

# **Austintown Fitch High School**



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2018-2019**

**AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS**

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## **VISION**

The Austintown Local School District is a united community with a proud legacy and a progressive approach to education.

## **MISSION**

We provide an inspiring education that strengthens and prepares our students for unlimited future opportunities.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

On behalf of the Austintown Locals Schools and the Fitch High School administration, we welcome you. This handbook is published so that all students and parents have easy access to information that will allow for a safe and successful school year. It is essential that parents and students read the handbook as students will be required to adhere to its provisions. We are more than happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have and we are looking forward to working with you throughout the school year. The number one priority is to maintain a safe and appropriate learning environment. All of the policies outlined in this handbook are intended to protect this learning environment and to ensure that the students of AFHS have complete access to a rigorous and relevant school experience.

## **Austintown Local Schools Code of Student Conduct**

The rules and standards in this code are applicable to all students when they are on property owned, rented, or maintained by the Austintown Board of Education or property owned, rented, or maintained by another party. Additionally, the provisions of this code shall apply to students if the prohibited act(s) takes place while on properties immediately adjacent to school property, within the line of sight of school property, on school buses or any other school vehicles, or if the act affects the operation of the schools. These rules and standards also apply to any misconduct regardless of where it occurs, that is directed at a district employee or official or the property of such employee or official.

Violations, by a student, of any one or more of the rules and policies in this code may result in disciplinary action(s) which may include, but are not limited to, detention, deprivation of privileges, parental contact, referral to legal authorities, emergency removal, disciplinary removal, suspension, expulsion, permanent exclusion, or other disciplinary actions as deemed necessary to respond to inappropriate actions or behaviors.

# Section 1: General School Information

## A. Bell Schedule

Period	Time
Homeroom	7:35 - 7:41
1	7:45 - 8:36
2	8:40 - 9:31
3	9:35 - 10:26
4	10:30 - 11:21
5A	11:25 - 11:51
5B	11:55 - 12:21
5C	12:25 - 12:51
6	12:55 - 1:46
7	1:50 - 2:40

## B. Grading Policy

The Austintown Fitch High School grading scale is as follows:  
A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = Below 60

## C. Homework Policy

Homework policies have been adopted by the Board of Education. Please refer to board policy for the latest information.

## D. Grade Reports

Grade reports are issued at the conclusion of each grading period. Parents/guardians are permitted access to Progress Book, which allows for ongoing supervision of student academic success.

## **E. Progress Book**

All students and parents/guardians are provided with Progress Book accounts. Parents and students can login daily to view all homework assignments and current grades. However, if student fees and charges are not paid in a timely manner, access to Progress Book will be discontinued until the account is paid and in good standing. ALS staff members will attempt to update grades weekly.

## **F. Visitors**

Students are not permitted to have guests. State law requires that guests enter via the main office and obtain permission from the principal upon entering. Additionally, the Austintown Local Schools will not permit visitors to go beyond the front desk without a state issued photo ID, which will be scanned by school security prior to the visitor receiving access.

## **G. Bus Transportation Policy**

Riding a school bus is a privilege and not a right. Students must abide by all regulations determined by the school bus policy and the bus driver, including getting to the bus stop on time and to the bus promptly upon school dismissal. Failure to comply with all school bus safety rules will result in disciplinary action such as a verbal warning, a written bus conduct report, suspension from bus riding privileges, or permanent exclusion from bus riding privileges. A copy of the Austintown Local Schools transportation safety rules and policies must be signed by all families. Questions regarding transportation can be directed to the **Transportation Office** at extension 1084.

## **H. Walking to School Policy**

Students walking to and from school shall obey all local safety rules. Loitering on school grounds before or after school is prohibited. The use of a bicycle or skateboard is not permitted as transportation to and from school.

## **I. Early Arrival to School Policy**

The school doors officially open at 7:20 a.m. for all students; however, students may arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. if necessary. The building doors will not be opened prior to 7:00 a.m. When a student arrives on school grounds prior to 7:15 a.m. the student must report to the school cafeteria. The student will be supervised in the cafeteria by school officials until 7:15a.m.

## **J. School Clinic Services:**

Students who are ill must first get a pass from their classroom teacher before going to the clinic. Failure to follow the correct procedure could result in the student being reported truant from class. If the clinic is closed, the student should report directly to the main office. Students may not leave school due to an illness or injury without being released by the medical staff. If it is necessary for the medical staff to administer medication during school hours, the following requirements must be met prior to the administration of medication:



### **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION:**

1. A Medication Administration Record (MAR) General Medication Form or the appropriate School Action Plan (Asthma, Diabetes, Emergency Allergy, Seizure) must be completed and signed by both the healthcare provider and the parent/guardian.
2. The medication must be brought to the school clinic by the parent /guardian. Students are not permitted to carry or transport an emergency medication (i.e. Inhaler, EpiPen) unless previously authorized by the school, physician, and parent/guardian.
3. All prescription medication must be labeled appropriately by the pharmacist or physician and in its original container. The label must state the student's name, dosage, and time(s) to be taken and must match the Medication Administration Record (MAR).

### **OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION (Non-prescription):**

1. A Medication Administration Record (MAR) General Medication form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian.
2. The medication must be brought to the school clinic by the parent /guardian. Students are not permitted to carry or transport medication unless previously authorized by the school, physician, and parent/guardian and is an emergency medication (i.e. Inhaler, EpiPen).
3. All non-prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with a permanent marker indicating the child's name. Medication not in its original container will not be administered to the student.
4. The recommended dosage on the box of non-prescription medication will be reviewed and compared to the parent/guardian's request. If the dosage exceeds the amount recommended on the medicine container/box, it must be requested by a healthcare provider's order on a Medication Administration Record (MAR).

In addition, the first dose of any new medication will not be administered at school in case of an allergic reaction. Also, it is the student's responsibility (age appropriate) to report to the clinic at the designated time to receive any medication ordered. Any change to the medication must be submitted on a new Medication Administration Record (MAR). If a prescriptive medication is to be discontinued, a written note must be provided by the healthcare provider. New medication forms must be submitted for **each** school year and for **each** medication. Parents/guardians must pick-up any unused medication. Medication will not be sent home with the child unless previously authorized and is an emergency medication.

Cough drops will not be given out in the clinics. Clinic staff can use a warm salt-water gargle to ease scratchy throats. Students in grades 3-12 may bring cough drops to school with a note from the parent/guardian. However, the cough drops, along with the note, will be stored in the clinic.

### **LICE:**

In an effort to control head lice infestations and protect all students, Austintown Local Schools maintain a "no-nit" policy to control the spread of head lice among classmates. Students will not be admitted to school if there are any visible signs of lice or lice eggs (nits). The policy is enforced in this manner:

1. If a child is found to have lice or nits, the parent will be called to take the child home and treat the infestation until all lice and nits have been removed. The school will provide information about treatment.
2. The student may return the following day if he/she has been treated and all nits have been removed.

3. A parent/guardian is required to accompany the child when returning to school and the school nurse will check the child's head. If any nits are found, the parent/guardian must take the child back home to complete the removal.

4. For a few weeks after the child returns, head checks will be performed to monitor the possibility of reinfestation.

The Ohio Administrative Code states "a person with head lice shall be excluded from school or child care centers until after the first treatment with an effective pediculicide." Most parents/guardians successfully treat this issue, if and when it occurs, with assistance from the school nurse. OAC 3701-3-12 K.

## **K. Immunizations**

In order to minimize the spread of preventable illnesses in schools and to provide students with a healthier learning environment, the Board requires immunization in compliance with State Law and the Ohio Department of Health for each student unless the parent(s) files an objection. The Board may also require tuberculosis examinations in compliance with the law. Students eligible for kindergarten and students new to the district must present written evidence of similar immunizations, or written evidence to indicate they are in the process of receiving immunizations, to be completed no later than the day of entrance. Students failing to complete immunizations within 14 days after entering are not permitted to return to school.

**Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year: All students entering the 12th grade** will be required to have a **2nd dose of the meningococcal vaccine** prior to entry. If the 1st dose of MCV4 was administered on or after the 16th birthday, a second dose is not required.

## **L. Counseling Services**

Counselors are available at each grade level to assist students with educational and personal concerns. School counselors provide an opportunity for students to discuss their thoughts and feelings with a concerned adult in a confidential setting.

## **M. Cafeteria / Outside Food**

Each student is provided a scheduled lunch period. The school administration, cafeteria management, and lunchroom supervisors expect all students to follow the cafeteria rules at all times. Students are not permitted to order food to be delivered to the school. Students who violate this policy will have the food confiscated, without refund, and face possible disciplinary action.

## **N. Lunch Policy / Charges**

Contact: 330-797-3900 ext: 2033 [www.AFFoodServices.com](http://www.AFFoodServices.com)

1. The cafeteria is a self funded entity. Your participation is greatly encouraged and appreciated. We generate our own money; it does not come from the district's general fund. Student participation is the key to our success.

2. Selling meals and extra food items is the only way we generate income, and these food sales directly affect how our department works. Actively paying your part of the meals we serve your child is another way we generate income.
3. We encourage all families to apply for free/reduced meals. Our federal funding is based on student participation, if you are approved for free or reduced meals but your children don't eat at school, we get zero federal funds to support our efforts to feed our children.
4. We are required to follow the rules and guidelines that are set forth by The USDA, The National School Lunch Program and the Ohio Department of Education in order to receive these federal funds. This funding alone is not enough to sustain all the required demands of providing meals to our children.
5. Free & Reduced meal applications must be filled out each school year.  
The Ohio Department of Education requires ALL students to be FULL PAY until an APPROVED Free and Reduced Meal Application is on file with Austintown Local Schools for the current school year. If you were on free or reduced meals the previous school year, your meal status carries over for the first 30 operating days. On day 31, all students that have not reapplied or have been automatically re-approved for meal benefits are automatically returned to full pay status. You agree to pay for each meal served at the current meal price. (Meal prices subject to change)
6. You will receive a letter via postal mail within two weeks of processing your application to inform you if you were approved or denied. If you do not receive this letter, then we did not receive your application.  
Applications are not backdated and all charges prior to an approved application are required to be paid.
7. Every student has a lunch account assigned to them using their student ID number. They can eat in the cafeteria whenever they choose. If they have no money, their account will be charged for each meal they are served. Please be aware we do not deny a child a meal. If they are over the allowed charges, they are still served an alternate meal, and this meal is charged at the same rate as the regular menu meal.
8. It is impossible to call a parent during lunch service to determine if we should feed the student. We will feed each and every student, and charge them accordingly. It is your responsibility to be aware of your child's lunch account at all times.
9. As long as a student has a positive balance in their account, we do not restrict what items they can purchase. Restrictions are the responsibility of the parent. Parents may request a restriction at any time to limit or prohibit the purchase of extras and ala carte items. Please call the Food Services Office @ 330.797.3900 Ext: 2032 if you want your child's account restricted. This can only be done through the office, not the cafeteria.
10. The Food Services Office encourages parents to make payments online. You may also send in cash or check, please place it in a sealed envelope marked clearly with your student's name, their ID number should be in the memo section, and the \$ amount and the check number if applicable. Checks are preferred, and should be made out to your school cafeteria and sent to the school. (Example: AES Cafeteria)
11. Our online payment system offers free no cost, email and text alerts for low balances even if you do not make payments online. You can see your students' meal account history there too. It's a great way to monitor your child's meal account. \*\*Checks returned for non sufficient funds are subject to bank fees and will be added to your school fees via the Board of Education Office \*\* Lunch charges are school fees as well.
12. If you have three (3) checks returned for non sufficient funds (NSF), we will no longer accept checks as payment. You will have to send cash, or use K12PaymentCenter.com.
13. There is a Five dollar (\$5.00) maximum charge limit for meals (breakfast and/or lunch). Only a complete meal may be charged. After this amount, we may serve your student the alternate meal, and it is charged at the same rate as the regular menu meal.

14. There is no charging of extras or ala carte items at any time for any student. (Any/all extras, chips, yogurt, extra pizza, second meals, specials, etc.) You must have cash in hand or in the lunch account to buy these items. (If the student has a negative balance, no ala cart purchases are allowed, even with cash in hand).
15. If a student has a negative balance of any amount, regardless of status, they will not be permitted to purchase any extras or ala cart items, until the negative balance is paid in full, even if they have cash in hand. (Any/all extras, chips, yogurt, extra pizza, second meals, specials, etc.)
16. The Alternate Meal\*\* is a plain cheese sandwich (instead of the day's regular entree), they will still have the vegetable, fruit & milk with the cheese sandwich until the charge balance is paid in full. Alternate meals\*\* are charged to the students account at current determined status price. Allergies will be observed when implementing this meal.
17. \*\*Serving an alternate meal is not considered to be in violation of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, or the National School Lunch Program. It is not our goal to deny any student a meal; therefore serving the alternate still meets USDA requirements. The goal of the alternate meal is to deter charging.
18. There is no charging of meals during the last two weeks of the school year. Please provide, cash or account deposit or a packed meal. We will serve the alternate meal to those with no money and charge the account accordingly.
19. When accounts reach a negative \$5.00, we may utilize letters or the One Call Now system to notify parents/guardians of a negative balance. It is the responsibility of the student and parents/guardians to assure that each student has funds to purchase a meal or bring a packed meal. We may, at our discretion, refuse meals to any student with a negative balance.
20. For everyone's safety headphones of any type or size are NOT permitted IN or ON the ears while in the cafeteria serving lines.
21. Food allergies must be filed with the proper paperwork with the school nurse. Only food allergies that are documented with a current valid doctor's order will be entered in the cafeteria system for allergy alerts. If a food allergy changes, you must notify the school nurse, and not the cafeteria. The Food Services Office will not remove an allergy without proper written documentation.  
The USDA will not substitute juice for milk allergies, juice must be purchased in this case.

## **O. Fees and Student Expenses**

All fees and student expenses are to be paid in the building in which the student attends. All obligations must be met by the end of the current school year. Students are responsible for asking for a receipt when paying expenses, fees, and other payments. Driving permits will not be issued to students who owe fees to the district, and passes may be revoked if fees go unpaid.

## **P. Safety Drills**

Fire drills are required by law at regular intervals and are an important safety precaution. When the alarm sounds, everyone must promptly and quietly clear the building by the assigned route, which is posted in each classroom. When the alarm sounds during a tornado drill, students are to report to their designated areas.

## **Q. Bullying Policy**

Harassment, bullying, and intimidation is defined by the Ohio Revised Code as an “**intentional** written, verbal, graphic, physical or electronic act that a student or group of students exhibited toward the alleged victim **more than once**; and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student, and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the

other student (ORC3313.666) and that false reports will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct that may include, but not limited to: detention, suspension, and/or expulsion depending on the circumstances. If you have been the victim, or know of a victim, who is suffering harassment, bullying or intimidation as defined above, please complete a Harassment / Bullying Incident Formal Report. Reports are available on the district website and in each school's main office and should be turned in to the grade level principal of the victim. If you wish to report anonymously, please use the form on the district website. **The complete Board of Education Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy and the district's formal reporting form are included at the end of this student handbook.**

## **R. FERPA Notification**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Austintown Local Schools receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask any Austintown Local School to amend a record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request]
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Austintown Local Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of post secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

## **S. Birthdays**

We ask that parents observe the following with regards to student birthdays:

1. Do not have balloons, flowers or other things sent to the school to be delivered to the child during school time. These will not be delivered to the classroom and balloons are not permitted on the school bus.
2. Food items are not permitted.

## **T. Work Permits**

All students 14-18 years of age must have a work permit to be legally employed. Applications for work permits are available in the high school attendance office. Please allow 48 hours for processing.

## **U. Parent Teacher Conferences**

Parents who wish to discuss their child's behavior or class work with teachers or counselors may do so in one of two ways. Parents may schedule an appointment during the established fall and spring conference days or call the student's counselor and schedule conferences with particular teachers. Fall and spring conferences can be scheduled online from the district website. This is requested in order to avoid conflicts with the previously planned duties of the teacher or counselor.

## **V. Enrollment for New and Transfer Students**

Parents wishing to enroll new or transfer students should report to the Registration Office at the Austintown Early Learning Center (*former Lynn Kirk Building*). The following documentation must be presented: academic transcripts, report cards, birth certificate, immunization records, proof of custody or court order, and proof of residency in the district. Enrollment will be delayed without these documents.

## **W. Withdrawal**

In order to withdraw, students must be signed out of school with a custodial parent or guardian's signature and all obligations must be completed. Records will not be released until all fees are paid in full and the student chromebook and power cord are returned.

## **X. Graduation**

Each student has the opportunity to receive a diploma from Fitch High School upon their completion of the requirements of the State of Ohio and the Board of Education.

# Section 2: Academic Information

## A. Minimum Course Load

All juniors and seniors should carry at least six classes per semester, and at least six credits per year. Freshmen and sophomores must carry at least 5.75 credits per year and six classes per semester. A student with a full schedule will normally have seven classes and no study hall.

*Sophomore Status - 5 Credits*

*Junior Status - 10 Credits Senior Status - 15 Credits*

## B. Student Scheduling Procedures

During February and March, counselors meet with all students to explain course requirements with available electives. Students are instructed to discuss course selections with their parents. If necessary, students and parents may request changes, however, once courses have been entered into the system, no changes will be made.

## C. Graduation Requirements

The State of Ohio and the Austintown Board of Education have established the following minimum requirements for graduation:

Course	Credits	Students must are also required to complete one of the three:
<b>English</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1. <u>Ohio's State Tests</u></b> Earn at least 18 points on seven end-of-course state tests.  End-of-course tests are: Algebra I or Integrated Math I Geometry or Integrated Math II American Government American History Each test score earns you up to five graduation points. You must have a minimum of four points in math, four points in English and six points across science and social studies. Your school and district receive grades on the Ohio School Report Cards for all students' scores and participation on state tests.
<b>Mathematics *</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Social Studies ** Am. World I / Am. World II / Government</b>	<b>3.5</b>	
<b>Science ***</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2. <u>Industry credential and workforce readiness</u></b> Earn a minimum of 12 points by receiving a State Board of Education-approved, industry-recognized credential or group of credentials in a single career field and earn the required score on WorkKeys, a work-readiness test. The state of Ohio will pay one time for you to take the WorkKeys test.
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>0.5</b>	
<b>Health</b>	<b>0.5</b>	



<b>Business</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3. <u>College and career readiness tests</u></b> Earn remediation-free scores in mathematics and English language arts on either the ACT or SAT. The Ohio Department of Higher Education works with Ohio’s universities to set the remediation-free scores for the ACT and SAT tests. Periodically, for a variety of reasons, these scores may be adjusted. For all high school juniors, the remediation-free scores set by Feb. 1 of their junior year will be used to meet their graduation requirement. The most up-to-date information regarding remediation-free scores can be found on the Department’s graduation requirements webpage.
<b>Electives ****</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>21</b>	

\* Mathematics units must include 1 unit of Algebra II or the equivalent of Algebra II

\*\* Social Studies must include .5 unit of an elective to meet graduation requirements

\*\*\* Science units must include 1 unit of physical science, 1 unit of life sciences and 1 unit advanced study in one or more of the following sciences: chemistry, physics, or other physical science; advanced biology or other life science; astronomy, physical geology, or other earth or space science.

\*\*\*\* Elective units must include 1 or any combination of foreign language, fine arts, business, career technical education, family and consumer science, technology, english or language arts, mathematics, science or social studies courses not otherwise required.

## **D. Valedictorian Requirements**

Eligibility to be a Fitch High School Valedictorian in any graduating class will be based upon the following criteria:

1. The student must have spent the entire Senior year as a student at Fitch High School.
2. The student must have the highest grade point in the graduating class, based on a 4.0 scale, including final grades for the last semester of the senior year.
3. The student must have taken “Honors” level courses in all subjects for which such courses are offered.
4. All coursework must be taught by Fitch High School departmental faculty during regular school hours, unless approved for the SB140 program.
5. Course retakes, while available to the student population in general, will not be permitted if students wish to remain eligible for Valedictorian status.
6. Final grades on all report cards and transcripts must be on the traditional letter grading system (A,B,C,D,F). The only exceptions are courses only offered on a pass /fail basis.
7. Only one course may be taken on a Credit/No Record basis and the student MUST be enrolled to receive college credit for the course. This course cannot be a required course.
8. The student is required to notify his/her guidance counselor at the conclusion of the junior year that he/she intends to be eligible for Valedictorian status.

## **E. Drop and Add Regulations**

All students should have six classes. Any student who has a study hall may add a class on “add” day during the first week of each semester if there is an opening in the class desired. Seniors are given first choice on Tuesday of the first week of the semester, juniors are given second choice on Tuesday, sophomores choose first on Wednesday and freshmen are given second choice on Wednesday.

Students are not permitted to drop classes after April 1st of the previous year. Under unusual circumstances, students may be removed from a class with the approval from grade principal, teacher and counselor.

## **F. Policy for Course Retakes**

When a student chooses to retake a course, which was passed, to raise the grade, the course must be taken in a regular school class and the higher grade of the two is calculated in the grade point average. The lower grade is removed from the student's permanent record.

A required course, which has been failed, may be made up through summer school, correspondence, Falcon Pride Online, Alternative School, or approved tutoring, in addition to regular school class. The same procedure applies to calculating grade point averages as above. Summer school may be used for credit recovery only, with the exception of Health and Physical Education.

## **G. Credit/No Record**

Seniors who will have 22 or more credits at the conclusion of their senior year may take up to 2 elective credits using the credit/no record privilege. Juniors who will have at least 18 credits by the end of their junior year may take 1 elective credit using the credit/no record privilege. Students must apply for this privilege by the deadline set, with parent, teacher, and principal/counselor approval. Students are able to register for the credit/no record privilege after the fourth quarter interim for year long and second semester courses and after the second quarter interim for first semester courses. All credit/no record applications must be completed and turned in to student services at least two weeks before the end of the fourth quarter for full year and second semester classes (at least two weeks prior to the end of the second quarter for first semester classes). A student must maintain at least a "C" average to receive credit for the class; a "D" or "F" receives no record and no credit.

The intention of extending this privilege to the student is to encourage the student to attempt a course that may be extremely challenging, without affecting the student's grade point average. The student must give his/her best effort to learn the material. The expectation is that the student will honestly attempt to succeed in the class. An honest attempt will include, but not limited to, the following: maintaining an acceptable attendance record, paying attention in class, participating in class, completing and submitting all assigned work and projects, submitting all assignments, quizzes, and tests, and behaving in an appropriate manner. Any student who does not fulfill these expectations may be denied the credit/no record privilege or may be removed from credit/no record status by the teacher if any violation occurs after the student is already granted credit/no record privilege. At the conclusion of the class, the student may elect to convert the CR into a standard letter grade, as long as the student has earned an "A", "B", or "C". It is the student's responsibility to discuss with the teacher. The principal can also remove a student from the credit/no record privilege. Student athletes and valedictorians should discuss this option with their counselor. There are few opportunities for valedictorians to participate in the credit/no record privilege.

Valedictorians must be taking the class for AP or dual enrollment credit. This option can only be used for one (1) course. Under no circumstances may students switch the classes in which they have been granted credit/no record status.

## **H. Physical Education Attendance and Participation**

Students may be withdrawn from physical education class under the following conditions:

1. The student does not dress for class five or more times.
2. Students with extenuating circumstances, such as extensive excused absences due to illness or injury, will be asked to complete equivalent written work for each day/unit missed. The assignment will be determined by the physical education teacher and the grade level principal.
2. Grade level principals have the final decisions on any removal for unusual circumstances

## **I. Educational and Career Planning**

Pamphlets, brochures, and books are available for student use on such topics as the MCCTC, colleges, careers, military opportunities, and financial aid. Students are encouraged to browse through materials in the office or to sign them out for a few days. The media center contains an extensive career section and several videos on colleges.

Beginning in the eighth grade and continuing through high school, all students develop an Individual Career Plan with the assistance of counselors and teachers. Junior and seniors work with their English teachers to produce a Career Passport that may be presented to prospective employers.

## **J. College Admission Requirements**

Students planning to attend college are advised to pursue an academic curriculum.

State universities in Ohio generally require the following course for admission:

Math.....	4 credits (Including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
English .....	4 credits
Business Tech .....	1 credit
Social Science .....	3 credits
Social Studies Elective.....	0.5 credits
Foreign Language .....	2 credits
Fine and Performing Arts .....	1 credit
Electives.....	2 – 5 credits

*Some programs may require more extensive coursework. Guidance counselors are available at each grade level to address this.*

## **K. Junior/Senior Level College Planning and Visitation**

Students in the college search process are encouraged to take time to visit colleges of interest. AFHS allows its juniors to take up to three (3) college visit days per year. Seniors are permitted five (5) college visits per year. These days are considered excused absences. (Excused absences do not count against the student.) Students will be expected to make up any work that they miss.

Students are required to download from the school website, or obtain from guidance, a college visitation form that must be completed and signed by the **parent** and **school counselor prior to the visit**. This form must be returned to the attendance office, with a certified signature from the college admissions office, within 48hrs of the visit.

During the school year, many colleges send admissions representatives to Fitch to discuss their schools with prospective students. Seniors are encouraged to attend up to three of these sessions. Workshops on financial aid planning are conducted for parents and students. Students are urged to begin their investigation early and be careful to meet all deadlines.

## Section 3: Activities Information

### **A. Homecoming/Other School Sponsored Dances**

Only current Fitch High School students are permitted to attend homecoming/other school sponsored dances. The grade level Principal reserves the right to the final decision on attendance.

### **B. Junior / Senior Prom**

Prom is open to *Junior and Senior students only*, underclassmen are not permitted to attend. Students bringing a guest from another school **must** have a guest approval form completed and approved. The grade level Principal reserves the right to the final decision on attendance.

### **C. Student Activity Program Information**

Involvement in extracurricular activities is strongly encouraged for all students. There are a wide variety of opportunities for students to be involved in. Extracurricular activities are a great way to meet people, pursue a personal passion and give back to our community.

Please refer to the "Look Book" on the school website for a complete list of student organizations and interscholastic athletic opportunities.

### **D. Extracurricular Activities Academic Policy**

For the purpose of this policy, an extracurricular activity refers to a pupil activity program that AFHS or the district sponsors, and is under the supervision of a coach/advisor and/or director. Extracurricular activities do not include activities in the district's course of study. As a condition for the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities, a student must have attained a minimum grade point average of 1.5 and receive no more than one failing grade for any course in the districts graded course of study in the previous grade period.

### **E. Athletics**

The Parent-Student Athletic Handbook is available on the district website or at the office of the Director of Athletics. This document will provide detailed information about participation in interscholastic athletics including rules, expectations, and academic requirements.

Student participation in athletics and related athletic activities is a privilege. As a participant, the student is expected to conduct himself/herself in an exemplary manner at all times. It is important that the students, parents, and all interested persons be aware of the necessary rules and regulations associated with participation in any extracurricular activity. Each coach or advisor must have a meeting at the beginning of his/her season with participants and parents so that rules, regulations and procedures of discipline are understood. Criminally related activity is prohibited and will be dealt with on an individual basis. The coach or advisor will handle all discipline problems. The Director of Athletics and Building Principals will be involved when deemed necessary. A member of an interscholastic athletic team and/or related squad represents more than himself/

herself. He/she also represents the team, school and community. His/her appearance and conduct must reflect this responsibility.

All Students who wish to participate in interscholastic athletics must abide by the rules and regulations as set forth by the Austintown Board of Education, Austintown Fitch High School and the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

## Section 4: Attendance Policy

The Attendance Office is responsible for maintaining accurate records of absence, tardiness, truancy, and early excusals. A student must attend school regularly to benefit from the educational experiences offered by Austintown Local Schools. A child between six and eighteen years of age is "of compulsory school age" for the purpose of sections 3321.01 to 3321.13 of the Revised Code. A child under six years of age who has been enrolled in kindergarten also shall be considered "of compulsory school age" for the purpose of sections 3321.01 to 3321.13 of the Revised Code unless at any time the child's parent or guardian, at the parent's or guardian's discretion and in consultation with the child's teacher and principal, formally withdraws the child from kindergarten.

### **A. Types of Absences:**

**Austintown Local Schools Attendance Guidelines and Procedures Revised (2017-18) The Austintown Local School District recognizes three (3) different kinds of absences:**

#### **I. Verified**

In this case, the attendance office was notified the day of the absence and the student brought in a signed, dated note from a physician, a document indicating a court appearance, or evidence of one of the following reasons for absence from school as permissible by the Ohio Revised Code:

The Ohio Revised Code and Board Policy permit students to be absent from school for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Family illness (medical verification may be required if it is deemed appropriate).
3. Quarantine of the home (The absence of the child is limited to the length of the quarantine as determined by proper health officials).
4. Death of a close relative - three (3) days maximum unless reasonable cause shown otherwise.
5. Observance of Religious Holidays.
6. Family emergency - it must be an acceptable reason in the judgment of the grade principal. The fact that the parent knows where his/her child is, if not in school, does not make the absence legal or verified.
7. Medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged during non-school hours.
8. Authorized school-sponsored activities.
9. College Visitations (In accordance with the Junior/Senior Level College Planning Visitation provisions of this student handbook).

- **Due to the changes with House Bill (HB) 410, handwritten parent notes will no longer be accepted in the Austintown Local Schools. Official documentation from a medical provider or other expert within the above allowable categories will be considered.**

## **II. Excused:**

In this case, the student was absent because of personal illness, family illness, or other reasonable situations.

## **III. Unexcused:**

An unexcused absence is defined as missing class or school without a legal reason. These days will also count toward the “Excessive Absence Policy.”

## **Habitual Truancy**

House Bill (HB) 410 made several significant changes to district obligations for working with students who are truant. It also made changes to student discipline. Under the revised law, the term “chronic truant” has been removed. The term “habitual truant” still is used, and the definition has been updated, removing references to “days” and replacing them with “hours.”

Under the revised definition, a **habitual truant** is defined as “any child of compulsory school age who is absent without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month or 72 or more hours in a school year,” (Ohio Revised Code (RC) 2151.011(B)(18)). The law expands the jurisdiction to juvenile courts in dealing with parents of truant students and creates a new option allowing the court to order school districts to place a child in an alternative school if one has been established.

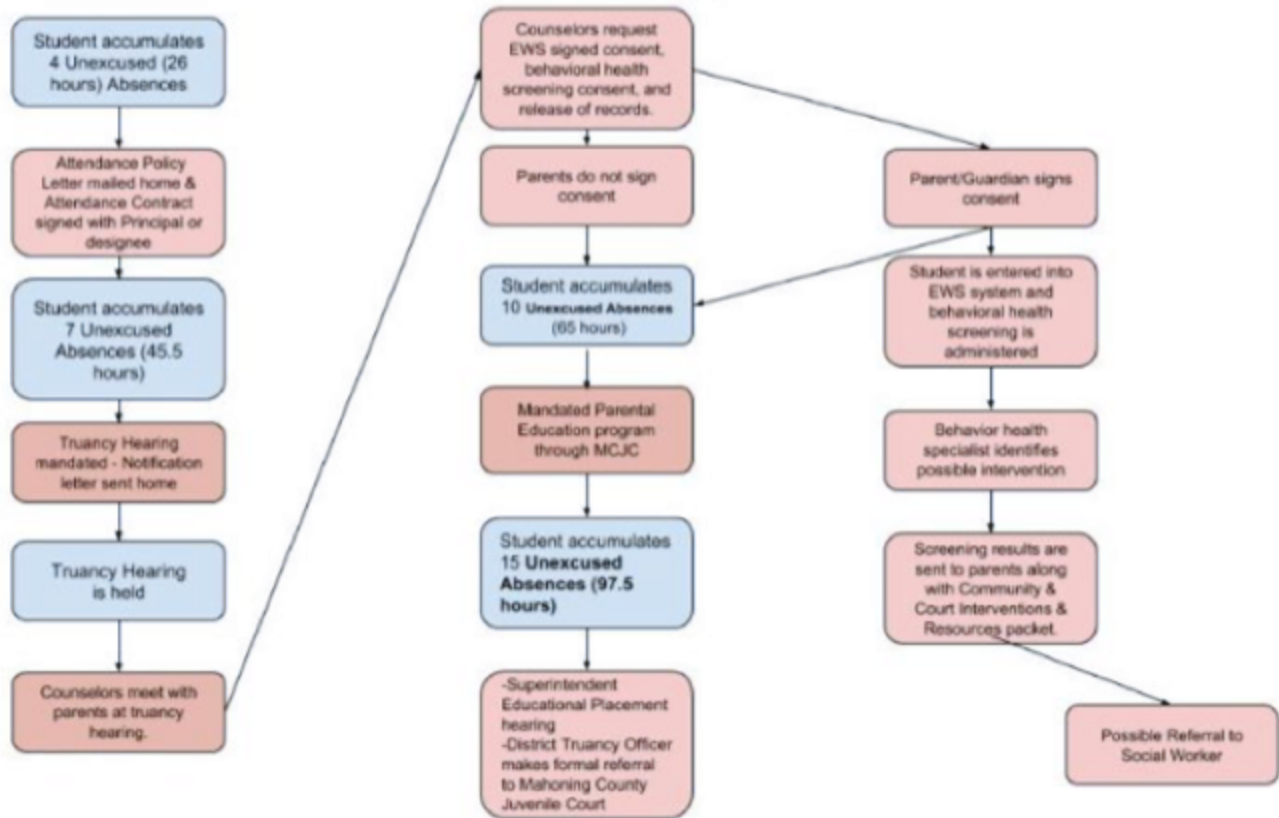
## **B. Excessive Absence Policy:**

Since the Austintown Local School District encourages progressive instruction with an emphasis on activities that are student-centered, hands-on, and cooperative, it is sometimes impossible to duplicate a lesson outside the normal classroom setting. Students who exceed a maximum number of absences without verification in a class or the school day may lose academic credit for those courses, be retained in the current grade, or possibly be recommended for an alternative educational placement at the discretion of the superintendent or superintendent’s designee.

***NOTE: The only days or class absences that do not count toward this total are “verified absences.” Recommended Progression of Interventions for Habitual Truant:***



## Austintown Local Schools Truancy Flowchart



### C. Make-up work policy:

**Each type of absence has specific guidelines about make-up work**

**Verified absence**—All work may be made up anytime a student is absent with verification. It is the responsibility of the student upon return to school to contact the teacher and make arrangements to schedule make-up work. As a general rule, students are expected to make-up educational activities within a time period equal to the number of days that were missed. Special situations give the teacher the latitude to make other arrangements when it is necessary. If an assignment was due on the first day a student is absent, or if a test was scheduled to be administered on the first day a student is absent, the assignment/test is expected to be completed upon return to school. It is the responsibility of the student to make up work missed during absences. Make up work can be picked up if a student is absent three (3) days. If you know your child will be absent for an extended period of time, please let the office know.

**Truancy and Absence without verification**—All work may be made up with the same rules as verified absences unless the student violates the “Excessive Absence Policy.” In these cases, make-up work may be denied.

**Due process:** All students with attendance concerns will be given due process. The parent or guardian of the student will be contacted by letter and/or phone before penalties or loss of credit occurs. The administration will

be available to meet with parent or guardian to develop strategies that help improve attendance and avoid any loss of credit or penalties.

## **D. Early Excusal Policy**

When an emergency situation arises which cannot be scheduled at another time, a student may be excused for part of a day. A matter of convenience is not to be interpreted as an emergency situation. Parental Responsibility: To send notice, including the name and telephone number of the licensed practitioner or other party involved; a note signed by the custodial parent containing the same information is acceptable. Otherwise, the parent or guardian must make a request in person. Student Responsibility: To present the notice to the main office immediately upon arrival to school, or the excusal may be denied. Please note: In grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>, the custodial parent or legal guardian is required to report to the main office and sign-out the student prior to being dismissed from school-grounds.

**To reflect the changes in the law per HB 410 and the obligations of the school district, early excusals and tardies are considered “hours” towards absences. The amount of time missed due to tardies and early excusals will contribute to the total absence hours and potentially cause a student to be a habitual truant. Time missed due to tardies and early excusals contribute to loss of instructional time which can adversely impact student achievement.**

### **Reporting Non-Attending Students to the Ohio BMV (AHFS)**

In accordance with Ohio law and Board Policy, Austintown Fitch High School personnel are required to notify the state Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) of any student under the age of 18 who has withdrawn from school for any reason other than a change of residence. School authorities may also notify the BMV of students who are absent from school without a legitimate excuse for ten (10) or more consecutive school days or fifteen (15) total school days in a school year.

### **Tardiness to School Policy:**

Students arriving to first period class after the bell are considered “tardy to school” after 7:35 am.

### **Progression of Discipline for Tardiness:**

<b># of Unexcused Tardies</b>	<b>Interventions</b>
6	Written Warning
8	(1) Detention/other administrator assigned age appropriate disciplinary measure
10+	(1) In-School-Restriction, additional interventions including community service as appropriate may be assigned

*The administration maintains discretion in the application of these consequences.*

**To reflect the changes in the law per HB 410 and the obligations of the school district, early excusals and tardies are considered “hours” towards absences. The amount of time missed due to tardies and early excusals will contribute to the total absence hours and potentially cause a student to be a habitual truant. Time missed due to tardies and early excusals contributes to loss of instructional time which can adversely impact student achievement.**

## **F. Tardy to Class Policy**

Students are expected to arrive to all classes, including study halls and lunch by the late bell/assigned time. Upon the accumulation of three (3) tardies to class and thereafter, a school official or grade level principal may administer disciplinary action ranging from detention, in-school restriction, suspension or expulsion.

## **G. Reporting Non-Attending Students to the Ohio BMV (AHFS)**

In accordance with Ohio law and Board Policy, Austintown Fitch High School personnel are required to notify the state Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) of any student under the age of 18 who has withdrawn from school for any reason other than a change of residence. School authorities may also notify the BMV of students who are absent from school without a legitimate excuse for ten (10) or more consecutive school days or fifteen (15) total school days in a school year.

## **H. Tardiness to School Policy**

Students arriving to first period class after the tardy bell are considered "tardy to school."

The tardy bell at Fitch High School is at 7:35am.

Progression of Discipline for Tardiness to School:

<b><i># of Unexcused Tardies</i></b>	<b><i>Interventions</i></b>
6	Written Warning
8	(1) Detention
10+	(1) In-school restriction, additional interventions including community service as appropriate may be assigned.

*The administrations maintains discretion in the application of these consequences.*

To reflect the changes in the law per HB 410 and the obligations of the school district, early excusals and tardies are considered “hours” towards absences. The amount of time missed due to tardies and early excusals will contribute to the total absence hours and potentially cause a student to be a habitual truant. Time missed

due to tardies and early excusals contributes to loss of instructional time which can adversely impact student achievement.

## **I. Truant From Class Policy**

Students who violate the Truant From Class Policy shall generally be progressively disciplined in accordance with the progression set forth below unless circumstances warrant otherwise. If circumstances warrant otherwise, the high school is not required to follow the progressive discipline steps and may also skip steps where warranted. The following discipline is cumulative per year & per course.

<i>Truant From Class</i>	<i>Discipline Progression</i>
# 1	Detention / 10 Demerits
# 2	In-School Restriction / 10 Demerits
# 3	Saturday School / 10 demerits

Repeated violations may result in other disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct, which may include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school restriction, Saturday school, and/or alternative restorative discipline practices depending upon individual circumstances.

Students are not permitted on the second floor during the lunch periods. Consequences: Detentions, demerits, In-school Restriction, Saturday school, and/or alternative restorative discipline practices depending upon individual circumstances.

## **J. Leaving School Grounds**

Leaving the school building or grounds, unless as a function of a supervised school activity or with administrative permission, is prohibited. Students are to remain in the building for the time of arrival until the official time of dismissal. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action ranging from detention, in-school restriction, Saturday school, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to the Austintown Police Department.

## **K. Homework Request Guidelines**

If an absence of three (3) consecutive days or more results due to illness, assignments may be requested through the 9th Grade Office. Please call the 9th Grade Office no later than 9:00 a.m. in order to pick up the requested material after 1:00 p.m. the following day. Assignments will not be ready for same day pick up. In the case of extended illness, additional assignments cannot be requested until previous assignments are returned to the classroom teacher(s).

## Section 5: Student Code of Conduct

Under the Student Code of Conduct, applicable Board policy, and administrative guidelines, the term "school" refers to all instances when a student is under the authority of the school; the term "property" refers not only to school-owned property but to any property, public or private, which may be damaged during the period when the student is under the authority of the school. The rules and standards set forth apply to conduct on school premises, or on school buses or any other school vehicle, or involving school property, or at any school-sponsored event/function, or within sight of school premises and connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school property. The rules and standards also apply to any misconduct, regardless of where it occurs, that is directed at a district employee or Board official or the property of such employee or Board Official. Students are considered to be subject to the authority of the school when they are on school buses or any other school vehicle or at school related or school sponsored events even though those activities may not take place at an actual school. Some examples include athletic meets and games, field trips, contests, and concerts. Offenses, which occur at such events, will be subject to the same penalties as offenses that occur in school.

### **A. Student Statement of Responsibility**

Each individual who attends Austintown Local Schools will be offered many opportunities to exercise self-control and respond to individual responsibilities. School discipline policies are applicable to all students if the prohibited act(s) take place during a school activity, function, or any such school-sponsored event/function; while on property immediately adjacent to or within the line of sight of school property; on school buses or other vehicles; off of property owned or controlled by the Board of Education but that is connected to activities that occurred on school property; misconduct that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or his/her property; or misconduct that affects the operation of the school. Students are expected to comply with the directions of teachers, substitute teachers, school aides, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, principals or other authorized school personnel in a spirit of cooperation and courtesy. Failure to comply will be considered as insubordination. Insubordination includes but is not limited to:

1. Disobedience or disrespect toward any staff member or other authorized school personnel.
2. Not serving assigned detentions.
3. Not following school rules or proper procedures.
4. Not following assigned schedule/being in unauthorized area.
5. Chronic tardy to school or class.
6. Repeated misbehavior after warning.
7. Refusal to turn over electronic communication devices to school personnel when requested.

Students who are aware of a potentially escalating conflict are to encourage the parties to peacefully resolve their dispute. If necessary, staff and administration are to be notified via verbal or written means of concern. At that time, the appropriate action will be taken to help all parties resolve their dispute.

Austintown Local Schools do maintain a zero tolerance policy for violent, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, including excessive truancy, menacing and harassment, whether verbal, physical, electronic or written.

Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken if necessary. Any violation may result in disciplinary action,

such as detention, deprivation of privileges, parental contact, referral to legal authorities, emergency removal, in-school restriction, home referral, in school or out of school suspension, expulsion from school, and permanent exclusion.

## **B. Person-to-Person Relationships / Threats**

Students will show proper consideration and respect toward staff members and fellow students. Any threat by a student, whether verbal, physical or electronic, directed towards any adult in our building will result in an automatic suspension pending expulsion with a police report being filed. Any threat by a student, whether verbal, physical or electronic, directed towards any other student in our building will result in detention, in-school restriction, Saturday school, out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion depending upon the circumstances.

## **C. Profane, Obscene or Vulgar Language/Gestures**

A student shall not use profane, obscene or vulgar language or gestures while under the authority of the school, while on school grounds, school buses or vehicles, or while engaged in or present at any school sponsored event or activity. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **D. Assault/Assault and Battery**

A student shall not engage in any, act or threatened act, of physical or psychological violence or force causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause, physical or psychological harm or injury to another person. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or or expulsion. Law enforcement will also be notified as appropriate.

## **E. Fighting**

A student shall not engage in any fight, hit, punch, kick, push, physically confront or engage in any other act of violence or force that causes harm or threatens to cause harm to another person. A student shall not instigate or encourage fighting. If a student, who is engaged in a fight, and, in the course of fighting, strikes, pushes, and/or physically restrains a staff member who is attempting to intervene, such actions may be regarded as a separate violation, specifically an assault and may result in a police report and appropriate disciplinary consequences. In such instances, the staff member retains the right to pursue legal remedies in the civil and criminal courts independent of the actions(s) taken by the school district. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **F. Intimidation / Harassment / Menacing / Bullying**

*A full copy of the district's anti-harassment and bullying policy is contained at the end of this handbook.*

In accordance with section 3313.666 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Austintown Local School District strictly prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student including on school property, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored event. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

**Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means either:**

- (a) Any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited towards another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
  - i. Causes mental or physical harm to the other student or staff members
  - ii. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- (b) Violence within a dating relationship.

**Electronic act** - means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation, or bullying through written, verbal, physical, or electronic acts can be administered discipline consequences ranging from, but not limited to detention, suspension, expulsion and/or the involvement of local authorities.

**False Reports** - In accordance with section 3313.666 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Austintown Local Schools strictly prohibits students from deliberately making false reports of harassment, bullying, and/or intimidation. Students who deliberately make a false report may be subject to discipline consequences ranging from, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion and/or the involvement of local authorities.

## **G. Hazing (Initiations)**

Initiations of any sort are prohibited. Initiations and/or hazing are those activities into which students are coerced in order to become part of a group or activity to avoid harm. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **H. Sexual Harassment Policy**

Inappropriate displays of affection or sexual conduct will not be tolerated. There can be no acceptance or tolerance in the school setting for inappropriate, unwelcome and at times vulgar or illegal harassment or advances of a sexual or other nature. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or propositions or pressure to engage in sexual activity.
2. Verbal or physical abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's clothing or body or otherwise graphic or suggestive comments.
4. The use of sexual degrading words to describe an individual.
5. Displaying sexually aggressive objects or photographs.
6. Sexually explicit or obscene jokes. If a student believes he or she is a victim of such actions by another member of the school community, they should report it immediately to a principal, guidance counselor or teacher. The principal or assistant principal should be contacted if the original referral was not made there. School administration will then investigate the situation as necessary. Parents will be informed as needed. Should the accused party be proven as an offender, appropriate action will be taken. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of

application based on the severity of the offense and can include, for students, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **I. Drug/Alcohol Policy**

The Austintown Local School District recognizes its responsibility in providing an environment conducive to the development of students to their maximum level of learning. Behaviors related to alcohol and drug abuse disrupt the educational environment for all within the classroom or school. Through this policy, we hope to maintain a balance of compassion for anyone suffering from alcohol and drug abuse and also protect the educational integrity of our schools. It is mandatory that students be in compliance with the standards of conduct set forth in this policy. Failure to comply with the rules pertaining to the possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicants, including steroids and/or counterfeit (look-a-like drugs), and drug paraphernalia at school or as a part of any school activity or while under the authority of the school will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Tobacco / Tobacco-Like Product / Nicotine:**

A student shall not possess, smoke, or otherwise make use of tobacco of any kind in the school building, on school buses, at school sponsored activities, or on school property at any time. The use, possession, consumption, purchase or attempt to purchase tobacco products or tobacco substitute products or paraphernalia in a school building (owned, leased or contracted for by the Board), on school premises, on or near a school campus, a school bus or other vehicle, or at any Board-sponsored event or at any sanctioned school activities on or off the school campus is prohibited.

Tobacco products or paraphernalia include, but are not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff or any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, papers used to roll cigarettes, tobacco substitutes and/or electronic “vapor” or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, or other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Narcotics, Alcohol, Drugs, and Paraphernalia**

A student shall not use, sell or distribute, possess, buy, or help broker or facilitate the sale or exchange of, be under the influence of, or smell of, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or narcotics on school property or at any school sponsored event at any time. A student shall not use, possess, offer to sell, distribute or help broker or facilitate the sale or exchange of counterfeit or look-alike drugs. Possession of any type of drug paraphernalia is similarly prohibited. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion. Law enforcement will be notified as appropriate. Solely at the discretion of the administration, discipline, in part, may be waived for alcohol violations if the student successfully completes a professional program/assessment by a certified alcoholism-counseling agency at the family’s expense

### **Prescription or Nonprescription Drugs**

A student shall not use, sell or distribute, buy or possess prescription or nonprescription drugs without following the procedures for use of such drugs at school. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to,



detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion. Law enforcement will be notified as appropriate.

## **J. Weapons, Explosives, Incendiary Devices, Fireworks**

Students shall not possess, use, threaten use of, handle, transport, sell, conceal, ignite, or explode fireworks/explosives/incendiary devices of any kind. A student shall not use, possess, handle, transmit, sell or conceal any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument. Weapons and dangerous instruments include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, metal knuckles, laser pointers, straight razors, explosives, noxious irritants, poisons, and other dangerous substances, along with any item that is a “look alike” of any of the above, or any object which is used or may be used to inflict physical harm. “Firearm” is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C.A. Sections 921-924.), which includes but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas; bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces; missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce; mine or device similar to any of the devices described above. The definition of a “knife” includes, but is not limited to a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle. Weapons violations may result in expulsion of up to one (1) full year.

## **K. Bomb Threats**

Making a bomb threat to a school building or any premises where a school activity is taking place is strictly prohibited and will result in expulsion of up to one year.

## **L. Attendance at School Functions and After-School Activities**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature manner so they do not bring discredit to themselves, their families, our school, or our community. Inappropriate conduct such as booing, rowdiness, physical confrontation, disrespect for officials, or refusal to follow instructions or directions will not be tolerated at home or away events. Students will be removed from school functions/after-school activities and denied admittance thereafter for not cooperating fully with school officials and officers of the law. Suspended or expelled students are not permitted to attend any school activity or event if at home or away. School officials have the same authority over students at after-school activities or functions as they have during a regular school day. Students who refuse to cooperate during after-school activities will be removed and denied admittance thereafter. Additional disciplinary action may be issued as well.

***Rights:*** Students are given top priority and encouraged to attend after-school activities. Suspended or expelled students are not permitted to attend any school activity or event at home or away.

***Student Responsibility:*** To show proper consideration to other people and property of others so as not to cause disruption or disregard for essential controls including physical confrontation and possession or use of intoxicants. Students are expected to display positive sportsmanship and behavior in relation to opposing teams, fans, and game officials. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in ejection and denial of admission, as a spectator for the remainder of the semester. Failure to comply with rules pertaining to possession or use of

intoxicants during after-school activities will result in immediate removal for the site along with other possible consequences, including discipline.

### ***Student Participation***

Any Fitch High school student involved in a extra-curricular activity including athletics, clubs, groups, organization and field trips, must be under the supervision of a Fitch High School supervisor or one representing Fitch High School. These students are subject to all rules, regulations, rights and responsibilities of Fitch High School. Requirements apply at home and off site activities.

### ***After School***

Students are not permitted in the gymnasium or school building after school without proper supervision by a coach, advisor or teacher. All students not involved in supervised activities after school must exit the building by 3:00 p.m.

## **M. Attendance at School Assemblies and Special Activities**

A variety of programs will be offered for the benefit of students, including pep assemblies, educational assemblies, and entertaining assemblies. Some will be open to all, others to restricted groups of relevance, depending on the nature of the program. Attendance at all school assemblies and school-related activities is a privilege, not a right. All students are expected to conduct themselves so as to show respect for the participants and others in the audience. Failure to comply with all school rules will mean ejection and restriction from future assemblies or activities.

## **N. Violation of Federal or State Statutes**

Students shall not violate federal or state statutes, rules, or regulations on school premises or at school activities, including, but not limited to, required immunizations.

## **O. Any Violation of a Law of the State of Ohio**

While students are under the auspices of the Austintown Local Schools, violation of State Law will be handled through the school and/or the appropriate legal authorities, as appropriate to the circumstances. Any violation of state law will be remanded to the appropriate legal authorities.

## **P. Use and Abuse of School Property and School Facilities**

***Rights*** : All students have the opportunity to use textbooks, computers, library materials, school furnishings, school equipment and many other items, without charge. A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage, destruction or defacement to either school property or private property on school premises or during school activities conducted on school grounds or at any school sponsored event or connected activity regardless to where it occurs. Any person destroying, defacing or otherwise causing excessive damage to school property or school facilities may be disciplined including but not limited to being suspended or expelled from school. In addition, full retribution for actual value of damaged, destroyed or stolen items will be expected.

***Student's Responsibility***: Any intentional or reckless damage will result in demand for full restitution for actual value of damaged, destroyed, or stolen items, disciplinary action, and involvement of law

enforcement as appropriate. Security cameras provide 24-hour surveillance at Fitch High School and all surrounding grounds.

## **Q. Textbooks**

The Board of Education furnishes textbooks without cost to the students. As books are issued, the serial number, the date of issue and the condition of the books are recorded by the teacher making the distribution. At the close of the school year, the books are to be returned to the teachers who issued them. Allowing for reasonable use, no fines will be assessed. However, if the book has been abused or lost, fines will be charged accordingly. Report cards and transcripts will not be issued if fees or fines are not paid in accordance with the law.

## **R. Theft**

Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Discipline may range from detention, in-school restriction, Saturday school, out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion. In addition to imposing discipline, school administration may report theft(s) to local authorities. Theft is the unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity.

## **S. Student Telephone Usage Policy**

School telephones are available for student use in the case of an emergency. Students requesting to call home for emergency purposes must first receive permission from school staff, school secretary, or school administration. Emergency messages from parents/guardians will be delivered to students via the main office.

## **T. Student Computer Policy**

Students are encouraged to use school computers/network and the Internet connection for teacher assigned, educational work. Unauthorized computer usage is prohibited. Failure to use computers/network for authorized educational work only will result in disciplinary action. All students must have a signed Acceptable Use Policy form in order to use school computers. All students must also adhere to the Student Electronic Device Guidelines.

## **U. Internet Access for Students**

All computers in Austintown Local Schools have access to the Internet and e-mail in accordance with all applicable policies and laws. Parents who wish to deny Internet access to their child during school hours must contact the school administration. Also see Section 7 of this handbook: Student Electronic Device Policy.

## **V. Use and Searches of Lockers, School Property, Personal Belongings, or Person**

Students are assigned lockers for their convenience in storing books, school supplies and coats. However, such assignment does not limit the right of school officials to examine lockers when, based upon a reasonable suspicion, they believe it is necessary for the safe, “non-disruptive” operation of the school. All students will be

assigned lockers and combinations. Writing on the outside and/or inside of a locker is prohibited. Also, any damage, which occurred through carelessness, kicking, slamming, etc. will be considered vandalism and subject to appropriate discipline. The Board of Education, or its designee, reserves the right to search the lockers, vehicles, desks, person, and personal belongings of a student on school grounds or at any school activity when, based upon a reasonable suspicion, it is reasonably necessary for the maintenance of order, discipline, and safety

in the supervision and education of students. Random searches may also occur if permitted under the law. Appropriate disciplinary action will result. Criminal charges may also be filed.

## **W. Disruption of School / Conspiracy to Riot / Disorderly Conduct**

A student shall not cause any disruption of any classroom or school activity or the operation of the school or the educational process and shall not engage in any act that is potentially harmful to the health, welfare and safety of the student himself/herself, other students or staff. This shall include the incitement of others toward acts of disruption. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **X. Academic Dishonesty**

A student shall not engage in any act of cheating, plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, the removal and/or alteration of any school record. This policy also includes impersonating a teacher and/or school official. Any infraction of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

## **Y. Distribution or Sale of Unauthorized Materials**

A student shall not distribute or sell unauthorized materials on school property. Unauthorized materials are defined as any material goods, literature, food items, or any other objects/items that are not approved first by the administration. This policy includes the sale or distribution of information. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

## **Z. Student Backpacks**

Backpacks of any kind and drawstring gym sacks are not permitted to be worn during school hours. Bags are permissible for transporting books and gym clothing to and from school but must be secured in lockers during normal school hours.

## **AA. False Reports / Forgery / False Impersonations**

A student shall not make false accusations or give false information on any school forms or correspondence or other communications directed to the school or school personnel. This includes forging names on passes, excuses or notes and impersonating a school official in written or electronic form on or off campus.

Impersonating a faculty member in writing, electronically, and in all forms of communication, including online and social networks, is prohibited. Committing such an offense will result in disciplinary action with a range of

application based on the severity of the offense and can include, but is not limited to, detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension and/or expulsion.

## **BB. Nuisance and/or Hazardous Items**

No backpacks, book bags, sack packs or other containers are permitted in the hallways, classroom, or cafeteria. Lunch containers are permitted for appropriate usage during lunch and breakfast times in the cafeteria. Any item that, in the judgment of administration disrupts, or interferes with school, is prohibited. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Any additional items that, in the judgment of the administration, disrupt or interfere with school or school activities are prohibited.

## **CC. Demerit System**

In addition to other disciplinary actions, a demerit system is in use to determine students' responsibility grades and as a means of disciplinary consequence for chronic offenders of school policies and regulations. The accumulation of demerits shall be cumulative throughout the school year. For the sole purpose of establishing a responsibility grade, demerits will be reset each grade reporting period. Cumulative accumulation will continue for chronic offenders.

Any act which is deemed to be a **disruption of the academic environment** is subject to consequences and shall be assigned demerits. Grade level principals and the Dean of Students have authority, and reserve the right, to assign appropriate demerits.

**Accumulation of Demerits:** Accumulation of more than forty (40) demerits, in one grade reporting period, will result in the grade of F as a responsibility grade and may be used to exclude a student from participation in any privilege or activity and could result in further disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct, which may include, but is not limited to: detention, in-school restriction, Saturday school, out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion, depending upon the circumstances. The accumulation of demerits shall be cumulative throughout the school year.

**Note:** Everything outside the scope and sequence of the classroom is a privilege and not a right, including but not limited to, aide placement, driving, dances, participation in clubs, and other school activities.

# Section 5A: Disciplinary Actions

## **A. After-School Detention**

All detentions are held after school for the duration of 1 hour. Students are notified of the infraction and are to serve the detention on the date and time of the detention listed on the detention slip. Failure to serve the first detention will result in the assignment of an additional detention. Failure to serve the two detentions at the arranged times may result in additional disciplinary action.

## **B. In-School Restriction**

Students assigned to I.S.R. must successfully adhere to and complete all assignments and expectations in order to return to his/her regular schedule. Students that fail to adhere to the rules/expectations will be assigned additional I.S.R. day(s), or out-of-school suspension. The expectations of I.S.R. include strict adherence to acceptable daily personal behavior, core curriculum work and completion of daily assignments, adherence to lunch and restroom guidelines, and adherence to the electronic device policy. Phones and electronic devices are NOT permitted in I.S.R. Personal electronic devices will be collected in the morning and returned to students at the end of the day.

## **C. Saturday School**

Students assigned to SS must successfully adhere to and complete all assignments and expectations in order to return to his/her regular schedule. Students that fail to adhere to the rules/expectations will be assigned additional SS day(s), or out-of-school suspension. The expectations of SS include strict adherence to acceptable daily personal behavior, core curriculum work and completion of daily assignments, adherence to lunch and restroom guidelines, and adherence to the electronic device policy. Phones and electronic devices are NOT permitted in S.S. Personal electronic devices will be collected in the morning and returned to students at the end of the day.

## **D. Out-of-School Suspension**

Students and parents will be notified of the suspension via the Notice of Intent to Suspend Form. Suspensions may cross semester lines and may be carried from one school year to the next. Students are not permitted on school grounds while serving an out-of-school suspension. Students may not attend any school functions, home or away, while serving an out-of-school suspension. Students are able to complete school worked missed while under suspension. Parents should call the 9th grade office to request missed assignments.

## **E. Expulsion and/or Permanent Exclusion**

Students and parents will be notified of a suspension pending expulsion via the Notice of Intent to Suspend Form. Students and parents will receive a letter from the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent regarding a hearing to discuss possible expulsion. Students are not permitted on school grounds while serving an

out-of-school suspension, expulsion or permanent exclusion. Students may not attend any school functions, home or away while serving an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or permanent exclusion.

## **F. Early Warning System (EWS) Intervention**

In an effort to support all students in receiving the highest educational support, the Austintown Local School District has partnered with the Mahoning County Juvenile Court to create an Early Warning System (EWS). The purpose of EWS is to identify students who are in need of additional intervention academically, behaviorally, or who may be struggling to attend school. Administration reserves the right to refer students to EWS if deemed necessary and in conjunction with, or as a substitute for, the disciplinary actions listed above.

# Section 6: Student Dress Code Policy

## **(Grades 6-12)**

The purpose for implementing this student dress code policy for all students in grades 6 through 12 is to strengthen the learning environment for classroom instruction and academic performance; prevent disruption to the educational process; prevent distraction to students, staff and the educational process; facilitate learning; increase the atmosphere for school pride and personal appearance and enhance the image of students and the schools in the Austintown community.

This dress code policy shall be in effect during the regular school year and during any summer educational programming.

As discussed further below, parents who believe that their child cannot comply with the dress code because of religious beliefs or religious dress must submit a written request for an exemption from the policy along with an explanation of how the religious belief/religion prevents compliance with the policy to the school principal at least 24 hours in advance where practicable.

## **General**

Attire that is not in compliance with this dress code policy is not permitted. In addition to the clothing items expressly prohibited under this policy, principals and the school administration have discretion to address any attire that is offensive, degrading, vulgar, contrary to the educational mission of the school, that disrupts the learning environment or infringes upon the rights of others.

All clothing must be of appropriate size and fit neatly. Any clothing that is too tight revealing or saggy/baggy, including, but not limited to, low necklines, midriff tops and form-filling tops or bottoms is not permitted.

## **A Hair**

1. Hair color, including highlights, hair tinsel, and hair feathers (of any type) must be within the spectrum of color that hair grows naturally such as shades of blonde, black, auburn/red and brunette. (Metallic and non-natural shades of hair color are not permitted. Hair crystals, of any color, are not permitted.)
2. Hair styles which are disruptive/distracting to the educational process or pose a safety hazard are not permitted.
3. Hair must not be worn covering the eyes or in a way which otherwise obstructs the natural vision of student or staff members.



4. Eyebrows are not permitted to be shaved.

## **B. Jewelry and Accessories**

1. Jewelry or accessories that may be used as weapons are not to be worn to school. This includes, but is not limited to, jewelry such as spiked rings, spiked bracelets, spiked dog collars, chained wallets, two or three finger rings that are connected and bulky chains worn around the neck or waist.
2. Chains and sharp objects such as spikes are not allowed on clothing or book bags.
3. No head coverings are permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, caps, hats, hoods, bandanas, wave caps, sweatbands, headbands, skull caps, sunglasses, headsets or any other head covering. Combs, rakes or picks should not be worn in the hair. Exception requests, including those based upon religious beliefs, must be made in writing to the school principal along with an explanation of how the religious belief/religion prevents compliance with the ban on head coverings at least 24 hours in advance where practicable.
4. Body piercing (other than permissible types of ear piercing) and displaying jewelry in areas such as the eyebrows, lips and tongue are not permitted.
5. Stretching of the mouth/lips/and/or earlobe as well as the following types of earrings, ear/body jewelry and ear/body piercing are not permitted: flesh tunnels, flesh plugs, ear/lip stretchers, ear/lip expanders, ear/lip stretchers and similar ear/lip stretching devices or jewelry.

## **C. Gang-Affiliated Attire/Accessories**

A gang, as defined in this policy means any organization, association or group of three or more which has a unique name or identifiable signs, symbols or marks, and whose members individually or collectively engage in criminal or violent behavior to persons or property, or who create an unreasonable and substantial disruption or risk of disruption of a class, activity, program or other function of a school.

Any gang attire, symbols, signs or other things which are evidence of membership in, or affiliation with, recruitment or desire to be affiliated with any gang are prohibited. Gang related attire/accessories include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any article of clothing bearing gang symbols, names, initials, insignia or anything else that signals gang affiliation;
2. students rolling up one pant leg;
3. long bulky chains and necklaces, gang styled belt buckles, large oversized pendants on necklaces and chains and
4. draping articles of clothing, towels or other objects out of pant pockets or over the shoulder or neck area.

As gang styles and clothing continually evolve and change, additional styles and apparel may be considered gang-affiliated, as identified in consultation with school officials and law enforcement authorities.

## **D. Tops**

The following tops are permitted: polo-style shirts with a collar, oxford shirts with a collar, dress shirts with a collar, turtlenecks, mock turtlenecks and sweaters, including crew neck, V-neck, full length zipper, half-zipper pullover, cowl, scoop, boat neck, sweater vest and cardigan.

Hooded tops (“Hoodies”) or shirts/jackets with full/reach through front pockets are strictly prohibited.

No attire that is vulgar offensive, degrading, sexually revealing, contrary to the mission of the school or disruptive to the learning environment or an infringement on the rights of others is permitted.

## **E. Bottoms**

The following bottoms are permitted for campus student wear: denim jeans, khaki pants, cargo pants, corduroy pants, and dress pants. Yoga pants, leggings or other stretch knits and/or spandex bottoms are permitted only with a shirt over them that extends to no less than 4 inches above the knee. Sweatpants, joggers and athletic style pants and shorts are permitted but must be worn at the waist. Shorts must extend to no less than 4 inches above the knee. No sagging permitted.

In addition to these choices, capri pants, skirts, skorts, dresses and jumpers are also permitted. The hemline on skirts, skorts, dresses and jumpers must be no shorter than two inches from the top of the knee.

Students are not permitted to wear pajama bottoms or pajama bottom-style pants.

Jeans or pants that have holes from 4 inches above the knee to the waist must be worn with something underneath that is not see through such as leggings. Nude colored nylons are not acceptable.

A manufacturer’s logo/emblem is permitted anywhere on the bottoms.

Students are not required to wear a belt with bottoms. All bottoms must be worn at the waist. The waist is defined as the area between the bottom of the rib cage and top of the hip bone. Wearing bottoms which expose skin or undergarments or wearing oversize/draping baggy style pants to create a look is strictly prohibited.

When wearing approved shorts, the hemline must be no shorter than 4 inches above the top of the knee. All shorts must be worn at the waist. The waist is defined as the area between the bottom of the rib cage and top of the hip bone. Wearing shorts below the waist area which expose skin in the waist/midriff or pelvic area or undergarments or wearing oversize/draping baggy style shorts to create a look is strictly prohibited.

All skirts and skorts must be worn at the waist. The waist is defined as the area between the bottom of the rib cage and top of the hip bone. All skirts, skorts and dresses must have a finished hem. All dresses must have sleeves and all jumpers must be worn with an approved top.

## **F. Footwear**

Students are permitted to wear any style of footwear, made of canvas, plastic, rubber, leather, fake/faux leather or leather-like synthetic compound with either a rubber sole or leather sole, which includes: dress shoes, casual shoes, athletic shoes, boots and closed-toe sandals. Footwear may have a back or be in nature. Boots may extend no higher than the bottom of the knee.

"Open-toe" footwear is strictly prohibited. Flip flops of any kind (leather, transparent plastic, rubber, wood, etc.) are strictly prohibited. Flip flops are defined as flat and backless consisting of a flat sole held loosely on the foot by a Y-shaped or V-shaped strap, like a thin thong, that passes between the first (big) and second toes and around either side of the foot. Shower shoes are strictly prohibited. Shower shoes are defined as those meant to be used near pools, bathrooms, or other wet places, and are made of plastic or rubber.

Shoes with wheels ("Heelys") are strictly prohibited.

## **G. Dress Code Exceptions**

Exceptions to the dress code shall include the following:

- 1 Students participating in a nationally recognized youth organization (such as Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts) may wear their uniforms on those days such organizations have a scheduled function.
2. Other exceptions are made only upon the prior approval (with at least 24 hours advance approval where practicable) of the building principal. Such exception requests must be made in writing at least 24 hours in advance where practicable and must include a reason/explanation for the request.

## **H. Religious Exemptions**

Requests for exemptions from the dress code based upon one's religion or religious beliefs, including an explanation of why the religion/religious belief prevents compliance with the dress code, must be made at least 24 hours in advance where practicable in writing to the principal.

## **I. Dress Code Violation**

This dress code policy shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct and any other student handbooks or discipline policies. Principals are responsible for ensuring that the dress code policy is implemented and enforced.

Students who violate this dress code policy shall generally be progressively disciplined unless circumstances warrant otherwise. Any time a student violates the dress code policy, he/she will be required to promptly change into alternative acceptable clothing or otherwise promptly correct the violation. Students who cannot promptly correct the dress code violation or who refuse to do so may be sent to in school restriction or home at the discretion of school administration.

Additionally, a student's first dress code violation will result in a warning being issued to the student with the student's parents/guardians being notified of the warning unless circumstances warrant more severe discipline.

Repeated violations may result in other disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct, which may include, but not be limited to, detention, in school restriction, suspension and/or expulsion depending on the circumstances.

<i>Offense</i>	<i>Discipline Progression</i>
# 1	Warning & Correction
# 2	Detention & Correction / 5 demerits
# 3	In-school restriction & Correction / 5 demerits
# 4	Out-of-School Suspension / possible expulsion depending on the circumstances

(Approval date: March 11, 2009)

(Re-approval date: September 19, 2011)

(Re-approval date: June 14, 2016)

(Re-approval date: June 21, 2018)



# Section 7:

## STUDENT ELECTRONIC POLICY

The following policy and discipline procedure regarding student possession of portable electronic communication devices, which applies to all Austintown Local School students and supplements the Board Policy regarding electronic device usage.

### **AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ELECTRONIC DEVICE GUIDELINES**

A "Bring Your Own Device" Program permitting students to bring their own Internet connected devices to the Austintown Local Schools, grades K -12, began with the start of the 2013-14 school year. During the 2014-15 school year, the Austintown Local Schools purchased chromebook learning devices for all students in grades 6 through 12. Students in grades K-5 now also have a vast amount of chromebooks at their disposal on carts.

Thus, Austintown Local Schools NO LONGER operates on a "Bring Your Own Device" mode effective August 21, 2015. Board of Education Policy JFCK shall be the sole authority on handling all matters related to electronic device usage by students in the Austintown Local Schools.

### **Chromebooks**

Students in grades 6-12 will receive an Austintown Local Schools issued Chromebook; There will be no Middle School/High School general supply fee, however there is an offered \$50 Insurance Plan for Chromebooks. Families electing not to pay the \$50 insurance plan will assume full responsibility for the full cost (\$326) of the device if broken or damaged. Chromebooks should be in school with students each day as they are a vital component in the instructional framework and assessment model of the Austintown Local Schools.

## Student Guidelines

Electronic Devices: Use of certain electronic devices is permitted in the Austintown Local Schools, grades 6-12. Permissibility is described as follows:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Personal Electronic Devices</b>
<b>Classroom</b>	As directed by the teacher with the primary usage always related to instruction.
<b>Hallways</b>	YES
<b>Study Hall</b>	As directed by study hall staff
<b>Lunch Period</b>	YES
<b>Media Center</b>	As directed by media center staff
<b>Busing</b>	Only when seated. <b>Earbuds must be out and devices put away when boarding and/or exiting the bus.</b> <i>Permitted only for the quiet usage on a single student basis with headphones or ear-buds.</i>

**Note :** This policy prohibits the use of mobile devices for voice communication in all school facilities and busing. The use of earbuds and headphones must be at a volume that does not disrupt others.

### **Misuse of Permissible Electronic Devices**

The misuse of permissible electronic devices in a manner distracting to other students or school personnel is not allowed. The misuse of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:

1. Use of any electronic device in a classroom without the direction of the classroom teacher.
2. Violation of the Austintown Local Schools' Acceptable Use Policy.
3. Listening to video or audio without headphones or earbuds.
4. Use of headphones/earbuds at a volume level where others can hear.

### **Prohibited Electronic Devices**

Recording devices, radios, pagers, laser pointers, and other electronic devices are deemed distracting to the educational environment. As such, these devices are not permitted in any Austintown Local School buildings and/or school buses.

## **Mobile Phones**

1. Use of mobile phones for any voice communication is not permitted during school hours, including the time spent in transportation on school buses, unless otherwise directed by school personnel.
2. Mobile phones must be muted during school hours including the time spent in transportation on school buses, unless otherwise directed by school personnel.
3. Mobile phones may possess advanced functions including Internet access, eReader, and video/audio functions. These functions may be used during study hall, lunch period and in hallways. Use of these functions during classroom instruction is at the discretion of school personnel.

**Restrictions and Expectations:** the following actions are strictly prohibited and will result in possible consequences ranging from but not limited to detention, suspension, expulsion and/or the involvement of local law enforcement:

1. The video/audio recording or photography of students or staff members without their consent.
2. Accessing, sharing, disseminating inappropriate content including pornography, material with abusive language, drug/alcohol/weapon related content, or any information that can be deemed harmful or shocking to minors.
3. Using technology for interactive communication in the form of posts on social media websites, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and other Blog/Chat/Messaging sites, during the hours of school operation to include time spent in transportation unless directed by school personnel for educational purposes.
4. Any and all harassment/bullying and intimidation behaviors per the Ohio Revised Code definition which follows:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means either:

- any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited towards another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
  - Causes mental or physical harm to the other student;
  - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- violence within a dating relationship.

**Electronic act** means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation, or bullying through written, verbal, physical, or electronic acts can be administered discipline consequences ranging from, but not limited to detention, suspension, expulsion and/or the involvement of local authorities. ORC 3313.666

## **Consequences for inappropriate use of electronic devices**

Violation of the appropriate use of electronic devices, as described above:

1. may result in detentions, Saturday School, In School Suspension, or Out of School Suspension; and
2. student may be required to turn the device over to school personnel and the student and/or parent/guardian may pick up the device from the School Office at the end of the school day. If instructed to turn over a device, students are expected to do so without argument or confrontation.

## Standard Discipline Sequence

The following is a guide for assignment of discipline. Note that the administration reserves the right to assign discipline ranging from detentions, Saturday School, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension and/or the involvement of local law enforcement agencies.

Infraction Level	First Infraction	Second Infraction	Third Infraction
<b>Level 1</b> <b>Sight violations – a student is seen violating a usage rule and responds with respect and in accordance with the policy.</b>	-Detention -Letter of reprimand -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.	-In School Suspension/Saturday School -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.	-Out of School Suspension -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.
<b>Level 2</b> <b>Sight violations – a student is seen violating a usage rule and responds with disrespect or in an argumentative manner.</b>	-In School Suspension/Saturday School -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.	-Out of School Suspension -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian.	
<b>Level 3</b> <b>Any violation involving but not limited to: harassment, intimidation, threats, video, audio, or image recording/dissemination, rumors, fighting, or violence.</b>	-Out of School Suspension -Device is confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian. -Possible involvement of law enforcement.		

### Internet Connection

Wireless Internet connection will be provided by the Austintown Local Schools for students to connect their chromebooks to the Internet but NOT other devices. Students must have a completed Acceptable Use Policy signed and on file at his or her respective school building. Students may connect to the Internet using their Internet provider, however, accessing and/or sharing inappropriate web content will result in confiscation of the electronic device until a parent/guardian retrieves it from the school, and possible consequences ranging from but not limited to detention, suspension, expulsion and/or the involvement of local law enforcement.

The Austintown Local Schools will not be responsible for any Internet connection expense.

### Lost or Damaged Device

The Austintown Local Schools assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, or damage of an electronic device brought at school or on the district's buses. Students bring these devices to the Austintown Local Schools at their own risk.



**Transporting Devices**

Use of bags and cases to transport electronic devices to and from the Austintown Local Schools is encouraged. Students may use laptop bags to carry portable computers to and from class. However, the bags may not be used to carry books or other personal items. District issued chromebooks must be covered.

**Policy Exemptions and Exclusions**

Building and District Administrators reserve the right to define classrooms and areas within the district at any time, such action is necessary, as non-use areas. The district reserves the right to revise or amend this policy at any point to ensure a safe and appropriate educational environment.

This policy does not apply to medically required electronic communication devices such as hearing aids and augmentative speech aids or to any electronic communication device, which is mandated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or on a student's Section 504, plan. If use of an electronic communication device is not mandated in an IEP or on a Section 504 plan but is required in individual instances to assist a student with the student's education, permission must be obtained in writing from a building administrator prior to use of the electronic communication device at any time otherwise prohibited by this policy. All assistive technology devices are permissible for use in the Austintown Local Schools in accordance to IEP and 504 accommodations.

## Section 8: Student Athletic Policy

The Parent-Student Athletic Handbook is available on the district website or at the office of the Director of Athletics. This document will provide detailed information about participation in interscholastic athletics including rules, expectations, and academic requirements.

### **Athletic Code of Behavior**

Student participation in athletics and related athletic activities is a privilege. As a participant, the student is expected to conduct himself/herself in an exemplary manner at all times. It is important that the students, parents, and all interested persons be aware of the necessary rules and regulations associated with participation in any extracurricular activity. Each coach or advisor must have a meeting at the beginning of his/her season with participants so that rules, regulations and procedures of discipline are understood. Parents are encouraged to attend these meetings.

### **Athletic Guidelines**

Below are the rules and regulations that must be followed:

1. Criminally related activity is prohibited and will be dealt with on an individual basis.
2. The coach or advisor will handle all discipline problems.
3. A member of an interscholastic athletic team and/or related squad represents more than himself/ herself. He/she also represents the team, school and community. His/her appearance and conduct must reflect this responsibility.
4. Each coach or advisor will enforce grooming rules, as is necessary for the particular sport or activity in order to maintain good health standards in the locker rooms and in the use of equipment.
5. All students in grades 7 through 12 who wish to participate in interscholastic athletics must abide by the rules and regulations as set forth by the Austintown Board of Education, Austintown Middle School, Austintown Fitch High School and the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

# Section 9: Board Policy on Bullying & Hazing

## **HAZING AND BULLYING (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)**

The prohibition against hazing, dating violence, harassment, intimidation or bullying is publicized in student handbooks and in the publications that set the standard of conduct for schools and students in the District. In addition, information regarding the policy is incorporated into employee handbooks and training materials.

### **School Personnel Responsibilities and Complaint Procedures**

Hazing, bullying behavior and/or dating violence by any student/school personnel in the District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any District publication; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to District e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop.

Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and/or attacks;
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as bullying such as the following:
  - A. posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
  - B. sending abusive or threatening emails, website postings, comments or instant messages
  - C. using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online and
  - D. using websites, social networking sites, blogs, personal online journals, e-mails or instant message to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.

6. excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes hazing or bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

### **Teachers and Other School Staff**

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence as defined above, should promptly notify the building principal/designee of the event observed and file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence should promptly notify the building principal/designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he/she prepares a written report of the informal complaint that is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day.

### **Complaints**

#### **1. Formal Complaints**

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence. The reports should be written. Such written reports must be reasonably specific and include person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying; and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

#### **2. Informal Complaints**

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

### **3. Anonymous Complaints**

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaint is reviewed and reasonable action is taken to address the situation, to the extent such action (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence.

### **Intervention Strategies**

#### **1. Teachers and Other School Staff**

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation, or bullying.

#### **2. Administrator Responsibilities**

##### **A. Investigation**

The principal/designee is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation, or bullying. Under the direction of the building principal/designee, all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact and a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence were verified. When prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint is limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

##### **B. Non-disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the

behavior, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating, and/or bullying.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring some cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

### **C. Disciplinary Interventions**

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action.

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board, or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

### **Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the parent or guardian of the perpetrator, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

### **Reports to the Victim and His/Her Parent or Guardian**

If, after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the parent/guardian of the victim of the finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator.

Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

School administrators shall notify both the parents of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

### **Police and Child Protective Services**

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply.

The District must also investigate incidents of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of District policy or regulations, even if law enforcement and/or the public children's services are also investigating.

All District personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

(Approval date: December 10, 2007)

(Re-approval date: August 17, 2010)

***THIS IS A REQUIRED POLICY***

**FORMAL BULLYING, HARASSMENT, & INTIMIDATION  
FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE  
AND IN ALL OFFICES.**