

Stephenson Area Public Schools



K-12 Parent/Student Handbook 2025-2026

Our mission

Stephenson Area Public Schools provides a safe environment to educate, challenge, and inspire students to be lifelong learners.

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WELCOME

This handbook is provided to you and your parents to help answer your questions about school. This is a guide and the administration has the right to adjust per their discretion. School can and should be an enjoyable experience. The rules and policies help to ensure that all students have a chance to enjoy school and learn in a pleasant setting. Have a great year!

Mission Statement

Stephenson Area Public Schools provides a safe environment to educate, challenge, and inspire students to be lifelong learners.

Vision Statement

In partnership with our community, Stephenson Area Public Schools serves as a premier school district by providing student-centered educational programs and encouraging students to develop to their fullest potential.

Belief Statements

Stephenson Area Public Schools believes:

All students have unlimited potential and deserve access to a quality education.
In Eagle (PRIDE) *Positivity *Responsibility *Integrity *Dedication *Empathy

CHAPTER 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook Acknowledgement

In an effort to promote a better understanding of Stephenson Area Public School rules and expectations, parents and students will be asked to review and sign a form acknowledging they have reviewed the handbook.

This handbook may be amended during the year without notice. This handbook in the latest version is applicable to all students upon the implementation of any change. The administration will notify all parents/guardians and students of any changes to the handbook. The current handbook is available on the District's website (stephenson.k12.mi.us).

General School Information

This handbook is a summary of the school's rules and expectations, and is not a comprehensive statement of school procedures. The Board's comprehensive policy manual is available for public inspection through the District's website (stephenson.k12.mi.us) or at Central office, located at:

Stephenson Area Public Schools – Central Office
W526 Division St.
Stephenson, MI 49887

Announcements

Announcements will be read daily and can be accessed through the SAPS web page. Announcement requests must be emailed to the Main Office **NO LATER THAN 3:00 PM** the day before the announcement is to be made. All announcements **MUST** be approved by the class advisor – students may not put items in the announcements. Only **EMERGENCY** announcements will be made throughout the school day. Announcements, posters and notices to be placed in the hallways must first be approved by an administrator.

Community Outreach

As a service to the community, Stephenson Area Public Schools has an automated phone service. In the event of school closures, emergencies or other important information, this service will generate an automated phone call. This call will go to the contact number listed in PowerSchool. Please make sure that all contact information is up to date with the office.

Periodically, parents/guardians will also receive email newsletters and other correspondences. This will be sent via ParentSquare to the email listed in PowerSchool. Please make sure that information is up to date with the office.

Schools of Choice

The Michigan legislature under the 1996-1997 School Aid Act (SB 851, 1996) permits school districts to accept for enrollment non-resident students residing within the same intermediate school district (ISD). The Stephenson Area Public School District will accept applications from non-resident students based on available space. For additional information contact the Superintendent's Office.

Lockers

Lockers are available for all students. Students should place only their belongings in their own lockers. Money and other valuables should not be kept in lockers at any time. The school is not responsible for Lost or stolen property. Lockers are the property of the school and are assigned for students' educational needs and use; they may be searched and/or inspected at the discretion of administration. All lockers are provided with school locks at no cost. Students may not use their own personal locks to secure their lockers. Damage to the locker or the cost of cleaning a locker will be assessed to the student assigned to the locker.

Visitors

All visitors, including parents/guardians and siblings, are required to enter through the front door (Railroad Street) of the building and proceed immediately to the Main Office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school. Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location that they are visiting. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag to their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the Main Office and sign out before leaving the school.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct his or herself in an appropriate manner will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespass and/or disruptive behavior.

Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination Statement

The Stephenson Area Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, or religion in its programs and activities. If any person believes that the Stephenson Area Public School District has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations regarding discrimination, he/she may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to the local Civil Rights Coordinator at the address found below. If after an informal discussion with an investigation by the Civil Rights Coordinator (CRC) the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision, he/she may reduce the grievance to writing and initiate the formal grievance procedure which includes:

- Step 1: Investigation by CRC and response
- Step 2: Appeal to the Superintendent
- Step 3: Appeal to the Board of Education
- Step 4: Appeal to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the School District's non-discrimination policies:

Jerry Sardina
Stephenson Area Public Schools
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887
906-753-2222 ext. 110

The School District's complaint procedure may be obtained from the Superintendent.

For further information, you may also contact:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750
Cleveland, OH 44114-2611
Telephone: 216-522-4970
FAX: 216-522-2573; TDD: 877-521-2172
E-mail: OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov

24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools Policy

In keeping with its mandate to protect Michigan students and foster effective learning environments, the Michigan State Board of Education strongly recommends that schools institute local smoke-and-tobacco-free schools policies that **prohibit all tobacco use in all school-related situations, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year.**

Tobacco use is a danger to everyone, capable of killing and disabling both those who use the product and those who are exposed to others' use. It can be immediately life threatening for those who have asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Because the danger of tobacco use is now so well known, the majority of Michigan residents are protected by family policies that ban tobacco smoke in their homes. It is therefore reasonable to assume that most Michigan families do not want their children exposed to tobacco in school.

In addition to being a deadly health hazard, exposure to tobacco has demonstrated negative effects on school performance. Research suggests that exposure to tobacco smoke is related to cognitive deficits, even at extremely low levels of exposure. Analysis of the Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey results indicates that students who are low-performing in school are twice as likely to use tobacco and ten times more likely to smoke heavily than high-performing students. Tobacco use and exposure also interfere with school attendance, decreasing opportunities for learning for those who use tobacco, as well as for those with respiratory illnesses.

Research also suggest that school health policies prohibiting tobacco use, when consistently enforced, can curb youth smoking both on and off school premises. This Policy on 24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools builds on existing State Board of Education policies including the Policy on Coordinated School Health Programs to Support Academic Achievement and Healthy Schools, Policy on Comprehensive School Health Education, and Policy on the Management of Asthma in Schools.

Stephenson Area Public Schools 24/7 Tobacco -Free Schools Policy is outlined below:

- 1) Stephenson Area Public Schools **prohibits all use of tobacco products.** Research suggests that young people are strongly influenced to use tobacco by the role modeling of adults and peers. The research is also unequivocal that tobacco smoke results in serious, ongoing health problems for children and adolescents. Schools should therefore prohibit the use of any tobacco product in all school-related situations, by any person, at any time, in any location, and at any event. **Stephenson Area Public Schools 24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools Policy** prohibits the use of all types of tobacco on all school property and at all school sponsored events and functions on or off campus, by all people (including students, employees, visitors, contractors, delivery drivers, etc.).
 - a) **“Any tobacco product”** includes but is not limited to, **cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco, snus, snuff, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, waterpipe, vapor product, electronic smoking device, heated tobacco product.** Tobacco products include all products deemed to be within the regulatory

authority of the US Food and Drug Administration Center for Tobacco Products in 21 U.S.C. 387 through 387u.

- b) **“Any person”** includes **students, staff, visitors, all groups using school property, and any other persons**. Because the State Board of Education believes that public education’s responsibility extends to the health and learning of all students, alternative and vocational programs are included in this prohibition.
 - c) **“Any time”** means **24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year**.
 - d) **“Any location”** includes **the school’s property, grounds, buildings, and vehicles, even when school is out of session or the event is sponsored by another organization**.
 - e) **“Any event”** includes **all school-sponsored events, whether on or off school property**.
- 2) Stephenson Area Public Schools 24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools policy prohibits tobacco advertising or promotion. Studies suggest that tobacco advertising and promotion, influence tobacco use. Schools should therefore prohibit tobacco advertising or promotion:
- a) On signs
 - b) On clothing such as T-shirts, caps, or bags.
 - c) Through sponsorship of school events.
- 3) Stephenson Area Public Schools identifies the responsibility of the school administrator to:
- a) Communicate this policy verbally to students, staff, family members, and visitors, at school events, through signage, and in the student code of conduct.
 - b) Develop and implement procedures for consistent and fair enforcement.
 - c) Develop educational alternatives to suspension.
 - d) Treat violators who are students or staff with disciplinary action in the same magnitude and manner as violations of other school policies.
 - e) Ensure that visitors who violate the policy discontinue using the tobacco product or leave the premises.
 - f) Include the expectation that the prohibition will be enforced in contracts with outside groups who use the school building.
 - g) Coordinate with local law enforcement of the Youth Tobacco Act and the Michigan Penal Code related to tobacco use.
- 4) Stephenson Area Public Schools 24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools Policy encourages and helps students and staff to quit using tobacco. Nearly 46 percent of students who are current smokers have tried to quit smoking in the past year. Smokers who quit before age 30 will undo much of the health damage caused by tobacco use. Schools should therefore provide access to developmentally-appropriate cessation programs and/or information about community cessation programs.
- 5) Stephenson Area Public Schools 24/7 Tobacco-Free Schools Policy builds on existing Board policies related to coordinated school health programs, comprehensive school health education, and management of asthma.

Animals

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a disability. This rule prohibiting animals on school property may be temporarily waived by an administrator in the case of a unique educational opportunity for students, provided that: (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

Rollerblades, Skateboards, Etc.

Students shall not use or possess rollerblades, roller-skates, skateboards, scooters or other similar devices on school grounds at any time, whether during or after school hours.

Loitering

Loitering is considered staying on school property without direct supervision of a staff member. Loitering on school property will result in detentions and can result in the police being called to arrest violators

School Volunteers

All school volunteers must complete the “Volunteer Application Form” and must be approved before assisting at the school. A background check is required. For school-wide volunteer opportunities, please contact a school administrator. Volunteers are required to check in and out at the main office and receive a visitor badge before going to their destination.

Emergency School Closings

In case of bad weather and other local emergencies, please listen to local radio or television stations to be advised of school closings or early dismissals. If bad weather or other emergency occurs during the day, please listen to local media stations for possible early dismissal information. For your convenience, a call will be sent to the phone number we have on file. It will also be shown on the school website. Please do not call school officials to inquire if school will be in session.

For your child’s safety, make certain your child knows ahead of time where to go in case of an early dismissal. If we dismiss early for an emergency, all after-school functions may be cancelled at the discretion of administration.

Video Monitoring Systems

A video monitoring system may be used on school busses and a video monitoring system may be used in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors, and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on video, that recording may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal conduct is recorded, a copy of the recording may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

Accommodating Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities. Persons with disabilities having questions about accessibility or needing accommodations should contact the superintendent or school administrator. Notification of the need for accommodation should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program, or meeting.

Student Fundraising

Fundraising activities by school organizations must be approved in advance by a school administrator. Organization sponsors assume the responsibility for supervising the project, accounting for funds, making reports, and any other details involved in the project.

CHAPTER 2 – ATTENDANCE, PROMOTION & GRADUATION

Attendance

There is a direct correlation between academic achievement and regular, prompt attendance. A student's success in school and future career activities depends on positive attendance habits. Regular and consistent school attendance helps to develop responsibility and self-discipline; it also prepares students for the world of work. The attendance policy is in place to promote and encourage positive attendance habits for each student.

Missing school on a regular basis can have a large impact on the student's learning as indicated below.

If the student misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling, that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year

Extreme absenteeism can influence a student's grade and earning of credit. It is considered excessive for any student to be absent more than twelve (12) times per semester, whether excused or unexcused. At this point the student may be referred to the truancy officer. An absence is defined as missing ten (10) minutes or more of any class period.

Students are expected to be in school and on time to class **every day**. Students should be fully aware that the interactions in the classroom constitute a valid and critical part of the coursework. They cannot be duplicated. Students should be attentive and prepared with proper materials to be actively involved in the class.

Every effort should be made to schedule routine appointments after school hours. Family vacations should be planned during holidays outlined on the school calendar. A trip slip is required prior to a planned vacation of two (2) or more days if the student wishes to receive credit for missed work.

Definition of Absences

There are four (4) general categories of absences: excused, school-related, unexcused, and suspensions.

1) Excused

- These include illness, health appointments, funerals or other issues deemed important enough to miss school. Students who have appointments during lunch may be required to provide appropriate documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.
- Prearranged absences are those absences that cause a student to miss three (3) days or more in a row. Parents/guardians are **discouraged** from excusing their children from school for trips. A student who wishes to take a planned vacation of three (3) or more days will be excused if: (a) A request is made at least five (5) school days before the trip. (b) A trip slip is signed by the parent/guardian AND an administrator. (c) This form is returned to the attendance office before leaving on the trip. (d) Student shall promptly turn in missed school work upon their return to receive credit for work missed.

- c) Observance of religious instruction and/or holidays. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to an administrator at least three (3) calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s).
- d) The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence. If a student's absence is excused, he/she will be able to make up any missed work, including homework and tests. The student will be permitted the same number of days as he/she was absent to turn in the make-up work. The student is responsible for obtaining assignments from his/her teachers.

2) Absences that are school-related

- a) There are field trips, athletic contests, or any other activities that are required for class work, club participation, or team participation for which a student must miss regularly scheduled classes. Students must have written parental permission for field trips. Students are also responsible for obtaining assignments or arranging for make-up work with their teachers prior to leaving on a trip. When students attend extracurricular events or field trips, they are expected to be in school on time the next morning with work completed as agreed upon with the teacher.
- b) Students will not be allowed to miss the same class more than two (2) times during the week for school-related activities. The only exception is when the activity is for more than two (2) consecutive school days. Students who miss several days of school due to excused or unexcused absences may be held from leaving school for an activity.

3) Absences that are unexcused

- a) Leaving school during the school day without permission or without properly checking out in the main office.
- b) Skipping class, leaving for more than ten (10) minutes of any period or without the permission of the teacher.
- c) All other absences not listed specifically as excused absences.
- d) Administration has the authority to deem the absence excused or unexcused. The fact that a parent simply calls in to report an absence does **NOT** automatically excuse the absence.

4) Suspensions

Suspensions are counted as **excused** absences. Suspensions are an absence for disciplinary reasons. Work may be made up during the period of suspension at full credit, but must be turned in immediately upon the student's return to class.

Tardies

Students are allowed a four (4) minute passing period between classes. Tardiness to class impedes students' and teachers' ability to effectively begin a lesson and disrupts others' learning. In each class, the third unexcused tardy per marking period and each successive three (3) tardies will be subject to disciplinary action. Tardiness to school in the morning will be handled in the same fashion as tardies to all other class hours. Tardiness of ten (10) minutes or more may be dealt with as an unexcused absence for the period. Excessive tardiness (6 or more and each successive) will be treated as insubordination and result in disciplinary measures.

Absence Procedures

Notify the office. When a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian shall call the attendance line as soon as possible (preferably by 8:00 AM on the day of the absence) but no later than the next school day after an absence occurs. If no contact is made within five (5) school days of the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused. It is the students and parents/guardians' responsibility to check the accuracy of PowerSchool attendance on a regular basis.

Checking In and Out of School

All students leaving must sign out in the office, receive permission beforehand and double-check with the secretary to ensure that a parent/guardian has called to excuse the absence. Failure to sign out properly will result in an unexcused absence. The same procedure holds true for students who are returning from a previous appointment. All students are required to check-in with the main office to secure a pass to class and to credit the absence as excused or unexcused. The school, acting in loco parentis, requires all students regardless of age unless living on their own, to obtain parent/guardian permission before signing out of school. Emancipated minors must receive administrative approval before signing out of school.

Michigan Law Attendance Requirements

Michigan law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between ages six (6) and eighteen (18) (*unless the child has already completed high school graduation requirements*) shall assure that the child attends public school during the entire school year. Michigan law requires that the student's attendance be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district.

Students who are over compulsory attendance age, and who are absent without a valid excuse for ten (10) or more consecutive days, will be dropped from enrollment. Students who have been dropped and have not attained the age of eighteen (18), or whose class has not graduated may return to school within five (5) school days of the beginning of a semester.

A student upon reaching eighteen (18) years of age has reached adult status according to Michigan law. Obtaining adult status **does not exempt** the student from school policies and rules. If a student reaching the age of eighteen (18) wishes the age of majority status, it is his/her responsibility to pick up the appropriate form in the office, sign it, and return it to the office. Proof of age of majority must be made by the driver's license or birth certificate. See "Age of Majority (p. 71)."

****All School Rules Apply to All Students Regardless of Age****

Michigan law includes the following exceptions to the mandatory school attendance requirement:

- 1) The parent/legal guardian of a child who is at least sixteen (16) has provided to school officials a written notice that the child has the permission of the parent/guardian to stop attending school.
- 2) The child is attending a state approved nonpublic school, which teaches subjects comparable to those taught in the public schools to children of corresponding age and grade.
- 3) The child is less than nine (9) years of age and does not reside within 2-1/2 miles by the nearest traveled road of a public school. If transportation is furnished for pupils in the school district of the child's residence, this subdivision does not apply.
- 4) The child is age twelve (12) or thirteen (13) and attends confirmation classes conducted for a period of five (5) months or less.
- 5) The child is regularly enrolled in a public school while attending religious instruction classed for not more than two (2) class hours per week. Off public school property during public school hours, upon written request of the parent/legal guardian.

- 6) The child is being educated at the child's home by his or her parent/guardian in an organized educational program in the subject areas or reading, spelling, mathematics, science, history, civics, literature, writing, and English grammar.

Truancy

A parent or other person in parental relation who fails to comply with the Michigan Compulsory School Law is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than \$5.00 nor more than \$50.00, or imprisonment for not less than two (2) nor more than ninety (90) days, or both.

Attendance Incentive Policy

Regular attendance in class directly affects learning and teaching. In order to encourage regular attendance, the following incentives for good attendance will be instituted.

Any student who has met ALL of the following requirements in a class will be permitted to be exempted from the semester final exam for that class:

- 1) Three (3) days or less total absences in that class. Students that miss more than three (3) days of that class due to illness may qualify for an exemption if they have a doctor's note; and
- 2) No unexcused absences; and
- 3) No suspension days (in or out of school); and
- 4) Has not been tardy more than twice per semester; and
- 5) Has attained passing grades both marking periods.

However, all students must take a minimum of three (3) exams per semester

Tardy means the student is not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings and class begins.

***Note:** It is to be understood that this is an incentive program which includes privileges and rewards, not rights. No exceptions are to be made for not meeting the required criteria. It is the students' and parent/guardians' responsibility to check the accuracy of PowerSchool attendance on a regular basis.

***Attendance records **CANNOT** be changed to meet the incentive requirements.

Grading and Promotion

Grade	GPA	%	Grade	GPA	%
A	4.000	93-100	C+	2.333	77-79
A-	3.667	90-92	C	2.000	73-76
B+	3.333	87-89	C-	1.667	70-72
B	3.000	83-86	D+	1.333	67-69
B-	2.667	80-82	D	1.000	63-66
			D-	0.667	60-62
			F	0.000	0-59

Grades can be viewed on PowerSchool or the parents/guardians can request a report card be sent home after each quarter. Contact the office to obtain PowerSchool login information for both the student and the parents/guardians. For questions regarding grades, please contact the classroom teacher.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on standardized tests and other assessments.

Final grades are based on the percentage earned each quarter and semester exam. The final grade will be computed as follows: 40% for each quarter and 20% for the semester exam. In some instances, a credit/no credit could be given for a course at the administrator's discretion.

Honor Roll

Honor rolls will be published for each marking period. The honor roll is divided into three (3) levels: High Honors (all A's, 4.0), Honors (3.5 plus), and Honorable Mention (3.0-3.5) Any grade below C eliminates the student from any honor roll. Grade point averages are computed on the above listed values.

Homework

Homework is used as a way for students to practice what they have learned in the classroom. The time requirements and the frequency of homework will vary depending on a student's teacher, ability and grade level.

The requirements and grading procedures for each course will be explained by the teacher at the beginning of the course. Tests, exams, homework, and other assignments are determined by the teacher.

Progress is continuously available for parents/guardians to monitor through PowerSchool. Parent-Teacher conferences will be held periodically to communicate with parents/guardians. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to confer with teachers regarding work and progress as concerns and needs arise. If there is a concern regarding an assignment or grade, the student or parent/guardian should arrange to discuss the concern with the teacher. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, an appointment may be made to confer with an administrator.

Late Work Policy (Grades 6-12)

All work is due on the assigned due date. Work, with the exception of daily work and exit tickets, may be taken up to five (5) days late at the discretion of the teacher with the following deductions in points.

Days late	Percentage of original points possible
1	90%
2	80%
3	70%
4	60%
5	50%

Example: Student turns in a 100-point project two (2) days late. The teacher grades the project per the rubric and the student earns 90 points on the project. The grade is then 80% of 90. Therefore, the student's grade is 72 points on the 100-point project.

Students who miss work due to an **excused** absence should turn in the work upon their return to school for full credit. Students who miss quizzes or tests will be required to schedule a make-up time with the teacher upon returning to school. All make-up quizzes and tests should be completed within three (3) school days of returning to school for full credit.

Students who miss work due to an **unexcused absence** will follow the late work policy listed above.

If circumstances arise that cause a student to get behind on their work, the student should meet with the Student Success Coordinator. The Student Success Coordinator will work with the teacher and student to develop a plan to get the student back on track.

Students who miss class due to a school-related activity, including sports and club events, are responsible for obtaining assignments or making arrangements for make-up work with their teachers prior to leaving for the event. If arrangements are not made, teachers will follow the above late work policy for all work.

Dual Enrollment

High school credit may be granted to students who successfully complete a course of instruction offered by an eligible postsecondary institution. The following requirements apply to such courses of instruction:

- 1) Application and admissions to the postsecondary institution are the responsibility of the student.
- 2) To receive high school credit for the successful completion of postsecondary institution coursework, the student must obtain prior approval from an administrator. Approval will be based upon the following factors:
 - a) Qualifying standardized scores (e.g. Compass, Accuplacer, ALEKS, PSAT, SAT)
 - b) Student must be on track for graduation
 - c) Minimum cumulative high school grade point average of 2.5
- 3) Computation of high school credit for postsecondary institution coursework will be based on the following formula: 3 to 4 college semester hours equals one (1) unit of high school credit.
- 4) Upon validation from the issuing postsecondary institution, the student's credit and grade will be recorded on the student's high school transcript. The grade earned by the student shall be included for any purpose in the computation of the student's grade point average or class rank. Students may opt out of receiving high school credit for a college course. Those college grades will not affect the student's grade point average or class rank.
- 5) The student is responsible to have the postsecondary institution report the student's grade and credit to a school administrator within thirty (30) days from the end of the semester.
- 6) Tuition and fees for the course(s) will be paid by the school district for eligible students only in accordance with the requirements of the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, the Career and Technical Preparation Act and Sections 21b of the State School Aid Act.
- 7) Students that fail or withdraw from dual enrollment courses will be responsible for reimbursing the school district for all related costs including tuition. A student who successfully completes a dual enrollment course may receive credit at both the college and high school level.
- 8) Students are responsible for following the postsecondary institution's calendar.

Credit for Alternative Courses and Programs

Students should not assume that the credit opportunities described below will always result in earned credit towards graduation or course prerequisites. Students should first discuss the matter with the school administrator.

Early Middle College

Stephenson Area Public Schools offers a 5th year early middle college program. Students who choose to participate can earn a technical certification, an Associate's degree, or just start taking college courses through the school. To be eligible students must:

- 1) Currently in grades 9, 10, or 11.
- 2) Apply for program by October 1 of their Junior year.

Virtual and Distance Learning

Virtual learning is completed through a computer-based internet-connected learning environment and may be offered at a supervised school facility during the day as a scheduled class period through distance learning, or through self-scheduled learning where students have some control over the time, location, and pace of their education.

A student enrolled in virtual or distance-learning courses may receive credit for work completed, provided that the course meet **ALL** of the following requirements:

- 1) Is capable of generating a credit or grade.
- 2) Is not a course in which the student has previously gained credit.
- 3) Is taught by a teacher who holds a valid Michigan teaching certificate (and who) is responsible for determining appropriate instructional methods for each pupil, diagnosing learning needs, assessing pupil learning, prescribing intervention strategies, reporting outcomes, and evaluating the effects of instruction and support strategies.
- 4) An administrator must approve the course **in advance** of enrollment.

Students may be limited as to the number of distance learning courses they can complete. Grades earned in approved distance learning courses count toward a student's grade point average, class rank and eligibility for athletic and extracurricular activities.

Online Credit Recovery Courses

A student may enroll in online credit recovery courses and may receive credit provided:

- 1) The course is given by an approved institution
- 2) An administrator approves the course in advanced
- 3) The course is required for graduation

Career Tech Ed Programs (CTE)

CTE programs, such as Health Occupations, Auto Mechanics, Machine Trades, Hospitality and Food Service, Teacher Cadet, Business and Welding, will be offered to Juniors and Seniors whenever possible. Classes may be held at off-campus locations.

Students are allowed to drive to CTE with signed parental consent and administrative approval. No other students are permitted in the vehicle. Violating this policy will result in the suspension of driving privileges.

Parents are encouraged to call the K-12 office for more information.

Exchange Programs

An exchange student will be granted a diploma if he or she completes the criteria for graduation established by the State of Michigan and the School Board. The board may grant a certificate of attendance to exchange students.

District students will receive high school credit for foreign exchange courses that meet the criteria established in the curriculum and that are approved by a school administrator. International study course work not meeting district requirements may be placed in the student's permanent record and recorded as an international study experience.

Alternate Credit Opportunities

High school credit shall be granted in any course to a student enrolled in high school but not enrolled in the course who exhibits a reasonable level of mastery of the course's subject matter as outlined below:

- 1) The student will be granted high school credit by attaining a grade of not less than a 77% in the final examination in the course.
 - a) A final examination is a comprehensive examination which addresses all components of the course curriculum
 - b) A non-comprehensive examination that is offered during the time set aside for final examinations is not considered a "final examination" for purposes of obtaining credit through the testing process.
 - c) No final examination will be created solely for the purpose of providing a student with an opportunity to test out of the course.
- 2) In lieu of a final examination in the course, the student may be granted high school credit by exhibiting that mastery through the basic assessment used in the course, which may consist of a portfolio, performance, paper, project, or presentation. The course teacher and school administrator will determine the assessment criteria to determine if the student has exhibited a reasonable level of mastery of the course's subject matter.
- 3) Credit earned under this policy section shall be based on a "pass" grade and shall not be included in the computation of the student's grade point average for any purpose.
- 4) Credit earned under this policy section shall apply equally to all students and may be counted towards graduation.

Foreign Language

A student who has demonstrated proficiency in a foreign language outside of a public or private high school curriculum shall be granted credit. Proficiency may be demonstrated by a competency test or other criteria established by the Board. The amount of credit will be based on foreign language proficiency achieved.

Homebound and Hospital Instruction

A student who is absent from school for an extended period of time, or has ongoing intermittent absences because of a medical condition, may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital. For information on homebound or hospital instruction, contact a school administrator.

High School Graduation Requirements

To graduate from high school with a high school diploma, each student must:

- 1) Complete all District graduation requirements.
- 2) Successfully complete all of the following credit requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards which includes:
 - a) English Language Arts (ELA) - 4 credits
 - i) Proficiency in State Content Standards for ELA (4 credits)
 - b) Mathematics – 4 credits
 - i) Proficiency in State Content Standards of Mathematics (3 credits); and
 - ii) Proficiency in district approved 4th Mathematics credit options (1 credit).
 - iii) Student must have a Math experience in their final year of high school.
 - c) Online Learning Experience
 - i) Course, Learning, or Integrated Learning
 - d) Physical Education and Health – 1 credit
 - i) Proficiency in State Content Standards for Physical Education and Health (1 credit); or
 - ii) Proficiency with State Content Standards for Health (1/2 credit) and district approved extra-curricular activities involving physical activities (1/2 credit).
 - e) Science – 3 credits
 - i) Proficiency in State Content Standards for Science (3 credits); or
 - ii) Proficiency in State Content Standards for Science (2 credits) and completion of a Department approved formal CTE program (1 credit)
 - f) Social Studies – 3 credits
 - i) Proficiency in State Content Standards for Social Studies (3 credits)
 - g) Visual, Performing, and Applied Arts – 1 credit
 - i) Proficiency in State Content for Visual, Performing, and Applied Arts (1 credit)
 - h) World Language – 2 credits
 - i) Formal coursework or an equivalent learning experience in Grades K-12 (2 credits); or
 - ii) Formal coursework or an equivalent learning experience in Grades K-12 (1 credit) **and** completion of a Department approved formal Career and Technical Education program or an additional visual, performing, and applied art credit (1 credit)
- 3) Or successfully complete a Personal Curriculum. Students and/or a student's parent/guardian(s) are entitled to request a personal curriculum that modifies certain of the Michigan Merit Standard requirements. Personal curricula are subject to school approval, as provided in state law. If all of the requirements for a personal curriculum are met, then a high school diploma may be awarded to a student who successfully completes his/her personal curriculum even if it does not meet the requirements of the Michigan Merit Standard.

All of the following apply to a personal curriculum:

- a) The personal curriculum shall be developed by a group that includes at least the student, at least one of the student's parents/guardians, a teacher, a school administrator and/or another designee qualified to act in a counseling role and selected by the school administrator. In addition, for a student who receives special education services, a school special education instructor will be included in this group. The teacher included in the group developing the personal curriculum will be a teacher who is currently teaching the student, who currently teaches in or whose expertise is in the subject area being modified by the personal curriculum, or who is determined by the school

administrator to have qualifications otherwise relevant to the group. This group does not have to meet in person.

- b) The personal curriculum shall incorporate as much of the subject area content expectations of the Michigan Merit Standard as is practicable for the student; shall establish measurable goals that the student must achieve while enrolled in high school; shall provide a method to evaluate whether the student achieved these goals; and shall be aligned with the student's education development plan.
- c) Before it takes effect, the personal curriculum must be agreed to by the student's parent/guardian and by the superintendent or his/her designee.
- d) The student's parent/guardian shall be in communication with each of the student's teachers to monitor the student's progress toward the goals contained in the student's personal curriculum.
- e) Revisions may be made in the personal curriculum if the revisions are developed and agreed to in the same manner as the original personal curriculum.
- f) The English language arts credit requirements and the science credit requirements are not subject to modification as part of a personal curriculum.
- g) The mathematics credit requirements may be modified as part of a personal curriculum if the student successfully completes at least three and one-half (3 ½) total credits of the mathematics credits before completing high school. The student must successfully complete at least one (1) math credit during his/her final two (2) years of high school enrollment.
- h) The social science credit requirements may be modified as part of a personal curriculum only if all of the following are met:
 - i) The student has successfully completed two (2) credits of the social science credits, including the civics course.
 - ii) The modification requires the student to complete one (1) additional credit in English language arts, mathematics, or science or one (1) additional credit in a language other than English or to complete a formal career and technical education program.
- i) The health and physical education credit requirement may be modified as part of a personal curriculum only if the modification requires the student to complete one (1) additional credit in English language arts, mathematics, or science or one (1) additional credit in a language other than English or to complete a formal career and technical education program.
- j) The visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts credit requirement may be modified as part of a personal curriculum only if the modification requires the student to complete one (1) additional credit in English language arts, mathematics, or science or one (1) additional credit in a language other than English or to complete a formal career and technical education program.
- k) If the parent/guardian requests as part of the student's personal curriculum a modification of the Michigan Merit Standard requirements that would not otherwise be allowed under this section and demonstrates that the modification is necessary because the student is a child with a disability, the school district may allow that additional modification to the extent necessary because of the student's disability if the group determines that the modification is consistent with both the student's educational development plan and the student's individualized education program.
- l) Additional modifications are allowed for transfer students who have completed two (2) years of high school.

Early Graduation

Students who will have successfully completed graduation requirements after seven (7) semesters may petition to graduate. Applications should be submitted to the school administrator prior to November first of the student's seventh semester.

- 1) Early graduates must take **full responsibility** to arrange with the K-12 office for anything pertaining to the graduation ceremony (i.e. announcements, cap and gown, graduation practices).
- 2) Any student enrolled in an off-campus course to fulfill graduation requirements must show documentation of such course(s) by the last day of the seventh semester. Failure to produce this documentation will result in denial of the early graduation petition.
- 3) The student and a parent/guardian will schedule a conference with the school administrator before December first of the student's seventh semester. At the conference the student should be prepared to justify his/her request to graduate early.

Enrolling and Withdrawing from School

In order to attend Stephenson Area Public Schools, you must live within the boundaries of the School District or be a *School of Choice* student. Information regarding these boundaries is available in the Office of the Superintendent. At the time of enrollment, you must provide proof of residency, proof of your birth date, and your immunization records. If you plan to withdraw from school, either to transfer to another school or to drop out, you should discuss your plans with a school administrator. You must have parent/guardian permission, and a withdrawal form must be completed if you wish to withdraw or transfer. A records request from your new school is acceptable for transfer students.

CHAPTER 3 – STUDENT FEES & MEAL COSTS

Fee, Charges, and Fines; Waiver of Student Fees

The school may establish fees and charges to cover the costs for certain extracurricular activities and project-oriented classes such as Welding, Woods, and Art. Materials for clubs, independent study, or special projects, as well as transportation costs and admission/participation fees for district-sponsored trips and activities may be included. Extracurricular activities for which fees are charged may not be used in determining credit or grades in any course. A fee shall not exceed the combined cost of the service(s) provided and/or materials used.

When school property, equipment, or supplies are damaged, lost, or taken by a student, whether in a regular course or extracurricular offering, a fine may be assessed. The fine will be reasonable, seeking only to compensate the school for the expense or loss incurred.

A student whose parent/guardian is unable to afford these fees may request a fee waiver. A fee waiver does not exempt a student from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and/or equipment. Fee waivers may be submitted by a parent/guardian of a student who has been assessed a fee. The school administrator will notify the parent/guardian promptly as to whether the fee waiver request has been granted or denied. Questions should be addressed to a school administrator. Payment plans may be used by the school administrator for fees that are not waived.

School Breakfast and Lunch Program

Breakfast is served before school every day. Lunch is served every school day and these times may be adjusted on days with an early dismissal.

Breakfast and Lunch are free for all students.

Students may deposit lunch money for ala carte at the K-12 office before school. Students in grades 9-12 may leave school property during their assigned lunch. Students in grades K-8 will have closed campus (may not leave campus during their assigned lunch periods). Abuses of lunch privileges will result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action. Inappropriate cafeteria or downtown lunch behavior may result in loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or closed campus. ***Students are allowed to drive during their lunch period with a signed parental consent form and administrative approval. However, they are not permitted to have passengers in their vehicles. Violating this policy will result in the suspension of driving privileges.***

Meal Charge Procedure

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of the guidelines are:

- 1) To treat all student with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- 2) To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies students and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
- 3) To establish guidelines that are age appropriate.
- 4) To encourage parents/guardians to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

The Stephenson Area Public School District has a meal charge procedure that applies at all schools for students and staff. The District realizes that there are times when staff and students may forget their lunch money. To ensure that staff and students do not go hungry, but also to promote responsible staff, student and parent/guardian behavior and minimize the fiscal burden to the District, the Board of Education will allow staff and students who may forget meal money to charge the cost of meals up to \$10.00 negative to be paid back as soon as possible.

Food services is a special revenue fund which means it should not receive general fund support from the district, and thus must generate funds through meal sales, snack sales and Federal and State reimbursement in order to pay operating expenses and fees to the district. Therefore, unpaid charges affect the ability of Food Service to support itself and its employees.

Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) have provided schools with administrative guidelines and policies for meal charges. Following the administrative guidelines from MDE and NSLP, Stephenson Area Public Schools will adhere to the following meal charge policy:

- 1) A student cannot purchase extra servings, or any ala carte items with any negative balances. (This guideline applies to students of reduced status and full pay status at the Middle School and High School level only.)
- 2) The Food Service department will coordinate communications with the parent/guardian to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Weekly phone calls are made to larger negative balances, so please make sure your phone number is up to date with the school. Emails are also sent weekly by our system that we use for our lunch program. Please make sure your email is up to date with the school. A student may be called down to the office to remind them that lunch money is needed.
- 3) All accounts must be settled at the end of a school year. Negative balances not paid in full before the start of the next school year will force the District to turn this negative fund in to collection agencies or small claims court. We don't want to resort to this, so please keep your account up to date. Seniors will need to have balances paid before their paper to graduate can be signed by the food service departments. Balance owed will follow the School Policy on Student Fees, Fines, and Charges and Demand for Payment.

CHAPTER 4 – TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Students are expected to follow all school rules when riding the school bus. A student may be suspended from riding the bus for engaging in disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Violating any school rule or school district policy.
- 2) Willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or to another rider.
- 3) Willful and/or repeated defacement of the bus.
- 4) Repeated use of profanity
- 5) Repeated willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or other supervisor.
- 6) Such other behavior as the building administrator deems to threaten the safe operation of the bus and/or its occupants.

Bus Transportation

The District provides bus transportation to and from school for all students. Parents/guardians must, at the beginning of the school year, indicate where a student is to be picked up, and where a student is to be dropped off. Students are not permitted to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned.

Exceptions must be approved in advance by the building administrator, transportation supervisor, or designee.

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the transportation director and/or a school administrator.

Parents/guardians will be informed of inappropriate student behavior on a bus that requires disciplinary action. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss bus safety and appropriate behavior with their children before the beginning of the school year and regularly during the year. In the interest of the student's safety, students are expected to observe the following rules:

- 1) Choose a seat and sit in it immediately upon entering the bus. Do not stand in the entrance or in the aisle.
- 2) Do not move from one seat to another while on the bus.
- 3) Keep all parts of the body and all objects inside the bus.
- 4) Loud conversation, singing, boisterous conduct, unnecessary noise, or profanity is not allowed.
- 5) Enter and exit the bus only when the bus is fully stopped
- 6) All school rules apply while on the bus, at a bus stop, or waiting for the bus.
- 7) Use emergency door only in an emergency.
- 8) In the event of emergency, stay on the bus and await instructions from the bus driver.
- 9) Good behavior and behavior that will not distract the bus driver from operating the bus safely is required. Crowding, pushing, scuffling, and other needless commotion are grounds for disciplinary action.
- 10) Do not open windows during inclement weather (rain, cold, etc.).
- 11) Keep the bus neat and clean.
- 12) Athletic footwear equipped with cleats or spikes are not allowed to be worn on the bus.

- 13) Inappropriate behavior will be reported to school authorities and failure to observe safety rules may result in suspension from bus services.
- 14) Be waiting at your bus stop five (5) minutes before pick-up time.
- 15) Never tamper with, damage, or deface anything in or on the bus, or any of the bus or school equipment.
- 16) Keep book bags, books, packages, coats, and other objects out of the aisles. Keep all body parts clear of the aisles when seated.
- 17) Eating is not permitted on the bus.
- 18) Parents/legal guardians will be liable for any defacing or damage student do to the bus.

Video cameras and audio devices may be active on busses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

For questions regarding school transportation issues, contact:

Patrick Marciniak 906-753-2222, extension 113

Parking

The school is not responsible for student vehicles, any possessions left in them, or anything attached to the vehicles. **STUDENTS PARK THEIR VEHICLES ON OR NEAR SCHOOL PROPERTY AT THEIR OWN RISK.** Students should be aware that their vehicles are not protected in any way while in the parking lot, and items of value should not be left in or near the vehicle while unattended.

Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in vehicles parked on or near school grounds.

Lots are regularly searched by contraband dogs, administration, and police officers. Students should be aware that items and spaces are subject to view by others. Based on the reasonable suspicion standard, vehicles parked on or within 1000 feet of school grounds may be subject to search. Prohibited items discovered during the course of a search may result in discipline, including, but not limited to, expulsion from school, as well as referral to law enforcement.

Vehicles MAY NOT be parked or located in the bus lanes or fire lanes at ANY TIME. Bus lanes and fire lanes are clearly marked. Vehicles must be parked in the student parking area located behind the school. We have been notified by the City of Stephenson that parking on the south side of Division Street and in front of the Methodist Church will be limited to two (2) hours. Vehicles located in these locations may be ticketed and/or towed by the police. The inset parking area on the north side of Division Street and the parking lot across from the school on Division Street are reserved for staff/administrative and visitor parking. Students are not to park in any areas designated as staff, visitor or reserved parking. All student vehicles should have a school issued parking pass properly displayed on their vehicle.

Video cameras may be active in parking lots and may be used for the purposes of investigation into student misconduct. Discipline for misconduct includes all disciplinary measures in the student discipline code and/or withdrawal of parking privileges.

Law enforcement officials may be notified and involved in vehicle violations. Once students enter the building, students are not to return to any vehicles during the regular school hours of 7:50 AM-2:55 PM.

Students who forget an item in their vehicle that is pertinent for their education need to request permission from the office, and an administrator may need to escort said student to their vehicle to retrieve the desired item.

Going to vehicles or hanging out in vehicles or parking areas during lunch time is strictly prohibited.

Failure to comply shall result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, loss of driving and parking privileges.

CHAPTER 5 – HEALTH & SAFETY

Immunizations

All students must be properly immunized at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school pursuant to Michigan Health Department regulations. A required vaccine may be waived or delayed with a written waiver from the health department in the following circumstances:

- 1) A valid medical contraindication exists to receiving the vaccine. The child's physician must provide written certification of the contraindication.
- 2) The student's parent/guardian holds religious or philosophical beliefs against receiving a vaccination. The parent/guardian must submit a written statement before a waiver is granted
- 3) The child has received at least one (1) dose of each immunizing agent and the next dose(s) are not due yet.

Student Medication

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "Medication Permission Form" which must be signed by both parent/guardian and licensed health care provider.

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed "Medication Permission Form" is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. This does not include the emergency administration of an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) by a trained school or district employee as provided under state law.

Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a "Medication Permission Form" which must be signed by both parent/guardian and licensed health care provider. The school and district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication or epinephrine auto-injector or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student's parent/guardian must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector and/or asthma inhaler, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

Guidance and Counseling

The school may provide a guidance and counseling program for students. For information on services offered contact a school administrator.

The Career Readiness program is available to assist students in identifying career options consistent with their abilities, interests, and personal values. High school juniors and seniors have the opportunity to receive college, vocational, and career-oriented information. Representatives from colleges and universities, occupational training institutions and career-oriented recruiters, including the military, may be given access to the school campus in order to provide students and parents/guardians with information.

Safety Drill Procedures and Conduct

Safety drills will occur at times established by school administration. Students are required to be **silent** and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. Each school shall conduct at least five (5) fire drills, two (2) tornado drills, and three (3) lock-down drills each school year. At least three (3) of the fire drills shall occur before December 1st. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. Drills will not be preceded by a warning to the students. Emergency procedures will be posted in each classroom. Students should not reenter the building until the “all-clear” signal is given. To leave school grounds during a drill is considered skipping.

Communicable Diseases

The school will observe recommendations of the Michigan Department of Community/Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

- 1) The student’s parent/guardian is required to notify the school office if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
- 2) In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent/guardian.
- 3) The school will provide written instructions to the parent/guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the communicable disease.
- 4) A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent/guardian provides the school a letter from the student’s doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

Head Lice

The school will observe the following protocols regarding head lice.

- 1) The student’s parent/guardian is required to notify the school office if their child is suspected of having head lice.
- 2) Infested students will be sent home following notification to the parent/guardian.
- 3) The school will provide written instructions to the parent/guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation.
- 4) **A student excluded because of head lice will be permitted to return to school only when the parent/guardian brings the student to school to be check by school personnel and the child is determined to be free of the head lice and eggs (nits). Infested children are prohibited from riding the bus to school to be check for head lice.**

Concussions and Head Injuries

A student who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (i.e. loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems), shall be immediately removed from physical participation and shall not return to the activity until he/she is evaluated by an appropriate licensed health professional who has the ability to recognize and treat concussions and receives written clearance to do so. Written medical clearance will then be maintained in the student’s CA-60 file until he/she is eighteen (18) years of age.

State law requires all Michigan schools to provide educational materials on the signs/symptoms and consequences of concussions to each student participating in an athletic activity (extra-curricular sports

and/or gym class) and their parents/guardians and to obtain a signed statement acknowledging receipt of the information to keep on record.

Emergency Medical Authorization

The student's parent/guardian will be notified if their student needs medical attention while at school. In an emergency situation the child should be transported to the nearest medical facility able to render appropriate care, regardless of parental preference. Typically, this decision is made by an EMT (emergency medical technician) or another first responder. It is very important that the parent/guardian notifies the school of any demographic changes.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCIPLINE & CONDUCT

Discipline

Discipline is exercised by the school to assure that all students have the opportunity to learn in a safe and orderly environment. Also, learning to follow rules and procedures and interact with others in an appropriate manner is a part of the educational process. (See Board Policy 5600)

To help achieve these goals, the following disciplinary guidelines will be followed when a student violates the rules of the Stephenson Area Public Schools. Each repeated violation of rules will result in more severe disciplinary action. Depending upon the violation, disciplinary action may be a warning, detention time, suspension, loss of lunch hour privileges, removal from extracurricular activities and assemblies, or recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion. Suspensions may be in-school or out-of-school depending on availability of in-school space and circumstances. The purpose of suspensions is to assure that other students have the opportunity to learn and to impress on the suspended student the serious nature of his/her behavior.

All school rules shall apply not only during the regular school day but also at all sponsored activities, including those at other venues, and whenever students are on school property. Discipline beyond the classroom level will normally be handled by a school administrator. After reviewing the incident and the student's explanation of his/her behavior, disciplinary action will be determined. Parents/guardians will be notified of disciplinary action that has been taken. A parent/guardian conference may be required for readmission to the classes when the problems are severe or persistent.

In cases involving 12th grade students who engage in persistent disobedience or gross misdemeanor, the administration may take away privileges specific to graduating seniors. Such privileges may include, but are not limited to, senior tea, commencement, graduation, and/or awards ceremonies.

The following is a general guide to the action that will be taken. Offenses that are not listed and other factors will be at the discretion of the administrator handling the situation. More severe action may be taken where the offense is very serious or the health and welfare of others is endangered. Willful abuse of school property, such as desks, lockers, doors, and bleachers, will result in disciplinary action. In cases of theft or vandalism the student will be required to make restitution. Where State or Federal laws have been violated, the law enforcement authorities may become involved. Detentions that are not served as assigned may result in suspension.

Positive Behavioral Intervention System

Stephenson Area Public Schools has been building a tradition of excellence for many years. In an effort to continue and improve upon this tradition, we have adopted a Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) that establishes clear expectations for the way students will behave. These behaviors are directly taught to students and are then promoted throughout the daily activities and routines of the school. We believe that education cannot proceed without good discipline. It is the responsibility of the school, in cooperation with the home, to work in such a way that students learn to conduct themselves in a socially acceptable manner. We will see that the rules of discipline used are fair and reasonable. Detentions are used for the majority of everyday infractions. Students issued a detention usually serve it during their recess time.

Positive Behavior (SOAR) Expectations

See Rubric on the following pages.

	Arrival/Dismissal	Bus Rides	Hallway	Restrooms
SOAR Safely	Enter and exit the building and grounds in a safe and timely manner Walk to/from on the sidewalk Obey all laws and safety rules Drive responsibly Arrive dressed appropriately Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult	Keep hands and feet to yourself Remain seated and face the front of the bus Enter and exit the bus in a safe and timely manner Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to the bus driver	Walk on right side Keep hands and feet to yourself Stick up for yourself, others, and your school Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult	Keep hands and feet to yourself Report anything broken, dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult Follow all school rules
SOAR Respectfully	Follow adult directions Use appropriate language and volume	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Use appropriate language and volume Invite others to sit with you and include others Greet the bus driver and others	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Use appropriate language and volume Be mindful of others and classrooms	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Give others privacy Use appropriate language and volume
SOAR Responsibly	Take all of your belongings with you	Show care for your school property, keep the bus clean Take all of your belongings with you	Use hallway time efficiently Show care for your school, keep lockers and hallways clean Be to class on time Have a pass to be in the hallway during class time Only use your assigned locker	Use bathroom time efficiently Go - flush - wash - dry - exit Show care for your school, keep area clean and dry Use primarily during passing time

	Classroom	Cafeteria	Playground	Special Events
SOAR Safely	Enter and exit the classroom in a safe and quiet manner Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult	Keep hands and feet to yourself Remain seated while eating Enter and exit the cafeteria walking and in a safe manner Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult	Keep hands and feet to yourself Stick up for yourself, others, and your school Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult Use equipment properly Be aware of your surroundings and remain in the playground boundaries Dress for the weather	Keep hands and feet to yourself Report anything dangerous, inappropriate or suspicious to an adult Follow all school rules
SOAR Respectfully	Follow adult directions and classroom expectations Use appropriate language and volume Respond appropriately and with good manners Invite others to work with you for group work Treat guests and guest teachers kindly and be tolerant of others	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Use appropriate language and volume Invite others to sit with you and include others Thank the cafeteria staff - please/thank you	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Use appropriate language and volume Invite others to play with you and include others, be kind and take turns Play fair, follow game rules and show good sportsmanship	Follow adult directions Show care for others and their property Participate appropriately Use appropriate language and volume Applaud and cheer appropriately
SOAR Responsibly	Show care for your school property, keep the classroom clean No cell phone usage (earbuds are not to be worn in school) Take all of your belongings with you Be on time, prepared and ready to learn Do your work, ask for clarification, give your best effort	Show care for your school property, keep the cafeteria clean Take all of your belongings with you Bring your student ID card Request adult permission to leave the cafeteria to use restroom High school students remain in cafeteria unless off campus	Show care for your school, keep playground clean Line up on time and quietly when instructed Stomp and wipe feet on rugs as entering the building	Treat opposing teams, officials, coaches and spectators with respect Participate appropriately and positively

Student Conduct

We believe every person has the right to learn and work in a non-threatening environment. We expect a positive attitude and respectful behavior from everyone. Respectful behavior will be encouraged by:

- 1) Treating others as we want to be treated.
- 2) Accepting other's responses and ideas in class with an open mind and polite attention.
- 3) Practicing common courtesy and friendliness at all times.
- 4) Being cooperative, attentive and responsive to directions in class and in the halls. A sincere effort will be made by administrators and faculty members to resolve problems with the student and his/her parents/guardians. On those occasions where the severity and/or frequency of the offense warrants, a student will be subject to withholding of privileges, Saturday School, notification of law enforcement, and out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Students may be disciplined for misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling any tobacco product including but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, spit tobacco, snus, snuff, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, waterpipe, vapor product, electronic smoking device, and heated tobacco product.
- 2) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession. They will not be permitted on school property.
- 3) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling:
 - a) Any **illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis** (including marijuana and hashish). Michigan law prohibits the possession or medical use of marijuana on school grounds/property or buses.
 - b) Any **anabolic steroid or performance-enhancing substance** not administered under a physician's care and supervision.
 - c) Any **prescription drug** when not prescribed for the student by a licensed health care provider or when not used in the manner prescribed.
 - d) Any **inhalant**, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance:
 - i) That a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or
 - ii) About which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system.
 - e) **"Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs**, including a substance not containing an illegal drug or controlled substance, but one:
 - i) That a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug or controlled substance; or
 - ii) About which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug or controlled substance.
 - f) **Drug paraphernalia**, including devices that are or can be used to:
 - i) Ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and
 - ii) Grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession. They will not be allowed to be on school property.

- 4) Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a **dangerous weapon** (firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles) or any object which may be used to cause or threaten harm to others, including a “look alike” weapon.
- 5) Using or possessing an **electronic paging device**.
- 6) Using a **cellular telephone, smartphone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA)**, or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as “sexting.” Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building administrator, all cellular phones, smartphones and other electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless:
 - a) The supervising teacher grants permission
 - b) Use of the device is provided in a student’s individualized education program (IEP): or
 - c) It is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff or other individuals.
- 7) Using or possessing a **laser pointer** unless under a staff member’s direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
- 8) **Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives** from staff members or school officials.
- 9) Engaging in **academic dishonesty**, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards, copying another student’s homework, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
- 10) **Bullying, harassment, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior** that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network or other similar electronic school equipment, or other comparable conduct.
- 11) Engaging in any **sexual activity** including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.
- 12) Engaging in **teen dating violence**.
- 13) Causing or attempting to **cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal**, school property or another person’s personal property.
- 14) **Entering school property** or a school facility without proper authorization.
- 15) In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, **calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency**; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.
- 16) Being **absent** without a recognized excuse.
- 17) Being involved with any **public-school fraternity, sorority, or secret society**.
- 18) Being involved in a **gang or engaging in gang-like activities**, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.

- 19) **Violating any criminal law**, including but not limited to, assault, battery, criminal sexual assault, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, and hazing.
- 20) **Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function**, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonable be considered to:
 - a) Be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or
 - b) Endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
- 21) **Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel** if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
- 22) **Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone** for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building administrator.

For purposes of these rules, the term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is:

- a) on the student’s person
 - b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the students clothing backpack, or automobile
 - c) in a school’s student locker, desk, or other school property
 - d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or
 - e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.
- 23) **No discrimination of any kind.**

When & Where Conduct Rules Apply

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student’s conduct is reasonable related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

- 1) On, or within 1000 feet of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
- 2) Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
- 3) Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
- 4) Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonable be considered to:
 - a) Be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or
 - b) Endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

Misconduct Prior to Enrollment

An otherwise eligible resident may be suspended or expelled for an act of misconduct committed while the student was: (a) a resident of another district; (b) enrolled in another school; (c) outside of school hours; or (d) off school premises if the misconduct would have constituted a sufficient basis for suspension or expulsion had it occurred while the student was enrolled in the School District.

Student Discipline

The Board of Education is continually concerned about the safety and welfare of District students and staff and, therefore, will not tolerate behavior that creates an unsafe environment, a threat to safety or undue disruption of the educational environment.

The following list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case.

Disciplinary Measures

Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures:

- 1) Notifying parents/guardians.
- 2) Disciplinary conference.
- 3) Withholding of privileges.
- 4) Temporary removal from the classroom.
- 5) Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property.
- 6) In-school suspension.
- 7) After-school study or Saturday study provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified.
(If transportation arrangements cannot be made in advance, an alternative disciplinary measure may be assigned to the student.)
- 8) Community service pre-approved by the building administrator.
- 9) Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
- 10) Suspension of bus riding privileges.
- 11) Suspension from school and all school activities for up to ten (10) days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds and property.
- 12) Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds and property.
- 13) Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for transfer under State law.

Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

SAPS School Discipline

- 1) SAPS school students who attend school-sponsored activities before/after school hours, on or off-campus, and on school-provided transportation, are subject to the same rules that apply during the school day.
- 2) School officials will evaluate each situation and respond based on the information available. The "1310d seven factors" will be considered in each situation as mandated by state law. School officials will assign consequences based on their discretion for any violations.
- 3) Disciplinary action may advance with each violation.
- 4) **Students engaging in persistent disobedience may be subject to suspension or recommendation for expulsion.**

Factors to Be Considered Before Suspending or Expelling a Student

Prior to suspending or expelling a student for any statutorily mandated reasons, except as noted below, the Board shall consider the following factors as outlined in MCL380.1310d:

- 1) The student's age
- 2) The student's disciplinary history
- 3) Whether the student has a disability
- 4) The seriousness of the violation or behavior
- 5) Whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- 6) Whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- 7) Whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior.

The Board will exercise discretion over whether or not to suspend or expel a student for the statutorily mandated reasons. In exercising that discretion for a suspension of more than ten (10) days or expulsion, there is a rebuttable presumption that a suspension or expulsion is not justified unless the Board can demonstrate that it considered each of the factors listed above. For a suspension of ten (10) days or fewer, there is no rebuttable presumption, but the Board will still consider the factors.

A student may not be expelled or excluded from the regular school program based on pregnancy status.

Exception: If a student possesses a firearm in a weapon-free school zone, the student will be permanently expelled without considering the above factors, unless the student can establish mitigating factors by clear and convincing evidence.

In recognition of the negative impact on a student's education, the Board encourages the District's administrators to view suspensions, particularly those over ten (10) days, and permanent expulsions as discipline of last resort, except where these disciplines are required by law. Alternatives to avoid or to improve undesirable behaviors should be explored when possible prior to implementing or requesting a suspension or expulsion.

Snap Suspensions

A teacher is authorized to immediately cause the removal and suspension of a student from class, subject, or activity for up to one (1) school day when the student's behavior interferes with the teacher's ability to effectively teach or manage the class, subject, or activity.

- 1) A student removed from class shall not return to the class, subject, or activity from which the student was suspended until the passage of one full school day from the time of the student infraction, unless permitted by concurrence of both the teacher and the school administrator.
- 2) At the discretion of the school administrator, the student receiving a teacher-imposed suspension from a class, subject, or activity may be permitted to attend other classes, subjects, or activities if the student conduct does not qualify for multiple-day suspension or expulsion in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.
- 3) All teacher-imposed suspensions shall be applied in a manner consistent with applicable student discipline procedures, as well as federal and state laws for students determined to be eligible for special education programs/services or reasonable accommodations of their disabilities.
- 4) Snap Suspension Procedures
 - a) The teacher shall immediately report the suspension and the reason for the suspension to the school administrator for appropriate action.

- b) The school shall notify the student's parents/guardians.
- c) The teacher shall arrange a conference with the student's parents/guardian as soon as possible to discuss the suspension.

Restorative Practices

If the District determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community caused by the student's misconduct.

Restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that:

- 1) Are initiated by the victim;
- 2) Are approved by the victim's parent/guardian, if the victim is at least fifteen (15), by the victim;
- 3) Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team");
- 4) Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these.

The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

Alternative Services

An expelled or suspended student may be enrolled in an alternative education program or evening high school upon the Superintendent's recommendation and Board approval. Students who are expelled for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon and employee, volunteer or contractor and are enrolled in a program operated for expelled students shall be physically separated at all times during the school day from the general student population.

The District may provide appropriate instructional services at home for an expelled student who is not placed in an alternative education program. The type of instructional services provided shall be similar to that provided to homebound or hospitalized students and shall be contracted for in the same manner.

Disabled students under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy and Federal due process rights appropriate to these students.

Expulsions/Suspensions – Required by Statute

For expulsions for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor, the Superintendent shall provide that the expulsion is duly noted in the student's record and that the student has been referred to the Department of Human Services or Mental Health Department within three (3) school days after the expulsion and the parents/guardians have been informed of the referral. Furthermore, the Superintendent shall ensure that, if a student who is expelled is below the age of sixteen (16), then notification of the expulsion shall be given to the Juvenile Division of the Probate Court. In compliance with Federal law, the Superintendent shall also refer any student, regardless of age, expelled for possession of a dangerous weapon to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system serving the District. In addition, the Superintendent shall ensure that a copy of this policy is sent to the State Department of Education as well as a description of the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of a student for possessing a firearm or weapon in a weapon-free school zone together with the

name of the school, the number of students so expelled, and the types of weapons that were brought into the weapon-free school zone.

A student who has been expelled under this policy for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor may apply for reinstatement in accordance with the following guidelines:

- 1) If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal guardian, the adult student, or the emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after sixty (60) school days from the date of expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before ninety (90) school days from the expulsion date.
- 2) If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for a reason other than possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal guardian, the adult student, or the emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement at any time, but the student may not be reinstated before ten (10) school days from the expulsion date.
- 3) If the student is in grade six (6) or above at the time of the expulsion, the parents, legal guardian, the adult student, or the emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after 150 school days from the date of the expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before 180 school days from the expulsion date.
- 4) The parent, adult student, or emancipated minor shall submit the request for reinstatement to the Superintendent.
- 5) The Superintendent shall, within ten (10) school days after receiving the request, submit the request, together with any other information he/she deems pertinent to the requested reinstatement, to a Board appointed committee consisting of two (2) Board members, a District administrator, a teacher, and a parent of a District student.
- 6) The committee shall, within ten (10) school days after being appointed, review all pertinent information, and submit its recommendation to the Board. The recommendation may be for unconditional reinstatement, conditional reinstatement, or non-reinstatement, based on the committee's consideration of:
 - a) The extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of harm to students or school personnel;
 - b) The extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of District or individual liability for the Board of District personnel;
 - c) The age and maturity of the student;
 - d) The student's school record before the expulsion incident;
 - e) The student's attitude concerning the expulsion incident;
 - f) The student's behavior since the expulsion and the prospects for remediation;
 - g) If the request was filed by a parent/guardian, the degree of cooperation and support the parent/guardian has provided and will provide if the student is reinstated, including, but not limited to the parent/guardian's receptiveness toward possible conditions placed on the reinstatement. Such conditions may, as an example, include a written agreement by the student and/or a parent/guardian who filed the reinstatement request to;
 - i) Abide by a behavior contract which may involve the student, his/her parents/guardian, and an outside agency;
 - ii) Participate in an anger management program or other counseling activities
 - iii) Cooperate in processing and discussing periodic progress reviews;
 - iv) Meet other conditions deemed appropriate by the committee
 - v) Accept the consequences for not fulfilling the agreed upon conditions.

The committee may also allow the parent/guardian, adult student, or emancipated minor to propose conditions as part of the request for reinstatement.

The Board shall make its decision no later than the next regular Board meeting following the committee's submission of its recommendations. The Board's decision shall be final and not subject to appeal.

In the event a student who has been permanently expelled from another school district requests admission to this District, the Board shall, in making its decision:

- 1) Follow the same procedure it has established in paragraph 1-6 above for the reinstatement of a District student.
- 2) Rely upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Students expelled for reasons other than dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor may also petition the Board for reinstatement. The Board may, at its discretion, consider the petition in accordance with the procedures set forth above.

The Superintendent shall ensure that Board policies and District guidelines regarding a student's rights to due process are adhered to when dealing with a possible suspension or expulsion under this policy.

For purposes of the policy, "suspension" shall be either short-term [not more than ten (10) days] or long-term suspension [for more than ten (10) days but less than permanent expulsion] of a student from a regular District program.

For the purposes of this policy, unless otherwise defined in Federal and/or State law, "expulsion" shall be the permanent exclusion of a student from the schools of this District. Students who are expelled permanently may petition for reinstatement only under the provisions stipulated above.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as the deliberate infliction of physical pain by hitting, paddling, spanking, slapping, or any other physical force used as a means of discipline. Corporal punishment does not include physical pain caused by reasonable physical activities associated with athletic training. A school employee, contractor, or employee may use reasonable physical force as necessary to maintain order and control in a school or school-related setting for the purpose of providing an environment conducive to safety and learning and for the reasons otherwise specified by law.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating occurs when a student obtains, or assists others in obtaining credit for work that is not his/her own. Some examples of cheating, not limited to the following:

- 1) Copying from another student's test, homework, quizzes, project, assignment or take-home test.
- 2) Submitting another student's work as one's own
- 3) Providing other student with information regarding a test or quiz
- 4) Stealing copies of tests or answer keys
- 5) Plagiarizing without appropriate documentation
- 6) Changing answers on tests, assignments or projects after grading
- 7) Using a calculator in a manner not specified by the teacher
- 8) Changing grades in a grade book or computer program
- 9) Violating AI Policy.

AI Policy

Use of AI/NLP Tools for School Work

- 1) Research Assistance
 - a) Students may use AI/NLP tools to quickly find relevant information for projects and assignments.
 - b) Teachers must provide clear guidelines on acceptable sources and citation practices when using AI/NLP tools for research.
- 2) Data Analysis
 - a) AI/NLP tools can be used for analyzing large data sets in scientific experiments or marketing research.
 - b) Teachers should instruct students on how to interpret AI-generated analysis and validate the results.
- 3) Language Translation
 - a) AI/NLP tools can assist in translating texts for language learning or understanding texts in other languages.
 - b) Teachers need to ensure students understand the limitations of AI translations and verify the accuracy of translated materials.
- 4) Writing Assistance
 - a) AI/NLP tools may provide grammar and spelling corrections and suggest alternative word choices and sentence structures.
 - b) Students must demonstrate their understanding by submitting both the original and AI-assisted versions of their work.
 - c) Teachers should emphasize developing independent writing skills alongside using AI tools.
- 5) Accessibility
 - a) AI/NLP tools can support students with disabilities by providing text-to-speech, speech-to-text, or translation services.
 - b) Teachers should ensure that these tools are used to enhance learning and not as a substitute for traditional learning methods.

Student Responsibilities

- 1) Seek Permission
 - a) Always seek prior permission from teachers before using AI/NLP tools for school work.
- 2) Use Ethically
 - a) Use AI/NLP tools responsibly and ethically.
 - b) Ensure that all work submitted is primarily their own.
- 3) Ask for Help
 - a) Approach teachers for assistance and clarification on assignments.
 - b) Use AI/NLP tools as supplementary aids, not replacements for personal effort and learning.
- 4) Follow Guidelines
 - a) Adhere to the guidelines set by teachers for using AI/NLP tools.
 - b) Understand the consequences of unauthorized use of AI/NLP tools.

Consequences for Cheating/Academic Dishonesty

- 1) Cheating on homework
 - a) 1st offense: 0% on homework and immediate parent/guardian notification by the teacher.
 - b) 2nd offense: Failure for the quarter (less than or equal to 59%) and immediate parent/guardian notification by the teacher.
 - c) 3rd offense: Failure for the semester (student must remain in the class for the remainder of the semester and not create a disturbance).
- 2) Cheating on tests, quizzes, and projects
 - a) 1st offense: 0% on the test, quiz or project and immediate parent/guardian notification by the teacher.
 - b) 2nd offense: Failure for the semester (student must remain in the class for the remainder of the semester and not create a disturbance) and immediate parent/guardian notification by the teacher.
- 3) Cheating on the final examination
 - a) 1st offense: Failure (0%) on the final exam and immediate parent/guardian notification by the teacher.

Audio – Visual Devices

- 1) All electronic devices must be put away in a locker or backpack, and turned off, upon entering the school building. Period.
- 2) Locks on lockers are encouraged. Locks are available for free in the school office. The student, not the school, is responsible for theft, loss, or damage.
- 3) If a student is caught on a device, without permission, the student will be required to turn it off and bring it to the office, where it will stay until a parent or guardian comes to pick it up.
 - a) 1st Offense - Warning
 - b) 2nd Offense - Lunch Detention
 - c) 3rd Offense - ISS - Meeting with Student, Parents/Guardians, and Administration
 - d) 4th Offense - OSS - 1 day for each offense - Meeting with Student, Parents/Guardians, and Administration. Cell Phone Behavior Contract put in place.

*Subject to change based on Administration discretion.
- 4) If a student refutes, the student will be subject to suspension and parents notified immediately.
- 5) In extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, practice time changes, ride situations, etc.) students can call from the office.
- 6) The policy is only in effect during school hours (extra-curricular activities, athletic events, dances, etc. are exempt).
- 7) Use of cell phones and audio-visual devices in the locker room or bathroom is prohibited at all times and may result in expulsion.

Note: There is no constitutional right to possess a cell phone in the classroom setting. If the parent/guardian does not wish for a phone to be confiscated, you have the simple alternative of not allowing your child to take the phone to school. (Ref. Laney V Farley MD Tenn 2006).

Lunch & Cafeteria Rules

- 1) Students shall not save seats for other students.
- 2) Loud talking, yelling, screaming, and other disruptions are prohibited.
- 3) Students shall not throw food or drinks.
- 4) Vending machines are provided for student convenience. Students shall not misuse, abuse, attempt to dismantle or cheat the machine, and must wait in line to use the machines.
- 5) Students shall not save places in line, cut in line, or otherwise cheat or intimidate their way into line for food service.
- 6) Students shall not leave the cafeteria until after the appropriate tone rings, or otherwise directed by staff.
- 7) Students shall follow the instructions of the cafeteria aides and other staff and show proper respect toward all cafeteria personnel.
- 8) Students shall immediately become silent when staff or presenters make announcements in the cafeteria.
- 9) Students shall report spills and broken containers to cafeteria staff immediately.
- 10) Students are responsible to clean up table area when finished and throw away all trash in trash cans and return trays to the designated place in the cafeteria.
- 11) Maintain adequate balances in their accounts.

Students shall follow all cafeteria rules during lunch and misbehavior will result in disciplinary action in accordance to the school's disciplinary procedures.

Open Campus Rules

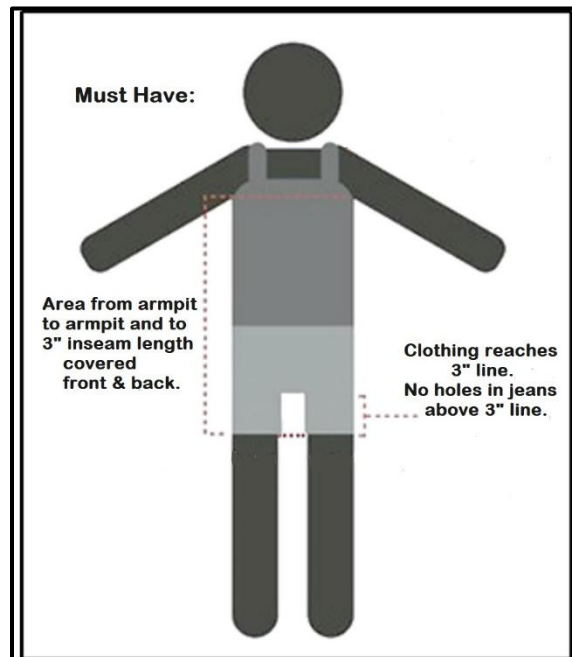
Grade 9-12 students may leave campus or proceed to the cafeteria during lunch. **School rules continue to apply to students who leave campus during the lunch period.** The following rules shall be observed and abided by during lunch:

- 1) Students shall choose whether they will leave campus or stay in the cafeteria during lunch each day.
- 2) Students shall not loiter in the halls or classrooms, and shall immediately proceed to their lunch destination upon dismissal from class.
- 3) Students who choose to stay in the school for lunch shall immediately proceed to the cafeteria. Students shall obey all cafeteria rules during lunch.
- 4) Violations of school rules that occur during lunch may result in discipline. As students are walking to their chosen destination, they shall obey signs and signals, shall carefully cross streets and intersections, and shall stay off railroad tracks.
- 5) Students shall be respectful, courteous, and safe at their chosen lunch location. Students shall obey rules and laws, and shall clean up after themselves before returning to school.
- 6) Students shall return to the school building on time.

School Dress Code/Student Appearance

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment.

- 1) Student dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or depict alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.
- 2) Student dress (including accessories) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
- 3) Hats can be worn in the building during the school day as long as you can see the student's ears.
- 4) Hair styles, dress, and accessories that pose a safety hazard or block vision and/or restrict movement are not permitted in school.
- 5) Clothing that is otherwise poorly fitting and/or showing undergarments may not be worn at school.
- 6) Clothing must have a minimum three (3) inch inseam. Pants cannot have holes in them above the three (3) inch line.
- 7) With the exception of special activities, robes and blankets are NOT to be worn to school.
- 8) Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
- 9) Students should limit the use of perfumes, colognes, body sprays, hair spray, and other aerosol fragrances to the locker rooms and bathrooms. Students should not be using such items in the hallways or classrooms.



10) If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, an administrator will make the final decision.

Field Trips

Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline.

All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent/guardian to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

- 1) Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher
- 2) Failure to complete appropriate coursework
- 3) Behavioral or safety concerns
- 4) Denial of permission from administration
- 5) Other reasons as determined by the school

Bullying, Intimidation & Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals. The district bullying policy is available online at www.stephenson.k12.mi.us under the Parent Resource page. Printed copies can be made available upon request from the building administrator or secretary.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, immigration status, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

- 1) During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
- 2) While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
- 3) Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network or other similar electronic school equipment.
- 4) Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

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

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

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to any staff member or one of the building administrators. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

Report all bullying to:

Christian Londo
K-12 Principal
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887
906-753-2222 ext. 149
clondo@stephenson.k12.mi.us

Josh Jones
K-12 Assistant Principal
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887
906-753-2222 ext. 123
jjones@stephenson.k12.mi.us

Marcia Cross
Student Success Coordinator
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887
906-753-2222 ext. 106
mcross@stephenson.k12.mi.us

Anyone who reports bullying can be assured of confidentiality Log entries that are requested will have names removed to further assure confidentiality. Names will not be released of those that report bullying unless required by law.

Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in intimidation or harassment will be subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in this handbook, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the school and district's discipline policy. Parents/guardians of students who have engaged in the above behavior will be notified. Any student making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment may also be subject to disciplinary consequences. All incidences of bullying will be recorded in the student information system (PowerSchool) indicating the parties involved, resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals for annual reporting.

Physical & Verbal Assault

The Board shall permanently expel a student in grade six (6) or above if that student commits physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor. The Board shall suspend or expel a student in grade six (6) or above for up to 180 school days if the student commits physical assault at school against another student. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence." The Board shall suspend or expel a student in grade six or above and may discipline, suspend or expel a student in grade five (5) or below for a period of time as determined at the Board's discretion if the student commits verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or makes a bomb threat or similar threat directed at school building, property, or at a school-related activity. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat. "At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises.

Hazing

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process, a violation of Michigan criminal law, and are prohibited at all times. Hazing means an intentional, knowing, or reckless act by a person acting alone or acting with others that is directed against an individual and that the person knew or should have known endangers the physical health or safety of the individual, and that is done for the purpose of pledging being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subject to hazing does not lessen the prohibition.

Weapons, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct

In compliance with State and Federal law, the Board shall expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone in violation of State law or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a dangerous weapon is defined as “a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles” or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term “firearm” is defined as: a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive; b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or d) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The Board need not expel for possession of a dangerous weapon if the student can establish in a clear and convincing manner to the satisfaction of the Board that:

- 1) The object or instrument was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon;
- 2) The weapon was not knowingly possessed;
- 3) The student did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument possessed constituted a dangerous weapon; or
- 4) The weapon was possessed at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of a District administrator or the police.

There is a **rebuttable presumption** that expulsion for possessing the weapon is not justified if the Board determines in writing that the student has established that he or she fits under one of the exceptions above by clear and convincing evidence, and that the student has no previous history of suspension or expulsion.

****The above exceptions will not apply to student misconduct involving sexual conduct or arson****

CHAPTER 7 – INTERNET, TECHNOLOGY & PUBLICATIONS

Internet Acceptable Use

All use of the school district's electronic network must be consistent with the school's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. These rules do not attempt to state all required or proscribed behavior by users. However, some specific examples are provided. **The failure of any user to follow these rules will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.**

Unacceptable Use

The user is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving the network.

Some examples of unacceptable uses are:

- 1) Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any State or Federal law;
- 2) Unauthorized downloading of software;
- 3) Downloading copyrighted material for other than personal use;
- 4) Using the network for private financial or commercial gain;
- 5) Wastefully using resources, such as file space;
- 6) Hacking or gaining unauthorized access to files, resources, or entities;
- 7) Invading the privacy of individuals, that includes the unauthorized disclosure, dissemination, and use of information about anyone that is of a personal nature including a photograph;
- 8) Using another user's account or password;
- 9) Posting material authored or created by another without his/her consent;
- 10) Posting anonymous messages;
- 11) Using the network for commercial or private advertising;
- 12) Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal material; and
- 13) Using the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked.

Network Etiquette

The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages to others.
- 2) Use appropriate language Do not swear, or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- 3) Do not reveal personal information, including the addresses or telephone numbers, of students or colleagues.
- 4) Recognize that electronic mail (e-mail) is not private. People who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- 5) Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
- 6) Consider all communications and information accessible via the network to be private property.
- 7) Users are responsible for obtaining permission from the network administrator before bringing in their own software and using it on school district equipment.

No Warranties

The school district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school district is not responsible for any damages the user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The school district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Indemnification

The user agrees to indemnify the school district for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the school district relating to, or arising out of, any violation of these procedures.

Security

Network security is a high priority. If the user can identify a security problem on the Internet, the user must notify the system administrator or a school administrator. Keep your account and password confidential. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the network.

Vandalism

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or any other network. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Copyright Web Publishing Rules

Copyright law prohibits the republishing of text or graphics found on the Web without express written permission.

- 1) For each re-publication (on a Web site or file server) of a graphic or a text file that was produced externally, there must be a notice at the bottom of the page crediting the original producer and noting how and when permission was granted. If possible, the notice should also include the Web address of the original source.
- 2) Students engaged in producing Web pages must provide library media specialists with the email or hard copy permissions before the Web pages are published. Printed evidence of the status of "Public domain" documents must be provided.
- 3) The absence of a copyright notice may not be interpreted as permission to copy the materials. Only the copyright owner may provide the permission. The manager of the Web site displaying the material may not be considered a source of permission.
- 4) The "fair use" rules governing student reports in classrooms are less stringent and permit limited use of graphics and text.
- 5) Student work may only be published if there is written permission from both the parent/guardian and student.

Use of Electronic Mail

The Email system is owned and controlled by the school district. Email is provided to aid students in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, and as an education tool.

- 1) The school district reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of any account on its system, without prior notice or permission from the account's user. Unauthorized access by any student or staff member to an electronic mail account is strictly prohibited.
- 2) Each person should use the same degree of care in drafting an e-mail message as would be put into a written memorandum or document. Nothing should be transmitted in an e-mail message that would be inappropriate in a letter or memorandum.
- 3) Electronic messages transmitted via the school district's Internet gateway carry with them an identification of the user's Internet "domain." This domain name is a registered domain name and identifies the author as being with the school district. Great care should be taken, therefore, in the composition of such messages and how such messages might reflect on the name and reputation of the school and district. Users will be held personally responsible for the content of any and all email messages transmitted to external recipients.
- 4) Any message received from an unknown sender via the Internet should either be immediately deleted or forwarded to the system administrator. Downloading any file attached to any Internet-based message is prohibited unless the user is certain of that message's authenticity and the nature of the file so transmitted.
- 5) Use of the District's email system constitutes consent to these regulations.

Disciplinary Action

Users violating any of these rights and responsibilities will immediately be banned from using school district hardware and telecommunications software until a meeting is held with the network administrator and, if necessary, school administration. Depending upon the seriousness of the violation, the user may be banned from the use of technology and receive additional disciplinary action from the school district and/or criminal prosecution.

The use of the Internet and other technologies is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The network administrator will deem what is inappropriate and his/her decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of Stephenson Area Public Schools may request the network administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

Reading Materials and Pocket Pagers

Pocket pagers or "Beepers" are banned from school under Michigan PA 215 of 1987. Reading materials brought to school must be appropriate to the classroom setting. Pornographic materials are prohibited. Pornography is defined as pictures, writing, or other material that is sexually explicit or equates sex with power and violence.

Non-School-Sponsored publications and Websites

Students are prohibited from accessing and/or distributing at school any pictures, written material, or electronic material, including material from the Internet or from a blog, that:

- 1) Will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
- 2) Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;

- 3) Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, or contains indecent and vulgar language; or
- 4) Is primarily intended for the immediate solicitation of funds.

The distribution of non-school-sponsored written material must occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the material is endorsed by the school district.

Guidelines for School-Sponsored Publication, Productions and Websites

School-sponsored publications, productions and websites are governed by the Speech Rights of Student Journalist Act, school board policies and the student/parent handbook. Except as provided below, a student journalist has the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored media, including the right to determine the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of school-sponsored media.

Student journalists are prohibited from using school-sponsored media in a way that:

- 1) Is libelous, slanderous, or obscene;
- 2) Constitutes an unwanted invasion of privacy;
- 3) Violates Federal or State law, including the constitutional rights of third parties; or
- 4) Incites students to
 - a) Commit an unlawful act
 - b) Violate any school district policy or student handbook procedure; or
 - c) Materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operations of the school

All school-sponsored media shall comply with the ethics and rules of responsible journalism. Text that fits into numbers one through four above will not be tolerated and school officials and student media advisors may edit or delete such material.

The author's name will accompany personal opinions and editorial statements. An opportunity for the expression of differing opinions from those published/produced will be provided within the same media.

No expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press under this policy shall be deemed to be an expression of the school, school district or an expression of school board policy.

CHAPTER 8 – SEARCH & SEIZURE

Search and Seizure

In order to maintain order, safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. “School authorities” includes school liaison police officers.

School Property and Equipment, Personal Effects of Students

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (i.e. lockers, desks), as well as personal effects left in those locations by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. **Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.**

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

Students

School authorities may search a student and/or the student’s personal effects in the student’s possession (e.g. purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, cell phones) when there is a reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school district’s rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student’s age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

Seizure of Property

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

CHAPTER 9 – ATHLETICS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletic Rules and Code of Conduct

The Athletic Code applies to all students who want to participate in sports and extracurricular organizations. This code applies in addition to other rules and regulations concerning student conduct and imposes additional requirements on student athletes (such as physicals).

Participation in all extracurricular activities is a privilege. Those who participate in them have a responsibility to favorably represent the school and community. Students are expected to conduct themselves both in and out of school in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities as representatives of the school and district. If a student fails to comply with the terms of this code, the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities may be lost in accordance with the terms of this Athletic Code. Specific incidents of behavior or academic problems not covered in the Athletic Code are subject to review and disciplinary action of the administration. The purpose of the Athletic Code is not to restrict freedom, but, instead, to encourage the students to practice and develop greater appreciation of the values associated with responsible behavior, healthful living and good citizenship.

Enforcement and Consistency

It is the avowed purpose of the area staff to treat every alleged offense and offender as an individual and unique case, to act not in haste and to safeguard the rights and interest of every individual as well as the overall interest of the Athletic Code, school and community.

Coverage

- 1) Students will be governed by the Athletic Code in grades 6,7 and 8 from their first day of their first semester of involvement to completion of their sixth semester of junior high school.
- 2) All students entering Stephenson High School athletics will begin their school involvement by signing a new athletic policy. This will mean that the student will begin his/her involvement in high school athletics with a “clean slate”. If for some reason a member of the coaching staff or administrative staff questions a Junior High school student’s past actions, there will be a meeting of that person(s) with the athletic director and a school administrator. If needed, an Athletic Council meeting may be called to settle any problems.
- 3) High school students, athletes, managers and cheerleaders are governed by the Athletic Code in grades 9-12 from their first day in their first semester of involvement to their last day their eighth semester of enrollment. This time period includes times off from school such as holiday breaks and summer vacation.
- 4) The rules, regulations and penalties as set forth in this document are meant to serve as a tool to be used to help student athletes. All coaches employed by Stephenson Area Public Schools are required to abide by these established rules.

MHSAA

Eligibility for most athletics is also governed by the rules of the Michigan High School Association and, if applicable, these rules will apply in addition to this Athletic Code. In a case of a conflict between MHSAA and this Athletic Code, the most stringent rule will be enforced.

Academic Eligibility

To participate in any athletic or extracurricular competition or event, a student must be passing all classes. Athletes will be permitted to practice during the period of scholastic ineligibility but not dress in the school uniform of their respective activity. A student who is ineligible, may not miss class time for those games/activities that require an early release from class.

Initial Eligibility

- 1) Initial eligibility is based on the previous semester grades. (Fall sports = Semester 2 or the previous year, Winter sports – Quarter 1 and Spring sports = Semester 1 of the current year).
- 2) Students will be allowed to compete in games if they are passing all classes.
- 3) Students who are failing any semester courses will be ineligible for the first 50% of regular season games. Students who fail more than two (2) semester courses will be ineligible for sixty (60) scheduled school days per MHSAA Guidelines.

Grade Checks

- 1) Grade checks will start the third Friday after the official start of practice and weekly thereafter.
- 2) If a student is failing any class, he/she will be ineligible to compete the following week.
- 3) The next Friday, his/her grades will be checked again. If his/her semester grade is 60% or above the athlete will be eligible the following week. If not, the athlete will be ineligible for another week.
- 4) Weekly grade checks will be made to monitor all students with any Fs and to implement personal student-achievement plans.
- 5) Semester 1 failures in any course will result in an immediate 50% of regular season games ineligibility period.

Requirements for Participation in Sports

An athlete must have the following fully executed documents on file at the school office before the athlete's first participation in any activity. Students must not be allowed to practice until an acceptable signed statement of physical examination and consent has been provided.

- 1) A current physical examination report (given on or after April fifteenth of the previous school year) completed by the M.D., D.O, Physician's Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner who administers the physical examination and which finds that the athlete has passed a physical examination and is physically able to participate in athletic tryouts, practices and contests; and
- 2) The physical examination report is on file with the athletic director and is effective for the entire year. The card must contain the signatures of the athlete and parent/guardian in the areas provided and the person conducting the examination.
- 3) A receipt showing the athlete and his/her parents received a copy of the Athletic Code, understand the terms of the Athletic Code and agree to abide by its terms and conditions.
- 4) Attendance is required at a "Right to Know" meeting.

Behavioral Conduct

Behavioral misconduct by student-athletes will not be tolerated. The training code will be based on a points system. Students who violated the training code will receive points on their athletic record. Any of the below listed violations may carry a maximum penalty of suspension from all athletic competition at any time for the remainder of the season. Any misconduct not listed below that the student/athlete engages in may be disciplined at the discretion of the coach and/or school administrator. Behavioral misconduct and penalties shall include but shall not be limited to:

- 1) 1-Point Violations
 - a) One point per suspension occurrence, except those listed separately in 3-Point and 5-Point Violations listed below
 - b) 1-Point violations may or may not carry over from year to year. This decision will be at the Athletic Director's discretion and/or school administrator.
- 2) 3-Point Violations
 - a) Insubordination toward your coach (failing to follow a reasonable request made by the coach or assistant(s)).
 - b) Unsportsmanlike conduct (i.e. profanity, temper tantrums, etc.).
 - c) Defacing or destroying school property.
 - d) Police contact resulting in arrest or the student/athlete being entered into the legal system.
- 3) 5-Point Violations
 - a) Involved in the use, possession, buying, selling, or giving away of alcohol, tobacco products, or other drugs.
 - b) Being present at establishments or gatherings where alcoholic beverages or controlled substances are present and not under the supervision of someone over the age of 21 who is preventing students from gaining access to the beverages or controlled substances. Students who do not leave immediately will be subject to discipline.
 - c) Possessing, receiving, or in any way connected with illegally obtained properties, stealing, or any act of dishonestly acquiring the property of another. These offenses shall be applicable when they take place in or on school property or when the event is sponsored by Stephenson Area Public Schools or another school.
 - d) Being convicted of a felony. More severe penalties up to and including permanent suspension from athletics may be imposed depending upon the severity of the felony.
 - e) Use, possession, buying, selling or giving away of dietary supplements such as ephedrine, androstenedione or creatine.
 - f) Police contact resulting in arrest or the student/athlete being entered into the legal system.
- 4) Point Accumulation Reference
 - a) Zero (0) Points – Athlete is in good standing
 - b) Two (2) Points – Warning is issued to the student
 - c) Three (3) Points – 10% game suspension [One (1) game minimum].
 - d) Five (5) Points – 25% game suspension [two (2) game minimum]. In addition, enrollment in and completion of mandatory substance abuse/alcohol/anger management counseling (as appropriate) at the expense of the parent/guardian may be required if the individual wishes to continue to participate in athletics.
 - e) Eight (8) Points – One (1) calendar year suspension. The student loses all remaining calendar year eligibility. After completion of a one-year suspension, he/she must apply to the Athletic Council for readmission to the athletic program. He/she must have accumulated no Three-Point or Five-point violations during the time of suspension. In addition, enrollment in and completion of mandatory substance abuse/alcohol/anger management counseling (as appropriate) at the expense of the parent/guardian may be required. A reinstated player may then return to active participation with zero points on the first official date of practice for the sport from which he/she was suspended.

Note: Expelled students, if reinstated back to school, will be suspended from sports for one (1) calendar year until the first official date of practice of the sport in season, at the time of the violation.

Coaches and school officials will impose disciplinary measures appropriate to the offenses committed. The discipline imposed for any particular offense shall be at the sole and exclusive discretion of the coaching staff and school officials.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Except for prescription drugs used by the person for whom such drugs were prescribed in the manner intended by the prescribing medical doctor, the possession, use, distribution, purchase or sale of any alcoholic beverage, drug, drug paraphernalia, controlled substance, look-alike, e-cigarette, tobacco or tobacco product or any other substance which, when taken into the human body is intended to alter mood or mental state, including any item or substance which is represented by a student to be, or is believed by a student to be any of the foregoing, regardless of the true nature or appearance of the substance, is prohibited in school buildings, on school buses, and on all other school property or school-related events at any time. This prohibition shall include all school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether held before or after school, evenings or weekends and shall additionally include a prohibition of use by a student athlete in any instance where the school can demonstrate a reasonable connection to the school program or school athletic program. For purposes of this procedure, students who are under the influence of prohibited substances shall be treated in the same manner as though they had prohibited substances in their possession.

Appeals Procedure

Step 1: An informal discussion will be conducted between all the parties involved as arranged by the athletic director.

Step 2: Upon written appeal to a school administrator by the athlete, a meeting of the Athletic Council will convene. The appeal must be made within five (5) school days of receiving the penalty, and the Athletic Council will meet within five (5) school days after receiving the appeal. A decision will be given immediately unless extenuating circumstances exist.

Step 3: The Athletic Council will hear and make the final decision. The Athletic Council shall only review the process used to assess a penalty and shall not alter the penalty to less than the minimum or more than the maximum, as spelled out in the policy. A majority vote will be final.

Note: During the appeal, the coach of the sport involved and the school administrator will decide whether or not the athlete participates in the sport.

Athletic Council

- 1) The Athletic Council will consist of a school administrator, athletic director, and varsity coaches. When the council is called to consider a suspension, the coach of that athlete will not be a member of the council for that incident.
- 2) The school administrator shall chair the proceedings and shall record the proceedings of the Athletic Council

Coaches' Obligations

- 1) Any coach who suspends an athlete from competition must submit in writing to the athletic director. The school administrator and athletic director will review the form and make the final determination on the suspension.
- 2) Upon a coach's request to meet concerning disciplinary action regarding an athlete, the athletic director will conduct such a meeting. If the athletic director/coach feels the matter should be reviewed by the Athletic Council, the athletic director will call for such a meeting within three (3) days.

Administrative Responsibilities

- 1) The Athletic Director is the administrator responsible for invoking all penalties under the Athletic Code.
- 2) The Principal and Athletic Director will consult with the coaches on reported violations of the Athletic Code. Coaches will be informed of actions under the Athletic Code that involve members of their program.
- 3) The Athletic Director will be responsible for notifying the athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the applied penalty.

Reporting of Violations

- 1) Alleged violations shall be reported in writing (signed and dated) to the athletic director or school administrator. An acceptable source in reporting violations is defined as an adult (age 18 or older) who is not currently an enrolled student at Stephenson Area Public Schools or other K-12 school districts. The person must have proof that he/she was a first-hand witness to the alleged violation. He/she must be willing to meet with the Athletic Council, the accused, and the accused's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 2) Hearsay of Information not reported in the above manner will not constitute grounds for application of penalties. If, however, after reasonable efforts to investigate have been made by school officials, the accused athlete admits to the violation or their parent(s)/guardian(s) are convinced of the athlete's guilt, action will be taken. Likewise, materials obtained from police agencies or other governmental sources will constitute a basis for action to be taken.

Awards

- 1) If the athlete serves his/her penalty and completes the season in good standing, he/she will receive the award earned. No award is given if the athlete is serving a suspension that is being carried over to the next sport season.
- 2) If the athlete violates the Athletic Code after the season has ended but prior to distribution of award(s), the athlete will not receive any awards. This applies to major violations (as spelled out in the Athletic Code) only.
- 3) Expulsion from a sport for any reason, or at any time, prohibits the athlete receiving the award.

Rules in Effect

The rules set forth in this Athletic Code are in effect throughout the calendar year and 24 hours a day, whether or not school is in session and including vacation periods, and holidays. The rules apply on and off campus and whether or not the misconduct occurs at school or a school-sponsored activity or in some other locale. The rules apply from the beginning of the athlete's first tryout or practice to the first sport which the athlete attempts until the completion of the athlete's athletic eligibility in all sports.

Absence from School on Day of Activity

An athlete must be in school by the beginning of fourth period on the day of an activity to be eligible for any activity on that day unless the absence has been pre-approved in writing by a school administrator. Two (2) exceptions may be made by the athletic director:

- 1) For a medical absence pre-arranged; or
- 2) For a death in the athlete's family

An athlete who has one (1) or more truanancies or who has been suspended from school may be suspended from participation in athletic activities by administration.

An athlete who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may be withheld from Saturday activities at the sole discretion of the athletic director and/or administration.

Travel

All athletes shall travel to athletic events and return home from athletic events with the team on which the athlete competes by use of school-approved means of transportation. A written waiver of this rule may be issued by an administrator upon advance written request of an athletes' parent/guardian. The athlete will be allowed to leave with only the parent, guardian, grandparent, adult sibling not in a K-12 school, aunt, or uncle and provided the responsible party appears and accepts custody of the athlete. In no case shall a waiver be issued unless the alternate means of transportation anticipated by the waiver will be provided by the parent, guardian, grandparent, adult sibling not in a K-12 school, aunt or uncle. Oral requests shall not be honored and oral permissions shall not be valid.

Special exceptions to this will be on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the superintendent. The Superintendent's decision is final and not appealable by the board.

Any student athlete found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's athletic discipline policies, rules and regulations as provided herein.

Uniforms

All athletes must return all uniforms at the end of the season. Students who lose or damage uniforms will be charged for replacing the uniform

Dual Sports

Students will be allowed to participate in two (2) sports during a season with approval from their parents, coaches, and athletic director. Athletes will be required to designate their primary sport. The athlete is expected to participate in all scheduled meets/games with priority given to the primary sport. However, athletes will not be allowed to miss the same class more than two (2) times during the week for sporting events.

Attendance at School Events and Activities

All school rules and policies apply at all times to students on school property, at school events, and at other activities whether on school property or at another location. Students are not to be in the building after buses depart unless they are remaining for an activity that is under the direct supervision of a staff member. Violations will be considered loitering and will result in disciplinary action.

****Attendance at school-sponsored dances and other activities is a privilege****

Only students who attend the school may attend school-sponsored dances and activities. If a high school student desires to bring a guest to a dance, they must obtain and have signed a "guest pass" form prior to bringing the guest to our school function. This form needs to be signed by the principal of the guest student's school. This form will advise that principal that their student wished to attend one of our activities and that with their signature they are indicating their student is a student in good standing. Only one (1) guest may be brought by any student and the guest must be in at least the 9th grade up to one (1) year removed from high school and no older than nineteen (19). The conduct of the guest is the responsibility of the student host. If a guest creates a problem, both the guest and the host will be removed

and possible barred from future events. Separate dances will be held for junior high students. Junior high students may not bring guests to their dances or be guests at senior high dances.

At school events such as dances, lock-ins, etc., the following policy will be enforced:

Students may not leave once they arrive. If they leave, they may not return.

Students shall dress in a manner deemed acceptable by administration. Students shall not:

- 1) Use, possess, distribute, purchase, or sell tobacco materials, e-cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, or any illegal substance or paraphernalia;
- 2) Use, possess, buy, sell, barter, or distribute any object that is or could be considered a weapon or any item that is a “look-alike” weapon;
- 3) Vandalize or steal
- 4) Haze other students
- 5) Behave in a manner that is detrimental to the good of the school; or
- 6) Be insubordinate or disrespectful toward teachers and chaperones.

Students who violate the school’s discipline code will be required to leave the dance immediately and the student’s parent/guardian will be contacted. The school may also impose other discipline as outlined in the school’s discipline code.

Equal Access for Non-School Sponsored Student Clubs

A student-initiated group may meet on school premises during non-instructional time and shall have the same rights and access and be subject to the same administrative guidelines that govern the meetings of school-sponsored student organizations, without regard to the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the activity.

A school administrator shall grant the group’s request by first determining that:

- 1) The activity has been initiated by students
- 2) Attendance at the meeting is voluntary
- 3) No agent or employee of the District will promote, lead, or participate in the meeting.
- 4) The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities in the school.
- 5) Non-school persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend the activity.

A school employee may be assigned to attend a student-initiated meeting in a custodial capacity but shall not participate in the activity.

Student Organizations

Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities and events to broaden their educational experience. A description of available organizations offered to students is listed below.

Note: A student who is academically ineligible under the standards set forth in the athletic code will not be allowed to miss class time for events/activities which are sponsored by the organization(s) in which the student participates.

Annual Staff

The Annual Staff is responsible for the completion of the high school yearbook, the record of each year's activities at school. Students in grades 9-12 are expected to devote their time and energy in the planning stages, which include creation of a theme and ideas for development, use of the marketing process (annual and ad sales), and completion of the final stages of this desktop publication. Students develop their journalism, photography and publication design skills by participation in this endeavor.

Art Club

The Art Club is an organization that focuses on the visual arts through the creation of banners and posters and through involvement in school and community projects. Field trips are made as local exhibitions and events arise. Members are students in grades 9-12 who are interested in art.

Business Professionals of America (BPA)

Business Professionals of America promotes learning through a variety of activities and is an integral part of the total business/computer instructional program at Stephenson Area Public Schools. Chapter members are students in grades 9-12 with an interest in business education. Business Professionals of America encourages individual and group initiative and competition at regional, state, and national levels, thus helping to develop future leaders for business and office occupations.

Drama Club

The Stephenson Drama Club is open to all students in grades 6-12 who are interested in play production and performance. Join to gain experience in acting, set design, costumes, lighting, sound, and all aspects of taking a play from auditions to opening night. Most of all join to have fun!

Healthy Youth Coalition

HYC is a grade 9-12 organization that promotes healthy lifestyles throughout our communities. HYC members participate in a variety of activities throughout the year such as reality haunted house and action troupe.

High School Quiz Bowl & Hi-Q

Members of High School Bowl and Hi-Q are chosen from a pool of students who are interested in competing. The advisor looks for students who are strong in specific content areas. High School Bowl is a competition that takes place at WNMU in Marquette. Questions asked of team members range from sporting events to cell composition and everything in between. The taped program is televised at a later date. The questions used in Hi-Q competitions are from specific areas, but there is still a wide range that is possible for the questions. Hi-Q teams compete three (3) times in January and February with playoffs for the highest scoring teams in March. Junior high students may have the opportunity to participate in Junior High Quiz Bowl.

LEO's Club

The LEO's club is run by members of the Lions Club. The club does various community service activities throughout the year.

National Honor Society (N.H.S)

The National Honor Society promotes recognition for students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, leadership, character, and service. Through N.H.S. chapter service activities, members maintain and further develop the qualities that won them selection Membership in the National Honor Society is both an honor and a commitment. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the faculty council of each school. Initial eligibility is based on a cumulative 3.5 grade average. Students who are academically eligible must complete a Student Activity Information Form. Candidates will then be reviewed by the faculty council. A final vote by the faculty council will determine selection.

Robotics Club

The robotics club builds and competes with a robot each year.

Student Council

The Student Council represents all students and coordinates all student activities, such as homecoming and community service projects. Any problems you may have during the course of the year may be directed to Student Council for consideration.

CHAPTER 10 – SPECIAL EDUCATION

Education of Students with Disabilities

It is the intent of the school district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational service. The school district provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all students with disabilities enrolled in the school. For the provision of special education programs and series under the IDEA, the term “student with a disability” means a person between ages three (3) and twenty-six (26) for whom it is determined that special education services are needed. A student who reaches age 26 after September first is a “student with a disability” and entitled to continue a special education program or service until the end of that school year. For the purposes of complying with Section 504, a “student with a disability” is a person who:

- 1) Has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one (1) or more of such person’s major life activities;
- 2) Has a record of such an impairment; or
- 3) Is regarded as having such an impairment.

A copy of the publication “Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities” may be obtained from the school district office of the Menominee County Intermediate School website.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

The School District will comply with the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 when disciplining students with disabilities. Behavioral interventions will be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors.

CHAPTER 11 – STUDENT RECORDS & PRIVACY

Student Privacy Protections

1) Surveys by Third Parties

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request. This applies to every survey:

- a) That is created by a person or entity other than a school official, staff member, or student;
- b) Regardless of whether the student answering the question can be identified; and
- c) Regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Parents who object to disclosure of information concerning their child to a third party may do so in writing to a school administrator.

2) Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one (1) or more of the following items:

- a) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
- b) Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
- c) Behavior or attitudes about sex.
- d) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- e) Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
- f) Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships such as those with lawyers, physicians and ministers.
- g) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
- h) Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

The student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

Instructional Material

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

Student Records

School student records are confidential and information from them will not be released other than as provided by law. The K-12 principal is the Records Control Officer for the Stephenson Area Public Schools and is responsible for the processing and maintenance of all student records. This office is located at Stephenson Area Public Schools or can be reached by calling 906-753-2222, extension 100.

A Federal law known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act" (FERPA) gives parents/guardians and eligible students (age 18 and older) the following rights with respect to their student records.

- 1) **Right to Inspect:** You have the right to inspect and review substantially all of your education records maintained by or at the school district. This right extends to the parent/guardian of a student under 18 years of age and to any student age 18 or older.
- 2) **Right to request amendment:** You have the right to seek to have corrected any parts of an education record which you believe to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of your rights. This right includes the right to a hearing to present evidence that the record should be changed if a designated school official decides not to alter the education records according to your request. If no change is made to the education record after the hearing, you have a right to place a written rebuttal in the record.
- 3) **Right to prevent disclosure:** You have the right to prevent disclosure of education records to third parties with certain limited exceptions. It is the intent of the Board of Education to limit the disclosure of information contained in your education records to those instances when prior written consent has been given to the disclosure, as an item of directory information of which you have not refused to permit disclosure, or under the provisions of FERPA which allows disclosure without prior written consent.
- 4) **Right to complain:** You have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning the alleged failure of the school district to comply with FERPA. Your complaint should be directed to:

Family Policy and Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

- 5) **Right to obtain policy:** You have the right to obtain a copy of the policy adopted by the Board of Education in compliance with FERPA. A copy may be obtained in person or by mail from:

Jerry Sardina
Stephenson Area Public Schools
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887

- 6) **Right to object to release of directory information:** Generally, school officials must have written permission from the parent/guardian of a student or an eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, FERPA allows school districts to disclose, without consent, "directory" type information. The Board of Education of the Stephenson Area Public School has designated the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record as "directory information:"

Name, address, and telephone number; date and place of birth; photograph; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight if a member of an athletic team; date of attendance; date of graduation and awards received; and any other information the District considers would not be harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. (See Board Policy 8330)

Unless you advise the school district that you do not want any or all of this information released, school officials may release personally identifiable information which it has designated as directory information. Upon such objection, this information will not be released without prior consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student.

- 7) You have two (2) weeks from the receipt of this notice to advise the school district in writing of any or all of those types of information about the student which you refuse to permit the school district to designate as directory information. Your objections should be addressed to:

Christian Londo, K-12 Principal
Stephenson Area Public Schools
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887

Requests from Military or Institutions of Higher Learning

Upon request, military recruiters and institutions of higher learning will be given access to student names, addresses and published telephone numbers. Parents/guardians who do not want their child's name to be released (or students over the age of 18 who do not want their name released) should contact a school administrator.

CHAPTER 12 – PARENTAL RIGHT NOTIFICATIONS

Standardized Testing

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that students in grades six through twelve will take standardized tests starting in April for approximately six (6) weeks. Parents are encouraged to cooperate in preparing students for the standardized testing, because the quality of the education the school can provide is partially dependent upon the school's ability to continue to prove its success in the state's standardized tests. Parents can assist their students to achieve their best performance by doing the following.

- 1) Encourage students to work hard and study throughout the year;
- 2) Ensure students get a good night's sleep the night before exams.
- 3) Ensure students eat well the morning of the exam, particularly ensuring they eat sufficient protein.
- 4) Remind and emphasize for students the importance of good performance on standardized testing.
- 5) Ensure students are on time and prepared for test, with appropriate materials;
- 6) Teach students the importance of honesty and ethics during the performance of these and other tests;
- 7) Encourage students to relax on testing day.

Sex Education

A student shall not be enrolled in a class in which the subjects of family planning or reproductive health are discussed unless the student's parent/guardian is notified in advance of the course and the content of the course, is given a prior opportunity to review the materials to be used in the course, and is notified in advance of his/her right to have the student excused from the class.

Upon the written request of a student or the student's parent/guardian, a student shall be excused without penalty or loss of academic credit, from attending a class in which sex education instruction is provided. "Class" means an instructional period of limited duration within a course of instruction and includes an assembly or small group presentation.

If a student's parent/guardian files with the school a continuing written notice that the pupil is to be excused from a class in which sex education instruction is provided, the student shall not be enrolled in such a class unless the parent/guardian submits a written authorization for that enrollment.

English Learners

The school offers opportunities and support for English Learners to develop high levels of academic attainment in English and to meet the same academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to attain.

Parents/guardians of English Learners will be informed how they can:

- 1) Be involved in the education of their children; and
- 2) Be active participants in assisting their children to attain English proficiency, achieve at high levels within a well-rounded education, and meet the challenging State academic standards expected of all students.

For question related to this program or to express input in the school's English Learners program, contact the K-12 school office at 906-753-2222 extension 100.

Homeless Child's Right to Education

When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined by law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent/guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

- 1) Continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless, or if the child becomes permanently housed until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or
- 2) Enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

Assistance and support for homeless families includes:

- 1) Food bank and meal programs:
 - a) St. Vincent de Paul, 906-863-3405 extension 14
 - b) Mid-County Ministerium Food Band, 906-753-4932
- 2) Local service organizations
 - a) Salvation Army, 715-735-7448
 - b) Precious Blood Catholic Church, 906-753-2562
- 3) Family shelters:
 - a) Abundant Life Church Missions, 906-424-4429
 - b) Rainbow House, 800-956-6656

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Throughout the school year, opportunities are available for parent/guardian involvement. A school administrator will email parents/guardians about opportunities, and parents/guardians are also encouraged to call the office to inquire about opportunities.

In order for parents/guardians to be fully involved in the educational process, the school and its teachers provide meetings, including parent/teacher conferences, at flexible times to accommodate a variety of parent schedules. Parents/guardians will be given notice of meeting availability at the beginning of each year, and at least two (2) weeks before conferences or other regularly scheduled meetings, to provide sufficient opportunity to schedule and attend meetings with teachers. Additionally, teachers are available regularly to meet with parents/guardians to discuss the success of their child. Parents/guardians are encouraged to inquire about available meeting times, and to work with teachers. Parents/guardians will be involved in an organized and timely way when any programs are created, considered, or altered, and will be continually involved in the ongoing development of programming, curriculum and policy. The school provides parents/guardians with access to:

- 1) School performance profiles required by Federal law and their child's individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results;
- 2) A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- 3) Opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions, share experiences with other parents/guardians, and participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children if such parents/guardians so desire; and
- 4) Timely responses to suggestions.

Everyone is responsible for the success of the students of the school. While the school provides the best education we can, it is critical to the success of students that parents/guardians assist us in meeting the goals of education set forth by the state, the federal government and ourselves.

In order to better assist in educating the students, we need the help of all parents/guardians. We ask that you help us educate children by monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; and participating, as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of children and positive use of extracurricular time.

The school endeavors to do its best to provide all information in the language best understood by parents/guardians. Questions about language alternatives should be directed to a school administrator at 906-753-2222, extension 100.

Age of Majority

Although 18-year-old students are recognized as adults under the Age of Majority Act, school officials are nonetheless committed to the equal treatment in application of school policies and procedures to all students. Obtaining adult status does not exempt the student from school policies and rules. With the exceptions noted below, school district policies and procedures set forth apply to all students, regardless of their attainment of the age of majority. Students 18 years and older may:

- 1) Have the same privilege as their parents/guardians as it relates to access or control of their student records;
- 2) Represent themselves during disciplinary conferences and be the addressee for their grade reports;
- 3) Sign themselves in and out of school and may verify their own absences.

NOTE: All attendance standards continue to apply. Parents still can be contacted in order to notify them of a student's absence;

- 4) Provide reason(s) for their absences and tardies, but are held to the same attendance requirements as other students, including the acceptable reason(s) for an excused absence.

The staff and administration of Stephenson Area Public Schools recognize that when a student reaches the age of majority, he/she is afforded all the rights and privileges of adulthood. This does not mean that provision has to be made for two (2) sets of rules (one for students under 18 and one for those who have reached the age of majority). In fact, the Michigan Legislature, recognizing the possibility of conflict between 18-year old students and school rules, has explicitly spelled out the rights of school by enacting a law which states:

It can be stated, unequivocally, that rules may be made by the state, local boards of education, teachers, and principals, and that these may be enforced reasonably against all who are in the school setting, below or above the age of 18 (eighteen).

**** All School Rules Apply to All Students Regardless of Age ****

Eligible students who wish to assert these rights should register their intent on the appropriate form in the K-12 office. Proof of age of majority must be made by the driver's license or birth certificate.

Until such time as the eligible student registers this intent, school officials will not apply the above exceptions to school policies and procedures.

Mandated Reporters

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Michigan Family Independence Agency.

Mental Health

Stephenson Area Public Schools is concerned about the mental health of our students. There is a school mental health counselor available for students. If you would like your child to speak with the counselor, please contact a school administrator to make arrangements.

Pesticide Application Notice

The school district maintains a registry of parents/guardians of students who have registered to receive written or telephone notification prior to the application of pesticides to school grounds. To be added to the list, please contact:

Patrick Marciniak, Maintenance Supervisor
W526 Division Street
Stephenson, MI 49887
906-753-2222 extension 113

Notification will be given before application of the pesticide. Prior notice is not required if there is imminent threat to health or property.