

Dear Students,

Welcome to Homer Middle School! Whether you are a returning student, an incoming 5th grader, or a transfer student from another school district I am pleased to have you with us here at Homer Middle School. I look forward to getting to know each of you and your families throughout this school year. I encourage each of you to take full advantage of all of the educational, enrichment, and athletic opportunities available to you.

All policies included in the 2020-21 Return to Learn Plans will be followed for the 2020-21 school year, while the district is still identified as being in Phase 1-6. During these phases, the policies of the Return to Learn Plan will supercede the procedures outlined in this handbook

Along with a wide selection of academic courses and a strong athletic program, we have a number of out-of-class opportunities for educational enrichment. Our 5th graders have some wonderful day trips planned for the spring, and our 6th graders are able to take part in our traditional 6th grade camping experience at the Pottawatomie Recreational Area in Tekonsha, Michigan. Our 7th grade trip to Chicago, Illinois is one of the best experiences you will have during your middle school career. As our 8th grade gets prepared for high school we send them off with a trip to Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. Add to these exciting adventures our annual ski trip, Quiz Busters, our students have a pretty full year.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with rules and guidelines that will be used to evaluate school situations as they relate to you-the student. Several changes have occurred in the State law as it relates to student discipline/bullying and I want to make sure that you are aware of the impact of specific actions. Reading through this handbook and reviewing it with your parents should help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a student in Homer Middle School.

A new Board Policy (8017) regarding Bullying was implemented for the 2012-2013 school year. Incident Reporting Forms will be available in each of the main offices. Included in this handbook is a copy of the Behavior Rubric that will be used by the school administration.

As a result of our ongoing district-wide school improvement effort, we have added new enrichment classes to our middle school curriculum. We have also added new staff members this year. In addition, I believe you will find that the nine-week marking periods (12 weeks for rotation classes) will increase your opportunities for success. My expectations for your level of achievement are high and I am confident that you will do great things during your middle school career.

I challenge each of you to make this an outstanding school year and to take advantage of all of the learning experiences that will be presented to you. This effort will go a long way toward helping you reach your goals. In today's society, a person's education goes a long way in determining future success and your education should be something you cherish and enjoy.

Please feel free to call or stop by the office if you have questions or concerns throughout the school year. Your student's success is the primary goal for all of us.

Homer Middle School Student Handbook

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HOMER MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that our educational efforts must be flexible and responsive to the changing conditions of the world and our nation. We believe that in order to become contributing members of our society that our students must be able to think critically and creatively. To this end we must provide our students with a thorough knowledge of the basics in science, social studies, mathematics, reading and writing. We believe that these skills will best be mastered by the student with good study habits.

We believe that our students must be exposed to a variety of activities, which will enhance their future by making them aware of their potential. We believe that we must help our students master the communication skills needed for positive self-expression in order to develop self-esteem. We believe that it is the student with a positive self-image who will apply a sense of caring to their lives, learn to accept the differences in others and respect themselves and others.

We believe that through our teaching and example our students will learn to respect laws, rules and regulations, and abide by them. We will have succeeded when we have instilled in our students a sense of self-pride and a working knowledge of what is right and wrong. We believe that students cannot be assets to themselves unless they are assets to our school, community and country.

Middle School Staff

HOMER MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The staff of Homer Middle School accepts the responsibility to instruct our students in academic and social skills in order for them to make the transition from elementary to high school.

Middle School Staff

GENERAL INFORMATION

Rules and regulations which govern student conduct in Homer Middle School are established to promote the safety and well-being of pupils, and to promote the welfare of the school as a whole. Personal liberty is restricted only where it conflicts with the best interest of the group.

1. **GENERAL CONDUCT** - General conduct in the corridors and around the building is regulated by your own sense of propriety and consideration for others. Keeping to the right in the halls and on the stairs provides an orderly way to pass from one class to the next. Gathering in the halls, as well as running, shoving, and scuffling, is, of course, out of order. Shouting and improper language has no place in our pattern of conduct. In addition to swearing, “sound alike” words or using a letter to represent the swear word may also be considered inappropriate by a teacher or another adult employee. In those cases, a lunch detention may be assigned by the adult in charge.
2. **SCHOOL PROPERTY** - Every pupil shares the responsibility for the good care and respect of school property, and should always think of it as his or her own. Any pupil who is caught damaging any school property will be required to repair or replace the property, leaving it as good as the original. This includes graffiti and other damage to school buildings, property, grounds, and vehicles. (see Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
3. **SNOWBALLING** - Snowballing can be dangerous. Therefore, it is prohibited on or near school property.
4. **ASSEMBLIES** - One of the measures of the quality of our school is the standard of conduct maintained in assemblies. Assemblies are scheduled by the principal's office. Students, who cannot behave in an acceptable manner, may be assigned to a study period during assemblies. It may also become necessary to assign seats in assemblies.
5. **STUDENT BEHAVIOR** - Students are expected to behave in a manner that will be a credit to our school. Any form of embracing, kissing, cuddling, or other displays of affection will not be tolerated. Conferences with the students and/or parents will be conducted if necessary. Second offenses may result in suspension.
6. **HALL AND MEDIA CENTER PASSES** - Students are not permitted in the halls or media center during class periods unless they are accompanied by a teacher or have a hall pass from an authorized staff member.
7. **HEALTH SERVICES** - Students who become ill at school must report to the office so a decision on what to do can be made. Students must not leave the building without authorization because of illness. In most cases, the school nurse will be consulted prior to releasing a student from school.
8. **LOCKERS AND EQUIPMENT** - Your locker should be locked when you leave it. Visiting your locker between every class is not necessary and only adds congestion to the corridors. Take materials with you for a minimum of two classes at a time. No physical education equipment or band instruments are to be kept in lockers or in the halls. Places

are provided for them in the locker rooms and band room. Locker assignments may not be changed without office approval. It is the student's responsibility to maintain a neat and orderly area in and around their locker.

Students are provided lockers, desks and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches.

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated.

9. **LOST AND FOUND** - Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the lost and found department in the office before or after school. Lost articles, which are not claimed within a reasonable time, will be given to a charitable organization or properly disposed of.

10. **DRESS AND GROOMING** - There appears to be a definite relationship among good grooming, good work habits and proper school behavior. Any type of attire which attracts undue attention to the wearer, and thus causes a disturbance in the school, is in bad taste and not acceptable. Hair must be neat, well groomed and modestly styled so as not to attract attention to the student. Clothes and body must be neat and clean at all times. Shoes must be worn. Cut-offs, halter tops, tank tops, bare midriffs, and muscle shirts are not acceptable for school dress. Hats are considered apparel for the out-of-doors and shall not be worn in the building. Shorts of appropriate length, halfway down the thigh or longer, are allowed in school year round. Skirt length must also adhere to the mid-thigh rule. Students who wear unacceptable clothing will be asked to return home to change. Final decision on acceptability lies with the building principal.

11. **DISCIPLINE** - It is impossible for teaching or learning to take place in a classroom unless good order is maintained. Students are reminded that they must adhere to a code of good behavior, not only for their benefit but for the benefit of others as well.

Step 1: Classroom interventions

- first warning
- second warning
- time out to a pre-arranged spot in another teacher's room
- At the third time out a parent contact will be made by the classroom teacher.
- At the fourth time out within two weeks, a grade level team meeting will be held to determine whether or not a student should be referred to the principal for intervention.

Step 2: Administrative interventions

- A team referral after the above steps have been exhausted will result in an in-school suspension or an after school detention.
- Repeated referrals will result in out of school suspensions from 1-10 days. The number of days will increase with each additional suspension. An expulsion hearing would be appropriate in the case of any weapons offense, extreme physical danger to other students or staff, or after repeated ten-day suspensions.

Offenses that would justify immediate referral to the principal, without following the above steps, include the following:

- actual physical or verbal threat to a teacher or another student
- fighting
- gross destruction of property
- sexual, racial, or ethnic harassment
- suspected drug or alcohol use*
- use or possession of tobacco in any form
- use or possession of fireworks, or any explosive device including smoke bombs
- bomb/gun threat

* If a strong suspicion of drug or alcohol use exists, a student may be asked to submit to a urine test. Refusal to comply will be interpreted as guilt and the student will be suspended for 10 days.

12. **ATTENDANCE** – We believe that obtaining an education is a major requirement of good citizenship in our society. Punctuality and regular attendance of classes is essential for the educational progress of a student. It is the responsibility of the student and his or her parents to ensure that the student attends school regularly.

Excused Absences – Students are expected to be present and punctual for all classes throughout the year. Illness, death in the family, or an emergency within the family should be the only reasons considered satisfactory for absence from school. Absences must be explained in a note, e-mail or phone call from parents. The excuse must be dated and must indicate the dates and reason for the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to bring a note to the office before class in the morning.

If students are absent for a doctor or a dentist appointment, we ask that they bring a slip from the doctor's or dentist's office. Repeated or suspicious medical excuses will be referred to an attendance committee for final decision. For example, a student who brings a doctor's excuse for missing school but attends out of school events or is seen socializing on those days may or may not be excused. Students must make up all work to receive full credit for their work. However, it is the student's responsibility to see that the work is completed within the teacher's assigned due dates. Missed class assignments will be made up on the student's own time.

Unexcused Absences – These are absences that are needless. They also apply to the student who has taken the liberty of leaving school without reporting to the office. Failure to provide an acceptable excuse within a reasonable time will result in an after school detention or suspension.

Skipping – Skipping of any sort will result in the student's suspension from school until the parents confer with the building principal and appropriate individual disciplinary action can be decided upon. Students should not anticipate any "second chances". Suspension action will become effective at 3:00 p.m. the day the student is notified. The student will hand-carry the suspension notice to the parent. We consider skipping as staying out of class without specific knowledge and/or permission of both the parents and school.

Advance Absence – Any advance absence should be cleared by the principal. Advance absence forms are available from the principal's office.

Leaving School – Students leaving the building while school is in session are required to have the principal's permission. This applies to all students and for all purposes, including lunchtime. Students must be signed out in the principal's office by a parent or guardian. Exceptions will be made by the principal.

Minimum Attendance Requirements – Students who have accumulated twelve (12), excused or unexcused, absences, will be referred to the Calhoun Intermediate School District office. Students subject to compulsory attendance laws will be contacted by that office and may be petitioned into probate court for excessive absences. Students beyond the age of compulsory attendance (18) will be dropped from the school's rolls after ten (10) consecutive absences unless specific arrangements for continued enrollment have been made previously with the principal.

Incompletes – An incomplete is given only when a student has been unable to complete the required work because of illness, illness or emergency in the family, or death in the family. Failure to complete work for any other reason does not merit an incomplete, and students will be given a lowered grade. When an incomplete is given, the student is allowed a prescribed period of time to complete the work. If the incomplete is not removed within the prescribed time, the mark becomes an "E".

13. **TARDINESS** - It is your responsibility to be in your class on time. Most tardiness occurs when students loiter in the halls or bathroom. Four (4) minutes passing time is allotted between classes. This is considered sufficient time for you to get to your next class. Tardiness to class during the day will be noted by your teacher. If it becomes excessive, then disciplinary action will be taken by that teacher. If tardiness continues, the teacher will refer the student to after school detention. Repeated offenses will result in a referral to the principal's office and a possible suspension.
14. **DETENTION** - Detention period is a time when the student is assigned to come to school early, stay after school, or report during noon hour for any infraction of acceptable student behavior. Students should understand fully that any teacher in the building has the authority to correct misconduct at any time and assign students to lunch or after school detention. Students required to stay after school for disciplinary reasons, including bus students, are responsible for their own transportation home. Students who have an excessive number of absences or who have skipped one or more classes may be required to make up missed time in detention. Missed detentions will result in in-school

suspension.

15. **HOMEWORK** - Home study is a necessary part of each pupil's educational program. Each student must be expected to spend some time, in addition to scheduled class instruction, to achieve satisfactory work. Some assignments are long range in nature and require planned study time for completion. Planned study eliminates the necessity of spending too much time in completing an assignment the day before it is due. Parents are encouraged to use the talking grades system or the school's website at www.homerschools.net and click on parent internet viewer.
16. **TEXTBOOKS** -All basic texts are furnished to students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Textbooks are not to be used for the storage of paper. PLEASE be sure your name, grade and school are written in books in case they are misplaced. We do charge you a fine based on the principal's or teacher's judgment for abuse, misuse, or loss of books.
17. **MEDIA CENTER** - The media center has books, magazines, and online resources for assigned study and recreational reading. It is open for use during the entire school day and a short time before and after school.
 - a. The purpose of the media center is to provide an area that encourages educational activity.
 - b. A media center hall pass, with the teacher's signature and the student's purpose, is required for using the media center during class time and lunch period.
 - c. Books may be borrowed for at least two (2) weeks.
 - d. Older issues of magazines may be borrowed for one (1) week.
 - e. Students are responsible for all materials they borrow from the media center. An overdue fine policy has been established by the media center director and book replacement costs and fees are charged for lost or damaged materials.
 - f. If a student is on the overdue book list, he/she may not borrow materials until his/her name is off the overdue list. He/she may use materials in the media center. Student schedules for the next school year may be withheld if library responsibilities have not been met.
18. **SCHOOL STORE** - The school supply vending machine is available to students throughout the school day in the cafeteria. Any profits go to the Academic Boosters' Club.
19. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** - Announcements to the student body are given daily. All announcements must be emailed to the building secretary at least one day in advance.
20. **MEDICATION** - Only the school nurse is permitted to stock medication for student use with parent permission. If a student is on any medication, please bring it to the Middle School office with complete dispensing instructions. State law prohibits any student from carrying medications in school. If parents wish to keep aspirin or other over-the-counter medicines on hand for their children, they must be brought to the office, labeled, and include a permission note for our files.

21. **MONEY AND VALUABLES** - Students frequently forget to lock lockers, or become careless with valuables. Please do not bring valuables, or larger sums of money than necessary, to school. The school cannot assume any responsibility for these items when lost or stolen. All reports of theft are to be made immediately.

If your locker does not function properly, please write your name and locker number and what is wrong with the locker on a slip of paper and leave it in the office. Students who “jimmy” their lockers in order to gain access without using their combination will lose locker privileges for the remainder of the semester and will be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the locking mechanism.

22. **STEALING** - Any student caught stealing will be suspended for three (3) days. The local police may be notified.

23. **LUNCH HOUR** - No students are allowed to leave the campus during the lunch hour. “Helpful Homer” recipients chosen each month will go out to lunch with the principal. Parents always have the option of signing out their child and taking him or her out to lunch as long as all parties adhere to the class time schedule.

24. **POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC/RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT** - Most necessary electronic equipment is supplied by the school. Students are not allowed to bring radios, “boom-boxes,” portable TV's, pagers, electronic games and the like without the permission of the principal. The property will be confiscated and disciplinary action will be taken. Laser lights, an especially dangerous item, will be confiscated and returned to parents at the end of the semester. A second violation will result in permanent loss of the item. Pokemon/magic/baseball/basketball, or other cards and toys are not allowed in school at any time.

25. **GUIDANCE** - Guidance services are available for every student. These services include assistance with educational planning; interpretation of test scores; study tips, help with home, school, and/or social concerns or any questions the student would like to discuss with the counselor. Students wishing to visit a counselor should leave a message in the middle school office.

26. **REPORT CARDS** - Report cards are issued every nine (9) weeks to notify parent of progress. Grades are printed on soft form paper and distributed to the students. The cards are the property of the student and need not be returned to the school.

27. **FIRE DRILLS** - Fire drills, at regular intervals, are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible when the first signal is given. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions. Any student setting off a fire alarm illegally may be suspended from school for ten (10) days and the proper authorities notified. (see Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)

28. **DISASTER DRILLS** - Whenever possible, we will send students home when we have a threat of a disaster such as tornadoes, etc. Disaster drills are necessary, especially in the spring of the year. Disaster drill procedures will be explained by teachers. When the

disaster siren sounds, all students should go to assigned places as quickly and as quietly as possible.

29. **ACCIDENTS** - All injuries should be reported to the office. Under no circumstances are students to go to a doctor for an injury sustained at school without notifying the office.
30. **STUDENT INSURANCE** - The school maintains a group insurance policy. Present insurance coverage carries a \$100 deductible and is a rider to any insurance a student may already have; the primary insurance being the personal coverage a student has at home. This policy is designed to prevent catastrophic or excessive medical debts incurred by an injury/accident that occurs in school. It is not meant to be a primary insurance policy.
31. **TELEPHONES** - The office telephones are for school business, and may be used by students only in cases of legitimate need, with the permission of the secretary or the principal.
32. **FOOD SERVICE** – Breakfast and Lunch is available to all students in the school system. The charge is based on food costs and expenses. Well balanced, wholesome, nutritious lunches are served at a minimum cost to the student. Research proves that students eating warm meals do better work in school.
33. **WORKING PERMITS** - Standards established under Michigan law regulate conditions and hours of employment of minors. Conditions must not be injurious to health, morals, or unduly hazardous. Points to remember:
 - a. Fourteen (14) years is the minimum age for the legal employment of minors.
 - b. Minors under eighteen (18) years of age must secure a work permit, and the employer must keep the permit on file.
 - c. Permits are issued by the principal's office in the school district in which the minor resides. Permits in Homer Schools are available in the high school office.
34. **BUSES** - The Board of Education maintains a fleet of buses to transport students living in the country. This is not a door-to-door taxi of convenience. Under abnormal road conditions, students might be expected to walk a reasonable distance, a practice used only when the routes are impassable. The privilege of riding the bus may be suspended, from one day to an entire school year, for willful disobedience of bus rules. (see Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
35. **SPECTATOR BUSES** - Spectator buses are operated under the rules set up by the High School Student Council and the administration. The number of buses needed for an athletic contest will be supplied if advanced notice is given.
 - a. The Student Council has decreed that students must sign up for the bus on the day the tickets are sold in order to be allowed to ride the bus. The only exception that can be made under this ruling is for a student who is absent due to illness.
 - b. Students must ride the bus both ways.

- c. Students must follow the directions of the bus drivers and chaperones.
 - d. Bus riding privileges will be denied students who violate the above two rules.
 - e. Spectators should attend games to see the game. The administration has ruled that students, who continually walk around, paying little or no attention to the game, may be denied the bus riding privilege.
36. **AUTOMOBILES AND BICYCLES** - No riding in automobiles, other than with parents or other approved adult, is permitted during the school day. Students are not to handle or loiter around vehicles during noon hour or physical education classes. These same rules apply to motor bikes and motorcycles.
37. **STUDENT VISITORS** - All non-students are to report to the principal's office upon entering the school building. The principal must approve the visit 48 hours prior to the day requested. Arrangements for visitors should be made in advance of the planned visit with all of the host student's teachers. Make certain visitors are properly introduced to the teacher of the class they are visiting. No visitors, under the age of an average 5th grade student, or over the age of an average 8th grade student, are permitted on any day of the year. No visitors are allowed during the last week of the school year or the week prior to Christmas and spring break. Student visitors must be in good standing at their own school.
38. **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS** - The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, sale, distribution, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. If caught, the student(s) could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies.
39. **SWIMMING** - Students are not to go swimming in Homer Lake or the channel area at any time during the school day.
40. **THE SCHOOL AND THE LAW**
- a. Civil Rights -The school recognizes all federal, state, and local level laws in connection with this subject. Interpretation of these laws is available from the principal.
 - b. Disturbances -The school will not tolerate mass disruptions in any form or for any reason. If such a situation does occur, students will obey the teacher or anyone in authority. Failure to do so may result in suspension.
 - c. Directory Information – Generally, school officials must have written permission from the parent of a student or an eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) allows school districts to disclose, without consent, "directory" type information. The Board of Education of Homer Community Schools has designated the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records as "directory information":
 - i. Student name; picture; major field of study; participation in recognized activities and sports, and related information; grade placement; and honors and awards received.

Unless you advise the school district within a reasonable time period that you do not want any or all of this information released, school officials may release personally identifiable information that has been designated as directory information. Upon such objection, this information will not be released without the prior consent of the parent.

41. **GLASS BOTTLES** - Glass bottles of any kind will not be allowed on school property at any time.
42. **GAMBLING** - No gambling is allowed, at any time, on school property. (See Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
43. **FIRECRACKERS, SMOKE BOMBS, ETC.** - Anyone in possession of, or who causes a firecracker, smoke bomb, or other items of this type to be exploded in the building, on buses or school grounds; or who is in possession of, or uses, any other substance that can be damaging to school property or other students will be suspended immediately from school for a minimum of five days. (See Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
44. **FIGHTING** - Fighting may result in a suspension and/or other disciplinary measures administered by the administration. (See Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
45. **EXCLUSION FROM CLASS** - Refer to discipline policy.
46. **NON CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE** - (See Rights and Responsibilities Handbook)
47. **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY** - Refer to discipline policy.
48. **RETENTION POLICY** - Students must be passing ALL four (4) core classes (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies) at the end of the school year to go into the next grade. Passing is considered a 60% or above for the YEAR grade in each cord class. Students who do not have 60% or above for the YEAR may still pass IF they pass the core class final exam with a 60% or above.
 - a. Students who fail two or more core classes will be retained for the next school year and repeat the grade. (For example: If a student fails Math and Social Studies in 6th grade; the student will re-take all 6th grade classes for the next school year).
 - b. Students who fail only one class will be expected to take a credit recovery course offered to “make up” the missed class in order to be moved on to the next grade. Students who need credit recovery will receive information later in the school year as to dates/times/etc.

Remember: grade retention is based upon overall YEAR grade for the core class.

49. **TOBACCO** - Students are not permitted to possess, smoke or chew any form of tobacco in the school building, on or near school grounds, at school-sponsored events, on the way to or from school, or on school buses. Refer to #39.

50. **INTERNET USE** - Only those students who have an internet agreement on file may use the internet. See Mrs. Miller for details and an agreement. Any student who abuses his or her internet privileges, including using someone else's password or sharing his/her own, will lose the ability to access the internet.

51. **BAND/CHOIR PROGRAM** - The object of the Homer band/choir program is to discover and develop musical aptitude and to encourage band members to study, explore, and enjoy fields relative to music.

- a. Grades and awards are based on effort, ability, attitude, attendance, and active participation in all events.
- b. Members who are absent or tardy to an activity must bring a signed, dated statement from their parents stating time and cause of absence or tardiness. Excuses for reasons other than sickness should be obtained in advance when possible. Otherwise, the absence is automatically unexcused and may result in detention, a lowering of the grade, assigned make-up work, or failure.
- c. On trips, students must ride the bus both ways unless written permission is obtained through the principal.
- d. All school rules in The Student Handbook and/or the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook apply to all activities and trips.
- e. Uniform rules and requirements will be given out at the beginning of the school year.
- f. Failure to be in proper uniform will warrant exclusion from the performance, and no credit will be given for the event.
- g. Be sure to carry theft and damage insurance on your individual instrument.
- h. The instructor will distribute additional rules at the beginning of each school year necessary.

52. **MIDDLE SCHOOL PARTIES** - Homer Middle School parties/dances/fun nights are not public parties. They are sponsored or approved by the principal to meet the social needs of members of this middle school. Parents are always welcome guests.

In order to insure the smooth running and success of all parties/dances/fun nights, the following guidelines must be followed:

- a. Students in charge are responsible for all planning, preparation and operation of the event.
- b. Homer Middle School students only. No visitors will be admitted unless prior permission is obtained from the principal at least 48 hours in advance of the activity. Any guest must be enrolled in 5th to 8th grade.
- c. Once a student has entered, he/she may NOT leave and return. Once gone-always gone.
- d. Anyone misbehaving will be required to leave.
- e. All school rules are in effect.
- f. A minimum of two (2) teacher sponsors and two (2) parent chaperones must be present.
- g. Chaperones are there to help make the evening an enjoyable one for you. Try not

to make it unpleasant for them. Cooperate with them and let them know you appreciate their efforts.

- h. Middle school students may not attend high school parties and dances. Senior high students may not attend middle school parties/dances/fun nights.
- i. Unexcused absences and/or removal from class may cause a student to forfeit his or her rights to attend extra-curricular activities during that week. In school or out-of-school suspensions automatically cause a student to forfeit all extra-curricular activities during the period of suspension. Any student who was absent during the school day is excluded from any extra-curricular event held in the afternoon or evening of the absence. This includes practices, games, dances, concerts, etc.
- j. Use of, possession of, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcoholic beverages or drugs will not be tolerated. Any students violating this rule will have their parents notified immediately. In some situations, it may be necessary to notify police. The discipline policy is in effect during all school activities and the student will receive the appropriate consequences.
- k. Permission forms must be obtained from the principal's office for any planning of a party/dance/fun night.

53. **ATHLETICS** - The Homer Middle School is a member of the "Big Eight" Conference. Other members of this league include Athens, Concord, Jonesville, Quincy, Reading, Springport, and Union City.

Homer Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of athletic activities, either actively or as a spectator. There is deep satisfaction to be found in working with teammates in some vigorous sport.

Anyone trying for a place on a team should be willing to give his or her best at all times. It is understood that, when a student becomes a candidate for one of the school teams, he or she accepts full responsibility for proper conduct at all times as a sportsman and true representative of Homer Middle School.

Standards of eligibility, under rules and regulation of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, are as follows:

- a. A student must be enrolled in Homer Middle School by Monday of the fourth (4th) week of any particular semester to be eligible for a sport that semester.
- b. A seventh (7th) or eighth (8th) grade student who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under fourteen (14) or fifteen (15) years of age respectively. However, a student who reaches that birthday on or after September 1, of a current school year is eligible for interscholastic athletic contests for the balance of that school year.
- c. The school is required to have in file a physician's statement that the student is physically fit to participate in vigorous athletics. Therefore, sports physicals are required prior to participation in practice or in a game.
- d. A student's participation in middle school sports will cease when he or she goes to high school.
- e. A student must maintain an amateur standing while participating in interscholastic athletics.

- f. Amateur standing will be jeopardized by receiving awards valued at more than \$15.00 or by receiving merchandise or money for athletic participation.

Local rules governing all athletes:

- a. To be eligible, a student must be passing in at least five (5) classes the week preceding the game. He/she must also have passed four (4) classes the preceding six-week period and have passed four (4) classes the preceding semester to be eligible.
- b. All players are expected to ride the bus to and from games. If a parent wishes his son/daughter to accompany him home rather than ride the bus, the parent must make arrangements with the coach, in advance of the game day.
- c. All athletes are expected to keep themselves physically fit. This requires close adherence to training rules.
- d. An athlete may forfeit the right to play if his or her conduct is judged, by the administration and coaching staff, to be unbecoming a representative of Homer Middle School.
- e. A student will have no more than 4 semesters of athletic eligibility while attending Homer Middle School.
- f. All participants are encouraged to secure financial protection against injury.
- g. No use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or drugs of any kind is allowed. There will be a suspension of 50% of the season for the use of possession of drugs, tobacco, and/or alcoholic beverages during a season. If the incident occurs near the end of a sports season, the suspension will continue into the next season. The athlete will attend practices during the suspension.
- h. Athletes must abide by curfew hours as established by the coach of each sport.
- i. Athletes must attend school regularly:
 - 1. Any athlete who misses school for any part of the school day of an athletic event may not participate in that event without the approval of the principal.
 - 2. No athlete with an unexcused absence will be allowed to practice on the day of the absence.
- j. Athletes must follow the directions of all coaches.
- k. Since the athletes are representing Homer Middle School, they are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times.

54. AWARDS

- a. Department Awards
 - 1. Academic awards are given by the various departments, by grade level, in recognition of outstanding student achievement.
- b. Honor Roll
 - 1. Students are placed on the Honor Roll each nine week (9) marking period if they have earned all A's or B's and better.
- c. Academic Booster's Club
 - 1. The Academic Booster's Club awards special certificates to those students who are on the honor roll each marking period of the current school year. Students may receive additional awards at the end of each marking period.
- d. Perfect or Near-Perfect Attendance

1. A perfect attendance award is presented to any student who has not missed a day of school. This includes any student who misses less than a full day because of a doctor's appointment even if they have been verified with a note from the doctor or dentist. Near-perfect attendance awards will be given to students who have missed no more than one day.
- e. Athletic Awards
 1. To receive an athletic award, a player must be in good standing at the end of the season.

55. **WEATHER REPORT** – In case of inclement weather, please listen to the following radio and/or television stations:

WNWN – FM 98.5 – Coldwater	WQLR – FM 106.5 – Battle Creek
WILX – TV10 – Jackson	WUFN – FM 96.7 – Albion
WBXX – FM 95.3 – Battle Creek	WOOD – FM 105.7 – Grand Rapids
WXME – 102.5 – Hillsdale	WKFR – FM 103 – Kalamazoo
106.9 – Spring Arbor	WWMT – TV3 – Kalamazoo
WLAJ – TV53 – Lansing	WOOD – TV8/TV41 – Grand Rapids
WVIC – Q106 – Lansing	FOX 47 – Lansing
WLNA – TV6 – Lansing	

56. **POSSESSION OF A WEAPON** – A weapon includes conventional objects like guns, pellet guns, knives, chains, or club type implements. It may also include any toy threat if presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon or any object converted from its original use to an object used to threaten or injure another. This includes, but is not limited to, padlocks, pens, pencils, chains, jewelry, and so on. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon will subject a student to expulsion. Wallet, wrist, neck, decorative chains and jewelry with spikes...are not allowed in school at any time.

57. **IMMUNIZATIONS** – Each student should have the immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waiver, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with state law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the principal.

Immunization Requirements

Unless given a waiver, students must meet the following requirements:

- a. DTP/DT/DTAP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis): Minimum of 4 doses are required, with the last dose given on or after the 4th birthday and within the last 10 years.
- b. POLIO: Minimum of 4 doses are required, with the last dose given on or after the 4th birthday.

- c. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella): 2 doses are required after the 1st birthday and at least 28 days apart.
- d. HEPATITIS B: 3 doses are required
- e. VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX): 1 dose of vaccine received on or after the 1st birthday, 2 doses are required if the 1st dose was given after the 13th birthday. NO vaccine is required if the child has previously had the chickenpox disease.

The State of Michigan now requires an assessment of the immunization record of each 6th grade student. All 6th graders must have documentation showing they have had the above listed immunizations.

58. **HARASSMENT** – The school believes that every individual deserves to be able to come to school without fear of demeaning remarks or actions. The harassment of other students or members of staff, or any other individuals is not permitted. This includes any speech or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive learning environment. Harassment could result in suspension or expulsion from school.

Conduct constituting harassment may take different forms including, but not limited to, the following:

a. Sexual Harassment

1. *Verbal:*

The making of written or oral sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.

2. *Nonverbal:*

Causing the placement of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or the making of sexually suggestive or insulting gestures, sounds, leering, whistling, and the like to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.

3. *Physical Contact*

Threatening or causing unwanted touching, contact, or attempts at same, including patting, pinching, pushing the body, or coerced sexual intercourse, with a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.

b. Gender/Ethnic/Racial/Religious/Disability Harassment

- 1. Verbal harassment includes written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, national origin, race, religious beliefs, etc. toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district. It

also includes conducting a “campaign of silence” toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.

2. Nonverbal harassment includes placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.
3. Physical harassment includes any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, pushing, hissing, or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.
4. Hazing by any school group, club or team is not permitted. This includes any form of initiation that causes or creates risk of mental or physical harm, no matter how willing the participant may be.

Any student who believes that she/he is the victim of any of aforementioned actions or has observed such actions taken by or against another student, staff member, or other person associated with the district should take the immediate actions:

- a. If the alleged harasser is a student, staff member, or other person associated with the district other than the student’s principal, the affected student should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact his/her principal.
- b. If the alleged harasser is the student’s principal, the affected student should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact the superintendent.
- c. The student may submit a report in writing, by telephone, or in person. The reporting student should provide the name of the person(s) whom she/he believes to be responsible for the harassment and the nature of the harassing incident(s).
- d. The report shall be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. While a charge is under investigation no information is to be released to anyone who is not involved with the investigation, except as may be required by law or in the context of a legal or administrative proceeding. No one involved will discuss the subject outside of the investigation.
- e. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, then appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action will be taken promptly to prevent the continuance of the harassment or its recurrence.

Given the nature of harassing behavior, the school recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, all students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment allegations or charges. Some forms of sexual abuse, which will require that the student-abuser be reported to proper authorities. Under no circumstances will the school threaten or retaliate against anyone who raises or files a harassment complaint.

The following policies and procedures are extremely important and should be read and discussed with parents or guardians. They will be found in the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook:

1. Safe School Law

2. Suspension Appeal Process
3. Ethical computer use
4. Internet access agreement
5. Homer Community Schools signature page for computer network use
6. Bullying Policy

Any questions or concerns about the content of this student handbook or the implementation of school policies and procedures should be directed to the building principal.

Cell Phone Policy: Homer Middle School Student Handbook

59. Possession of Personal Communication Devices (PCD)

Students may use their personal communication devices during the day at designated times throughout the day. This includes computers, tablets, electronic readers, cell phones and/or web enabled devices of any type. Students are permitted to use their PCD before and after school and during the lunch period. Homer Middle School Students are not permitted to use devices during passing time. Students must refrain from communication with students who are in class during the lunch period. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action.

Students may not use the PCD during instruction time. This means devices must be turned off or placed on silent and put away before entering the classroom. Devices may not be used outside of the classroom during instruction time. For example, leaving for the restroom, locker, and library is still instruction time.

Teachers may permit the use of devices for academic activities related to curriculum and will notify students when this type of use is authorized.

When a device is in use in the classroom, students **WILL NOT**:

Answer an incoming SMS (text) message or phone call

Be on any social media site (Facebook, Twitter, etc)

Access or play any game or access any entertainment site on their device

Access or use any application (app) on their device unless expressly instructed to by the instructor

Take any picture or video that the instructor has not expressly asked you to take

Upload any picture or video taken in any class to any social media site or website

SMS (text) message or email any picture or video taken in class to any person, including themselves

Access any type of mobile web browsing for any reason unless directed by the instructor

Take any picture, video or text any class assignments or assessments without permission.

Device used without permission will be confiscated by the classroom teacher/staff member and turned into the main office.

1st offense—confiscated device returned at the end of the day

2nd offense—confiscated device returned at the of the day to the parent/guardian

3rd offense—loss of use of PCD for one week

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy.” A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to and including day suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion. “Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such

conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of

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the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the PCD.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during any assessment is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, s/he will fail the assessment and could be suspended. S/He could also face automatic withdrawal from the class depending on the severity of the incident. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.