

Niles Community Schools



Ballard Elementary
2026 - 2027

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Section I—FOREWORD

Niles Community Schools' Vision and Mission Statement

Niles Community Schools
Dynamic Learners * Diverse Opportunities * Driven to Succeed

Niles Community Schools inspires and prepares all learners through diverse opportunities to challenge the present and enrich the future.

Behavior Expectations Guiding Principles

I Am: Respectful
I Am: Responsible
I Am: Resilient

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Niles Community Schools. This handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced in this document are revised after **June 30, 2026** the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

The first seven sections provide general guidelines and policies that are followed within all Niles Community Schools' buildings. Section VIII will provide you with building specific information. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

Respectfully,
Your Niles Community Schools Leadership Team

Adopted by the Board of Education on August, 2025

Equal Education Opportunity

Board Policy - [2266-NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES](#)

[4122 - NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY](#)

Title IX Coordinators & Anti-Harassment/Non-Discrimination Compliance Officers:
Dustin Kyncil | Jessica Johnson

Human Resources
269-683-0757
One Tyler Street, Niles MI. 49120
dustin.kyncil@nilesschools.org

Student Affairs Coordinator
269-683-0732
One Tyler Street, Niles MI. 49120
jessica.johnson@nilesschools.org

Directory Information

Under FERPA, the district is authorized to designate certain personally identifiable information contained in education records as “directory” information and to disclose such information without prior consent unless a student objects to such disclosure. The district designates the following personally identifiable information contained in a student’s education record as directory information: student name, address, photograph, e-mail address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, participation in officially-recognized sports and activities, weight and height of athletic team members, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent previous school attended. Unless a parent or eligible student advises the district in writing within 20 days of receipt of this notice that she/he does not want some or all of this designated directory information released, school officials may release this information without prior consent. Written objections to the release of directory information should be submitted to the building principal.

SECTION II—GENERAL INFORMATION

Parent Volunteer Policy

We encourage volunteers and parent participation in our schools so please do not hesitate to ask! However, to ensure the safety of our students, the following apply to all adults who will be working with our students:

1. Volunteers, including parents, are screened through the administration of the Self Certification Statement and must complete an ICHAT before volunteering on a regular basis. These documents are available in the office.
2. Volunteers must complete the Volunteer Availability and Consent Forms.
3. Volunteers must check in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass.
4. Volunteers using office machines should use them outside of teacher preparation time.
5. All supplies needed should be requested or obtained by the teacher.

Niles Community Schools appreciates your time and assistance

Parent Participation

Parent organizations and advisory groups are important to our school improvement processes. Input and review of the following are required on an annual basis:

- MICIP Plan
- Title 1 School Wide Program
- Curriculum and Assessment
- Health and Nutrition
- Parent and Child Needs in the Community
- School/ Home Communication

Please contact your child’s school if you would like to participate

Visitors

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, classroom visits need to be arranged 24 hours in advance. Each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to register with the office and obtain a pass. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, she/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

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

Visitor and Volunteer Expectations

- Always sign in and wear a nametag; sign out when you leave.
- Weapons are prohibited on school property
- Appropriate attire must be worn. Please know that you are a role model to our children.
- No profanity written on clothing.
- Shorts or skirts need to be at an appropriate length.
- No pajamas.
- Any rips in clothing must not be revealing.
- Appropriate language must be used in the building.
- Have your cell phone on vibrate and limit the use so that your attention is on the children.
- Videotaping or otherwise recording classroom activity without permission of the principal is prohibited.
- Pre-approval of siblings joining your volunteer time is expected.
- No smoking or tobacco use on school property.
- Have a great time, enjoy the students and share your positive attitude.

Injury and Illness

While we make all attempts to ensure the safety of your child while in our care, occasionally accidents happen. Parents will be notified in writing, via phone, or in person of all injuries to children on the day of the injury. Should your child require immediate medical attention, all attempts will be made to notify you via phone or one of your emergency contact persons prior to transporting your child to the closest and most appropriate facility.

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

For your child's well-being and to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, please do not send your child to school if she/he has one or more of the following symptoms:

- Fever (within the past 24 hours)
- Vomiting (within the past 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (within the past 24 hours)
- Heavy nasal discharge (especially green or yellow)
- Reddened eyes and/or discharge
- Persistent cough
- An unidentified rash

Symptoms of Other Communicable Diseases:

Chickenpox (Varicella)	Exclude until lesions are dry and crusted.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Exclude until 24 hours of treatment or symptoms are resolved.
Diarrhea: Non specific, Rota-virus and most Salmonella	Exclude when diarrhea cannot be contained or presence of fever.
Salmonella Typhi	Exclusion until permission from health department to return.

Shigella	Exclusion until permission from health department to return.
Fifth Disease (erythema infectiosum)	Exclusion not required.
Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease	Exclusion not required.
Hepatitis	Until approved by health care provider
Impetigo*	Exclude until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
Lice	Exclude following board policy .
Mononucleosis	Exclusion not required.
Pertussis (whooping cough)	After (5) days of treatment
Ringworm*	Exclusion not required. (should be treated)
Scabies*	Until treated
Strep Throat	After 24 hours of treatment
Tuberculosis	Until Physician's advisement
Upper Respiratory Infection	When fever is gone
IF YOUR CHILD IS BEING TREATED FOR ANY COMMUNICABLE DISEASE, PLEASE INFORM THE SCHOOL OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.	

Control of Non Casual-Contact Communicable Diseases

see Board Policy [8453 - DIRECT CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES](#)

Head Lice and Bed Bugs

- If a child is found with head lice, the parent will be called to come pick up his/her child. Form 8450A F1 and the cover letter (Form 8450A F2) shall be provided to the parents/legal guardians of the student.
- An informational handout is given to the parent on how to treat the lice and information on re-entry back into school. **Before a child can return to the classroom or community expert location, he/she must be examined by the school. If a student has no live lice, but has nits closer than one quarter inch from the scalp, they may return to school. The child shall be rechecked for lice and nits on each school day until no live lice and no nits closer than one quarter inch of the scalp are found.** The parent will bring him/her to the office or designated staff member to be checked.
- If a bed bug is found in a classroom, parents of students in the classroom will be notified, the classroom will be inspected and licensed pest control specialists will treat the classroom.

Immunizations

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

Use of Medications

A Doctor must complete and sign the Medication Permission and Instruction form available in the school office for prescription medication required during school hours (or use the link below). The doctor should be very specific about instructions for administration of medication. "As needed" is NOT specific enough. Medicine CAN NOT be dispensed without required forms.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Form located in school office

*Prescription medication MUST be in its original container labeled with a date, the child's name, and the exact dosage.

*Medication should never be transported to and from school by the child. An adult must bring the medication, along with the completed permission/instruction form directly to the school office.

Children with ASTHMA must have an “asthma action plan” on file, signed by a physician.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Form located in school office

Children with DIABETES must have a “diabetes action plan” on file, signed by a physician.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Form located in school office

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

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

Blood/Bodily Fluids

We have special policies to follow when a child has been bleeding or has any bodily fluids on his/her clothing. ***Bodily fluids are vomit, diarrhea and blood.* Michigan law requires that a child that has bodily fluids on his/her clothing cannot be exposed to other children. The home will be contacted for a change of clothes, if one has not been provided.

Control of Blood-Borne Pathogens

[8453.01 - CONTROL OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS](#)

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information

Michigan state law requires schools to provide students and families with important information to help prevent sexual violence and support those affected. As part of this effort, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has developed a [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide](#) for students in grades 6-12.

This guide, created with input from experts and reviewed by students and professionals in education, public health, and sexual violence prevention, includes:

- Definitions of **sexual harassment and sexual assault**
- Reassurance that **victims are never to blame**
- Resources for **those seeking help**

Additionally, [Niles School Policy 2266 - NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES](#) strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment or sexual assault.

For more information or to access support resources, students are encouraged to reach out to a trusted staff member or visit the school office.

Individuals With Disabilities

See Board Policy 2260 - NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
[Notice of Non-Discrimination](#)

Limited English Proficiency

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. Those students identified, as having limited English proficiency, will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency. Parents should contact the English Language Coordinator (269-683-2894) to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

Homebound Instruction

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability. Applications must be approved by the Director of Special Education (269-683-0757). The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

See Board policy [2412-HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION PROGRAM](#)

Transfer Out of the District & Withdrawal

Parents must notify the office about plans to transfer their child to another school. If a student plans to transfer, the parent must notify the enrollment secretary. School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions of the student.

Intradistrict Transfers

Parents may apply for intradistrict transfers prior to the start of each school year. An intradistrict transfer is when parents/guardians wish to enroll their student(s) at a school other than the designated school that is in their attendance area **within** Niles Community Schools. Transportation to and from school must be provided by the parents/guardians. Applications are emailed to parents after the enrollment process is complete.

Student Records

See Board Policy [8330 - STUDENT RECORDS](#)

Student Information Updates

We ask you to keep our staff informed of any new or ongoing changes of address, phone numbers, those responsible for picking up your child, and health concerns that may arise during the year.

Food Services

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee. Universal breakfast is free to ALL students and served each morning.

To apply for Free & Reduced meal service please complete a [Educational Benefits Form](#)

All menus and prices can be found online at: <https://nilesschools.nutrislice.com/>

Breakfast and lunch are offered each day to all students. In addition to the regular meals, students may choose from a number of ala carte items. Students are encouraged to eat well-balanced meals and parents are urged to discuss this issue with their children. Students are expected to pay as they receive their lunch. Excessive lunch charges may result in loss of school lunch privileges. Checks are accepted for meals with the money applied to the student's account. Change will not be given for checks. Any questions should be directed to JJ Merimonti at 269-684-1144.

After eating lunch, students will go outside when the weather permits or have indoor recess in their classrooms. Students are expected to behave appropriately and respond as directed by the school staff on duty. Failure to do so may result in students losing the opportunity to go outside during lunch. Students are not to take food or drink into the hallways or to classes unless given special permission. Food will be allowed in the gym only during sporting and special events. Cafeteria food is not to go outside the cafeteria during lunch periods.

Emergencies in Buildings When First Responders Are Involved

Unfortunately, emergencies do occur from time-to-time in our schools and in the community that could result in a lockdown or other action. During such matters, the safety and well-being of our students, employees and staff is our primary concern. While we are committed to informing parents and guardians of any emergency as soon as possible, it is critical to coordinate with law enforcement and first responders. Sharing information prematurely could disrupt active investigations, delay the resolution of potential situations, or interfere with efforts to ensure everyone's safety. Calling the school during an emergency situation may result in busy signals as the lines will most likely be tied up with first responders. While we value informing parents of any emergency as soon as possible, our first responders strongly request that we not release any public statement until they have an opportunity to assess the entire situation. This serves two primary purposes:

- 1) It allows all of our people to work with the first responders to ensure the safety of our students and employees and
- 2) In the early stages of the emergency we may not have all of the necessary facts to share with you and we do not want to release misinformation. In this day of social media and cell phones, we realize you may hear about an event before you hear from us. Unfortunately, we can't control the dissemination of all information. However, we have extensive plans in place, work very closely with our first responders, and always put safety first. In consultation with emergency personnel, we will provide parents with accurate information as soon as possible.

Public updates will be provided once emergency personnel advise that it is appropriate, there are no concerns about impacting the investigation, and it is considered safe to do so. This approach ensures that accurate information is shared without compromising the safety or effectiveness of emergency response efforts. In case of an evacuation, a dedicated location and time will be communicated so we can safely release students to their parents. For security purposes, picture identification will be required.

Emergency Operating Procedures

- The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law.
- Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State.
- Lock down drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of two (2) times each school year.
- The schools have specific procedures outlined and on file for additional emergencies.
- In case of an evacuation, a dedicated location and time will be communicated so we can safely release students to their parents. For security purposes, picture identification will be required.

Emergency Closings and Delays

During inclement weather, please listen to your radio or TV for school closings or shortened days. The following stations will be notified and some or all of them will broadcast the information, depending on the time school officials make the decision:

ABC57 WNDU AM/FM WSBT AM/FM

All emergency information relative to early dismissals, delays, or closure will be posted on building and/or district websites. In the event of an early dismissal based upon weather, building issues, power outage, etc. parents are notified and procedures are followed according to the information from the Child Emergency Closing Form. Changes in information on this form (and school emergency cards) are the responsibility of the parent.

Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards

[Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act \(AHERA\) Notification Requirements](#)

Complaint Processes

If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after consulting with your child's teacher you should contact your school's administrator. Call the office and leave a message with the secretary *"that you would like to speak with an administrator or schedule an appointment"* During your contact with the teacher or administrator you should be prepared to thoroughly explain your concerns, and offer any information you believe will be helpful. If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after your appointment with the school level administration, you can call the superintendent's office and your complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate official. If your complaint is still unresolved after working with the appropriate official, you have the right to a hearing in front of the board.

Parental Grievance Process

See Board Policy 9130 - [PUBLIC COMPLAINTS](#)

Weather & Recess

Children have the opportunity to play outdoors daily. Students will not go outside if the temperature or wind-chill is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit.

SECTION III—ACADEMICS

K-8 Curriculum

Our curriculum is unique to each program, and developmentally appropriate for each student. Small group and differentiated instruction ensure that every student is successful in meeting the objectives for the student's specific program and/or individual student plan. Niles Community Schools maintains a curriculum that:

- Supports each child's rate of development;
- Provides the foundation for school readiness and later school success;
- Integrates health, mental health, and nutrition into school activities;
- Helps children develop emotional security and social skills; and
- Balances activities to enhance all areas of a child's development

Review of Instructional Materials and Activities

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school; they also may observe instruction in any class. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

Student Assessment:

Each student's proficiencies and needs will be assessed by staff members upon the student's entrance into the District and annually or more frequently, as required by law, thereafter. Procedures for such assessments will include, but need not be limited to, teacher observation techniques, cumulative student records, student performance data collected through standard testing programs and/or diagnostic reading assessment systems, student portfolios, and physical examinations.

- A. The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) and MI-Access Alternate Assessments will be administered each year in accordance with the schedule established by statute and the State Department of Education;

M-STEP includes summative assessments designed to measure student growth effectively for today's students. English language arts and mathematics will be assessed in grades three (3) through eight (8), science in grades four (4) and seven (7), and social studies in grades five (5) and eight (8).

- B. A valid and reliable screening, formative, and diagnostic third-grade reading assessment system from the assessment systems approved by the Michigan Department of Education;
- C. selection of assessment instrument, data, and other District criteria that will be used to assess educational achievement of each student in grades one (K) through five (5).

Field Trips

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extracurricular program. A student's behavior will be taken into consideration for a student to participate. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

See Routine Transportation sign off (section VIII)

Grades

Each program has a standard grading procedure; your teacher will provide you with detailed descriptions of your child's measure of their achievement. Parents and students are encouraged to check academic progress through PowerSchool. This is a service to parents which allows them to monitor how their child is doing. Log in information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. If you have not received your log in information, please contact your child's school's office.

Grading Scale:

For 5th grade only: A = 90-100

B = 89-80

C = 79-70

N = Needs improvement

K-4th grade:

ES = Exceeds Standards MS = Meets Standards

BC = Basic Concept - Some understanding of basic concepts, but fails to meet standards

N = Needs Support - Little understanding of basic concepts

CR = Credit

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents will be continually informed on student progress throughout the year. However, two times a year, parent teacher conferences are held either in-person or virtually to help us foster family involvement by building a relationship with you, learning more about your expectations for your child and discussing how we can work together to help your child be successful. You may also request a parent teacher conference any time throughout the year.

Title I

We receive Title I federal funds to assist us with providing quality programming for our students. Please accept this is as your notification that:

- You have the right to request specific information about the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher and about any paraprofessional (instructional assistant) who provides Title I services to your child. You may request this information from: Ann Bingham, Director of Curriculum 1 Tyler Street, Niles, MI 49120
- If your child has been assigned a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements, you will be notified in writing if that teacher has taught your child for more than four consecutive weeks. In this situation, notification will be made no later than the end of the fourth consecutive week and will be provided to you in an understandable format and, to the extent practical, in a language that you can understand.
- Niles Community Schools must prepare and distribute to parents an annual report card. The report card is available on the NCS web site at www.nilesschools.org.

- If a Title I school is identified for improvement, the district must provide all students who attend that school the option to transfer to another public school in the district. Also, supplemental educational services (SES) are tutorial services for Title I low-income students in schools in improvement.

Federal regulations require that each district adopt procedures for receiving and resolving disputes pertaining to the Title I program. Please contact the Niles Community Schools Curriculum Office at 269-683-0736 for further information regarding the district's disputes resolution policy.

See School Compact (section VIII)

Student Assistance Team Process

Our primary goal is to develop successful students in academic and behavioral areas. If your child is having significant learning or behavioral problems, the general education teacher will have been in touch with you, and together you have probably worked on possible solutions for your child's success. If continued support is needed, a Student Assistance Team (SAT) is activated. This team is composed of multiple educators and educational support personnel; it is an "in house" problem solving team to help students be successful. If at any time you are concerned about your child's progress, please begin discussion with his or her teacher, and you are always welcome to bring your concern to the principal.

Scheduling and Assignment

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

Promotion, Placement, and Retention

Promotion to the next level is based on the following criteria and is determined through collaboration with families. Final right of assignment lies with the principal or their designee.

- Current level of achievement
- Potential for success at the next level
- Emotional, physical, and/or social maturity

Section IV—Student Activities

School-Sponsored Clubs and Activities

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the school curriculum, but may be made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities. Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the principal. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Non- district-sponsored organizations may not use the name of the school or school mascot.

See Specific School Activities (section VIII)

SECTION V—STUDENT CONDUCT

Attendance

The Board of Education, as an agency of the State, is required to enforce the regular attendance of students. The Board recognizes that the presence in the classroom enables the student to participate in instruction, class discussions, and other essential learning activities. As such, regular attendance and classroom participation are integral to instilling incentives for the student to excel. Regular attendance means being absent no more than 5% of school days in session. For example, in a 180 day school year, regular attendance is equal to 0-9 days absent. Absences greater than 10 days put your child at risk academically.

Board Policy - [5200 – ATTENDANCE](#)

- **ABSENCES:** All absences must be reported by telephone or through written notification to the school. Office hours are 8:00AM-4:00PM. You will receive a phone call any time your child has been marked absent during a school day. The parent should send a note to the teacher when the child returns explaining the child's absence if not reported by phone. In the event that your child will be absent for three or more days (e.g. family vacations, childhood diseases), homework assignments will be provided upon request. Please give the teacher 24 hours of advance notice for homework requests.
- The school reserves the right to ask for verification (i.e., doctor's notes) for the cause of any absences. If, at any point during the school year, your child's absences are considered chronic, he or she will be referred to an attendance intervention program.
- We believe regular attendance is essential to school success.

Data Point 1: (40 days) ● Regular = 0-2 days absent ● At risk = 3 days absent ● Chronic = 4 or more days absent ● Severe Chronic = 8 or more days absent	Data Point 2: (80 days) ● Regular = 0-4 days absent ● At risk = 5-7 days absent ● Chronic = 8 or more days absent ● Severe Chronic = 16 or more days absent	Data Point 3: (120 days) ● Regular = 0-6 days absent ● At risk = 7-11 days absent ● Chronic = 12 or more days absent ● Severe Chronic = 24 or more days absent
Data Point 4: (160 days) ● Regular = 0-8 days absent ● At risk = 9-15 days absent ● Chronic = 16 or more days absent ● Severe Chronic = 32 or more days absent	Data Point 5: (180 days) ● Regular = 0-9 days absent ● At risk = 10-16 days absent ● Chronic = 17 or more days absent ● Severe Chronic = 34 or more days absent	Excessive tardiness may result in unexcused absences.

- The school reserves the right to ask for verification (i.e., doctor's notes) for the cause of any absences. If, at any point during the school year, your child's absences are considered chronic, he or she will be referred to an attendance intervention program.
- The Board may report to the Intermediate School District infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of sixteen (16). A truant officer will be notified when 10 or more unexcused absences have occurred.
- Written notification will be sent home after a student has been absent 10 days. A second letter will be mailed home after 15 days. To participate in any extracurricular school activity, the student must be in school by noon on the day the activity takes place. This includes attending as a spectator.

Truancy

Unexcused absences from school (truancy) is not acceptable. After 10 days of unexcused absences a student will be considered an "habitual truant" which can result in:

- Assignment to an alternative placement with loss of participation in school activities and events.
- A poor work-ethic grade, which will become a part of the student's permanent record.
- A hearing before a judge in a court of law.
- A report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

Tardy Policy

Students are expected to be on time for every class. Students will receive a verbal warning for their first tardy. A lunch detention will be given for a fourth (4th) tardy. Any student who exceeds four (4) tardies may receive an after school detention, in-school

restriction, or other consequences determined by administration. Tardies will reset at the start of each marking period. Skipping lunch detentions will result in further consequences. Frequent late arrivals to school requiring an office pass to class, will be brought to the attention of the assistant principal and the appropriate consequences will apply.

Dress Code

To minimize disturbances to the educational environment and to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following guidelines will be used by building principals to determine what action will be taken relative to student dress:

1. Clothing, patches, buttons, jewelry, bags and any other personal items should be appropriate.- Any item containing or depicting obscenity, profanity, weapons, ads for illegal substances, or symbols found to be offensive and/or disruptive to the educational environment, including but not limited to the Confederate flag, swastika and/or gang affiliations, are **not** acceptable.
2. Jewelry or body adornments considered to be disruptive or dangerous are not acceptable.
3. Revealing, sheer, strapless and/or low-cut clothing will not be allowed. All shirts, tank tops, and/or blouses must have straps and cover the entire torso.
4. Hats, sunglasses, and hoods cannot be worn inside the building. Headphones and/or earbuds may not be worn in the building. Head coverings for religious purposes are permitted.
5. Shorts, pants, skirts, leggings, torn or altered clothes should cover all undergarments and the buttock and private areas should not be visible while standing, bending, sitting or laying down.
6. Sagging pants riding below the waist that may expose skin or any garment worn under the pants are not allowed.
7. Coats or lined jackets are to be left in lockers, not worn to class.
8. Book bags, backpacks, purses, laptop bags, and duffels are to be left in lockers except for use in gym class only.
9. Excessive make-up and/or face paint, costumes, or accessories that are distracting to instruction or unsafe are not allowed.
10. Any other item or appearance deemed inappropriate by administration.
11. "Heelys", shoes with wheels in the bottom, are not permitted at school. If a student wears these shoes, he or she will be asked to take the wheels out.

When appropriate, students violating the dress code will be allowed to call home to request suitable clothing. Staff may also be able to offer temporary garments. Any student refusing to comply with the dress code may be suspended.

Behavior Expectations

Students at our school are expected to behave appropriately at all times. Careful consideration has been given to establishing rules and regulations reflecting the standards for student behavior set by the school. In addition to the information in this handbook, teachers may also have expectations specific to their classrooms. These expectations will be communicated to students at the beginning of each marking period. It is extremely important that all students are familiar with all issues addressed in this handbook. Failure to comply with the rules will begin a progression of consequences. Offenses unresolved by the teaching or support staff will result in a written referral to the office, and will be recorded in a disciplinary file. Consequences will be issued with consideration given to the circumstances surrounding the infraction, the severity of the infraction, and the student's history of misbehavior.

Administrative Hearing

The Board of Education of the Niles Community School District, as both an employer and a public school district, is concerned with and interested in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees, and visitors. The Board recognizes that school buildings, facilities, vehicles, grounds, and other school property are best utilized in the educational process in the absence of threats to physical and emotional well-being and safety.

The primary objective of requiring appropriate student behavior and self-discipline is to produce a positive and safe learning atmosphere in which there will be no interruption of the teaching-learning environment. All students will assume personal responsibility for their behavior and actions, develop appropriate self-control, exhibit self-discipline, and accept the responsibility and consequences of any inappropriate behavior. To accomplish this objective requires a cooperative effort from students, staff, and parents.

The responsibility to implement the Code of Conduct rests with the building principal.

All students shall:

A.	Respect the educational process through the display of appropriate language, attitude, and physical behavior.
B.	Respect and honor the rights of other students to learn in an environment free of intimidation or harassment.
C.	Maintain satisfactory attendance.
D.	Comply with the dress code.

Consequences and interventions for noncompliance for the above expectations shall include, but not be limited to the list below. The severity or the repetitive nature of a student's behavior will be given consideration when determining appropriate consequences.

A.	Community or school service
B.	Detention
C.	Denial of participation in school activities
D.	Denial of privileges
E.	Intervention by professional school staff
F.	Parent contact or conference
G.	Referral to an administrative panel
H.	Referral to appropriate law enforcement or other governmental agency
I.	School probation
J.	Warnings
K.	Peer mediation
L.	Participation in restorative justice practices
	The severity or the repetitive nature of a student's behavior will be given consideration when determining appropriate consequences.

The following behaviors will be considered unacceptable by Niles Community Schools and a violation of the School Code of Conduct which will result in suspension and an administrative hearing.

A.	Any purposeful action toward another student that results in serious and observable injury requiring medical attention.
B.	Use or possession of a weapon, explosive, look-alike weapon, or anything that is used as a weapon.
C.	Possession of any drug or look-alike drug (includes alcohol and tobacco).
D.	Use, or being under the influence, of drugs or alcohol.
E.	Intentionally causing, or attempting to cause, physical harm to any school staff or school representative through force or violence.
F.	Verbal assault against any school staff or school representative. (Any intentional threat or offer to do bodily injury to another by force, under circumstances that create a well founded fear of actual harm, coupled with the apparent ability to carry out the act if not prevented.)
G.	Acts of arson, bomb threats, false fire alarms, or any serious threat to school property or activities.
H.	Willful destruction of school property (in excess of \$200).
I.	Acts of stalking (repeated or continuing harassment of another individual that cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested).

A violation of the Niles Community Schools Code of Conduct will result in the following sequence of events:

A.	The student shall be suspended from school.
B.	The building principal will convene an administrative panel composed of three administrators.
C.	The student and his/her parents will be informed of the time, place, and purpose of the administrative hearing.
D.	At the hearing, all parties will present information and arguments pertinent to the case. School officials and the student may invite other individuals to testify at the hearing.

E.	After the panel has heard all the parties, they will excuse the student and parents to determine a recommendation for the Board of Education.
F.	The recommendation will include the offense and recommended disciplinary actions. If expulsion is recommended, the panel will also outline the conditions for acceptance back into the Niles Community Schools.

Revised 10/18/93, Revised 1/16/95, Revised 2/20/95, Revised 4/17/00, Revised 1/25/08

[Policy 561](#)¹

Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students

5517.01 - BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying is intentional behavior initiated by one or more students directed toward other student(s). Bullying exists when a student with more social and/or physical power deliberately dominates and harasses another with less power. Bullying is unjustified and typically repeated. Bullying/Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. Any student that believes she/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or assistant principal, or may report it directly to the Superintendent's Office at 269-683-0732. All reports of bullying will be investigated. Consequences for bullying will range from a warning to expulsion, depending on the severity and number of previous offenses.

OK2SAY

OK2SAY is an anonymous hotline that students, staff and community members can use to report, and help stop harmful behavior. The goal of OK2SAY is to stop these behaviors before they occur by encouraging anyone to report threatening behavior to caring adult authorities who can help. OK2SAY encourages Michigan residents to confidentially submit tips 24/7 using the OK2SAY mobile app, online, email, texting, or by calling trained program technicians. Upon receipt of a tip, specially trained OK2SAY technicians address the immediate need and forward the information to the appropriate responding law enforcement agency or organization. Tips go to schools, local law enforcement agencies, community mental health agencies or the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Search and Seizure

See Board Policy [5771 - SEARCH AND SEIZURE](#)

Student Expression

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

A. A material cannot be displayed if it:

1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent, and pervasively or vulgar,
2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
3. intends to be insulting or harassing,
4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.

B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

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

Non-Retaliation and False Reporting

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action. Giving false information when asked to identify oneself may result in disciplinary action.

Due Process Rights

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's constitutional rights, particularly when subject to the District's disciplinary procedures.

To better ensure appropriate due process is provided a student, the Board establishes the following guidelines:

A.	Students subject to short-term suspension:
	Except when emergency removal is warranted, a student must be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her and the opportunity to respond prior to the implementation of a suspension. When emergency removal has been implemented, notice and opportunity to respond shall occur as soon as reasonably possible. The principal or other designated administrator shall provide the opportunity to be heard and shall be responsible for making the suspension decision. An appeal may be addressed to the Assistant Superintendent at 269.683.0736. His decision will be final.
B.	Students subject to expulsion and permanent expulsion:
	A student and his/her parent or guardian must be given written notice of the intention to expel and the reasons therefore, and an opportunity to appear with a representative before the Board to answer the charges. The student and/or his/her guardian must also be provided a brief description of the student's rights and of the hearing procedure, a list of the witnesses who will provide testimony to the Board, and a summary of the facts to which the witnesses will testify. At the student's request, the hearing may be private, but the Board must act publicly. The Board shall act on any appeal, which must be submitted in writing, to an expulsion (Policy 5610 and/or Policy 5610.01) to a request for admission after being permanently expelled from another district (Policy 5610.01).

The Superintendent shall establish procedures so that all members of the staff use the above guidelines when dealing with students. In addition, this statement of due process rights is to be placed in all student handbooks in a manner that will facilitate understanding by students and their parents.

Acceptable Use of Technology

Niles Community Schools (NCS, or Schools) strongly promotes the use of electronic information technologies in educational endeavors. Schools provide access to information resources in a variety of electronic formats, which allows students to access resources, communicate in a technologically rich environment, make informed choices, and become self-directed, responsible, and accountable life-long learners.

Definitions (Information Resources)

- *Network* includes, but are not limited to, all voice, video and data systems.
- *Equipment* includes, but is not limited to, network infrastructure, computers, disk drives, keyboard & mice, multi-function photocopiers, printers, scanners, video and audio players/recorders, cameras, and telecommunications.
- *Software* includes, but is not limited to, local applications (code, script, or service), network applications (code, script, or service), audio/video/media programs, and print/fax processing.

- *Materials* include, but are not limited to, files, pictures/images (still or motion), sounds, and text or dialogue (in any language).
- The *Internet* is a global network connecting millions of computers. More than 100 countries are linked together through the exchange of data, news and opinions.

The purpose of this document is to identify and communicate standards that will assist in ensuring students benefit from their use of the Schools' network and the Internet.

The Internet allows for the exchange of information and ideas on a wide range of subject matter. An emphasis on *Digital Citizenship* is crucial to development of 21st Century Skills. With access to computers and people all over the world, there also comes the availability of materials that may not be considered an educational value in the context of the school setting.

While NCS implements Internet filtering, it is impossible to control all materials on a global network. As such, students may encounter materials that are personally considered obscene, abusive, or otherwise offensive. NCS firmly believes that information and the interaction available through the network outweighs the risk that students may access materials that are not consistent with the educational goals of NCS.

Use of the NCS Network

Use is ultimately governed or supported by Board Policies:

- 7540 - COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS
- 7540.03 - STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY
- 7542 - ACCESS TO DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FROM PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES
- 5136- [WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES](#)
- 5500 - CODE OF CONDUCT
- 5513 - CARE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY
- 5517 - ANTI-HARASSMENT
- 5517.01 - BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS
- 5600 - STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The use of the Niles Community Schools' network is a privilege, not a right. Students who fail to comply with the district policies and guidelines while using the network may lose the privilege to access the network. Students may also lose the privilege to use equipment provided by the school or to bring their own computerized devices to school. Additionally, students may be subject to other disciplinary action or financial liability as appropriate based upon the nature and severity of the violation.

All students who are granted access to Internet resources through NCS, whether on or off of district property, will have read, signed and accepted the Student Acceptable Use Policy agreement. This will typically occur as a function of the Student Handbook process. NCS will revoke network and Internet access to any student who does not have a properly signed agreement on file with the school they attend. In the case of students under the age of 18, parental consent and signatures will be required before access will be granted.

All account holders ("users") of the NCS network will be granted access to select services the network offers based on grade-level and curriculum needs. Students who are currently enrolled in the district may be granted an individual network account or access to a shared account following agreement to the terms and conditions of this policy.

All accounts, software and materials created or stored on NCS equipment or within the NCS network are the property of Niles Community Schools. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding documents, files, e-mail or other media created or stored using district technology and should understand that all items may be reviewed at any time without knowledge or consent of the user.

General Rules

The scope of this agreement extends to all NCS network, equipment, software and materials whether being used on or off of district property. Furthermore, the user(s) of technology:

- Should have appropriate experience or instruction before using the technology.

- Are to use the network, software and materials during instructional time only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of NCS..
- Are responsible for the reasonable care of technology, including hardware and software while in their possession or while they are using it. Failure to maintain reasonable care may result in a financial liability to the student or student's parent/guardian.
- Will report any damage or problems with equipment, software or materials immediately upon discovery to the teacher or building principal.
- Are responsible for the security of their account. Passwords should be considered confidential and not shared with anyone else.
- Are discouraged from leaving their account logged in and unattended.
- Are expected to have all media (e.g. CD/DVD, USB drives) scanned for contamination which might endanger the integrity of the district's network, equipment or software before they are used.
- Shall adhere to specific rules established for the use of network, equipment and software in building media centers/labs.

Acceptable Uses

Technology may be used:

- to further instructional goals and mission of the district;
- in the creation of files, digital projects, videos, web pages and podcasts using network resources in support of education and research;
- to participate in video conferencing, weblogs, wikis, bulletin boards and groups with the creation of content for podcasts and webpages that support education and research or to enhance educational information exchange;
- with parental consent, for online publication of original educational material, curriculum related materials and student work.

Unacceptable Uses

To attempt or:

- Cheat, plagiarize, or in any way violate Niles Community Schools' Code of Conduct;
- Violate copyright, or use another person's intellectual property without his/her prior approval or proper citations;
- Knowingly access, possess, share, upload, download or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials;
- Annoy, harass, discriminate, intimidate, or threaten any person or district;
- Vandalize, deface, damage, or disable the property of another person, organization or School;
- Endanger the integrity of a computer on the district network or the data stored on the network or Internet, including introduction of malicious software (e.g. viruses, worms, trojan horses, etc);
- Circumvent the district Internet security measures and/or filters;
- Log on to the network using another person or group's name and password or to otherwise misuse a name or password;
- Access or manipulate another person's network, equipment or materials, without the implied or direct permission of that person;
- Falsely represent oneself in any network communication;
- Transmit information that is false or defamatory or violates the privacy of another person;
- Transmit unsolicited emails (e.g., chain letter emails, spamming emails) to any of the district's distribution lists without permission of a teacher or administrator;
- Utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or Internet social media without authorization of a teacher or Schools' administrator;
- Play, download or install games, entertainment software, or copyrighted material without permission of a teacher or Schools' administrator;
- Remove, disable or modify any district installed software;
- Engage in commercial (private or for-profit) activity, product advertisement, or political lobbying;
- Interfere with the authorized investigation or lawful activities of any person, business, or organization in any manner;
- Violate any local, state or federal statute, or any rule, regulation, or policy of the Niles Community Schools..

In accordance with its obligations under the Children's Internet Protection Act, NCS has undertaken efforts to educate students about appropriate online behavior, including cyber bullying awareness and interactions with individuals on social networking websites.

During classroom activities, the classroom educator/teacher/facilitator will supervise student internet use in a manner that is consistent with the educational objectives of the district and this policy.

Student Responsibilities

Use of the Internet by students must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with the educational objectives of the corporation.

Network etiquette expects that the student abides by the following guidelines. These guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful. The use of vulgar, obscene, lewd, and otherwise inappropriate language is prohibited. Students shall not engage in cyberbullying.
- While the Internet itself has virtually boundless resources, the availability of local communication and storage resources is limited. Since list servers and mail servers can generate a significant amount of data to be stored, students are expected to “clean up” their files or mailboxes at appropriate times so as to not create a storage problem on the host server.
- All communications and materials obtained via the network or the Internet should be assumed to be intellectual property subject to federal copyright law.
- Any attempt to compromise network security is prohibited. Any student identifying a possible breach in security must notify a school administrator, teacher or the district’s Technology Director.

If a student is uncomfortable or feels harassed, intimidated, or threatened by information or materials that he/she receives over the Internet, he/she should tell a teacher, principal, or other school administrator immediately. Likewise, if a student is asked by another Internet user to stop emailing or contacting them, the student must stop all contact immediately.

If a student inadvertently identifies or is presented with inappropriate materials on the Internet while doing legitimate research, the student is expected to notify the teacher, principal, or other Schools’ administrator.

Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media.

Laptops and Personal Computing Devices

Assignment of District-Owned technology [1-to-1] (Care of District Property):

Students or their parent/guardian are responsible for the proper care of technology equipment at all times, whether on or off district property, including any costs associated with repairing or replacing the equipment if student is deemed negligent of reasonable care. Purchase of optional insurance is recommended.

Checkout of technology for non-classroom use must be in accordance with building and Board Policy (Lending of District-Owned Equipment):

Students or their parent/guardian are responsible for the proper care of technology equipment at all times, whether on or off district property, including any costs associated with repairing or replacing the equipment if the student is deemed negligent of reasonable care. Check with your home insurance carrier for applicable coverage.

Use of personal computing devices must be in accordance with Board Policy (Personal Communication Devices):

Additional Guidelines for Use :

- Personal computers and other personal communication devices in use on the NCS network are subject to inspection by a teacher or administrator at any time.
- Students may only use personal laptops or other personal communication devices in accordance with NCS’ Acceptable Use Policy and applicable Board Policy.

Restrictions and Disclaimers

- NCS accepts no responsibility or financial liability for personal laptops or other personal communication devices that are brought to school by students.
- Personal computers or other personal communication devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged are the responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians, regardless of how the loss, theft, or damage occurs.

- Students are advised to take steps to guard against damage, loss, or theft, including the optional purchase of appropriate insurance.
- The district's technology department will not provide technical support for any personal laptop or other personal communication device.
- Students and his/her parents are responsible for compensating the Niles Community Schools for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school district for violations of Board Policies/Administrative Guidelines and school rules while the student is using district technology network, equipment or software, including the cost of investigating such violations. The school district assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a student while using equipment or 3rd-party Computer Services. The student and his/her parents/guardians are similarly responsible if the student takes any action with network, equipment or software that has the purpose or effect of voiding any warranty in effect covering such equipment or of providing students access to software that are available other than at the software source authorized for use by the district..

Consequences of Inappropriate Use of Technology, Computer(s) and the Network

- The building administrator will determine inappropriate use based on this Acceptable Use Policy. Their decision is final. The building administrator may close an account at any time.
- Any person who does not comply with the Acceptability Use Policy may lose or have restricted privileges of use. Repeated or severe infractions of the policy may result in permanent termination of privileges.
- Users violating any of these rights and responsibilities may face additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate in keeping with policies as stated in the student code of conduct, student handbook or policies of The Board of Education.

Section VI—Transportation

First Student

Together First Student and the Niles Community Schools have developed this document to outline the standards of student conduct that we believe will assure each child a safe bus ride each day. This document provides guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behavior and possible disciplinary actions:

School Bus Rules and Regulations

1. Students must listen to the driver and follow the driver's directions. The driver has the authority of a classroom teacher.
2. Students are to conduct themselves on the bus in such a way that will not distract the driver. Distracting the driver puts everyone on the bus at risk.
3. If crossing the street to board the bus, students **MUST** look both left and right for cars, make sure the **RED** lights are flashing, and wait for the driver's **signal to cross**. Always cross the street in **FRONT** of the bus.
4. Before boarding and after exiting the bus, students must keep a safe distance from the bus. Keep at least 10 FEET away from the bus.
5. Students are to enter the bus promptly, immediately take their seats, and remain in their assigned seat whenever the bus is moving.
6. Students must **remain properly seated** at all times. (Back to Back; Bottom to Bottom; Book bag on the lap)
7. Outside of ordinary conversation in a normal tone, classroom conduct is to be observed when on the bus. The driver has authority to prohibit any conversation.
8. Students are not to touch the emergency equipment on the bus (emergency doors, windows, roof hatches, body fluid/first aid kits, 2-way radios, etc.) except as directed by the driver or during an actual emergency.
9. The bus windows should not be opened without permission from the driver.
10. Students are to keep all body parts inside the bus. (Hands, arms, head, hair, etc.)
11. Students are to keep **their hands and feet** to themselves. (No fighting; horseplay poking or pinching)
12. Students are not to eat or drink while on the bus.
13. No spraying of colognes, perfume or body sprays while on the bus.
14. Students are not to throw objects of **any kind** either inside the bus, out of the bus, or around the bus.
15. Students should help keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly. They must not damage or abuse bus seats or equipment.
16. Students are **not** to use abusive language or profanity, obscene or rude gestures, or spit while on the bus.

17. Students may **not** bring large musical instruments, any animals, balloons, glass containers or objects, or large school projects onto the bus unless this has been prearranged.
18. Students are not to leave the bus without the driver's permission, except on arrival at their assigned bus stop or at their assigned school.
19. It is unlawful, in the State of Michigan, for any unauthorized person including parents, grandparents, and guardians, to board a school bus, without permission or approval received by Niles Community Schools and First Student.
20. Students are prohibited from using PCD's (cellphone, tablets, watches, etc) to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and or images (i.e. picture/videos) of any student, staff members or bus driver/aide.
21. By riding the bus, it is implied that all students and parents understand these rules and will abide by them. Stating that they did not know the rules does not excuse a student from mis-behavior or infractions of the rules.

STUDENTS MUST RIDE THEIR ASSIGNED BUS TO AND FROM THEIR ASSIGNED STOP. SWITCHING BUSES FOR ANY REASON IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED UNLESS A BUS PASS IS ISSUED BY SCHOOL OFFICE.

Following the Bus Safety Rules and Regulations will ensure safety, prompt arrivals and departures of buses, and positive attitudes on the part of students. Violations of these rules may result in the suspension of bus privileges. Please review this information with your child to help him/her understand what is expected of them while riding a school bus. We take the safety of your children very seriously. A key part of that is to establish a safe and pleasant environment on the bus to and from school.

Conduct and Discipline

Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner toward the driver and other students while waiting for and riding the bus. Fighting, bullying, bickering, horseplay and boisterous activities are not allowed. Drivers will try to prevent and resolve behavior problems as they arise by working directly with students. In cases of repeated misbehavior or serious misconduct the driver may issue a misconduct report to be taken to the parent/guardian. The misconduct report will contain a brief description of the inappropriate behavior. Please take this opportunity to discuss the inappropriate behavior with your child. Please sign and return the misconduct report to the driver with your child. If you have questions or concerns about the misconduct report please contact either the Manager or Supervisor at the Transportation Office at 269-684-1420.

The Niles Community Schools have adopted a District Administrative Hearing which applies to all students at school, involved in school activities and on the buses. If you have questions regarding transportation, please contact:

First Student, 1740 Lake Street
Niles, Michigan 49120
269-684-1420

Section VII—Niles Community Schools Board Policy

Niles Community Schools' Board Policy can be viewed at:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/mi/nile/Board.nsf/Public#>

Confidentiality

[8350 - CONFIDENTIALITY](#)

Health Services

[5310 - HEALTH SERVICES](#)

Student Abuse and Neglect

[8462 - CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT](#)

Student Privacy and Parental Access To Information

[2416 - STUDENT PRIVACY AND PARENTAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION](#)

[2461 – RECORDING OF DISTRICT MEETINGS INVOLVING STUDENTS AND/OR PARENTS](#)

Student Supervision & Welfare

[3213 - STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE](#)

Annual Notices

are linked through NCS website <https://nilesschools.org/ncs/community-2/annual-reports-notices/annual-notices/>

[Annual Report and No Child Left Behind Report Card](#)

[Annual Parent Notice - Right to Request Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications](#)

[Notification to Public Regarding Inspection of Instructional Materials](#)

[Student Privacy Notice - And Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities](#)

[FERPA Annual Notification of Rights and Designation of Directory Information](#)

[Emergency Closing](#)

[Notice of Non-Discrimination in Vocational and Applied Technology Education](#)

[Notice of Pesticide Use](#)

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Josh Asmus

Dana Daniels

David Fish

Kelly Gadeski

Paulette Johnson

Marcella Taylor

Kyle Zelmer

Section VIII—Ballard Elementary School

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address/Phone/Fax/Website	Start and Dismissal Times
Ballard Elementary 1601 Chicago Rd. Niles, MI 49120 Phone: 269-683-5900 Fax: 269-684-5927 www.bes.nilesschools.org	8:46 am – School begins 3:46 pm – School is dismissed 11:58 am – Half day dismissal

Arrival and Departure

All students transported by car must be picked up and dropped off in the FRONT of the building where the supervisor is on duty. PLEASE-NO PARKING in the student drop off area during arrival and dismissal times. Do not use the loading dock or back door for this purpose. Students should not arrive more than 10 minutes prior to the start of the school day (school day begins at 8:46) or stay more than 10 minutes after dismissal (school ends at 3:46). Students cannot stay on the school grounds beyond the end of the school day. If you need to pick your child up early, please be sure to sign him/her out in the office before leaving the building.

Traffic Flow/Parking

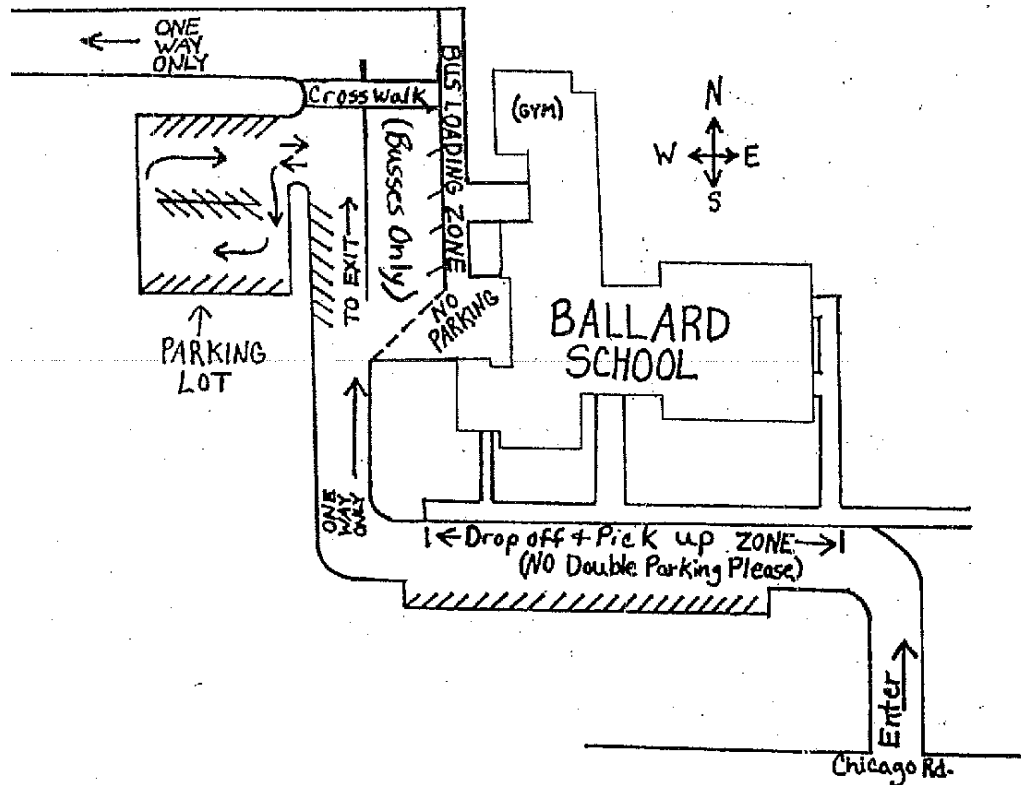
It is important for us to separate bus traffic, parent drop off traffic, and parent parking/drop off. These procedures will only be in effect during drop off and pick up times:

1. All bus traffic will be in the back of the building.
2. Vehicle traffic will enter from Chicago Road. The drop off and pick up zone for vehicles will be in the front.
3. Vehicle traffic must exit in the back of the building to Phillip Road.
4. MORNING DROP OFF / AFTER SCHOOL PICK UP: All parent pick up will be outside the front of the building.

MORNING DROP OFF STARTS AT 8:35AM

- a. All families will be given a number to be placed in the front window of their vehicle when picking up a student
 - b. Please stay in line
 - c. Please pull up as far as possible towards the west end of the sidewalk so others may pull up behind you
 - d. The 'unloading' and 'loading zone' is marked with signs and a yellow line is painted on the sidewalk
 - e. Staff will assist your child out of the car, so the driver does not need to get out of the vehicle
 - f. Students must always exit on the passenger side of the vehicle
 - g. For safety and security, do not release your child early from the vehicle. The adult must remain with the student until Ballard staff arrive outside to supervise.
5. EARLY PICK UP: If you have a scheduled appointment and know you will be picking up your student before dismissal at 3:46 P.M., **please contact the school before 3:00pm on the day of the change to notify staff of any changes.** We cannot guarantee that requests made after 3:00pm will be communicated to the proper staff members. The student will be called down to the office once the parent or person signing the child out is present. After 3:15 P.M., we ask that all students remain in the classroom until dismissal.

The safety of your child is top priority. In an effort to maintain safety at Ballard Elementary, we are asking that you adhere to the traffic flow pattern below:



Clubs & Activities

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the school curriculum, but may be made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities. Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the principal. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate. No non-district-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

Parent Visiting / School Events

Every visitor to a school must register at the school office. Any person who does not register with the school office is on school property without authorization and should be asked to identify himself/herself properly and obtain permission or to leave the school grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave the school grounds or creates any disturbance, the building principal should request aid from the local law enforcement.

Parents, other than those who have been asked by a teacher to be in the classroom, who wish to observe learning activities taking place in their child's classroom are to confer, in advance, with the principal and the teacher and state the purpose of the visitation.

We ask that, if you choose, to walk your child to school that you only walk him or her to the school entrance. For security and safety protocols, we ask that parents refrain from walking their student to the classroom. Authorized personnel, i.e. school staff members, will always be available to assist your child in getting to and from his or her classroom.

Parent Volunteer Policy

We encourage volunteers and parent participation in our schools so please do not hesitate to ask! However, to ensure the safety of our students, the following apply to all adults who will be working with our students:

1. Volunteers, including parents, are screened through the administration of the Self Certification Statement and must complete an ICHAT before volunteering on a regular basis. These documents are available in the office.
2. Volunteers must complete the Volunteer Availability and Consent Forms.
3. Volunteers must check in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass.

4. Volunteers using office machines should use them outside of teacher preparation time.
5. All supplies needed should be requested or obtained by the teacher.

Niles Community Schools appreciates your time and assistance

Celebrations

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, we encourage parents to partner with the classroom teacher for a day and time that a treat can be brought in.

- No Balloons
- No "full cakes" - cupcakes are acceptable
- All treats must be store bought due to allergies

Field Trips

Throughout the year, students participate in district-sponsored field trips such as Fernwood, Five Pines, Homecoming Parade at Niles High School, Ring Lardner Middle School and Niles High School (5th grade students), and YMCA (swimming for 2nd grade students). Each of these activities enhances the curriculum and helps us carry out the vision and mission of the district. These activities take place during the school day.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located in the hallway across from the cafeteria. You or your child may check the box at any time for lost items.

Teacher Requests

A teacher request form can be obtained from the school office. All teacher requests must be completed and submitted to the school office between May 1 - May 24th. Teacher requests will be carefully considered; however, all requests are subject to staffing, scheduling, and student needs. While we value parent input, we cannot guarantee placement with a specific teacher.

Social Media Accounts

Our school Facebook page is "Ballard Elementary" and be found at: <https://www.facebook.com/BallardElementary/>
Our school's website can be found at <https://nilesschools.org/ballard/>

P.T.O. Information

Ballard's Parent Teacher Organization offers several ways for you to get involved. You can reach out and contact the PTO via email at ballardpto@nilesschools.org

Valuable Items

With the exception of designated days approved by teacher or principal, students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The school cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables. If a cell phone must be brought to school, it must be turned off and kept in a locker. **A student may not keep the device on their body during the school hours.** Personal communication devices shall not be used during school hours unless approved by a teacher.

If devices are being used, they will be confiscated and kept in the office until the parent is available for pick up. The device will only be released to a guardian.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

We implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) at Ballard. PBIS is a way for Ballard to encourage a positive culture. With PBIS, students learn about behavior, just as they learn other subjects like math or science. The key to PBIS is prevention, not punishment.

Our PBIS System has 5 components:

- **Be Resilient, Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and Be Safe** - Four behavioral expectations are posted throughout the building.
- Lesson Planning - Lesson plans are used to teach students the behavior expectations
- Positive Tickets - A way to recognize and encourage positive behavior
- Viking of the Week - Weekly prize drawings for students who've earned positive tickets
- Office Discipline Referrals- Holding students accountable when they don't meet expectations.

How does a student earn a positive ticket?

These are for a student whose...

- Behavior goes above and beyond for doing the right thing
- Behavior goes above and beyond when others around them aren't showing positive behavior
- When a student may sometimes struggle goes above and beyond to show positive behavior.

My child has earned a positive ticket. What now?

1. The ticket is collected by their teacher.
2. Each teacher draws a name weekly
3. Each weekly classroom winner is the Viking of the Week and receives a prize.

My child hasn't gotten a positive ticket yet. Is this bad?

At Ballard, we know all of our students show positive behavior on a regular basis. Not all students will get a positive ticket right away, and that's okay! Encourage your child to continue to meet the behavior expectations.

Our students and staff are excited about this new PBIS system. Please continue to support our efforts in focusing on making positive choices at Ballard!

Please review the behavior expectations:



Determining the Disciplinary Response

The following pages are intended to provide guidance to school staff in addressing student discipline issues. In determining how to best address inappropriate behavior, it is necessary to evaluate all of the circumstances surrounding the conduct.

The following facts must be considered prior to determining the appropriate disciplinary measures:

- The student's age, skill level, cultural background, and maturity;
- The student's disciplinary record (including the nature of any prior misconduct, the number of prior instances of misconduct, and the disciplinary and guidance intervention measures applied for each);
- The nature, severity and scope of the student's behavior;
- Who, how and to what degree harm was done (including how the harmed individual(s) will be involved);
- The circumstances/context in which the student's behavior occurred;
- The frequency and duration of the discipline incident;
- The number of persons involved in the discipline incident;
- The social emotional status/needs of all persons involved in the behavior;
- The student's IEP (Procedural Safeguards), BSP, and/or 504 Accommodation Plan, if applicable.

Levels of Response Definitions

Level	Potential responses are listed below; not all may be appropriate depending on the circumstance.	
1	<i>Teacher Managed</i> <i>These interventions aim to address behavior, teach skills and restore relationships so that students learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior. Teachers implement a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies. Behavior expectations are explicitly taught & retaught at intervals & reinforced.</i>	
	• Classroom system of positive reinforcement • Reteaching, reminder, redirection • Proximity • Seat change • Verbal / Nonverbal correction • Written reflection, problem solving or apology • Device check in • Parent contact	• Teacher/student conference • Parent or guardian conference • Daily progress sheet on behavior (Teacher Created) • Buddy teacher system • De-escalation strategies (e.g., mindfulness, reflection break) • Restorative Practices
2	<i>Teacher/Behavior Team Managed</i> <i>These interventions, in partnership with the behavior team, aim to address behavior, teach skills and restore relationships by stressing the impact of the behavior and how to make it right while maintaining access to instruction.</i>	
	• Change in schedule or class • Restorative conversation • Peer mediation • Conflict resolution • Assignment of work projects • Student / teacher / admin / parent conference • Restitution (monetary or service-based) • Discussion with appropriate administrator	• Use of Behavior Problem Solving Sheet • Talking circle • Informal Behavior Plan • Loss of privileges related to offense • Detention (lunch/recess, after school w/ parent notification) • Safety/supervision plan
Level	Potential responses are listed below; not all may be appropriate depending on the circumstance.	

3	<i>Admin/Behavior Team Managed</i> <i>These interventions may involve the removal of a student from the classroom environment because of the severity of the behavior. Administrator communicates with the behavior team regarding information needed for decision-making & problem-solving. Restoration, skill building & consequences are all components of Admin/Behavior Team managed responses to behavior.</i> • Parent or guardian notification required • Restorative practice methods, including restorative conversations, formal conferencing or community conferencing by a trained adult • Behavior Plan (contract / modified schedule) • Privilege Revoked (preferred activity) • Development of or revision to student/behavior support plan Referral to tier 2 or 3 support services • In school suspension • Consult with special education team/director if applicable. • Revise/Review SAT Form
4	<i>Administrator Managed</i> <i>These interventions may involve the removal of a student from the school environment for a period ranging between 1 to 10 school days because of the severity of the behavior. The duration of the suspension, if issued, is to be limited as much as possible while adequately addressing the behavior. Teaming (e.g. district office staff, classroom teachers, support staff, parent/guardians, outside agencies, etc) for students with severe behavioral issues/incidents is a necessity. Restoration, skill building, consequences and staff input are all important components considered in an administrative hearing.</i> • Parent or guardian notification required • Restorative practice methods, including restorative conversations, formal conferencing or community conferencing by a trained adult, peace circle • Development of or revision to student support team plan • Safety and/or supervision plan • In or out of school suspension (1 to 10 days) • Reentry meeting required for return Referral to substance abuse counseling if applicable • Consult with the special education team/director if applicable.
5	<i>Administrative Review/District Managed</i> <i>These interventions are determined by an administrative review that could involve the removal of a student from the school environment for up to 10 days. Additionally, an administrative review could potentially lead to a recommendation to the Board of Education that the student be removed from the school environment because of the severity of the behavior and focus on maintaining the safety of the school community to end behavior that is harmful to the student or others. The duration of an extended suspension or expulsion will be limited to the least amount of time necessary to adequately address the behavior.</i> • Parent or guardian notification required • Ongoing restorative practice methods as needed including formal conferencing by trained adult • Development of or revision to student support team plan • Expulsion (serious behavioral infractions) • Consult with the special education team/director if applicable.

Restorative Practices

At Ballard, we utilize Restorative Practices. Restorative Practices, also known as Restorative Justice, is a whole-child approach to addressing student behavior by identifying and fulfilling needs.

Some of the strategies we use but are not limited to:

- Do calming and mindfulness activities to de-escalate
- Reflect on Minor or Major behavior they exhibited and how they could improve in the future
- Develop strategies to cope with feelings of anger or frustration
- Physical movement, such as a sensory walk
- In-School Suspension to do work independently

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

An important aspect of a child's education is developing their social and emotional intelligence. There are a variety of ways we teach social and emotional skills to students at Ballard. A few examples include:

- Whole group SEL lessons taught by the classroom teacher using *Second Step* curriculum
- Behavior self-monitoring and self-reflection
- Small group skill building sessions with the Behavior Specialist
- Individual skill building sessions with the Behavior Specialist
- Adult-led peer mediations

The School-Parent Compact can be viewed on the next page. Copies of the compact will come home within the first two weeks of the school year

SCHOOL COMPACT

Dear Parents:

It is important that families and schools work together to help students achieve a quality education. Listed below are essential roles and responsibilities that we as partners need to carry out to support our children's success in school and in life. Teachers, parents and students at Ballard Elementary are asked to sign the agreement outlining this commitment.

Parent(s) Responsibilities	Student Responsibilities	Teacher/Staff Responsibilities
<i>I (we) agree to:</i> 1. Make sure my child is on time and attends school regularly. 2. Have my child ready to learn by sending him or her to school healthy, rested and clean. 3. Support the school rules and expectations for a positive learning environment. 4. Other ways I can help my child: (Please mark the following ways you are willing to help your child this year.) ☐ Read every night ☐ Practice math facts ☐ Limit television/video games ☐ Provide a writing journal Parent(s) Signature: _____ Date: _____	<i>I agree to:</i> 1. Be a responsible learner by listening and following directions and doing my personal best every day. 2. Complete and return assignments on time. 3. Share work with parents and return papers to school on time. 4. Follow school and classroom rules and accept the consequences and responsibility for my own behavior. Student Signature: _____	<i>We agree to:</i> 1. Provide a safe and positive learning environment where all children are treated with respect and compassion. 2. Establish open communication with parents regarding student progress. 3. Communicate school/classroom rules, and expectations. 4. Have high expectations in order to help each student reach his or her personal best. 5. What would you like me to do to help your child this year? _____ _____ _____ Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

