during the games or intermissions will not be readmitted unless granted permission by the teacher or principal.
- Students who do not intend to watch the games should not come.

School Bus Conduct: Rules of conduct have been established to insure the rights and safety of all students who ride the school bus. All bus riders should become thoroughly familiar with the rules and regulations and abide by them.

Getting on and off the bus

- Be on time at the designated school bus stop.
- Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
- Be careful in approaching the place where the bus stops; do not move toward the bus until the bus has been brought to a complete stop.
- When getting off the bus, wait at least 10' in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the highway where traffic may be observed in both directions until the driver signals permission to cross.
- NEVER go between buses as they are parked for loading or unloading.

On the bus

- Do not leave the seat while the bus is in motion.
- Be alert to a signal from the driver.
- Remain in the bus in the event of a road emergency until instructions are given by the driver.
- Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times after entering and until leaving the bus. Do not throw anything out the bus window.
- Remember that loud talking and laughing or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and could result in a serious accident.
- Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing stop.
- Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture in your own home. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary at all times. No eating is allowed on the bus.
- Do not bring animals on the bus.
- Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles.
- Be courteous to other riders and the bus driver. Help look after the safety and comfort of smaller children.
- Do not ask the driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop without proper authorization from a school official.
- Observe the same rules and regulations on other trips under school sponsorship as you observe between home and school. Respect the wishes of the chaperone appointed by the school.
- Students will not be permitted to use cell phones on the bus without permission from

the principal, teacher, coach, supervisor, or bus driver. The use of other electronic devices such as iPods, gaming systems, etc. may only be used with permission from the bus driver, teacher, coach, or supervisor.

Regular riders on the bus route may get off and on at other houses on the route with a written request the parent gives directly to the driver. Non-riders of a regular route will need a written request from their parents, approved by the school principal, in order to ride the bus.

Consequences - The bus driver has the authority and responsibility to maintain proper conduct on his or her bus. The driver has the authority to assign seats for as long a period as is considered necessary. If the bus driver and school officials have continued difficulty with a student's behavior, disciplinary action and/or suspension of bus privileges may take place. In the event of a bus suspension, the parents will provide transportation to and from school.

A student can be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

- Prohibited student conduct
- Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.
- Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.
- Repeated use of profanity.
- Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or other supervisor.
- Such other behavior that deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

If a student is suspended from riding the bus for gross disobedience or misconduct the student may be suspended for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The student's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus.

Electronic and visual audio recordings may be used on school buses to monitor conduct and to promote or maintain a safe environment for students and employees when transportation is provided for any school related activity. Notice of electronic recordings shall be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle's entrance door and front interior bulkhead in compliance with State law and the rules of the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety.

Students are prohibited from tampering with electronic recording devices. Students who violate this policy shall be disciplined and reimburse the School District for any necessary repairs or replacement.

Misconduct:

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Misbehavior in the building or classroom.
- Misbehavior in the hallways.
- Misbehavior on school grounds, at school events, or on field trips.
- Misbehavior on the school bus.
- Misbehavior for a substitute teacher
- Throwing objects.
- Activities and/or projects which are vulgar, lewd, obscene, plainly offensive, or disruptive to the educational process.
- Public display of affection.
- Failing to report to office or assigned area.
- Leaving class or school without permission.
- Cheating.
- Inappropriate use of computers - tampering, hacking, any violation of the district's electronic network policy- is subject to disciplinary action in addition to restricted computer use.

Gross Misconduct:

Section 10-22.16 of the Illinois School Code gives the Board of Education, the District Superintendent, and the Building Principals the power to suspend or to expel a student “guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct.”

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student guilty of **gross disobedience or misconduct**, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco related products.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, manufacturing, or selling: a) any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana and hashish); b) any anabolic steroid not administered under a physician's care and supervision; c) any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a licensed physician or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's instructions; d) Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in the section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications. e) “look-alike” or counterfeit drugs (see definition, in Miscellaneous Discipline Information section); f) drug paraphernalia, including

devices that are or can be used to (1) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (2) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances. Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance or drug or in possession of any drug paraphernalia are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had the prohibited substance or paraphernalia, as applicable, in their possession. Expulsion will be recommended by the building principal to the School Board.

- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the “weapons” section of this policy. (See “Weapons”). Expulsion will be for at least one year, but shall not exceed two calendar years.
- Using or possessing electronic signaling devices and two-way radios, unless authorized and approved by the Building Principal. Electronic signaling devices include pocket – and all similar – electronic paging devices.
- Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, signal others, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all electronic devices must be kept powered off and out of sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the Principal or designee grants permission, (b) use of the device is provided in a student’s IEP, or (c) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff or other individuals.
- Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member’s supervision and in the context of instruction.
- Disobeying directives from staff members or school officials and/or rules and regulations governing student conduct.
- Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
- Engaging in hazing of any kind of bullying or aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another or any urging other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited aggressive behavior includes, without limitation, the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, harassment, hazing, or other comparable conduct. (See Aggressive Behavior/Harassment in the Miscellaneous Information Section.)
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s personal property.
- Soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in hazing is prohibited.
- Being absent without a recognized cause; however, State law and Board policy regarding truancy control will be used with chronic and habitual truants.
- Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, by being a member, promising to join, pledging to become a member, or soliciting any other person to join, promise to join, or be pledged to become a member.
- Involvement in gangs or gang-related activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.

- Violating any criminal law, including but limited to assault and battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping and hazing.
- Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that: interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

DISCIPLINE

Maintenance of Discipline:

School administrators and teachers have an important responsibility in assuring that a student's conduct does not intrude upon and endanger the rights of other students to learn.

Maintaining an orderly learning environment is an essential part of each teacher's instructional responsibilities. A teacher's ability to foster appropriate student behavior is an important factor in the teacher's educational effectiveness. Teachers will enforce school and classroom rules as outlined in this handbook.

The school may suppress classroom activities and/or projects which are vulgar, lewd, obscene, and plainly offensive or may be disruptive to the educational process. Students involved in these activities and/or projects will face disciplinary action.

Imposition of Discipline:

School personnel may impose discipline in instances of student misconduct whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

- On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, or event, or any activity or event which bears a reasonable relationship to school;
- Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or
- Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

Corporal Punishment:

Use of Corporal Punishment: Corporal punishment shall not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. No physical activity shall be used as punishment or as a consequence for any reason.

Use of Reasonable Force: Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for the students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or the defense of property.

Discipline Consequences:

Detentions: Detention is a disciplinary tool. It may be used to reduce tardiness or help change poor academic or social behavior. Detentions may be served after school from **3:05** until **4:00** p.m.

Good Behavior Recognition:

- An accumulation of 3 detentions, OR 1 in-school or out of school suspension during a semester may prohibit a student from attending school sponsored dances or reward activities held that semester. Students start each semester with zero referrals.

In-School Suspension: In-school suspensions may be issued after 4 detentions when students have fallen far behind in class work, or when a particular student behavior is more severe in nature. In-school suspension is assigned by the principal. Work is provided by classroom teachers. Work missed in class may be made up. Misbehavior in the in-school room will cause the student to be sent home. Another in-school suspension day will be issued. Actions which may result in an in-school suspension include but are not limited to:

- Swearing, vulgar language or vulgar gestures
- Fighting
- Excessive detentions
- Destroying school property or other student's property (minor items)
- Refusing to obey a teacher
- Being removed from class

Any student who is excluded from classes as a result of an in-school suspension will not be allowed to attend any after school events during the time of exclusion. Any athlete excluded from class as a result of an in-school suspension is not eligible to practice or play/compete during the time of exclusion.

Out-of-School Suspension: The principal or superintendent has the authority to suspend students from one to ten days. Actions which may result in out-of-school suspensions include

but are not limited to:

- Possessing, using, selling, buying, hiding, or transmitting any alcoholic beverage, tobacco product, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at a school function
- Vandalism or destruction of school property
- Possession of a weapon (even if it is a toy)
- Serious hazing or harassing (physical or verbal) of other students
- Fighting or any behavior which may be injurious to other personnel or students
- Theft
- Verbal abuse, profanity, or threats directed toward a teacher or any other school personnel
- Repeated or continuous acts of misconduct, disrespect or disobedience which are disruptive of school functions and the educational process
- Any other acts that, according to the administration, can endanger the well-being of students, teachers or any school employees or interrupt the instructional process in the classroom

Suspension Procedures –

The following are suspension procedures:

- Before suspension, the student shall be provided a conference during which the charges will be explained and the student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- A pre-suspension conference is not required and the student can be immediately suspended when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the notice and conference shall follow as soon as practicable.
- Any suspension shall be reported immediately to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). A written notice of the suspension shall state the reasons for the suspension, including any school rule which was violated, and a notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to a review of the suspension. A copy of the notice shall be given to the School Board.
- Upon request of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a review of the suspension shall be conducted by the School Board or a hearing officer appointed by the Board. At the review, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may appear and discuss the suspension with the Board or its hearing officer and may be represented by counsel. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer's report, the Board shall take such action as it finds appropriate.

During the period of suspension:

- Students shall not be allowed on school property or at school activities during the period of suspension.
- The parent of the suspended student will be contacted by registered mail.
- Students will be permitted to make-up tests and quizzes. Students will receive full credit

for assignments that were assigned prior to the suspension and should have been turned in on the day/days gone (i.e. if a student is suspended for Wednesday and Thursday, full credit will be given for the assignments that were due and should have been turned in on those days). The assignments must be turned in to the teachers the day the student returns from the suspension in order to receive full credit.

Expulsion: Expulsion is the most serious kind of disciplinary action taken in public schools. It is used only as a last resort. Grounds for expulsion include, but are not limited to the following:

- Any act outlined in the preceding “Out-of-School Suspension” description
- Physically striking teachers, students, administrators, or other school employees
- Arson
- Possession of a weapon on school grounds
- Other acts which endanger the physical well-being of anyone

Expulsion Procedures- The following are expulsion procedures:

- Before expulsion, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written notice of the time, place, and purpose of a hearing by registered or certified mail requesting the appearance of the parent(s)/guardian(s). If requested, the student shall have a hearing, at the time and place designated in the notice, conducted by the Board or a hearing officer appointed by it.
- During the expulsion hearing, the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) may be represented by counsel, present witnesses and other evidence and cross-examine witnesses. At the expulsion hearing, the Board or hearing officer shall hear evidence of whether the student is guilty of the gross disobedience or misconduct as charged.
- After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer’s report, the Board shall decide the issue of guilt, hear evidence on whether expulsion is appropriate, and make its decision.

Electronic Devices:

Use of all electronic items including cell phones, iPods, etc. are not permitted in the classroom unless given permission from a teacher or supervisor. All electronic devices are to be turned off and placed out of sight. These devices may also be collected for safe-keeping in the office. Any student violating this policy is subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- 1st offense-** Device must be dropped off at office (can be picked up at the end of the day)
- 2nd offense-** Device must be dropped off at office daily for a week (can be picked up at the end of the day)
- 3rd offense-** Device privileges are revoked for the remainder of the year.

Further offenses will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and subject to principal discretion.

Miscellaneous Discipline Information:

Aggressive Behavior/Bullying: Aggressive behavior includes but is not limited to, the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, bullying, or other comparable conduct. Bullying is defined as persistent, negative, psychological or physical acts directed by a stronger student or group against a weaker one.

Bullying- “Bullying includes “cyber-bullying” and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonable predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

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

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Physical - hitting, other types of physical contact such as poking, kicking, grabbing, spitting, etc.
- Verbal - name calling, racist remarks, put-downs, taunts, extortion, etc.
- Indirect or direct behaviors such as spreading rumors, wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice, exclusion from peer group, taking and hiding/destroying other’s papers, and/or possessions, etc.
- Written - threatening e-mail or other electronic correspondence, notes, and/or graffiti, etc.

Bullying is contrary to Illinois State Law and the policy of Okaw Valley CUSD #302.

Due to the mental and physical harm that these forms of aggressive behavior/bullying can create, it is necessary for the building administrator to have the tools necessary to help protect students that are subjected to this type of behavior. With this in mind, the consequences of any documented incidence of these behaviors will be as follows **(unless circumstances deem more severe/immediate consequences):**

1st incidence: Verbal warning and conference with principal

2nd incidence: Detention assigned to student and parent contact will be made to rectify situation.

3rd incidence: **Minimum 1 day In-School-Suspension** assigned and a parental conference

OVMS Handbook

may be called by the administration.

Subsequent incidences: Due to continued bullying being a threat to the safety of students, a **minimum of 1 day out-of-school suspension** will be administered.

Repeated incident(s) of this type of behavior will result in additional disciplinary action that will consist of additional out-of-school suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.

Anyone can report harassing conduct to a school. This may be done verbally, through email (forlinesr@okawvalley.org), phone (217-756-8521) or the anonymous Bully Report Form found on the school website <http://www.okawvalley.org/schools/middle/bullying.cfm>). When OVMS receives a complaint they will take these steps to investigate and resolve the situation.

- Immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what happened. (within 10 days after the report date)
- Inquiry will be prompt, thorough, and impartial.
- Interview targeted students, offending students, and witnesses, and maintain written documentation of investigation. Parents/Guardians of all students involved will be promptly informed.
- Communicate with targeted students regarding steps taken to end harassment
- Check in with targeted students to ensure that harassment has ceased
- When an investigation reveals that harassment has occurred, OVMS will take steps reasonably calculated to:
 - End the harassment,
 - Eliminate any hostile environment,
 - Prevent harassment from recurring, and
 - Prevent retaliation against the targeted student(s) or complainant(s).
 - Appropriate Services will be provided: Social work services, counseling, school psychological services, restorative measures and other interventions (as necessary)

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, a suspension. Reprisal actions will also trigger remedial restorative actions. This also includes false accusations as a means of bullying/retaliation.

OVMS provides the following to address bullying:

- (1) Bully Prevention Assemblies
- (2) Bully Prevention resources
- (3) Social Work Services
- (4) Counseling services
- (5) Restorative measures
- (6) Character Education
- (7) FLEX intervention services
- (8) SRSS Student Behavior Screener

- (9) School Climate Surveys
- (10) Disciplinary Data Sharing
- (11) School Psychological Services
- (12) Behavior/Bullying Committee

Alcohol, Drugs, Hazardous Material, and Tobacco: Use, possession, sale, manufacture, delivery, transfer, distribution and/or being under the influence of alcohol, hazardous materials, tobacco, or unauthorized drugs in any form by students is forbidden on school premises (including school buses) and/or any school function. Sanctions (consistent with local, state, and federal law) up to an including expulsion and referral for prosecution will be imposed on students who violate these standards of conduct.

* For the purpose of these rules, “hazardous material” is any material deemed unsafe to persons in or on school property.

Due Process: Prior to imposition of discipline for violations of school rules/regulations, students will be afforded due process, including notice of the alleged violation and an opportunity to offer an explanation of the facts.

Although it is the goal of the school to maintain fairness for all students, at times there may be legitimate differences of opinion between a student and a staff member. In the case of a student or parental complaint, the school principal shall be the first recourse. The next step shall be the district superintendent. The Board of Education will extend their full rights as provided by law.

Gang Activity: Students are prohibited from engaging in gang activity. A “gang” is any group of two (2) or more persons whose purpose includes the commission of illegal acts. No student shall engage in any gang activity, including, but not limited to:

- Wearing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other things that are evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;
- Committing any act or omission, or using any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (such as gestures or hand-shakes) showing membership or affiliation in a gang, and;
- Using any speech or committing any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to: a) soliciting others for membership in any gangs, b) requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person, c) committing any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies, d) inciting other student to act with physical violence, e) inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person. Students engaging in any gang-related activity will be subject to disciplinary action.

Hazing: Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, or athletic team whose members are or include other students. Students engaging in hazing will be subject to disciplinary action.

Look-Alike Substance: A look-alike or counterfeit drug is defined as a substance not containing an illegal drug or controlled substance, but one (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug or controlled substance, or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or implicitly represented to be an illegal drug or controlled substance.

Possession: The term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations where the item is (a) on the student’s person, or (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student’s clothing, backpack, automobile, (c) in a school’s student locker, desk, or other school property, or (d) any other location on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

Property Damage: Students who destroy or vandalize school property or property belonging to others will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and subsequent expulsion could result. If a student should accidentally damage something, he/she should report it to a teacher or the school office immediately.

Search and Seizure: To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects.

School Property and Equipment/Personal Effects Left by Students: School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. As a matter of public policy, the Board of Education finds that students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

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

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

When feasible, the search should be conducted as follows:

- outside the view of others, including students;

- in the presence of a school administrator or adult witness; and
- by a certificated employee or liaison police officer of the same sex as the student.

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

Weapons: A "weapon" means possession, use, control, or transfer of (1) any gun, rifle, shotgun, a weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners identification Act, or use of a weapons defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code, (2) any other object if used or attempted or intended to be used to cause bodily harm, including but not limited to, knives, brass knuckles, billy clubs, or (3) "look alikes" of any weapon as defined above. Any item, such as a baseball bat, pipe, bottle, lock, stick, pencil, and pen, is considered to be a weapon if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm. The Building Principal or designee shall notify the local law enforcement agency, State Police, and, if a student is reportedly in possession of a firearm, also the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

EXTRACURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR INFORMATION

Extracurricular /Co-Curricular Activities:

Extracurricular activities are those activities which are organized and sponsored by the school district, but do not include graded courses, or classes or activities for which academic credit is received, or such special events as may be approved by the administration.

Okaw Valley Middle School students are encouraged to actively participate in one or more school-sponsored activities. Participation enables the student to experience social activities, develop leadership qualities, pursue leisure-time interests, develop new interests, enlarge friendships, learn the art and policy of government and have fun.

Extra-curricular activities for middle school students are subject to change from year to year. Current programs offered:

Sport/Activity	Grade Level			
	5	6	7	8
Basketball (Boys & Girls)	#	#	X	X
Track	X	#	X	X
Baseball	#	#	X	X
Volleyball	#	#	X	X
Cheerleading	#	#	X	X
Softball	#	#	X	X
Band	X	X	X	X
Chorus		X	X	X
Class Officers		X	X	X
Scholastic Bowl		#	X	X
Eco Team		#	X	X
Student Council		X	X	X
Cross Country	X	X	X	X

X= offered each year

= Dependent on numbers of athletes in 7th & 8th

Eligibility/Exclusion from Classes:

Academic Eligibility

- All Middle School students who participate in extra-curricular activities – competitive and non-competitive – must be passing (D) in all subjects to be eligible to participate in those activities.
- Eligibility begins with the first week of each semester and is cumulative throughout the grading period. Students in grades 6-8 will be ineligible if they are still “ineligible” after appearing on the warning list issued the previous week.

- All IESA rules will be followed where applicable.
- Ineligibility does not excuse attendance from practice and contests unless excused by the sponsor.
- Ineligibility starts on Monday morning at 12:01 am and goes through Saturday night 12:00 midnight.

Exclusion from classes: Whenever an extra-curricular participant is excluded from classes, in-school or out-of-school, that participant is not eligible to practice or play/compete during the time of the exclusion.

Ineligibility Rules:

An academically ineligible athlete will be allowed to practice with the team, but he/she cannot play in games. If the athlete is ineligible for four consecutive weeks during the season, that athlete will be removed from the team. Okaw Valley Middle School's academic eligibility program follows a No **Pass/No Play** policy. If an athlete is not eligible, he/she cannot play. Students will receive communication weekly to alert them of possible ineligibility. Any academically ineligible student will not be able to work concessions for an event until he/she is no longer on the academically ineligible list.

Extracurricular Code of Conduct:

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege extended to the student body by the Board of Education. Participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibility to the school, the activity, the community, and the students themselves. Extracurricular activities add to our school spirit and help all students - spectators and participants - develop pride in the school. Thus, students who wish to participate are subject to the rules and standards and their related consequences.

Students participating in extracurricular activities will receive the Okaw Valley Schools Extracurricular Code of Conduct. Participation in the Okaw Valley Schools extracurricular programs requires the consent of the participant's parent(s)/ guardian(s). Participants and parent(s)/guardian(s) must agree to follow the Extracurricular Code of Conduct. In addition, participants in extracurricular programs must adhere to all rules as stipulated in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Extracurricular participation is a privilege, not a right. Rights to education granted in the Student-Parent Handbook do not apply to extracurricular activities, rules, or consequences.

Sports Season Tickets:

Single admission prices are \$3 for adults and \$2 for K-12 students, and Seniors age 55 and above for IESA and conference athletic events.

Season tickets for Okaw Valley Schools athletic events are available through the School Superintendent's office. Season passes do not include tournaments. Senior citizens passes for those age 60 and above are available in the Superintendent's office at no charge.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Accidents:

Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, during a school sponsored activity, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge AND to the principal's office.

Accident and Emergency Information:

If a serious accident occurs, the parents will be called and asked to come for the student. If it is not possible to contact the parents, the person designated on the Emergency Data Sheet will be notified as soon as possible. If neither the parent(s) nor the emergency contact can be reached, the student will be sent to the hospital.

It is important that the information on the emergency data sheet be accurate. When any changes in emergency information occurs (phone numbers, emergency contact, **physician**, etc.) please contact the school office (756-8521). It is the parent/guardian responsibility to inform the principal's office when there is a change of address or telephone number or a change in custody/guardianship.

Emergency Drills:

Emergency drills are held to prepare students and teachers for getting to safety in the event of fire, severe storms, or other disaster.

Alarms: You will hear two types of alarms during the year - a fire alarm and a tornado/disaster alarm. Fire and tornado alarms are serious business because they involve the safety of us all. Any person sounding false alarms will be referred to the administration and police for disciplinary action.

Emergency Codes: Emergency Codes are posted in each classroom. Students should be familiar with the various codes and safety procedures.

Drill and Emergency Procedures: Confusion and disorder can be avoided by observing the following:

- Leave all personal belongings behind.
- Remain silent so that order can be maintained and important information given.
- Walk to pre-determined locations.
- When the drill is over, return to your prior location immediately.
- Always follow the instructions of the teacher in charge of the group you are with at the time of the alarm.

Fire Drill

- The continuous sound of the fire alarm signals a fire emergency or drill.
- At the sound of the fire alarm, persons nearest the windows will close them; all students will form a single line with the persons nearest the door leading the way; students will walk quietly and as quickly as the pathway will permit to the nearest exit.
- Upon leaving the outside doors, students are to proceed to a safe distance away from the building. When possible, students will remain on the sidewalk or driveway.
- All persons will return to the building upon the instruction of the principal or faculty member responsible for each group.

Tornado Procedures: The following procedures are outlined for the protection of the students and faculty during the season of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. There are basically two types of warnings concerning schools. The following is the description of terms used when referring to tornadoes.

Tornado Watch: A tornado watch is an alert to the public via all available communication media including radio and television that tornado activity in these areas may occur during the next several hours. The weather bureau issues these watches and they cover an area averaging 100 x 300 miles in zones where tornado activity appears imminent. Once a tornado has been sighted and its existence becomes known to the weather bureau, a public tornado warning is issued.

Tornado Warning: A tornado warning means that a tornado has actually been sighted in the area, or its presence has been detected by radar. The warning will indicate where the tornado was discovered, the area through which it is expected to move, and the time period during which the tornado will move through the area warned. Following the warning, persons in the path should immediately take safety precautions.

Tornado Warning Procedures:

At the alarm, proceed to pre-determined locations. Students and personnel should sit on the floor and place their heads between their knees and cover them with their hands. To lessen the possibility of serious injury, students should sit on the floor along the wall nearest the lockers in designated areas.

Windows and doors on the south and west sides should be closed. Doors and windows on the north and east sides should be open. It has been established that most injuries that occur during windstorms are due to broken glass and debris.

Earthquake Instructions Earthquake instructions and information will come from the classroom teacher. In the event of an earthquake, students will:

- Take cover under tables, desks, or counters.
- Move to an inside wall if cover is not available, kneel down, and cover their heads.
- Move to open ground, away from buildings and overhead power lines if outside.

Illness/Injury:

In case of illness or injury a child will be cared for temporarily by a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available the child will be taken to the emergency room at the nearest hospital.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND NOTICES

Activity Fee:

Students participating in non-credited extra-curricular programs will be assessed an annual fee as established by the Board of Education. Organizations included are Athletics, Cheerleading, and Scholastic Bowl. Payment of the fee must be made prior to the first official contest and is non-refundable after the first official contest.

AED Program:

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) are required in indoor physical fitness facilities. Schools with four or fewer indoor physical fitness facilities must have at least one facility equipped in 2006 with the fourth facility equipped by July 2009.

The Okaw Valley School District received grants through the Illinois Rural School AED Access Grant program administered by the Illinois Rural Health Association for the purchase of two AEDs for use in the Okaw Valley Middle School and the Okaw Valley High School. An AED has been placed in an easily accessible location in or near the Gymnasium at OVMS and OVHS. District personnel have been trained by the Mid-Illinois Chapter of the American Red Cross in the use of the AEDs; refresher training and training for new employees will be ongoing.

Breakfast/Lunch Programs:

A school breakfast program is available every weekday morning for **\$1.75**. Students may choose to bring a lunch from home or to eat the hot lunch offered at the school for **\$2.60**. Breakfast and lunch menus are posted on the District website (www.okawvalley.org).

Breakfast/Lunch and Milk Money

Breakfast/Lunch and extra milk money should be sent to the office on the first attendance day of each week or you can use the **Epay** system on the district website. **Breakfast or lunches may not exceed a total of 5 charges unless PRIOR arrangements are made in the school office with the secretary.** Parents will be notified weekly by **E-Mail** if there is a balance due. If the amount is not paid, students will be served a cheese sandwich and milk instead of the main menu selection. One serving of milk is provided with hot lunch. Extra milk or milk for sack lunches

may be purchased for thirty-five cents.

Change of Contact Information:

It is the parent/guardians responsibility to keep the school office updated on any change in contact information that would be necessary in case of an emergency (i.e. phone number, address, etc.) Please review your contact information for accuracy at registration, and make sure to report any changes that take place during the course of the school year as they apply.

Spectator Conduct and Sportsmanship:

Any person, including adults, who behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner during an athletic or extracurricular event, may be ejected from the event the person is attending and/or denied admission to school events for up to a year after a School Board hearing. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include:

- using vulgar or obscene language;
- possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance;
- possessing a weapon;
- fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person;
- failing to obey the instructions of a security officer or school district employee;
- engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive; and
- making inappropriate remarks to officials, coaches, participants, or school personnel.

Head Lice:

Each school year cases of head lice are identified/reported to the school office. Okaw Valley Schools strictly adhere to a **NO NIT** policy. Children found to have lice nits or live lice, **MAY BE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY WITH A LETTER CONTAINING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TREATMENT.** Upon return to school, students must present proof of treatment (note from doctor, note from parent with label from treatment product, etc.) and be rechecked by school personnel to determine that students are clear of active infestation. In case of conflict, the decision of the school administration is final. If a student has been sent home with lice or nits three or more times they must have a letter of clearance from the public health department.

Head lice affect more people than all other childhood communicable diseases not including the common cold. But like a cold, when children come in close contact with each other, it is easy to pass head lice along. Shared hats, clothing, brushes, pillows and other personal articles are perfect vehicles to transfer lice from one person to another. Head lice survive only on humans, and do not affect family pets.

We ask that you assist in the effort to minimize the spread of head lice through routine examination of your child at home. We hope that the following information about recognizing and treating head lice will be helpful to you. Should you find that your child has head lice, please notify the school immediately so that we may examine classmates and prevent the spread of this problem.

Identification and Treatment: *Please note, anyone can get head lice. It has nothing to do with cleanliness, nor does it reflect on you as a parent. Fortunately, it is a problem that is easily treated. It is important to act immediately to prevent the spread of head lice to other classmates or to members of your family.*

■ ***Examine your child's head.***

- Head scratching and intense itching of the scalp are the main indications of head lice. Their presence can be confirmed by a close visual inspection of the hair and scalp under a good light and magnifying glass.
- Head lice are small, only about 1/16 of an inch long. They are greyish-white with dark edges. While they cannot fly and do not jump, they move quickly. That's why it's difficult to find them in a child's hair.
- Diagnosis of head lice is generally made when lice eggs (called nits), which are fastened to the hair shaft, are clearly evident. Nits are teardrop in shape, whitish, and very small - only about 1/32 of an inch. They are "glued" to the hair and cannot be washed or brushed out like dandruff.
- Clusters of nits may be found in any section of the hair, but they are more apt to be attached to the hair shafts about 1/4 inch from the scalp, behind the ears and at the nape of the neck.

- ***Check all other family members to see if they are infested.*** Any family member with evidence of head lice must also be treated.
- ***Use an effective head lice treatment.*** Your pharmacist can recommend an effective over-the-counter pediculicide product. When used as directed, it will be very effective in killing head lice.
- ***Remove all nits (lice eggs).*** Because no pediculicide product kills all the eggs with one treatment, multiple applications may be required to finish treatment. Special combs are usually provided with the treatment product for the removal of the nits. You may want to ask your pharmacist about a special rinse that quickly releases the nits from the hair, making nit removal easier with the special comb.
- ***Wash all clothes,*** bed linens and towels in hot water (130 degrees Fahrenheit) and dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items that cannot be safely washed, such as stuffed animals, should be dry cleaned or stored outside the home for a minimum of two weeks.
- ***Clean combs and brushes in hot, soapy water.*** Water should be at least 130° F, and it is advisable to let combs and brushes soak in the hot water for 10 minutes.
- ***Vacuum everywhere*** to make sure your home is free of lice. Vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture; anything that might hold lice. Do a thorough job and discard the vacuum bag promptly.

For further information on lice detection and prevention, contact your local health department or call the school office.

Medication Policy:

We realize that occasionally a student must take medication during the school day and that it is often impossible for a parent to be present to administer the medication. When a student must take medication at school the following requirements must be met:

- All medication must be kept and administered by school office personnel.
- All medication must be accompanied by a completed and signed Authorization of the Administration of Medication Form. This form will be made upon request and during registration. If you are taking your child to the doctor, it is suggested that you take a form with you in case medication is prescribed.
- A physician's signature is required for both prescription and non-prescription (OTC medicines, cough syrup, Tylenol, etc.) medication.
- Non-prescription medication must be in the **ORIGINAL** container and labeled clearly with your child's name in permanent marker.
- Prescription medicine must carry the appropriate prescription label, with the student's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, and doctor's name.
- Any medication sent to school with your child that does not meet requirements as listed above will **NOT** be administered. The medication will be kept in the school office and must be picked up by a parent. It will **NOT** be sent home with the student.
- Any medication not claimed by parents will be destroyed. This includes medication not retrieved following the completion of the school year.
- Students who require an Epi-Pen or carry an asthma inhaler must *complete and sign* the **Parent/Student Agreement to Carry Asthma Medication and/or Epinephrine Auto-injector** form that is provided at registration and upon request.

We do not administer any medications that must go in the eyes or ears regardless of a physician's signature.

Illinois School Code Citing –

(105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b) (from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.21b)

Sec. 10-22.21b. Administering medication. To provide for the administration of medication to students. It shall be the policy of the State of Illinois that the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the critical health and well-being of the student. Under no circumstances shall teachers or other non-administrative school employees, except certified school nurses and non-certificated registered professional nurses, be required to administer medication to students. This Section shall not prohibit a school district from adopting guidelines for self-administration of medication by students. This Section shall not prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students.

5TH GRADE ADDITIONS

Some modifications of the above rules are necessary due to differences in daily procedures at the 5th grade level. Please note the following additions/modifications:

Recess:

Students will go outside for lunch recess and an afternoon recess when weather conditions allow. The decision to go outside for recess during cold weather depends upon the temperature and the wind chill factor. Usually students will be inside when the wind chill is lower than 25°. **Parents** are asked to follow the weather reports and dress children appropriately. A note is required for students to be kept inside. A doctor's statement will be required for periods longer than 2 days.

Areas of Instruction:

Fifth grade students receive instruction in the basic subject areas of Reading, English, Spelling, Math, Science, and Social Studies in a self-contained classroom setting.

Art: General art instruction is provided for all students by an art teacher.

Band: They may participate in Band. Students participating in I. E. S. A. Music Contests must meet eligibility requirements.

Physical Education: Physical education instruction will be provided every day by a physical education teacher.

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education to receive special education support and services with the agreement of the student's parent/guardian or as determined by the student's individualized education program team.

Special Area Services: The school offers programs in Speech and Language Therapy, Learning Disabilities, and Educational Mental Impairment for those students experiencing difficulty in these areas.

Enrichment Program: (If available) Team Quest is a program offered to students who meet selection criteria in the areas of achievement, ability, and teacher recommendation. Team Quest activities allow students to extend their knowledge and skill beyond the regular classroom program.

Instructional Policies/Procedures

Homework:

Homework is a part of the educational experience. While every teacher provides study time during the school day, homework is necessary to reinforce what has been taught in the classroom. Parents can help make homework a positive experience for their children by making homework a top priority and providing praise and support.

Homework Suggestions

- Set a definite time for study early in the evening before the child is tired and sleepy. Provide a place to read and study away from the noise of television, radio, or other children playing.
- Provide a desk or table with good lighting and the proper materials paper, pencil, pen ruler, eraser, etc.
- Supervise the child's homework, but guard against the tendency to do the work for the child.
- Give occasional help with homework. Children have been taught the lessons by the teacher and if they pay close attention in class, they should be able to do their homework by themselves.
- Check to be sure that the child starts and finishes the assignment, does it neatly, and returns it to school the next day.
- Encourage the child to do the best possible work. Do not compare one child with another.
- Encourage children to begin using the library in the primary grades and continue in the higher grades, reading every day in easy, interesting library books. Reading is the tool by which all other subjects are mastered.
- Talk with the teacher if the child is not making satisfactory progress.

Homework Procedures

In an effort to make policies regarding homework more uniform, this framework will be followed by all teachers at the 5th grade level:

Students will fill out assignment notebooks. For each missing or late assignment each student will fill out a homework slip that must be signed by a parent and returned with the missing/late assignments. If returned signed the next day the student will receive 80% of their grade. 3When a child accumulates five late assignments or **3** three zeroes, a detention will be assigned.

An accumulation of 5 late assignment slips, OR 3 detentions, OR 1 in-school or out-of-school suspension during a semester prohibits a student from attending their school sponsored dance or reward activities held that semester. Students start each semester with zero referrals.

Good Behavior Recognition:

Awards:

Students receive special recognition at the school through a variety of awards programs. These awards are intended to promote and recognize academic skills, attendance, athletic and fine arts achievements and good citizenship.

- Students are recognized for Good Citizenship and Courtesy through our Paw Prints program.

Miscellaneous Policies/Procedures:

Treats - Parents are asked to refrain from sending refreshments, treats or gifts to school for the purpose of commemorating birthdays or other special events without first contacting the teacher for approval. Any approved birthday treats will be eaten during lunch and not in the classroom.

Invitations - Invitations to parties are not to be distributed at school unless the student distributing such invitations invites all members of his/her class.

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES: Mattoon CUSD#2 believes in educating and supporting the whole child. With support from both home and school, the District believes an environment where all children can thrive and overcome negative emotions can be created. At school, Okaw Valley CUSD #302 will be complying with Illinois law by meeting the requirements of Ann Marie's Law. The law, signed in 2015, mandates that all Illinois public schools provide age-appropriate suicide and depression awareness and prevention education programs for students in grades kindergarten through 12. In addition, the District encourages parents who are concerned about their children to access the following resources for support.

School social workers, counselors, and psychologists are also available at each school, if you believe your child may need additional help.

LifeLinks Mental Health 750 Broadway Avenue East Mattoon, Illinois 61938 (217) 238-5700

National Suicide Hotline Helping connect individuals dealing with suicidal ideations to services. (800) 273-8255 (888) 628-9454 (Spanish) (800) 799-4889 (TTY)

Sarah Bush Lincoln Psychiatry and Counseling Prairie Pavilion 1 1005 Health Center Dr., Suite 102 Mattoon, IL 61938 217-258-4042