

RECEIPT OF SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK AND PARENT COMPACT

_____ 6TH 7TH 8TH
Print Student Last Name Print Student First Name Circle Grade

I have received the Sycamore Middle School Handbook and Parent Compact, which includes the attendance and discipline policies that will be in effect for this school year.

I understand that I am personally responsible for reviewing and understanding the information contained in the handbook. I also understand violations of the school's policies may lead to disciplinary action.

STUDENT SIGNATURE DATE

PARENT SIGNATURE DATE

SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE DATE

This page should be signed, removed, and returned to the Sycamore Middle School Assistant Principal by the fifth day of class attendance.

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Student-Parent HANDBOOK 2016-2017

Property of: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

In case of emergency, please notify:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

The information in this book was the best available at press time. Watch for additional information and changes.



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SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

MISSION

Empowering all learners to succeed in their world

A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

Here at Sycamore Middle School, we are truly a community of learners. Each day, we come together as a student body to embark on the journey of learning. As our students progress from year to year, we hope that our students expand on their knowledge and work together to learn as much as they can about the world around us. Middle school is a time of exploration – we hope our students use this time to learn more about themselves and their relationships with others, learn more about how they learn, learn how to manage time to meet deadlines and responsibilities, and learn where their talents and gifts lie. Some of these lessons will be academic lessons, while some will be in the arenas of sports, the arts, music, or other activities. Whatever they learn, we hope that the most important lesson that they learn is how each student makes up a special part of the Sycamore Middle School community.

To our sixth graders – we welcome you to our building. You are a valued member of our school, and we look forward to the many positive contributions that you will bring to us.

Our seventh graders have come a long way, and we have already witnessed first-hand the many valuable assets that you bring to our building. We are excited to see your continued successes this year.

Eighth graders now become the leaders of the community. In every way, shape, and form, we have very high expectations for you, and we fully expect you to meet, if not exceed, those expectations.

For our parents, we can only succeed in our mission with your help. We ask for your cooperation in establishing a partnership that will provide the best possible educational atmosphere here at Sycamore Middle School. Please consider joining our Parent/Teacher Organization or volunteering with your child's team. It is only with your help that we can help your child achieve the highest levels of his or her potential.

We have created this handbook to serve as a set of guidelines for our community. We hope that it will help you and your family to become more acquainted with our school, as well as to understand the expectations that we have for your time when you are here.

It is only together, as a community, which we are at our most effective. When we all are involved in the learning process, we create something truly magical – a community of learners that are empowered to succeed in their world.

SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT #427

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Don Clayberg
Julenne Davey
Jim Dombek
Eric Jones
Stephen Nelson
Diane Tyrrell
Kris Wrenn

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Kathy Countryman, Superintendent
Ms. Lynn Reilley, Director of Special Education Services
Mrs. Nicole Stuckert, Director of Finance
Dr. Kristine Webster, Director of Curriculum

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Jim Clevin – Principal
Mr. Thomas Franks – Assistant Principal
Mr. Ryan Schrader – Dean of Students

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mailing Address:

Sycamore Middle School
150 Maplewood Drive
Sycamore, IL 60178

Telephone Numbers:

Main Office.....815.899.8170

Attendance.....815.899.8182

Important Websites:

District Website: www.syc427.org

Parent Portal to view grades: <http://sis.syc427.org/discoveryportal/>

WebStore to pay fees and add money to lunch accounts: <https://sycamore.revtrak.net/>

COMPACT

HOME/SCHOOL COMPACT

A challenging instructional program encourages ALL Sycamore Middle School students to reach their highest potential. Classroom instruction includes strong reading and writing components, while providing a variety of opportunities for students to become responsible, productive citizens. Learning is student-centered, and instructional strategies focus on the unique needs of adolescents. We have a school wide emphasis on critical thinking strategies and strong citizenship values. This creates an instructional environment that stimulates academic, social, and cultural learning. We commit to a safe, secure campus that facilitates academics. As a community of learners, Sycamore students, parents/guardians, and staff share responsibility for high academic achievement and are in consensus that:

STAFF

- The staff has high expectations for academic achievement that are clearly communicated to students and parents.
- The staff uses a variety of instructional strategies and multiple forms of assessment to evaluate student progress toward meeting educational goals.
- The staff maintains on-going communication about school programs and events.
- The staff develops and maintains communication with parent/guardian regarding student academic and behavioral progress.
- The staff clearly communicates that Sycamore is a community of learners.
- The staff focuses on student's needs by creating a positive school/classroom climate that promotes academic, social and cultural learning.
- The staff consistently reinforces school rules, policies, and expectations to facilitate learning for all students.
- The school maintains facilities that are safe and in working order.
- The school has an emergency/safety plan that is communicated to students and parents.
- The school provides specific activities and strategies which enhance self-esteem and promote the development of positive interpersonal relationships.

STUDENTS

- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of school wide expectations for high achievement and accept responsibility for learning.
- Students recognize their potential, set personal goals, and know how to seek help in achieving their goals.
- Students assume responsibility for taking information home to parents.
- Students attend school each day in appropriate academic attire, enter class on time, and are ready to learn.
- Students will actively participate in class and will complete assigned work.
- Students assume responsibility for bringing all necessary books, materials, and supplies to class each day.
- Students follow school rules, policies and expectations.
- Students assume responsibility for maintaining a safe, clean campus.
- Students clearly understand the school's emergency/safety plan.
- Students use conflict management and decision making skills to resolve problems in a positive manner.

PARENTS

- Parents actively support high standards of academic achievement for students.
- Parents serve as advocates for their students to help them realize their potential and achieve their educational goals.
- Parents assume responsibility for keeping informed about their students' educational programs and progress.
- Parents ensure that students are in appropriate academic attire and arrive to school on time each day.
- Parents designate a homework plan/structure and provide a place for students to keep books, materials, and supplies at home.
- Parents support school rules, policies, and expectations.
- Parents help students develop pride in their school.
- Parents clearly understand the schools' emergency safety plan.
- Parents provide support for students to develop interpersonal and communication skills that enable them to become responsible, productive citizens.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Board of Education and Sycamore Middle School is committed to providing educational programs and services designed to meet all students' individual needs and abilities. The District will not discriminate against any individual for reasons of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, economic status or disability.

HANDBOOK JURISDICTION

All handbook and school rules apply to all school-sponsored events, even those activities occurring off-campus.

HANDBOOK ADDITIONS OR MODIFICATIONS

During the school year, it may become necessary to change or add to these guidelines. The school administration reserves the right to make such changes. When changes are made, students will be notified by announcements in class, announcements on the intercom, through the newsletter, and/or it will be posted on our website.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL DAY

A full student attendance day is 8:20AM -3:00PM. On Early Release Days school begins at 8:20AM, and ends at 1:00PM. Lunch is still served on these days. Students are not allowed in the building before 7:35AM on a normal school day, unless they are under the direct supervision of a staff member. Students must exit the building by 3:15PM, unless they are participating in an organized school-sponsored activity or meeting with a teacher.

PARENT DROP-OFF/PARKING AREAS

Students can be dropped off or picked up in the parent lane near the front entrance of the building. In the morning, please remember to pull all the way up into the loading zone to the furthest orange cone. Students should only unload vehicles between the orange cones at the beginning and ending of the loading zone. Please do not allow students out of your car unless you are within the loading zone between the cones.

When picking your child up from school each afternoon, please remember to pull all the way up into the loading zone to the furthest orange cone. If the loading zone is full all the way back to the yellow striped area, please park in a parking space. Students will only be allowed to load cars in between the orange cones (the loading zone), or those that are parked in the parking lot. We do ask that you not add a second pick-up lane, double park or block other parking spaces. Special reserved parking is available for those that have a need. Do not park in these areas unless authorized.

Students are not dismissed for the day until 3:00PM. We highly encourage parents to pick up their children later than 3:00, as the parking lot traffic won't be as congested. We strongly caution against students being dropped off or picked up on the shoulder of Route 23. Additionally, parents will not be permitted to make a left turn leaving from our parking lot onto Maplewood drive. Encourage your child to use crosswalks, and to use caution when walking to and from their vehicle.

The bus loading and unloading zones should be free of parent traffic between 7:00AM-7:00PM daily, as we do have several after school events.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Although normal school rules and courtesies to fellow students (and guests) are expected to be respected anytime a student is on the school grounds, some special expectations or rules are necessary prior to 8:05AM. This is due to the arrival of large groups of students and the number using the Commons area. The rules that are particularly important for this before school time are based on respect for others as well as respect for personal and school property. All walkers/riders will enter the building through the main entrance except when special arrangements have been made. Students who ride the bus will enter the doors on the North side of the building. These doors will be opened at 7:30AM and all students are to report to the Commons if arriving between 7:30AM and 8:05AM. If a student wishes to eat breakfast, he or she must do so immediately upon arrival to school.

The rules for waiting in the commons are:

- Once a student selects a location, he/she may not leave without permission.
- Students need to remain seated.
- Students should not congregate in the entrances or aisles.

When students are dismissed from the Commons, students are to go to their lockers, and report immediately to their 1st hour class. Students who need to leave the classroom, even before the first bell rings, must have their assignment notebook pass signed before leaving. First hour class begins at 8:20AM.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students who will need to leave early or within the day for an appointment will need to notify the office of the early dismissal, either by phone or in writing. The child will be given an early dismissal pass. When the parent arrives to pick up the child, he/she will need to come into the school to sign the child out. If the parent sends someone else to pick up the child, the receptionist will check photo identification of the person picking him/her up, and the designee will need to sign the child out before leaving.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

After school all students must be on their way home by 3:15PM unless they are participating in a school activity, being detained by a teacher, or getting help from a teacher. Students are to use the bus exit or the main entrance to leave the building, depending on how they are getting home. Walkers should leave the grounds immediately after dismissal.

Students involved in an activity or after-school sports in the gym should take belongings needed from their hallway locker. Students may not have access to these areas once these activities have completed. All buses board on the north side of the school.

STUDENT ID CARDS

Students are required to have their current I.D.'s with them at all times. They are required for library check out, buying lunch, and school activities, including dances. Students may not use I.D. cards from previous school years for any school-related purpose. If students attempt to misuse or use expired I.D. cards for any school-related purposes, the cards will be confiscated and disciplinary consequences may result. Replacement I.D.'s can be purchased in the main office for \$2.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks, including drawstring bags, may be used to carry school materials to and from school but may not be carried from class to class unless special arrangements have been made with staff to accommodate a student's needs.

ASSIGNMENT NOTEBOOKS

Setting up good organizational habits is a must in order to be successful. Students are issued and are expected to utilize their assignment notebooks for tracking daily and long term assignments, writing hallway passes, and for familiarizing themselves with the Middle School expectations. Students are to maintain their assignment notebook in good condition, or they will be charged a replacement fee of \$10.

HALLWAY POLICIES

- Students should walk in the hallways.
- Students should keep to the right in hallways as much as possible to allow smooth movement of students between classes.
- Pushing, excessive loudness, and congregating of large groups in the corridors is not permitted.
- **THERE IS NO HUGGING PERMITTED AT SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL** due to hallway congestion.
- Students who are passing while classes are in session are to be quiet and considerate in halls outside classrooms and offices.
- Students should go directly to class and should not wander the halls to socialize.
- Students are required to use their assignment notebook passes whenever traveling in the hallways during non-scheduled passing periods.
- Eating is not permissible in the hallways at any time.
- Students will not be allowed the use of any aerosol sprays, colognes, or perfumes at any time, including in the hallway areas.

LOCKER INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Each student is assigned an individual locker for his coat, books, etc. Unauthorized sharing of lockers is not necessary and will not be permitted. A combination lock is provided for each locker and only the office, the homeroom teacher, and the pupil who is assigned that locker should know how to open it. **The school is not liable for lost or stolen items.** All lockers are school property and fall under the Search and Seizure guidelines.

Advice about Lockers

1. Be accurate when working the combination.
2. Be a good housekeeper -- books, coats, etc. may push against the door to keep it from opening.
3. Don't kick or bang locker doors with hands or fists.
4. Students may go to their lockers between periods if they choose, but each is expected to arrive at the next class on time.
5. Locker problems should be reported to the office.
6. Students should only use their assigned locker.
7. Locker combinations should never be shared.
8. Remember that lockers are the property of the school and may opened at any time by school personnel.
9. Locker decorations will not be allowed.

OFFICE

Students may take care of office business between 7:30AM and 8:05AM. Students are to go to the office before entering the Commons or going to their classroom.

STUDENT MESSAGES AND MATERIALS

To keep interruptions to the classroom at a minimum, parents should not to ask the office staff to get messages or materials to their children unless absolutely necessary. Office staff will not get messages or materials to a student until the end of a class period, unless an emergency situation exists.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities may inspect and search places and areas such as lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school as well as personal effects left in those places and areas by students without notice or consent of the student and without a search warrant. As a matter of public policy, federal law finds that students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places and areas and in their personal effects left in these places and areas. School authorities may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs. If a search conducted in accordance with this section produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law, local ordinance, or the school's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized by school authorities, and disciplinary actions may be taken. School authorities may also turn over such evidence to law enforcement authorities. The provisions of this sub section apply in all school districts.

State law requires the District to inform students and their parents/guardians that school officials may request or require a student or his/her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website. This request would only be made in cases where there is reasonable cause to believe that the student's account contains evidence that he or she violated a school disciplinary rule or Board of Education policy.

PASSES

Students are required to use their assignment notebook passes whenever traveling in the hallways during non-scheduled passing periods.

GIFTS DELIVERED TO SCHOOL

We strongly discourage delivery of flowers, gifts, or balloons. Any such delivery for students will be kept in the office until the end of the school day.

FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch is provided for purchase daily for all students. Students must present their ID to purchase meals, snacks, or drinks. Students eating breakfast should purchase their meal immediately upon arrival to school. Breakfast service will stop at 8:10AM.

Students with lunch balances that are negative will be given a sandwich and milk every day until the lunch account is brought back into the positive. Parents may go onto MySchoolBucks from the District's Webstore and setup their student's lunch account. Parents then have the option to choose a low-threshold amount in which an email will be sent once their student's lunch balance reaches that amount.

Parents have the ability to go online on Sycamore School District's website, www.syc427.org and apply for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program. Those steps are listed below:

- Click into the "Parents" tab on the home page and select "Lunch Information". The results are immediate, and the parents can see their eligibility status.
- The form has to be printed and brought into the secretary of their student's home school building.
- Also provided for parents on the same page of the website is a "Fee Waiver" form for those who qualify for "Free" meals. This form is to be completed and turned in with their application results at the same time.
- Free and reduced price breakfast/lunch application forms are available in the office.

It is a violation of State law for a student receiving free or reduced breakfast/lunch to purchase food for someone else.

WATER AND OTHER BEVERAGES

Students are allowed to carry a clear water bottle into the classroom. Sport Energy drinks are not allowed at school at any time.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to eat the school-provided lunch or a sack lunch brought from home. Due to the limited amount of time for lunch, parents are discouraged from removing students from the building during this time.

Students are not to order out for food and have it delivered to the building, nor are parents to bring food to the school for any students other than their own child.

In the Commons, students are to:

- Arrive immediately after class dismissal.
- Enter in an orderly manner - walk!
- Students MUST have a **current** ID in order to purchase lunch or anything at the snack shack. Giving an ID number is not okay. Replacement IDs are available in the office for \$5.
- Use established route to pick up food and milk.
- Remain seated at all times unless given permission from a supervisor.
- Push the chair under the table and take all food and paper goods to containers provided.
- Get permission to leave the Commons by a supervisor.
- Help keep the area picked up and clean.
- Use unbreakable containers.
- Keep all food in the lunchroom.
- Keep voices at an indoor conversational level.

- Practice good eating habits and good table manners.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.

The following types of behavior are not permissible:

- Sharing or buying food for others
- Running or horseplay
- Removing chairs from tables
- Leaning back on chairs
- Throwing anything
- Going to others' tables to socialize
- Creating a mess
- Disrespect for supervisors
- Disruptive behavior
- Removing food from the cafeteria

Students who choose to display inappropriate behavior will be denied the privilege of eating in the cafeteria.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Sycamore Middle School has a PTO. All parents are considered members and are encouraged to attend meetings. Meetings are held monthly and times are announced in the newsletters.

VISITORS

All visitors must report to the receptionist, show identification, sign in, and receive a visitor pass. When leaving, please sign out. Unauthorized persons are not allowed in the school building or on the school grounds, and will be directed to leave or be subject to criminal prosecution.

Parents

Parents are always welcome to visit their child's class. In order to provide parents with the best opportunity to view student activities, we ask that parents call the office at least 24 hours prior to such visits. Any parent wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member by telephone or e-mail to make an appointment. Conferences with personnel are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during a teacher's plan or team meeting time.

Out-of-Town Students

Student visitors are not allowed to attend a child's class during school hours. Past experiences have shown this not to be beneficial for either the visitor or the student.

Sycamore High School Students

High school age students and ex-students who come to visit may visit after 3:00PM. They will be required to check in at the office and present their ID in exchange for a Sycamore Middle School Visitor's badge before being allowed to tour the building. Those who do not follow this procedure will be asked to leave. High school visitors must leave by 4:00PM.

FEES

Instructional Materials

An instructional materials fee is to be paid at the beginning of the school year. This charge includes textbook rental, technology fee, and student assignment notebook, and other class materials fees.

Textbook Damage and Replacement Fees

Students who damage or lose a textbook will be required to pay fees for damage incurred or full replacement, depending on the damage assessed. The Department chairperson has replacement guidelines. These fees may be charged at the time the unit ends or at the end of the year. If a parent is required to pay full replacement cost of a damaged book, he/she is allowed to keep the book.

Textbook and Other Fee Waiver Policy

The Sycamore Community Unit School District #427 will waive all fees assessed by the district on children whose parents are unable to afford them, including but not limited to children eligible for free lunch. Extenuating circumstances such as very significant loss of income due to severe illness or injury in the family, unusual expenses as fire, flood, or storm damage, or similar emergency situations that the district determines to include this policy may also entitle a family to a fee waiver. Fee waivers should be requested from the principal's secretary.

INSURANCE

Sycamore CUSD #427 is participating in a Student Accident Insurance program that covers students for injuries incurred while participating in school sponsored and supervised activities, including all sports. This program pays benefits with no deductible.

Because accidents also occur away from school, Sycamore School District has approved the following optional plans that you may purchase separately:

24 Hour Coverage

Around the clock accident coverage for students anywhere in the world; protection during vacation, weekends, and school days, as well as all travel.

24 Hour Unlimited Dental Accident Coverage

Brochures, claim forms, and applications for these plans are available in the middle school office or by contacting the Business Office.

These plans provide secondary coverage and will pay benefits after parent/guardian's primary health insurance has concluded participation in the claim.

SELLING ITEMS IN SCHOOL

Students are not to sell any items at school without authorization from the principal or assistant principal.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED AT SCHOOL

The following items are not allowed at school:

- music with explicit lyrics
- Sharpies or other permanent markers
- laser pens
- playing cards, unless used with consent and direct supervision of Sycamore Middle School Staff or Administration
- skateboards, scooters, roller blades
- Other items per administrative discretion that interrupt the educational process

Not only do they disturb classes, but these items can be lost or stolen. Anything that interferes with the instructional process will be confiscated by the teacher and turned over to the office. Any of the above items to be used for class projects or use on bus trips must have prior approval and must be checked in at the office or kept in your locker.

VOLATILE SUBSTANCES

Items such as permanent markers, liquid paper, modeling glue, rubber cement, etc. are not to be brought to school. Students found in possession of these items will have them confiscated, and could be considered to be in violation of the middle school's substance abuse policy.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES (INCLUDING CELL PHONES, E-READERS, TABLETS, LAPTOP COMPUTERS)

Students have the privilege to use student-owned cell phones, iPods, tablets, laptop computers, electronic readers, and other electronic devices while on school property. "School property" includes the school building, parking lots and grounds, and school-owned vehicles. Use of such devices is allowed in classrooms at the discretion of the teacher. Students may not take pictures, videos or recordings of other students or faculty. All devices must be turned off and out of sight during all assessments, unless the classroom teacher approves the use of such electronics during an assessment. The use of any device for audio or video recording by students is prohibited on school grounds and at school events. This usage is a privilege, and these privileges can be revoked if the teacher/administrator deems it necessary. If its usage distracts from the educational environment, school staff may confiscate an electronic device. If the school provides access to their Wi-Fi, all school rules apply to transmission and usage of all devices, including personal, as written in accordance with the handbook and Acceptable Use Policy. SMS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

GUM CHEWING/CANDY

As a general rule, gum may be chewed at Sycamore Middle School if the SMS staff does not: see it, hear it, or find it. In addition, if gum is causing a classroom disruption, teachers have the right to issue disciplinary consequences.

A student who is asked by a staff member to dispose of his/her gum needs to do so willingly and properly, and he/she is not to put any more gum in his/her mouth during that class period. Reminder points may still be assigned for gum misuse. SMS staff and administration reserve the right to restrict a student's gum chewing on a more permanent basis if the student's choices with gum regularly show irresponsibility and disrespect of the rules.

Gum is not allowed in PE, Band, and Orchestra. In addition, classroom teachers have the right to declare their classrooms as a "Gum Free Zone." Gum chewing is a privilege that may be revoked. Students should take care to dispose of gum in appropriate trash receptacles. This applies to both the inside and outside of the building.

Candy may be eaten only during the student's own lunchtime in the cafeteria area or in a classroom when distributed by a teacher as a treat or reward.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Our staff feels that public display of affection is considered inappropriate for middle school students, and any demonstration of this will be addressed by staff and administration with those involved. There is no romantic hugging permitted at Sycamore Middle School per staff discretion. Students should avoid all unnecessary physical contact, horseplay, hugging, and/or roughhousing. Parents may be notified and office consequences may be issued.

TOBACCO-FREE/E-CIGARETTE SCHOOLS

By state statute, no person is allowed to use any form of tobacco or e-cigarette in the school building or on the school grounds.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

As part of our on-going partnership with the Sycamore Police Department, a School Resource Officer will be in our building this year. School administration empowers the SRO, as a staff member, to enforce all school and district rules. The School Resource Officer may be consulted on behavioral matters.

CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION

COMPUTERS

Use of school computers is considered a privilege. Any student who damages or misuses any type of computer hardware or software, in addition to disciplinary action, may lose his/her computer privileges for a period of time to be determined by a building administrator.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:

Purpose of Technology Use: The Sycamore Community Unit School District (the "District") is pleased to offer students access to our computer network as well as the Internet. We are happy to be able to provide this service and believe it offers vast, diverse, and unique resources. Our goal in providing this service is to continue to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, engaged learning, and communication. Students' use of the District's computer network will be teacher directed and for academic-related assignments only.

Opportunities and Risks of Technology: Internet access will enable the exploration of thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other sources of information around the world. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may still find ways to access inappropriate materials. We believe that the benefits to users from access to the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their student(s) access to the Internet.

Even though the District does use robust filtering software to keep students from accessing unauthorized and inappropriate sites, no filter is guaranteed to be error free or totally dependable. Among other matters, the District is not liable or responsible for:

- any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties;
- the accuracy or appropriateness of any information that is retrieved through technology;
- breaches of confidentiality;
- defamatory material; or
- the consequences that may come from a student's failure to follow District policies and procedures governing the use of technology.

Privileges and Responsibilities of Technology: The District promotes the use of computers in a manner, which is responsible, legal and appropriate. Use of the District's network is a privilege. Failure to adhere to this Technology Acceptable Use Policy will result in the revocation of access privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action. Should a user's privileges be revoked, there shall be no obligation to provide a subsequent opportunity for access to the District's network.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the District's network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the District's computer resources. Users are advised never to access, save, print, or send anything that they would not want parents/guardians and teachers to see or read. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review communications and files to maintain system integrity and to ensure that the network is being used responsibly.

Network Etiquette: Network users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite and nonabusive in your messages to others;
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language;
- Do not reveal the personal addresses or telephone numbers of students;
- Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users;
- Adhere to the rules of copyright law and assume that all software is copyrighted (unless it is labeled "freeware" or "public domain");
- Adhere to the licensing agreements governing the use of shareware;
- Be responsible at all times for the proper use of access privileges and for complying with all required system security identification codes including not sharing such codes;
- Close any site (URL) that has inappropriate material. Contact or report the site to a lab supervisor or teacher, and do not share such sites with other users;
- Respect the right of others to use equipment and therefore do not use it for non-school activities; and
- Protect the privacy of other users and the integrity of the network by avoiding misuse of passwords and others' files, equipment and programs.

Unacceptable Use: Users are responsible for their actions and activities involving the network. Network users will not:

- Use offensive, obscene, inflammatory or defamatory speech;
- Harass other users;
- Use the account or password of another user;
- Misrepresent themselves or others;
- Violate the rights of others including their privacy;
- Access, submit, post, publish, download or display any defamatory, intentionally inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal material;
- Post material authored or created by another without his/her consent;
- Post anonymous messages;
- Use the network for commercial or private advertising or for the sale or purchase of materials for personal use;
- Download unauthorized software programs or files including but not limited to the following types: exe, zip, mp3, mpeg, avi, streaming audio, etc.;
- Wastefully use network resources such as file space;
- Gain unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Use the network for private financial or commercial gain;
- Vandalize data, programs, and/or networks;
- Damage technology hardware and/or software;
- Spread computer viruses;
- Use the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or State regulation;
- Reveal their personal address or telephone number or those of others; and
- Use the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked.

Disciplinary Action: Failure to comply with this policy and any administrative regulations and guidelines governing the use of technology will result in revocation of access privileges, disciplinary action including payment for causing equipment damage, and/or appropriate legal action.

Confidentiality: Network users must recognize that there is no assurance of confidentiality with respect to access to transmissions and files by persons outside or from persons inside the District. Also, the District reserves the right to log technology use, to monitor file server space utilization by users, and to examine users' files and materials as needed. Therefore, users cannot expect absolute privacy from District personnel as to their use of technology.

LIBRARY

The Library provides a wide selection of reference materials, magazines, newspapers, and books. Students may use the scanners, camcorders, digital cameras, opaque and other technology with teacher approval for classroom assignments in school. The library is open from 7:45 a.m. until 3:15 pm each day.

Students must present their picture ID in order to check out materials. Students may check out books for three weeks and magazines for one week. Up to three materials may be checked out to a student. This privilege is suspended when books are overdue or lost and not paid for. **Students who have overdue materials in excess of double the amount of time allotted for borrowing the material will be assessed a fee for the full replacement cost of the item.** Students must have their assignment notebook signed by a teacher in order to go to the library from class or study hall. The assignment notebook will be signed by a librarian when the student leaves. If a student needs to return during study hall, he/she will need to show the study hall teacher the librarian's signature from earlier in the day.

ASSEMBLIES

General assemblies are held occasionally for those students displaying a positive school attitude and for the purpose of providing entertainment, knowledge, and experience of being an audience. These are held at various times during the day and students leave from their regular classes and sit with their classroom teacher.

At these occasions, friendly and enthusiastic applause is welcome. Whistling, stomping, booing, and other unsuitable noises are not acceptable.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are an extension of classroom learning in a location outside school. Because students represent Sycamore Middle School, they must be in good standing for consideration for a field trip. Team discretion for attendance on field trips will be used for students whose behavior record causes concern for the safety and well-being of all students. These cases will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Students who are deemed ineligible to attend a field trip will remain at school with appropriate curriculum materials for learning. All Field Trip permission slips must be returned on time or the student will not be able to go on the trip. Students who remain at school will be provided with educational activities for the day.

TESTING

Like last year, each student in the building will take the PARCC test for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. This series of sub-tests will occur between March and May. These are tests required by the state of Illinois. Looking at your child's achievement on these assessments over his/her school career is helpful in finding his/her strengths and areas of academic weakness.

In addition, all our students will take the MAP test over Reading and Mathematics three times a year. The scores from this assessment are nationally normed and give the school a good indicator of how a child is performing in a specific area. Although these scores do not affect grades; special programs, intervention and support are given based on these scores.

The best preparation for these important tests is adequate rest, good nutrition, and hydration to fuel the best possible thinking.

HOMEWORK

Homework that contributes to the student's scholastic and/or social progress is a normal and important part of school life. It is important that each student complete all homework assigned on the due date. A normal and reasonable amount of homework to expect at this age level would be from five (5) to seven (7) hours per week. One of the biggest causes of lack of student accomplishment at this level is not completing work on time. Parents are encouraged to discuss homework with their child and establish a regular procedure to assure its completion on time. If additional help is needed, students are encouraged to speak with the teacher to set up time for extra help.

ASSIGNMENT REQUESTS

Students absent for one day or less should contact a fellow classmate or check HomeworkLive.com for makeup assignments. Parents who wish to request assignments for students absent THREE or more days may call the school. The request can be made on the THIRD day of a child's absence. Homeworklive.com is a great place to keep up-to-date on all current and upcoming classroom assignments. Please understand that because teachers may not have time during the school day to prepare makeup assignments, not all assignments will be available immediately at the end of the day. Therefore, parents may wish to call before coming to school to pick up assignments. Students are generally given one (1) day to make up work per day absent (maximum 3 days). Students whose makeup work is not completed within the required time may be not be given full credit for that assignment.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule changes are extremely difficult to honor, because one change causes many others to be necessary. Therefore, while parents are welcome to call and express their concerns regarding a schedule, it is not likely any changes will result.

PERFORMANCE MUSIC DROP/ADD

Students who wish to drop or add a performance music class will only be permitted to do so if the following requirements are met:

- Student must get a performance music class drop form from the teacher and have it signed by a parent.
- Student must return the drop form to the music teacher at least one week before the quarter ends.
- **Request deadlines are within the first two weeks of school, and the last day of first, second, and third quarter.**

EXTRA HELP SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS

Students finding they need extra assistance from a teacher may meet with that teacher before school on specifically scheduled mornings (7:50-8:15AM.). Teachers also are available to assist students after school, when scheduled in advance. The SMS staff is dedicated to helping students. However, there are times they may have already scheduled a student or parent conference or have a staffing or meeting. To avoid such times, it is a better procedure to check with the teacher in advance.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Saturday School is an initiative that is designed to meet different student needs. Saturday School is an intervention that requires students to come to school on Saturday, where they can work with two certified teachers to receive support for behavior, work completion, and academics.

- SMS is experiencing greater numbers of students who are falling behind in work completion. Many initiatives have targeted this need: before/after school help sessions, Parent Portal, and other individual team initiatives. These have been largely unsuccessful, as the number of students with incomplete work continues to rise, and gaps in learning are a result. Coming to Saturday school at the end of a week where a student has fallen behind will serve to close learning gaps.
- Students earn detentions for tardies and accumulated reminder points. If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the length of the detention doubles. If a doubled detention is skipped, the student earns a day AEP. Saturday School is an intervention which allows students to be accountable for their lack of punctuality or behavior without losing instructional time.
- Students who have a serious discipline infraction may earn Out of School suspension. This results in a loss of instructional time. In certain circumstances, Saturday School can be offered as an alternative to suspension.
- Saturday School is also available for students in the credit recovery program to make up learning where they have earned an F.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTING (REPORT CARDS)

Pupil progress is reported to students and parents formally on a quarterly basis. Students will be given a copy of the grade card following the nine-week grading period as soon after as computer time will permit.

The school encourages open communication between parent and teacher. Parents should feel free to ask for conferences with staff members at any time rather than waiting for grading periods.

Student achievement is graded on the following basis:

90-100	A - for superior achievement
80-89	B - for above average achievement
70-79	C - for average achievement
60-69	D - for below average achievement
0-59	F – student consistently chooses not to meet expectations

Parents and students need to be aware the above standards may be influenced by other factors such as student attitude, student effort, and individual teacher's curving of grades.

"S" and "U" marks may be used for an individual student if approved by multi-disciplinary team. The "S" mark indicates that the student has not been able to acquire the necessary skills to work effectively at the grade level at which he/she is now placed, but is working to capacity at the lower level where he or she is receiving instruction. The "U" mark indicates that a student is working and receiving instruction at a grade level below which he or she should be placed and still is not doing satisfactory work at that level. Plus or minus marks may be used with letter grades of A, B, C, D.

HONOR ROLL

Two honor rolls have been established for the purpose of encouraging high academic performance and to recognize those students who have made high achievement. The subjects that will determine the honor roll are English, social studies, science, mathematics, literature, physical education, allied arts, orchestra, chorus, and band.

1. High Honors – a student must have earned "A's" in all subjects listed above. "A-" is considered an "A".
2. Honors – a student must have earned a 3.0 GPA in all subjects listed above. A student may not have any grade lower than a "C" to make the honor roll. A "C-" is considered a "C".

The office will determine eligibility for both honor rolls.

PARENT PORTAL AND REPORT CARDS

The Parent Portal has been made available to track academic progress online. Please access the district's website at www.syc427.org and click on the link Parent Portal. Sycamore Middle School will not mail progress reports or quarterly report cards because these grades are always available online for 24/7 access. If you do not have computer or Internet access, please contact the Sycamore Middle School office in assistance in monitoring academic progress.

RETENTION/SUMMER SCHOOL

Sycamore Middle School feels strongly that students must be held accountable for their learning and effort in school. Students who fail a course for first semester will be required to make up missed learning through a credit recovery program during allied arts, study hall, after school or on Saturdays. If they continue successful work second semester, they may not be retained. Students who fail a course second semester will be required to attend summer school credit recovery. A student who is unsuccessful in making up the missed instruction may be retained. Students **will** be held accountable for completing each grade successfully.

It is the practice of the middle school to promote students one grade each year or retain in the same grade based on the best academic program for each individual student. The staff will make every effort to help every child achieve a passing grade in each of their subjects throughout the school year. All appropriate personnel, teachers, parents, guidance counselor, and Response to Intervention Team may be consulted if work from a student is showing a decline.

If all efforts do not produce desired results and a student has not made adequate progress for promotion, the following may apply:

- The principal will contact the parents of a student who has earned failing grades, and he/she will be required to attend summer school to be promoted. His/her success will be evaluated at the end of the summer school session to consider retention/promotion.
- Special education students will be considered separately.

Parents will be working partners with school personnel in this retention/promotion procedure. However, the final decision on retention/promotion remains with the school administration.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Each month, teams select students who merit recognition. Teams use the following criteria in their selection discussions:

Academic performance (though not necessarily As)	Attendance
Citizenship/Modeling of Core Values	Positive attitude and effort
Involvement in school activities	Class participation

NOTICE TO PARENTS INVOLVING FAMILY/SEX EDUCATION CLASSES AND ERIN'S LAW

Illinois Public Act 98-441 now requires that sexual education classes discuss both abstinence and contraception. Additionally, each year, schools are required to teach the objectives of Erin's Law; age appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

At Sycamore Middle School there is a continuum of Special Education programming available to meet students' unique learning needs.

Most students receive special education services within the regular classroom. Sometimes that means that they are in a collaborative setting, where two teachers, a special educator and general education teacher co-teach together. Other times, students only require the occasional support of a paraeducator in the classroom. If there is a more pronounced academic need, there are smaller classes of twelve or fewer students taught by a special education teacher.

Some students have difficulty managing their behavior, and a classroom with structure and behavior management supports is provided at times during the school day where they need support. The behavior support teacher works closely with the student's team to provide support in the least restrictive environment.

Another program that meets students' needs is designed to provide functional, pre-vocational, and community based learning. Students work with an assistant and special educator to learn daily living and life skills within the school and community setting.

This continuum of services is designed to meet students' unique learning needs, and we are proud to be inclusive in our programming.

ACCELERATED PROGRAMMING

Sycamore School District #427 offers opportunities for acceleration in the areas of math and literature. The purpose of the acceleration program is to meet the needs of students whose abilities require a quicker paced and more challenging curriculum than their regular grade level class would provide. Identified Accelerated Math students are clustered together in single sections for math instruction. Students receive a math accelerated and compressed curriculum, as well as, enrichment within their regular classroom setting. Students who move through this middle school program and complete algebra successfully are eligible for the high school freshman geometry course.

Students qualifying for our Accelerated Literature program are clustered together into single sections for literature instruction. Students are presented with challenging materials that provide for in-depth discussions, vocabulary growth, thoughtful reflection, and independent work. Classroom teachers work collaboratively to plan progressively more challenging concepts each year, and with high school teachers to articulate the expectations of Pre-AP and AP classes offered at the High School.

In both programs there are specific criteria used to determine the initial pool of candidates. District testing data is placed on a matrix to determine placement. At times, classroom achievement and learner characteristics may also play a role.

STUDENT RECORDS

As specified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students and parents have a right to review, object to, or challenge certain material placed in a student's records. Those rights are also set forth in Board policy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT POLICIES

****These policies are reviewed at the beginning of the school year****

PE Locker Number # _____ PE Lock Combination _____ - _____ - _____

Locker Rooms

1. Each student will have a PE locker assigned each school year. The locker combination will be provided.
2. Each student will use their PE locker to store and secure their materials for class. Students are not allowed to share lockers. If there is a problem with the assigned locker, let the locker room supervisor know as soon as possible.
3. During class time students may use the big lockers for storage of their belongings (when available). After class all items must be moved back to the small PE lockers. If using a big locker, a student must provide their own padlock to secure items.
4. Cell phones and electronic devices are NOT allowed in the locker room.

***Please make sure to keep your PE locker locked at all times.** Students are discouraged from bringing money, jewelry, or valuables to school. **The PE department is not responsible for lost or stolen items.** Combinations will only be given to the owner of the locker.

****Due to medical conditions such as allergies and asthma:**

1. **No aerosols or sprays** will be allowed in the locker rooms (this includes deodorant, body sprays, perfumes and scented lotions).
2. **NO GUM** is permitted during PE classes or in the locker rooms.
3. **NO FOOD or DRINK** is permitted in the locker rooms.

Uniform Requirements

The appropriate physical education uniform is to be worn each day unless the instructor informs the class of a special circumstance where the uniform is not required. If a particular unit does not require a uniform to be worn, the student will still change into the appropriate shoes for activity.

A required uniform consists of:

1. Gold or Yellow T-shirt (must be in good condition: no rips, tears, or sleeves missing).

2. Black shorts or black athletic pants.
3. Socks.
4. Athletic shoes.

(Appropriate fitting shoes that are tied or use Velcro. Improper or unsafe shoes, such as sandals, flip-flops, boots, dress shoes, unlaced shoes, shoes without backs, etc. will not be permitted).

5. Sweatshirt and sweatpants may be worn over the PE uniform, but not in place of the PE uniform. It is recommended that students keep sweats in their PE locker during cooler months.

6. The student's last name should be printed in a non-washable ink on the student's shirt and shorts and other belongings.

** Students are encouraged to practice good hygiene. Students may not wear items that have been worn to school that day for PE class. At the end of each week, students should bring home their PE uniform, wash, and return them the following week.

Items that should not be worn in PE class:

1. NO jewelry (except small, stud-type earrings or a medical alert necklace or bracelet for emergency medical conditions).
2. NO necklaces (including IDs and lanyards).
3. NO school items issued to the student by athletics (ex: track sweats).

Procedure for No Dresses

Each quarter, if a student is not prepared with their PE uniform or proper athletic shoes, the following consequences will occur:

1st offense: Student will lose participation points for the day. Parent/guardian will be contacted (phone call or email) and made aware of this situation.

2nd offense: Student will lose participation points for the day and referral will be given with a lunch detention.

3rd offense and each offense thereafter: Student will lose participation points for the day and a referral will be given with two lunch detentions.

****The PE Department and Dean of Students reserve the right to deal with chronic situations which may result in additional disciplinary consequences.**

Medical Information

All students are required to participate in physical education classes unless there is a doctor's note restricting activity. A parent/guardian request, stating the nature of the injury or condition, will be accepted for restricted or limited activity based on the recommendation of the school nurse. Parent notes are limited to two consecutive days (more than two days requires a doctor's note). **Medical notes from a parent/guardian or doctor should be taken directly to the nurse's office before school.** The student will then be given a copy of the note to bring to their PE teacher.

**Parents are encouraged to have the doctor's note state what the student CAN do as opposed to complete removal from class activities (Example: No contact activities, may ride a stationary bike).

Athletics

Any student participating in an extracurricular activity must participate in physical education. If a student-athlete does not participate in PE because they are sick or injured, refuses to participate, or they do not have the proper PE uniform, that student athlete is not eligible to participate in athletic practice or competition for that day.

ATTENDANCE

Sycamore Middle School staff is committed to helping all students succeed educationally. An important factor in achieving this goal is for students to be in school on a regular basis. Regular attendance is one of the most important factors in determining success in school. Class discussion, demonstrations, labs, and hands-on activities cannot be regained by make-up work. Poor attendance results in lower grades, disinterest in school, and ultimately dropping out of school or retention. No student should miss class without valid cause or prior approval by the building administrator.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

A student's absence must be called in by a parent or guardian. **Please call 899-8182 to report an absence.** Leave the student's name and reason for the absence.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

Valid cause for absence means illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, court-related actions, circumstances which cause parent concern for the safety and health of the child, and family emergency (as deemed valid by school building administration). Valid cause absences shall be considered excused, and work missed is allowed to be submitted for credit. The school principal has the right to determine what constitutes an excused absence. "Take Your Child to Work Day" in April will result in an absence on the student's attendance record.

If a student has been ill for three or more days a doctor's excuse MAY BE REQUIRED.

If the illness will cause more than a one-day absence, parents may inform the secretary on the first day and then they will not have to call every day for the same illness. Students will have one day per each day missed to make up absence-related work.

School Related Absence. Students are considered to be in attendance and are expected to make up work for credit when absent from school, on a field trip, or other school-related trips.

Vacation Absence. Vacation absences are absences for recreational/enjoyment reasons. Sycamore School District strongly encourages parents to plan vacations to coincide with the school calendar and avoid taking valuable educational time away from their children. Students who know in advance that they will be absent from school for vacation must check with the attendance office. The student must request a special form at least 5 days in advance. A phone call from a parent is required either prior to or at this time. Vacation absences will be considered as excused (absences with valid reasons) for up to five days, unless parent has been notified that a doctor's note is required for all absences. However, they are included as days absent for the total absence policy including the truancy stage. More than 5 days will be considered unexcused. Work may or may not be prepared in advance; that is up to teacher discretion. Any work assigned over vacation is due upon return. Vacation absences may impact your child's learning and/or grade. All work/tests will need to be made up upon return in a timely manner (one day per day missed) in order to receive full credit.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE (TRUANT)

- **Truant** means a child who is absent without valid cause for a school day or portion of the day. Students in truancy may not be allowed to attend extra-curricular activities such as dances, per principal's discretion.
- **Chronic or Habitual Truant** means a "child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or one of the previous 180 regular attendance days"
- **Truant Minor** means a child who is a "chronic truant to whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention, and remedial service, alternative programs, and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy, or have been offered and refused."

Using the definitions cited, the school district shall determine if the student is a truant, chronic or habitual truant, or a truant minor. Every attempt will be made to determine the reason for a student's truancy through talking with him/her, through parent conference, or through other means. Work may or may not be accepted from students who have an unexcused absence per administrative discretion.

The following support services may be offered to a student who is experiencing an attendance problem:

- Conferences: Student or Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Counseling: Counselor or Social Worker
- Schedule Changes
- Parent Letter or Telephone Call
- Involvement of School Nurse
- Referral to Student Teacher Assistance Team
- Consideration of alternative education programs
- Information about existing Community Services

If the supportive services of the school district have been offered to the student, and proven ineffective and the behavior persists, the building principal will refer the student to the DeKalb County Truancy Prevention Program.

20 Full Day Absence Plan

- 6th Full Day of Absence – Letter to parent.
- 10th Full Day of Absence – Letter to parent.
- 14th Full Day of Absence – Letter to parent.
- 16th Full Day of Absence – Parent notification/Doctor's note required for subsequent absences.
- **5th Day Unexcused in last 180 days**-Referral may be made to DeKalb County Regional Office of Education Truancy Intervention/Prevention Program.

DOCTOR'S NOTE REQUIRED

After sixteen absences per school year, to excuse each absence thereafter, a physician's note stating specific medical reasons for the student's absence will be required within **24 hours** of the student's return to school. While seeking a medical excuse, the student's parent or guardian must still comply with absence notification procedures. Should a parent or guardian choose not to secure a medical excuse, the absence will be considered unexcused. Medical notes must be signed by a doctor and state specific days that a student is excused from school.

After five unexcused absences during the previous 180 days of school attendance, a referral may be made to the DeKalb County Regional Office of Education Truancy Intervention/Prevention Program.

TARDINESS

For safety reasons, our doors are locked at 8:20. If a student enters the building after this time, he/she must get a pass from the office to

enter class. Students will be asked to explain the reason for the tardiness. Five unexcused tardies will result in a 1 hour detention, ten will result in 2 hour detention, fifteen will result in a 3 hour detention, and twenty will result in a 4 hour detention. If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the time will be doubled. If the student fails to serve the doubled detention, the student will be required to attend Saturday Service.

UNEXCUSED TARDIES

Unexcused tardies will be monitored carefully. **Five unexcused tardies will equal 1 full day absence.**

During the school day there are three minutes given between class periods. Any tardiness during the school day will be dealt with by the classroom teacher. This includes students who are tardy to their first period class. Students are expected to be in their seat when the final bell sounds at the beginning of each period.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES FOR FAILURE TO CALL

Any full day or partial day absence, which is not called in by a parent within two hours of the beginning of the school day for the reasons identified as "excused absences," will be termed "unexcused." A parent's call does not make the absence excused if the reason for the absence is not excusable (e.g. shopping, sleeping, hunting, babysitting, car problems, etc.) Work may or may not be accepted from students who have an unexcused absence per administrative discretion.

SUSPENSIONS

Suspensions are considered excused absences. Students may make up assignments given during their suspension per Board of Education policy. (See suspensions in the Discipline section.)

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students must be in attendance during the school day to participate in, or attend, school activities. Students absent from school for more than four periods (1/2 day) or who were assigned AEP during the day for multiple periods are not eligible to participate or attend activities.

RESIDENCY FORM

It is the expectation of the district that at the time of any initial registration, the parent/guardian of the student will complete a form that indicates they have met the residency requirements of the district prior to the student being accepted.

MEDICAL/HEALTH

MEDICATION

Prescription Medication Procedure at School

Administration of medication to students is the responsibility of the parents and should be given at home whenever possible. Only in cases where failure to take prescribed medication could jeopardize the child's health and/or education should medication be given at school.

A child does not need most medications to be administered at school. If they need to take a medication 3 times a day or less, it should not be sent to school; it can be given before school, right after school and at bedtime. If your child takes daily medications, they should be taken at home with very few exceptions.

Over-the-counter Medications

All medications (with the exception of asthma inhalers and Epi-pens) are to be taken in the nurse's office. Students are not to have over-the-counter or other types of medication in their possession during the school day.

Procedure for Prescription and Nonprescription Medication

When school personnel are required to administer over-the-counter or prescription medication, the following procedure **must be followed** when school personnel dispense medication to individual students.

1. A **written order** for prescription and non-prescription medication **must** be obtained from the child's physician.
2. A written request from the parent/guardian requesting the medication be given **must** accompany the above order.
3. Medication must be brought to school in a pharmacy labeled container that displays:
 - a. Child's Name
 - b. Prescription Number
 - c. Medication Name/Dosage
 - d. Administration Route
 - e. Date and Refill
 - f. Physician's Name
 - g. Pharmacy address and phone number
4. The School Nurse, School Administrator or the student (via Self Administration- Guidelines below) will administer the medication to the student

5. All medications designated "controlled substance" (including, but not limited to, Ritalin, Concerta, Dexedrine, and Adderall) **must be** delivered to school by a parent or another adult.
 6. Each dose of medication administered shall be recorded with date and initials of the person administering it and placed in the student's health record.
 7. Medication must be kept in a locked drawer or cabinet in a supervised area.
 8. The school nurse assigned to the school should be notified of all medication requests, including those that are to be self-administered such as bronchial inhalers. He/she will then monitor and counsel the students as needed.
- The school may refuse to administer prescription or non-prescription medication unless the above procedure is followed.**

Self-Administration

Self-administration means the student will be responsible for opening the envelope or bottle/container and recognizing their medication prior to taking it in front of the staff member.

Field Trip Medication Procedure

The school nurse will dispense medication into individual student envelopes. Designated school personnel (not necessarily the School Nurse) will carry the medication and supervise the student in self-administration.

Asthma/Epipen Medication

Illinois School Code requires that all schools permit students to carry and self-administer prescribed asthma and Epipen medication at school. In order for a student to carry asthma and/or Epipen medication at school, written permission from the parent and physician must be on file in the nurse's office. The permission for self-administration of medication is effective for the school year and needs to be renewed each subsequent school year. The school district and its employees are to incur no liability, except for willful and wanton misconduct, as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication to the student.

The emergency administration of epinephrine using an Epipen auto-injector is now approved in Sycamore Schools. The standing orders and protocol for school nurses and other trained personnel are reviewed and signed by a designated physician. An Epipen will be used when a student exhibits signs or symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction. In the event that an Epipen is administered, there will be immediate activation of the EMS system and transport to Kishwaukee Hospital. Students already diagnosed with bee sting allergies or other conditions that could lead to anaphylaxis will provide their own Epipen with physician and parent authorization.

ILLNESS

Should you send your child to school?

If your child is not feeling well on a school day, a decision must be made whether or not to send them to school or keep them home. The following is not intended as medical advice, but to merely to provide guidelines until your doctor can be consulted:

- **COLD, SORE THROAT, COUGH:** A child with a "heavy" cold and hacking cough *belongs at home and in bed even if he/she does not have a fever*. Children with sore throat complaints may attend school unless you see white spots, pronounced red streaks, or the sore throat is persistent. In those cases, call your doctor.
- **DIARRHEA AND VOMITING:** Keep your child home. Call your doctor if no improvement is seen after a day. The child should have **NO SYMPTOMS FOR 24 HOURS** before returning to school.
- **EARACHE:** Consult your doctor.
- **FEVER:** This is a warning that all is not right in the body. **No child with a fever of 100 degrees should be sent to school.** Students **must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducers** before returning to school.
- **HEADACHE:** Your child may come to school, but remember, **Aspirin, Tylenol, or Ibuprofen is NOT** dispensed in the elementary grades.
- **RASH:** This may be the first sign of chickenpox. (Your child should be immunized against measles.) "Spots" may cover the entire body or may appear only in one area. Do not send your child to school with a rash until your doctor has said that it is safe for them to return. Those who have the chickenpox should remain home until the pox are dried (usually 7 days).
- **STOMACHACHE:** This is a very common complaint! Call your doctor if no improvement is seen after a day.
- **TOOTHACHE:** See your dentist.

Illness at School

Your child will be sent home if they:

1. Have a fever of 100 degrees or more
2. Have vomited or have diarrhea
3. Feel too miserable with cold or flu symptoms
4. Have lice

5. Have been injured seriously enough to impair functioning at school

If you are called at home or work and asked to pick your child up, it is your responsibility to come or arrange for someone else to come for your child ***immediately***. It is imperative that you supply the nurse with names and phone numbers of **two (2) other people who can transport your child** if you can't be reached.

Returning from an Illness

Students **must be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for 24 hours** before returning to school.

Emergency Medical Attention

If we feel that emergency medical services (EMS) are necessary, EMS will be activated and your child **will be** transported to the nearest hospital for emergency medical attention. The closest hospital for Sycamore School District is Kishwaukee Hospital.

Head Lice

Anyone can get head lice. It is a popular belief that head lice only thrive in an unclean environment, but having head lice in no way implies poor housekeeping or a lack of personal cleanliness. Head lice come from direct contact with another person or indirect contact through use of lice-infested clothing, bedding (staying overnight), hairbrushes, or combs, hats, theatre seats, or any number of ways. Sycamore Schools have a "No Live Lice" protocol to address the issue of head lice. Report any lice outbreak to the school nurse for specific suggestions and follow up.

Parents should check their child's head for lice nits regularly. The tiny, white/clear oval eggs of head lice, called nits, are attached to the hair shafts near the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck and in back of and above the ears. The lice themselves are often not seen because they are usually present in very small numbers and move very quickly. Bites by lice and the accompanying scratch marks can often be seen. If scratch marks become infected, one may experience swollen lymph nodes in the neck. The nits resemble dandruff, but dandruff is flat and is easily removed for the hair. Nits are not. They are attached to the hair shaft with a glue-like substance and cannot be removed easily even by pulling them. Also, contrary to popular belief, intense itching is **NOT** always present when a person is infested with head lice. One might have head lice and not feel discomfort at all. **Please check your child's head closely! Parents should look for lice nits every week on their child.**

What to do if you find head lice on your child:

1. Keep your child home until the first application of lice shampoo or lice crème rinse has been applied and all nits removed. A "NO Live Lice" policy has been implemented in our school district, and therefore a child returning to school with any live lice will be sent home again.
2. Report any lice outbreak to the school nurse. She provides you with further specific suggestions for getting rid of lice.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

Students will be screened according to state mandated vision and hearing laws and the results will be shared with school personnel. Hearing screenings will be for all students in grades kindergarten, first and second. Vision screenings will be for students in kindergarten, second & 8th grades. Additionally, any students in special education, new to district, teacher referrals and with known vision or hearing concerns will be screened. Parents should notify the school if consent of screening is denied. Vision screening is NOT a substitute for a complete eye exam and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form, indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months.

FOOD ALLERGIES

State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, federal regulations, and state rules. If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify the building principal or school nurse. Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan can be developed and implemented to provide the needed supports so that your student can access their education as effectively as students without disabilities. Not all students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. Our school district may be able to appropriately meet a student's needs through other means.

DIABETES

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan from the physician must be submitted to the school principal or school nurse. Parents/Guardians are responsible for and must:

1. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
2. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
3. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan
4. Grant consent for and authorize designated School District Representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.
5. Provide appropriate snacks and supplies for their diabetic care.

For further information, please contact the building principal or school nurse.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION MEDICAL NOTES

Students are required to participate in physical education class unless a doctor's excuse is on file in the school nurse's office.

PHYSICAL AND IMMUNIZATIONS REQUIREMENTS

Illinois law requires that all K, 6th, and 9th grade students have a completed physical exam before entering school each fall. Completed physical forms are to be turned in to the school nurse before a student can attend classes. Any student who arrives at school the first day without a physical will be sent home and will not be allowed to return to school without the completed physical form. The physical must be completed on the current Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination form. In addition to the physical, the student must show evidence of protection against: Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), TDap, Hepatitis B series and proof of having the Varicella vaccines or history of the chickenpox disease. All students new to the district must also comply with these regulations within 30 days of enrollment. Transfer students, as well as students with no physical exam but verification of a doctor's appointment, will be conditionally enrolled. Exceptions to the law are valid for medical contraindications or religious objections provided the exemption is on file and approved in the student's health folder.

The required examinations, immunization dates and forms must be turned into the school office on or prior to the first day of school or within 30 days of moving into the District or they will be **excluded** from school.

The State of Illinois has specific requirements for students entering school at different grade levels. Students are required to have/show proof of receiving the following items:

2016-2017 School Year	School Physical	Dental Exam	Eye Exam	Tetanus, Diphtheria, pertussis (DPT, DTap) Series	MMR 2 doses	Polio Series	Varicella 2 doses	Hepatitis B Vaccine Series of 3	Meningococcal (MCV)	TDap Vaccine	
Kinder	✓	✓	✓	All grades K-12	All grades K-12	All grades K-12	✓				
1 st							✓				
2 nd		✓					✓				
3 rd											
4 th											
5 th											
6 th	✓	✓					✓	All grades 6-12	✓	✓	All grades 6-12
7 th							✓		✓		
8 th							✓				
9 th	✓						✓				
10 th							✓				
11 th							✓				
12 th							✓*				

*All 12th graders will need to show proof of receiving two doses unless the first dose was administered after 16 years of age. In this case, only one dose after 16 years of age is required.

Religious/Medical Exemptions

1. Certificate of Religious Exemption: parents or legal guardians who object on religious grounds to complete any required immunizations or examinations must complete a Certificate of Religious Exemption form, which must also be signed by the physician, advanced practice nurse or physician assistant responsible for performing the student examination. The healthcare provider signature on this new form attests to informing the parent or legal guardian of the benefits of immunization and the health risks of not vaccinating the student. Per the State Of Illinois, the certificate requires the parent or guardian signature to attest to understanding that their child may be excluded from school in the case of a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak or exposure.

2. If there is an outbreak of disease (i.e. Measles), those students who have not had immunization due to medical or religious reasons will be on the susceptible list and will be excluded until a set number of school days after the last reported case of the disease (as determined by the IDPH).

- Example of exclusion dates: Measles exclusion can last a minimum of 21 days. Mumps exclusion can last a minimum of 25 days. Pertussis exclusion varies depending upon the student's symptoms and treatment options.
3. Students with a Religious Exemption are not eligible for homebound tutoring services during an outbreak related exclusion.
 4. Each school keeps an up-to-date list of all children who have not presented evidence of immunity against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Rubella, Mumps, Varicella, Hepatitis B and Meningitis.

DENTAL REQUIREMENT

The State of Illinois through Public Act 93-946 has mandated that all students in K, 2nd and 6th grade must have a dental exam completed prior to May 15 of the current school year.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Discipline Philosophy

The Board of Education has the responsibility for providing a safe environment for all of its students, as well as an atmosphere that is free from disruptive influence and is conducive to effective learning. To accomplish this, reasonable rules and regulations are established and enforced.

The rules and regulations governing student conduct will be reviewed annually by the Board of Education, Administration, and will be included in the current Parent/ Student Handbook.

The Sycamore School District Board of Education believes:

- Self-discipline is preferable to external forms of control
- In assisting students to develop internal controls necessary for successful school citizenship and achievement
- In educating students about alternatives to violence, peaceful resolutions to conflict, responsible behavior
- In offering a variety of services that support the mission of the district
- In placing teachers at the forefront of encouraging responsible and appropriate behavior
- In encouraging and supporting teachers' efforts to handle minor classroom disciplinary issues
- All conduct problems are not the same, therefore disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to:
 - Student or parent conferences
 - Teacher or administration-assigned detentions (before, during, or after)
 - Alternative Education Program (AEP) partial, full or multiple-day assignment
 - Response to Intervention (RTI)
 - Saturday services
 - Varying lengths of suspension
 - Police Referral
 - Recommendation for expulsion to the Board of Education by the Superintendent or his her/ designee

Parents Should:

- be prepared to attend school to address student discipline problems, and, possible, to remove their child from school
- expect that phone calls will be made to work or place of business when necessary.
- be aware that the Sycamore Schools have a partnership and a positive working relationship with the law enforcement community and it may become advisable and/or necessary to involve local law enforcement agencies.
- know that the school community and the law enforcement community have a reciprocal reporting agreement, which allows sharing of relevant information.

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL BELIEVES

The behavior of our students should at all times model the core values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Caring, Fairness, Integrity, Honesty, Loyalty, and Cooperation. We expect students to model the school's behavioral expectations outlined on the behavioral matrix. Our three expectations are: **Respect, Responsibility, and Relationships**.

It is our philosophy at Sycamore Middle School that when students do not meet these expectations, disciplinary action is required. At the same time, it is our feeling that students who do meet these standards should be recognized for their effort. Therefore, we have devised a discipline practice that contains both positive and negative consequences.

Along with support of the teachers and teams, Sycamore Middle School has a systematic school-wide point system to recognize and remind student behaviors. All across the building, teachers in all content area disciplines spend time teaching the expectations and consequences for positive and negative follow through on those behaviors. Through this approach, we believe all students can be successful.

Sycamore Middle School Expectations

Accumulated Reward System

Students whose accumulated point total shows a positive value will be periodically recognized for such effort through a school developed positive incentive program.

Recognition Points

- Students earn *recognition points* for demonstrating the school expectations by being respectful, responsible, and building positive relationships with peers and staff.
- Students are also encouraged to follow the district's core values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Caring, Fairness, Integrity, Honesty, Loyalty, and Cooperation.
- Each week a student is in attendance for more than 2 days, he/she will earn 2 *recognition points*.
- Each week a student does not receive any reminder points, he/she will earn 2 *recognition points*.
- Students can earn an unlimited amount of *recognition points*.

Teachers have the discretion to award *recognition points* in different ways, and different teams have different approaches. While not all of these are given every time, the ways to earn *recognition points* is unlimited; some examples are listed in the chart below.

Sycamore Middle School Spartan Expectations



Be Respectful ~ Be Responsible ~ Build Relationships

Code	Recognitions	Reminders	Points
A	On Time	Late for Class	All points can range from 1 to 3
B	Appropriate Behavior	Inappropriate Behavior	
C	Prepared for Class	Missing Materials	
D	Appropriate use of Pass	Without a Pass	
E	Respectful Words	Inappropriate Language	
F	Role Models	Class Disturbance	
G	Respects Technology	Improper use of Technology	
H	Respects Staff	Disrespects Staff	
I	Respects Peers and/or Self	Disrespect to Peers and/or Self	

Reminder Points

Students who display inappropriate behavior in violation of the classroom rules or in violation of the school rules listed above may receive *reminder points*. *Reminder points* shall accumulate with the consequences becoming more severe as the point value increases (see consequences). Please note that these behaviors listed may instead receive a referral, based on the severity of the incident. Students will be immediately notified if they have received *reminder points* and will be asked to sign a reminder point slip indicating such notification.

CONSEQUENCES OF ACCUMULATED OF REMINDER POINTS

STEP 1 (-10 PTS.)	Letter home AND 1-hour detention after school Referral to Counselor/Social Worker
STEP 2 (-20 PTS.)	Letter home AND 2-hour detention after school Behavior contract offered
STEP 3 (-30 PTS.)	Letter home – 1-hour detention AND Loss of Privileges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent use of learning center/computer lab • Loss of privilege passes • Alternate lunchroom assignment • Loss of the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities (athletics, cheerleading, pom poms, student council, yearbook, music activities, and other school activities) • Loss of the privilege of attending positive point activities, field trips, dances, and after school events sponsored by the faculty or PTO • Passing period limited whenever possible

Excessive reminder points (-10) in a week, **regardless** of point total, will result in disciplinary action.

1st time – 1-hour detention

3rd time – Saturday Service Program

2nd time – 2-hour detention

4th time – Full Day In-School Supervision

If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the time will be doubled. If the student fails to serve the doubled detention, the student will be required to serve a full day of Alternate Education Programming. If a disciplinary issued Saturday Service Program is not served, the student will serve a full day of Alternate Education Programming.

Periodic updates of accumulated points are available by parent/guardian request.

DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS, GROSS DISOBEDIENCE, AND MISCONDUCT

Engaging in any activity, on or off school grounds, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or and educational function, including, but not limited to be considered a threat or intimidation of a staff member, or endanger the health, safety of students, staff, or school property is subject to disciplinary action. School Administration is authorized to discipline students for infractions that may include, but are not limited to, the following types of prohibited conduct, behavior, or activity:

1. Dress Code Violation: an individual's dress, personal appearance, and cleanliness, as well as his/her behavior demonstrate his/her sensitivity to and respect others. SMS recognizes that a student's individual appearance is mainly the responsibility of both the student and parent(s). If, in judgment of school officials, modes of dress or appearance are distracting or disturbing the progress of the educational program, both the student at the parent(s) will be notified, and the student will be required to change immediately.

The following dress code is in effect:

- Dress and grooming should be clean, modesty in attire, decent, and free of obnoxious odors. For the protection of the student, health and safety standards must be maintained at all times.
- Footwear must be worn at all times, and clothing and footwear must not have ornamentation that will damage furniture, floors, or create a safety hazard to either the student or others.
- Accessories such as necklaces, bracelets, belts, etc., that could be used as weapons are expressly forbidden.
- No large chains may be worn attached to clothing or on a student's body.
- Caps, hats, coats, bandanas, sweatbands, head gear or sunglasses may not be visible at school.
- Wearing flannel pants or pajama pants is prohibited.
- Garments depicting beer, alcohol, liquor, or drugs may not be worn at school.
- No undergarments shall be visible while sitting or standing. This includes boxer shorts. Pants shall be worn at the waist.
- No clothing considered to be revealing will be allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, shirts that reveal midriffs, shirts with bare backs, clothing made of see-through fabrics or mesh, shirts with spaghetti straps or shirts without two straps, certain holes in clothing, low-cut tops (revealing cleavage), off the shoulder tops, and short shorts/skirts (shorts need to be fist length or longer). Subject to Administrative discretion.
- Any material deemed inappropriate by administrative staff may not be worn/ displayed/ used on school property.

Please note: Specific courses may require safety equipment to be worn or require other special dress codes, including footwear. Students must wear the appropriate equipment and adhere to those dress codes. If a teacher believes a student is not properly dressed for a specific activity, the teacher has the authority to request the student to change attire or to put on an article of clothing available through the nurse's office or PE department. If a student refuses the teacher's request to change attire, the teacher is to send the student to the Dean of Student's office for disciplinary action. Administration may send the student home to change or may assign the student reminder points, removal from the activity, detention, an alternate education program, or an out of school suspension. Exemptions to the dress code may be determined for specific events (i.e. Spirit Week) or causes as determined by the building principal or his designee. Administrative discretion will determine the appropriateness of a student's attire.

2. Presence in an **unauthorized or non-supervised area** will receive disciplinary consequences.

3. **Insubordination** is defined as failure to comply with requests from school personnel. School personnel includes all faculty and staff, including the SRO (School Resource Officer), employees, teachers, administrators, school board members, school bus drivers, other school district employees, and students (where the term is appropriate).

4. **Cheating/Academic Dishonesty**...Sycamore Middle School expects academic honesty. Any action intended to get credit or help someone get credit for work which is not one's own is considered academic dishonesty. **Plagiarism** (including Internet copying/pasting) is considered academic dishonesty. Consequences for academic dishonesty will be administered at the discretion of the teacher and administration, but could result in a zero for the assignment.

Forgery is dishonest. Students who forge a parent's signature will receive consequences for academic dishonesty. These can include classroom consequences, reminder points, or an office referral.

5. **Alcohol, Drugs or Look-Alike Drugs, Tobacco or Electronic Cigarettes:** It is illegal in Illinois for anyone under the age of 21 to be in possession, consume, and/or under the influence of alcohol, defined by observable behaviors, physical appearance/symptoms, noticeable indicators (i.e. odor or alcohol present on breath, etc.). It is also illegal for anyone to possess, sell, manufacture, or use alcohol/tobacco/drugs or look-alike drugs on school property, school buses, or at any school related activities. The prohibition of electronic cigarettes applies. Electronic cigarettes are defined as a cigarette-shaped device containing nicotine or non-nicotine based liquid that is vaporized and inhaled. All city, state and federal laws apply to the use and possession of drugs and alcohol.

The City of Sycamore has an ordinance prohibiting the purchase, possession, or use of **tobacco products** by anyone under the age of 18. In accordance with that statute, students found to be in violation will receive a police referral. In addition, students will face school disciplinary consequences.

6. **Bringing weapons, or look-alike weapons**, such as guns, clubs, chains, knives, brass knuckles, and any other device that could be used to hurt or harm a student, staff member, or anyone else on school grounds or at a school function is strictly prohibited. The Sycamore school system considers this type of violation to be extremely serious and will result in severe disciplinary action ranging from suspension to recommendation for expulsion.

7. **Gang Activity:** It is the school's responsibility to maintain a safe and disruption-free school environment. The School Code of Illinois (Ill. Rev. Stat., Ch. 122, par. 31-1 through 31-4) provides that "any public school fraternity, sorority or secret society is inimical to the public good." 'Gangs,' as defined in this policy, shall mean individuals who associate with each other primarily for criminal, disruptive, and/or other activities prohibited by law and/or the Sycamore School District's Rules and Regulation. Gangs, gang-related activities, and secret societies are not acceptable in the school setting. The Board of Education is aware that the presence of gangs interferes materially and substantially with both the educational process and the requirement of appropriate discipline in the school. Gangs also foster anti-social behaviors, attitudes, and practices, which may endanger the health, safety, and welfare of our students.

Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Soliciting and or recruiting others for membership.
- Participating in and/or inciting physical violence.
- Extorting or soliciting money and/or services, requesting any person to pay for protection, insurance, or other payment of dues.
- Coercing, harassing, and/or otherwise intimidating, threatening, or causing harm to any person or living creature.

- Wearing, possessing, using, displaying in any manner (such as on folders or books), distributing, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other item commonly associated with membership in, or affiliation with, a gang, secret society, and/or any public school fraternity or sorority.
- Any act or activity which violates any law or any policy of Sycamore School District #427 when such an act or activity is taken to further or promote the interests of a gang, secret society, and/or any public school fraternity or sorority while attending school or school sponsored events.

8. **Endangering the physical or psychological well-being** of the school population by acts including, but not limited to:

- Improper release of a school fire alarm or tampering with fire extinguishers.
- Starting a fire on or to school property or attempting to do so.
- Setting off, attempting to set off, or threatening to set off explosive devices or smoke bombs in or around school property, or the use or display of dangerous weapons.
- Possession or use of mace, pepper spray, or other similar self-defense sprays.

9. **Bullying** is the severe, repetitive, and/or intentional infliction of physical, social, intellectual, and/or emotional suffering on another person or group of persons. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to direct behaviors (e.g. teasing, taunting, intimidating, attempting to intimidate, threatening, name calling, ridiculing, belittling, extorting, hitting, hazing, physical attacks and/or violence) and indirect behaviors (e.g., spreading rumors, causing social isolation or psychological isolation, placing them in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property). This also includes cyber-bullying by the use of, but not limited to, the Internet and cell phone texting.

Definition of Cyber-Bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photooptical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. “Cyber-bullying” includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. “Cyber-bullying” also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)].

Prohibition of Cyber-Bullying. Bullying is prohibited through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leases, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

10. **Acts of intolerance** for diversity, either physical or verbal, which may include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, religious belief, gender, disability, ancestry, age, etc. All students should have respect for one another and all school personnel.

11. **Vandalism** is the intentional damage to or destruction of school property or property of school personnel.

12. **Theft:** Stealing or possessing stolen school property, school funds, or student or faculty property. In addition to school disciplinary action, this offense may result in a police referral.

13. **Fighting or any other type of physical abuse will not be tolerated at Sycamore Middle School.** The school community views this as an unacceptable means to solve conflict, **no matter what the circumstance.** In addition to school disciplinary action, school officials may make a police referral in the event of a physical altercation. If students see such actions occurring, they should report it immediately to the nearest staff member or office. Students are prohibited from involving themselves in a fight **for any reason.**

14. **Assaulting school personnel** will result in an immediate police referral in addition to school disciplinary consequences.

15. **Acts which directly or indirectly jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of students and/or school personnel** are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, **snowball throwing, skate boarding and in-line skating**. These activities are not allowed at any time, except for curricular reasons, on **any** school district property.

16. Willfully **obstructing an investigation** by school officials by giving false information or by withholding information in response to questions.

17. **Group or mob action:** Acts which are unacceptable on an individual basis remain inappropriate and become an even greater offense when a group engages in them. Intimidation, threats, fighting, food fights, and “skip days” are examples of acts of gross misconduct. Each individual will be held accountable for his/her misconduct.

18. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is interpreted to be any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct is a violation of school and district policies and will be handled through disciplinary action.

This category also includes “sexting”, which is defined as creating, sending, viewing, or receiving an indecent picture of oneself or another person through the use of computer, cell phone, or other electronic communication device. At no time shall a person distribute or disseminate an indecent visual depiction of themselves or another through the use of a computer or electronic communication device. Violators may be subject to both police referral and Juvenile Court proceedings.

Any student who believes that he/she has been subject to sexual harassment, or any person who believes that he/she has witnessed an incident of sexual harassment, should make a complaint. The initiation of a complaint of sexual harassment will not result in retaliation, bias, or intimidation against the complainant. All complainants shall immediately be referred to the building principal for investigation. If the building principal is the subject of the complaint, the complaint shall be referred to the Superintendent or designee for Sycamore School District 427.

19. **Inappropriate or offensive language**, when used in an abusive manner directed at students and/or staff. This also includes, but is not limited to, profanity.

20. **Disrupting the educational environment:** The use of the middle school’s computers/technology is a privilege, not a right. All student use of technology must be in accordance with the Sycamore School District Acceptable Use Policy. Use must be for the purpose of education or research and must be consistent with the educational objectives of the district.

21. Students are not allowed to access or tamper with teacher, student, and/or staff files, user files, user areas, system software, system hardware, or emails. Students will not be allowed to utilize school technology to generate material for personal (not related to education or research) use or distribution. In addition, students may not use school technology to access, generate, view, submit post, publish, transmit, or distribute inappropriate material which may include, but is not limited to, material which is defamatory, intentionally inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal.

Students must abide by the Acceptable Use Policy at all times, including using only their own personal login information. Students found to have committed a technology violation may suffer disciplinary consequences including, but not limited to, the suspension of their technology privileges.

22. **Electronic Devices/Cell Phones:** Students may not take pictures, videos or recordings of staff or other students. All cell phones follow the rules as outlined earlier in this handbook. Additionally, cell phones must be turned off and out of sight during all assessments. These devices shall not be used for or associated with any unlawful activities, including “sexting” (see #18), the copying of proprietary material (assessments, another student’s homework assignment, etc.), or other similar behaviors.

Any electronic devices that record, receive, and transmit are prohibited unless approved by administration. Possession and/or use of laser pointers and other similar devices is expressly prohibited at any time. This includes before, during, and after school hours, as well as at any and all extra-curricular events/activities.

23. **Student use of devices for audio or video recording:** The use of any device for audio or video recording by students is prohibited on school grounds and at school events.

THIS LIST IS NOT INTENDED TO BE ALL-INCLUSIVE. DEPENDING ON THE NATURE AND SEVERITY, ADDITIONAL INFRAC-TIONS MAY BE INCLUDED AT ANY TIME BY THE ADMINSTRATION. ADMINISTRATION HAS FULL DISCRETION OF ALL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL CONSEQUENCES

AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION PROGRAM

In an effort to provide disciplinary consequents for students without removing them from their academic classes, a formalized after-school detention program has been instituted. Minor disciplinary problems may be addressed by the detention program. A staff member will supervise this program. A student will be required to bring sufficient materials to study or read during the time assigned to detention.

Detentions may also be assigned individually by both the staff and administration (before, during, or after school) as part of their classroom management plan.

Conditions of the Detention Program

1. Students are assigned to the school-wide detention program by a building administrator or designee.
2. Students are expected to serve detentions, whether assigned by faculty or administration. The student is to be in attendance in the detention room for the duration of the period assigned.
3. If a student has an excused absence they day of an assigned detention, a new date will be assigned.
4. Any student chronically involved in the detention program may face more serious disciplinary consequences.
5. Failure or refusal to serve an assigned detention will result in additional consequences.

Regulations of the Detention Program

1. Students are not permitted to eat or drink in detention. Restroom breaks may be permitted at the discretion of the detention supervisor.
2. Students are to report to detention on time **with their school I.D.**
3. No talking is permitted unless to ask questions of the supervisor. In this case, students must raise their hands and wait to be recognized.
4. Students must bring sufficient study or reading materials to detention in order to engage in productive activity for the entire period. Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers to get materials once detention has started.
5. No cards, CD Players, iPods, cell phones, coats, hats, etc., are allowed. Any items of this nature brought to detention will be turned in to the office.
6. Students are not to leave their assigned seats without the permission of the supervision and are not to move desks, chairs, etc.
7. Students are not to write on or in any way deface the desks, tables, books, magazines, etc.
8. Students are to cooperate with and show respect to the supervisor at all times or risk further disciplinary action.
9. Students are not to sleep in detention. Progressive discipline may result.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM – AEP

Infractions involving some attendance issues and other major or minor disciplinary problems will be handled through the Alternative Education Program. A staff member will supervise this program. A student will be required to study material related to the classes being missed or work on other assignments provided by the AEP supervisor.

Conditions of the Alternative Education Program

1. A student is assigned to the Alternative Education Program by a building administrator or designee.
2. The student is to be in attendance in the AEP room for the duration of the period assigned.

3. The student may make up work missed in his/her daily classes during the day(s) of AEP placement and receive full credit for this work. To receive full credit for work made up during day(s) of AEP placement, work must be turned in to the AEP teacher by the end of the period/day assigned or to the teacher making the assignment by the due date. Otherwise, no credit will be given.

4. If a student has an excused absence on a day that AEP is assigned, an alternative date will be assigned.

5. Suspensions from activities: If a student is in the AEP room for more than three periods, that student will not be able to participate in any school extra-curricular activity until 8 a.m. the following day.

6. Any student chronically involved in the Alternative Education Program in one semester may face the following alternatives:

- External suspension from school.
- Referral made for comprehensive case study evaluation for the purpose of considering placement in an alternative education program other than Sycamore Middle School.

Regulations of the Alternative Education Program

1. The Alternative Education Program shall run from 8:20 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A 30 – minute lunch break will be held in the room (for students assigned all day) from 11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Students must bring their lunches with them. Students who attempt to bring lunches to those in the AEP room will be reported to the office for disciplinary action.

2. Students are to report to AEP on time.

3. No talking is permitted unless to ask questions of the supervisor. In this case, students must raise their hands and wait to be recognized.

4. Student must bring sufficient study or reading materials to AEP in order to engage in productive activity for the entire period. Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers to get materials once AEP has started.

5. While serving AEP, students must be working on assigned school work or reading. If assigned work is completed, the supervisor may assign further work or reading. If the student does not make progress with his/her school work, further disciplinary action may be imposed. Students who do not complete assigned work in AEP will not be allowed to make the work up later date and **will not** receive credit for the class that day.

6. Students are not to leave their assigned seats without the permission of the supervisor and are not to move desks, chairs, etc.

7. No cards, CD players, iPods, cell phones, coats, hats, etc. are allowed. Any items of this nature brought to AEP will be turned into the office.

8. Students are not to write on or in any way deface the desks, tables, books, magazines, etc.

9. Students are to cooperate with and show respect to the supervisors at all times or risk external suspension as a result.

10. Students are not to sleep in AEP. Progressive discipline may result.

11. If a student that participates in extra-curricular activities is in the AEP program for more than three class periods, that student athlete will not participate in a sport until 8 a.m. the following day.

SATURDAY SERVICE PROGRAM

In an effort to provide disciplinary consequences for students without removing them from classes, the Saturday Service Program has been instituted. The Saturday service Program may be assigned when a school administrator or designee deems it appropriate. A staff member will supervise the Saturday Service Program. Students should bring materials to study or read in the case that the service does not take the allotted time period.

Conditions of Saturday Service Program

1. A building administrator or designee assigns a student to the Saturday Service Program.

2. The student is to be in attendance in the assigned areas for the duration of the time.

3. Any student chronically involved in the Saturday Service Program may face more serious disciplinary consequences.

4. Failure/refusal to serve an assigned Saturday Service Program will result in additional consequences.

Regulation of the Saturday Service Program

1. The Saturday Service Program will be held on assigned Saturdays every month from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. Students are not permitted to eat or drink during Saturday Service. Restroom and water breaks will be permitted at the discretion of the supervisor.
2. Students are to enter through the main doors and report to the cafeteria at 8 a.m. for attendance to be taken and task(s) to be assigned.
3. No talking is permitted unless to ask questions of the supervisor. In this case students must wait to be recognized.
4. Students must bring sufficient study or reading materials to Saturday Service, in the case that the assigned tasks to do not take the allotted time period.
5. No cards, CD players, iPods, cell phones, etc. are allowed. Any items of this nature brought to Saturday Service will be taken to the office.
6. Students are not to leave their assigned areas without permission of the supervisor.
7. Students are not to write on or in any way deface school property.
8. Students are to cooperate with and show respect to the supervisor at all times or risk further disciplinary action.
9. Students are not to sleep during Saturday Service. Progressive discipline may result.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as a temporary exclusion of a student from school and school-related activities (this may include riding the bus) for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) school days. The authority to suspend a student is delegated to the superintendent, principal, assistant principal, and dean of students.

Conditions of suspension

1. Suspension is a major penalty which may be caused by a single, serious case or repeated cases of misconduct.
2. If a student is placed on suspension, he/she may not come to school or be on school property or at any school function including any extra-curricular activities at any time unless he/she has permission from an administrator.
3. Students who are suspended will be given the opportunity to make up work for equivalent academic credit. This includes students suspended from the school bus who do not have alternate transportation to school so long as the student's parents/guardians notify school officials that the student does not have alternate transportation to school.
4. After the third suspension for repeated acts of misconduct, a student will have a conference with the Principal. The student will be advised that future acts of misconduct may result in an expulsion hearing with the Board of Education.
5. Sycamore Middle School will facilitate the re-engagement of students who are suspended out-of-school, expelled, or returning from an alternative school setting. Appropriate and available activities could include a variety of supports, including, but not limited to; a re-entry meeting involving the student and parents/guardians, assignment of a staff mentor, establishment of a check-in process, counseling services and plans for regular communications with parents/guardians and/or outside support providers to facilitate re-engagement.

Pre-Suspension Conference

1. The authorized administrator or designee shall confer with any student who is under consideration for suspension prior to taking such disciplinary action.
2. When, in the opinion of the authorized administrator, a student poses an immediate threat to school personnel, other students or school property, or poses an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the student may be summarily removed from school without holding a pre-suspension conference as set forth above.

Student Suspension Notification

1. If the pre-suspension conference results in a decision to suspend, the parents of the student shall be advised immediately of the decision by phone and followed by a written notice sent by certified mail, return receipt requested.
2. The notice to the parents shall include:
 - A statement of the reasons for the suspension, including any school rule which has been violated.
 - The dates and duration of the suspension.

- A statement of the parents' right to request a review of the suspension with the District Hearing Officer, or the Board of Education.
- A statement that the failure to request such a review within five (5) days after receipt of the notice, or eight (8) days after date of the mailing, whichever is earlier, shall be deemed a waiver of the right to a review hearing with the hearing officer or the board.
- Students who are suspended out-of-school for longer than four days will be provided appropriate and available support services during the period of their suspension. Parents are responsible for transporting their student to and from the offered support services during the suspension period.

STUDENT SUSPENSION REVIEW HEARINGS

Hearing Structure

1. A suspension review hearing shall be conducted by a hearing officer or the Board of Education. The results of the hearing will be communicated in writing to the parents within five (5) days.
2. If reviewed by the hearing officer, a summary of the results of the hearing will be given to the Board of Education to review.
3. Refer to suspension letter.

During the school year, it may become necessary to amend these guidelines. The school administration reserves the right to make such changes. When changes are made, students will be notified by announcements in class, announcements on the intercom, and/or articles in the school newspaper or newsletter.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school for a period of time not to exceed two (2) calendar years (105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 105 ILCS 5/24-247). The authority to expel a student is delegated to the Board of Education, whose decision will be based on the recommendation of the superintendent.

Conditions of Expulsion

1. Expulsion from school is a major penalty that may be caused by a single, serious case or repeated cases of misconduct.
2. If a student is expelled from school, he/she may not come to school or be on or around school district property or at any school function, including extra-curricular activities on/off campus, at any time unless he/she has permission from an administrator.
3. Students who are expelled from school are withdrawn from all courses in progress and will receive no credit for the entire semester and subsequent semesters of the expulsion.

Student Expulsion Notification

1. The authorized administrator shall send a letter by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the parents of the student notifying them of the expulsion hearing.
2. The expulsion notice to the parents shall include:
 - A statement of the reasons for the proposed expulsion, including any school rule which has been violated.
 - The potential maximum duration of the expulsion.
 - The time and place of the expulsion hearing.
 - A statement of the parents' rights to be represented at the expulsion hearing by an attorney or other representative.
 - A copy of the expulsion hearing procedures.

Mandatory Expulsion

Any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school may be recommended for expulsion for a minimum of one year. Such recommendation for expulsion may be modified by the Board of Education on a case-by-case basis.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

School bus riders, while in transit, are under the jurisdiction of the school bus driver. It is recommended that all riders, parents of riders, and teachers become thoroughly familiar with the following regulations governing school bus riders.

1. According to state regulations, student transportation is provided from home to school and school to home only for students who live more than 1½ miles from school.
2. Students must be picked up and dropped off at the same location, Monday through Friday. Those requests to be transported to and/or from a daycare provider must be submitted to the Transportation Department for approval. Requests will be honored only if both the daycare provider's address and the student's home address qualify for transportation.
3. Due to the large number of students eligible for transportation, it is not possible to allow guests to ride with the regular bus students to or from school. Transportation **will not** be provided for birthday parties, overnights, girl/boy scouts, music lessons, dance lessons, study groups, etc. Bus drivers are not authorized to approve written or verbal requests. If a student has a special transportation need, parents or guardians must contact the Transportation Office at 899-8106 twenty-four hours prior to transportation being provided. Requests will be approved or denied on an individual basis. The Transportation Office hours are 7:00 – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when school is in session.
4. If a student moves and is eligible for transportation, it is imperative to contact not only the student's school, but also the Transportation Department to make necessary arrangements prior to the student being transported to and from school.
5. Permanent bus routes, stops and approximate pick up/drop off times have been established. Do not ask bus drivers to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; drivers are not permitted to do this except by proper authorization from the Director of Operations.
6. All students should be on time at their designated school bus stops to help keep the bus on schedule. Riders should be outside and ready to board the school bus a minimum of 5 minutes prior to the designated time the bus is scheduled to arrive.
7. Students should step on and off the bus in a timely manner, quietly, without crowding, pushing, or shoving.
8. LOADING
 - Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Stand quietly.
 - Do not move toward the bus until the bus has been brought to a complete stop.
 - When pupils must cross the road to be picked up, the driver, after looking for approaching cars, will give a hand signal to the pupils motioning them to cross. Pupils should wait for the driver's hand signal and cross promptly. Students should NEVER cross behind the bus.
9. UNLOADING
 - Observe safety precautions at discharge points. Where it is necessary to cross the roadway, proceed to a point at least 10 feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the roadway where the driver can observe the student. The student must wait for the hand signal from the bus driver before crossing in front of the bus.
 - Do not ask the bus driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; he/she is not permitted to do this except by proper authorization from a school official.
 - Students should NEVER cross behind the bus.
10. DO NOT linger around bus loading or unloading zones.
11. DO NOT leave the seat while the bus is in motion.
12. Be alert to a danger signal from the bus driver.
13. Remain in the bus in the event of a road emergency until the bus driver gives instructions.
14. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
15. Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
16. Remember that loud talking, laughing, and active play, or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
17. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad-crossing stop.
18. Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture at home. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Any damage to the bus should be reported to the driver immediately.
19. Students have a responsibility to keep the bus clean and do their part to keep the floor clear of waste paper and dirt and to keep the upholstering interior finish of the bus in excellent condition.
20. No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus.
21. No animals, birds, fish, etc., skateboards, in-line skates, weapons, toys, (cap guns, water pistols, baseball bats, etc.), glass objects or anything that could cause a potential danger can be transported on the school bus.
22. Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles.
23. Leave no lunches, books, or other articles on the bus.

24. Be courteous to fellow passengers and the bus driver.
25. Help look after the safety and comfort of younger students.
26. Fighting, the use of smoking materials and/or smoking on the bus, possession and/or consumption of alcohol, vandalism (destruction of property), use of profanity which is directed at fellow students and/or the bus driver. Direct insubordination to the bus driver's directions will not be tolerated.
27. Observe the same rules and regulations on other trips under school sponsorship as you observe at home and school. On such trips, students are directly responsible to the chaperone and teachers appointed by the school.

BUS CONDUCT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The following regulations shall apply to all students riding school buses in the Sycamore School District #427. It shall be the responsibility of the student and parent to be familiar with and obey the following rules.

PASSENGER REGULATIONS

Sycamore school bus drivers are responsible for students riding their buses just as teachers are in charge of their classroom. Students are required to obey the driver at all times. The privilege of riding the bus is dependent on good behavior and following rules. The purpose of these rules is to provide for a safe bus ride for all. Bus drivers are required to report any student who violates these rules. Violations are reported to the student's principal or designee who may take away the student's privilege to ride the bus until such time as permission to ride is reinstated. Students who are suspended from riding the bus must be present in school during the period of suspension. Failure to attend school during a period of suspension may result in referral to the county truant officer.

PASSENGER REGULATIONS FOR RIDING SYCAMORE SCHOOL BUSES

The following regulations apply to all students riding buses. The regulations have been categorized either as Minor Infraction or Major Infraction depending on its severity. Bus misconduct may also result in school disciplinary action.

MINOR INFRACTIONS

1. Excessive and unnecessary noise of any kind
2. Extending any part of the body out of a bus window or yelling out of the window
3. Feet or body parts in the aisle
4. Spitting, littering, eating, or drinking
5. Standing while the bus is in motion.
6. Making a noise of any kind at a railroad crossing

BUS CONDUCT REPORT (FOR MINOR INFRACTIONS)

- **1st Minor Infraction** – Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **2nd Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A **minimum one (1) to three (3) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **3rd Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A **minimum five (5) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **4th Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the Dean or designee and the student involved. A **minimum ten (10) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.

MAJOR INFRACTIONS

1. Fighting, harassment, intimidation, injury or property damage
2. Insubordination
3. A physical attack toward anyone
4. Throwing or shooting any objects inside the bus, out bus windows, or at the bus
5. Vandalism of any kind to inside or outside of bus
6. Using obscene or unacceptable language, gestures, remarks, or signs directed at anyone
7. Possession or use of tobacco (any smoking materials including matches and/or lighters), firecrackers, alcohol, or a controlled substance
8. Possession or use of weapons, look-alike weapons, or anything that can be used as a weapon

BUS CONDUCT REPORT (FOR MAJOR INFRACTIONS)

When applicable, restitution for damages must be paid prior to reinstatement of bus riding privileges.

- **1st Major Infraction** -- **Minimum three (3) to five (5) day** bus suspension.
- **2nd Major Infraction** – **Minimum five (5) day** bus suspension.
- **3rd Major Infraction** -- **Minimum ten (10) day** bus suspension.
- **4th Major Infraction** -- **Minimum fifteen (15) day** bus suspension.

In cases involving repeated misconduct (Minor or Major Infraction) or in cases of an extremely serious nature or gross mis-

conduct, bus privileges may be withdrawn for the remainder of the school year.

A parent may request a conference regarding their child's bus transportation and/or conduct with the bus driver, Director of Operations, building principal, or designee at anytime.

When a conference is held to review bus conduct, which may result in bus privileges being withdrawn for the remainder of the school year, the bus driver(s) may be present along with the Director of Transportation and the building principal or designee.

Bus disciplinary problems regarding special education students will be handled on an individual basis according to I.E.P.'s, state regulations and Board of Education policies.

This policy and the disciplinary procedures have been adopted by the Board of Education. The appeal process for any disciplinary action is the same as stated in the Sycamore School District #427 Policy Manual.

ACTIVITIES

ATHLETICS

Aim and Philosophy of Interscholastic Programs for Sycamore School District No. 427

The aim of the interscholastic program of Sycamore Middle School is to provide participation for boys and girls to promote friendly rivalry, improve playing skills, and build good sportsmanship. The philosophy of our athletic program is stated in terms of the player, school and community.

- For the player, athletic competition offers opportunities for improving and displaying athletic skills, good sportsmanship, and the development of physical vigor.
- For the student body, the athletic program provides for developing good school morale, sportsmanship, and for improving qualities of fair play and courtesy.
- For the community, the athletic program affords opportunities for good school-community relationships.

The athletic program at Sycamore Middle School is part of the educational process based on policies set forth by the Board of Education. These programs will be available for all students who wish to participate, providing they are safely staffed with coaches. Notice will be given to the student body in advance of each season so they can enroll. Adequate interscholastic competition will be available in each sport to create interest and to gain playing skills. Games and meets are scheduled giving consideration to numbers and distance traveled.

ATHLETIC OPPORTUNITIES AT SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL				
6th Grade Interscholastic Sports	7th Grade Interscholastic Sports		8th Grade Interscholastic Sports	
Girls and Boys Scholastic Bowl Wrestling Cross Country	Girls Volleyball Basketball Pom Pons Cheerleading Track Cross Country Scholastic Bowl	Boys Football Basketball Wrestling Track Cross Country Scholastic Bowl	Girls Volleyball Basketball Pom Pons Cheerleading Track Cross Country Scholastic Bowl	Boys Football Basketball Wrestling Track Cross Country Scholastic Bowl

The purpose of our athletic program is to provide additional opportunities for students to develop good sportsmanship and team play in a supervised setting, to increase basic skills in the respective sports, and to simply enjoy being able to participate.

Athletic Fee

A participation fee will be charged to boys and girls who are out for athletics. There is a maximum fee per student at the middle school and a district family cap. Costs are reviewed annually, and coaches will inform the athletes of required fees. The fee is payable prior to participation in each sport in which the student is involved. This fee is not refundable after participation in the first contest.

Dissemination of Athletic Rules

This policy shall be incorporated in the Athletic Handbook and shall be disseminated to all athletes at the beginning of each sport.

Eligibility

Any student at Sycamore Middle School involved in an extra-curricular athletic activity is expected to be passing all subjects (no F's).

Eligibility will be checked on a weekly basis. If an athlete is failing a class, as reported to the Athletic Director through our grade reporting system, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in athletic competition for that next full week. Parents of a student ruled academically ineligible will be notified. A student is considered passing on the first day of a new quarter.

Insurance

All students are covered by school insurance, if all school fees are paid. A student must have insurance or have a signed waiver indicating the family has insurance coverage to participate in athletics.

Physical Exams

Each student-athlete must take, pass, and file with the athletic office a physical examination each year. This exam must be completed

and turned into the athletic office before an athlete can start interscholastic practice. Physical examinations are good for thirteen (13) months from the date of issue.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Social activities at Sycamore Middle School are open only to students who are registered, enrolled and attending academic classes in the middle school at the time of the activity. To participate in activities, a student must possess a current, valid school ID.

Social growth is important to the growth of all middle school students. Much growth can take place during the regular school day and the opportunities that are available to students through this channel. In addition, the staff will assist students in planning social activities that occur outside of the regular school program. Participation in activities may be tied to the school discipline plan. **Students who have been suspended, assigned AEP for any portion of that day, or have accumulated 30 reminder points on the discipline system will not be allowed to attend the activity.**

DANCE GUIDELINES

We would like to remind everyone about the requirements and procedures for a PTO dance. Not everyone knows the challenges in putting on a safe, fun activity for middle schoolers, but because of those challenges, there are rules we follow without exception.

Students must have a CURRENT I.D. to enter. If a student has lost his/her I.D., a new one is available for purchase in the office for \$2 during office hours. Student may be allowed in the dance if they forgot their ID by purchasing an ID at the door for an additional fee; this is in addition to the entrance fee. Students must be here by 7:30 PM. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Doors are locked at 7:30PM. Students at -30 or below will not be admitted. Students who have been in AEP for more than two periods of the dance day will not be admitted.

The dance rules are as follows:

1. Chaperones and their child(ren) may enter early for free, but others that ride with them will need to pay and wait outside for appropriate entrance time.
2. All rules enforced during a Sycamore Middle School class day will be enforced during dances.
3. Arrive before 7:30 and stay until dismissed.
4. Current I.D.'s are required. Temporary I.D.s will only be allowed when authorized by the principal or assistant principal.
5. Appropriate dress is required; no hats are allowed.
6. Gum should be left at home.
7. Cell phones should only be used to call for a ride home.
8. MP3 players and iPods should be left at home.
9. Food and beverages must be consumed in the Commons.
10. Show respect in the Commons with all food and water.
11. Appropriate space should be maintained between dancers.
12. Walk at all times.
13. Fighting will result in immediate expulsion for the rest of the dance, as well as future dances.
14. Inappropriate behavior may result in loss of privileges to attend future dances.
15. Appropriate behavior is required in the basketball gym:
 - Don't sit or stand on the wrestling mats.
 - Use the ball safely for the number of people in the gym. Long shots are not allowed.
 - Play appropriately.
 - Treat backboards and rims appropriately.
 - Be respectful of other people's games.

Please place basketballs on rack when you leave.

EIGHTH GRADE PARTY

The 8th Grade Party is a casual dress party to celebrate the end of middle school and entrance to high school. Please note – tickets must be purchased in advance for the eighth grade party. Doors will be locked at 7:30pm – no late admittance will be allowed. Eligibility requirements during 4th quarter are:

- If a child is enrolled at the beginning of 4th quarter, a student must increase his/her points by the required number of points in order to attend. (at least 5, but determined by 8th grade staff 3rd quarter)
- Team discretion may be used to determine eligibility.
- Earn no Out of School Suspensions.
- No full day of ISS (or partial days that add up to a full day)

- Partial days in ISS and detentions are subject to review by 8th grade staff and could result in a student being ineligible for the party.
- Bus conduct reports will be reviewed and infractions have potential to exclude a student from the party.
- Point balance above -30

STUDENT ACTIVITIES CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in extra/intra-curricular and interscholastic athletics at Sycamore Community School District No. 427 is a **privilege** extended to the student body by the Board of Education. Student participants act as ambassadors of the School District. **Accordingly, they are expected to hold themselves to the highest standard at all time.**

The Sycamore community has also defined a set of core values. They are: Honesty, Integrity, Trustworthiness, Loyalty, Fairness, Caring, Respect, Citizenship, Responsibility, and Cooperation. We expect all students and staff to strive toward developing and displaying these core values. Since student activities are a privilege, students who choose to be involved have the additional opportunities and accompanying responsibilities related to the district's goals to learn, accept and display these core values.

APPLICATION OF EXTRA/INTRA-CURRICULAR DISCIPLINE POLICY

The policy applies to all students in extra/intra-curricular activities and interscholastic athletics at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427.

STANDARD OF CONDUCT

Any student who participates in extra/intra-curricular or interscholastic athletic activities is prohibited from engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct or any other conduct during the entire calendar year, **either on or off school grounds**, which does not meet the ideals for good character, citizenship, and sportsmanship including, but not limited to, conduct for which an arrest has been made by law enforcement officials.

Definitions

1. **Gross Disobedience or Misconduct** is any conduct, behavior, or activity, as defined by the Board of Education in its policies, which causes or may reasonably cause school authorities to forecast substantial injury or disruption or material interference with school activities or the rights of other students or school personnel. Gross disobedience may occur on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school function. It also may occur off school grounds, provided, however, that a direct relationship must exist between the conduct of the student and the school's educational function.
2. **Other conduct** is any conduct, behavior, or activity which does not meet the ideals for good character, citizenship, and sportsmanship including, but not limited to, conduct for which an arrest is made by law enforcement officials or conduct which violates the code of conduct.
3. **Interscholastic Athletic Activity** is an athletic activity sponsored by the School District which involves athletic competition between students sponsored by the School District and students sponsored by other school districts or private schools.
4. **Extra/Intra-Curricular Activities** (including attendance at dances, assemblies, athletic events, etc.) are those activities sponsored by the school district which have open membership to interested or qualified students. All or parts of the activities take place outside the classroom, and interaction may or may not include students from other schools or communities.
5. **Participation Rules:** The Athletic Director, coaches, sponsors or other supervising faculty may establish participation rules, including but not limited to: curfew, attendance at functions, attire, or other rules deemed necessary by the coach/sponsor. These rules shall be distributed in writing, as well as explained verbally. In the event a new rule is activated during the year, it is the coaches'/sponsors' responsibility to disseminate the information verbally as well as in writing.
6. **Suspension**, as defined in this Student Activities Code of Conduct is the exclusion of a student-athlete from extra/intra-curricular activities or interscholastic athletic activities for more than one activity or contest or date if there are multiple activities on one date. The suspension of a student for one athletic contest or one extra/intra-curricular activity can be administered by a coach or sponsor as a consequence of violating team rules or this code of conduct.
7. **Review Board** is the board governing any appeals within the extra/intra-curricular and interscholastic athletic programs at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427. This Review Board shall consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, one non-coaching/sponsor faculty member (appointed by the Principal) and one coach/sponsor (appointed by the Athletic Director.)

STUDENT ACTIVITIES DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY

Procedures and practices will be distributed by the coaches before the season begins.

Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427 stands strongly behind the commitment to a drug-free extra/intra-curricular program and believes in the educational value of extra/intra-curricular activities. The following rules apply to all high school and middle school extra/intra-curricular participants. **Violations of these rules carry significant consequences. The consequences for rule violations are cumulative from first infraction throughout your eighth grade year.**

EXTRA/INTRA-CURRICULAR RULES

1. Every extra/intra-curricular participant shall not use or possess any form of alcoholic beverage or drugs unless prescribed by his/her physician.

2. Every extra/intra-curricular participant shall not smoke (including electronic cigarettes) or chew tobacco nor possess it.

SELF-HELP CLAUSE (1ST INFRACTION ONLY)

It is the desire of Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427 to assist all students with the rehabilitation of substance abuse problems. In keeping with this philosophy, an extra/intra-curricular participant will have the opportunity to seek self-help without jeopardizing his/her immediate participation or eligibility by following these procedures (such a self-referral is recorded as a step one violation) by following these procedures:

1. Student must notify building administrator or student assistance team member voluntarily of his/her involvement with drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
2. Parent notification will be made by the building administrator or student assistant team member.
3. Student immediately goes through a school approved assessment program at his/her own expense.
4. Assessment recommendations must be followed at the student's own expense.
5. Agency verification of the student's completion of #3 and #4 must be made to the school.

INFRACTION OF RULES

All infractions must be observed by a certified/non-certified staff member of this school district or a law enforcement agency and must be submitted to the building administrator within ten school days of the violation.

If these infractions occur in school or at school-related events, students are also subject to disciplinary actions outlined in the "Student Behavior and Discipline" section of the student handbook.

Consequences to violations are as follows:

1st Infraction: Non-Athletic Extra/Intra-Curricular

- Suspension from participation and attendance of all extra/intra-curricular activities that the student is involved in for four weeks. If there are less than four weeks remaining in the school year, the time will be pro-rated to the next year.

1st Infraction: Athletic

- Suspension from 20% of contests for the current season, or if there is not 20% remaining the suspension will be pro-rated to the next season of participation.
- Athletes must attend all practices or meetings, although they will not be allowed to participate in any contests.
- *The extra/intra-curricular participant will be strongly encouraged to seek an assessment program at his/her own expense.*

2nd Infraction

Suspension from participation in extra/intra-curricular activities for the season, term or year, depending on the structure of the program. The student **must** undergo and complete an assessment of potential chemical problems at his/her own expense and follow recommendations made. This completed assessment is **required** to re-enter the Sycamore extra/intra-curricular program. Notification of this completed program **must** be made in writing from the assessment agency to the school administrator.

3rd Infraction

Suspension for up to two calendar years, but not less than one year. The student **must** undergo and complete an assessment program and strictly adhere to assessment recommendations at his/her own expense before he/she re-enters the Sycamore intra/extra-curricular program.

4th Infraction

Suspension from either extra/intra-curricular programs while in attendance at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427.

The participant may appeal a suspension within five school days. This request to review the suspension may be oral or in writing, directed to the Athletic Director. The Administration will convene a Review Board in accordance with the Extra/Intra-curricular Policy. Sycamore School District #427 is committed to drug-free activities and is a member of DCP/SAFE (DeKalb County Partnership for a Safe, Active, and Family Environment).

EMERGENCY PLANS

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the health and safety of our students and staff, several safety drills are practiced throughout the year: fire, disaster, bus evacuation, and Intruder. Safety information and procedures are communicated to students via staff members. Students and staff should proceed quickly and in an orderly manner to designated areas, where student attendance will be taken.

In the event the building would need to be evacuated for other reasons, students and staff will receive instruction as to the specific procedures for each evacuation. Students should proceed directly to the specified areas, without stopping at their lockers.

It is very serious to tamper with the fire alarm, fire equipment, and the Blue Point Solution systems. Tampering with alarms, equipment, or intentional misuse will result in a referral to the School Resource Officer and/or the Sycamore Police Department.

WEATHER RELATED EVENTS

It is sometimes necessary to close school due to heavy snow. If parents are in doubt as to whether there will be school, check the district's website at www.syc427.org or tune in your radio to **WLBK, DeKalb 1360AM, WSQR, Sycamore 1560AM, WNIU 89.5FM, or WDKB (B95) 94.9FM** on your radio dial during the early morning hours. In addition, our telephone and email blast systems should alert each family. **Please do not call the school or the district office.** Every attempt to announce school closings by 6:30 a.m. will be made, but this is not guaranteed.

