



Sycamore Junior High School Student-Parent Handbook 2022-2023

Mission and Vision:

- Cultivate a culture of academic excellence through inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for the whole child.
- Empower all learners to reach their full potential in a globally competitive world.

Administrative Team

Janelle Schunk, Interim Principal

Tyler Meyer, Assistant Principal for 8th Grade

Greg Cole , Interim Assistant Principal for 7th
Grade

Jim DeJoy, Athletic Director

Freedom with Responsibility

5757 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242 - 513.686.1760

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Sycamore Community Schools' students and parents with specific information concerning major policies, procedures, and regulations.

While every effort is made to present the information accurately, the information contained in this handbook is continually updated and the actual text of the policy, procedure or law should be consulted as the authoritative source of information. Questions regarding this handbook should be directed to the school principal.

We hope that you are looking forward to the many educational opportunities and numerous extracurricular activities that make Sycamore Junior High School a world-class learning environment. The faculty and staff are excited that you are here and look forward to helping you become more successful in your academic studies as well as your personal growth.

Your involvement in school is important! Sycamore Junior High School's reputation has been built on the conduct, participation, and achievement of individuals like you. Your success will be dependent upon a number of important factors: **daily attendance, paying attention in class, doing your homework, participating in extracurricular activities, giving 100% effort, and exhibiting cooperative behavior.** With your help, we can make our school community a dynamic place for everyone.

During your years at Sycamore Junior High School, you will make numerous decisions and may face personal or academic problems. Please seek the assistance of your teachers, counselors, and principals – our offices are open to you at any time to discuss personal struggles or career goals. We care about your success and are willing to listen!

This Student/Parent Handbook is a comprehensive collection of information about school rules and expectations, services and facilities, and policies that directly affect students. It is every student's responsibility to promote the best educational atmosphere possible by becoming familiar with the contents of the Student/Parent Handbook. The rules and regulations in this handbook will help to ensure that each student at Sycamore Junior High School has the opportunity to succeed.

It is our sincere hope that you will take advantage of the many opportunities available to you at Sycamore Junior High School so that you might fulfill your career dreams and goals. Let's work together to make this a wonderful school year!

Our District Mission:

Cultivate a culture of academic excellence through inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for the whole child.

OUR DISTRICT VISION

Empower all learners to reach their full potential in a globally competitive world.

OUR DISTRICT VALUES

- **Academic Excellence**
- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Community**
- **Character**
- **Collaboration**

DISTRICT DIRECTORY

District Office Administration

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Superintendent	Chad Lewis	686-1700
Assistant Superintendent	Kelly Wegener	686-1700
Community Relations Director	Mallory Bonbright	686-1700
Director of Business & Student Operations	Brad Lovell	686-1703
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Becky Tompkins	686-1700
Director of Student Services	Stacey Spencer	686-1780
Director of Technology	Christian Long	686-1700
District Gifted Coordinator	Jamie Jackson	686-1700
ESOL Supervisor	Emily Williams	686-1700
Pupil Support Supervisor	Lisa Zelvy	686-1700
Special Education Supervisor	Misty Belfrom	686-1780
Treasurer	Beth Weber	686-1700

Board of Education

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Paul Balent	686-1700
Sara Bitter	686-1700
Brad Comerford	686-1700
Lynne Stieger	686-1700
Melissa Weiss	686-1700

Child Nutrition Services

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Director	Kelsey Warren	686-1796
Secretary	Chris Zinnecker	686-1796

Registration **5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**
 Registrar Angie Spyrou 686-1700

Transportation **5751 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**
 Director Michael Miller 686-1785
 Supervisor Tony Huber 686-1785
 Dispatcher Mary Ann Buchanan 686-1785
 Secretary Sue Vollman 686-1785

Sycamore Junior High **5757 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**
 Interim Principal Janelle Schunk 686-1760
 Assistant Principal Tyler Meyer 686-1760
 Interim Assistant Principal Greg Cole 686-1760
 Athletic Director Jim DeJoy 686-1760
 Administrative Assistant TBD 686-1760
 Treasurer Janice Kirschner 686-1760
 Registrar Theresa Manning 686-1764
 Nurse Amy Bonham 686-1763
 Attendance Line 686-1762

COUNSELORS

Ben Brenner (A-G)

Kristin Suter (H-N)

Rachel Morris, (O-Z, ESOL students)

Kelsie McKinney, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital school based therapist

Raphaella Teixeira, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital school based therapist

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Information about specific departments can be directed to the following staff members:

Department	Name	Extension
World Language Department	Mike Teets	2546
Media Center and Launch Pad	Tom Villani	2580
Language Arts	Sara Sheldt	2547
Mathematics	Pete Tanaka	2527
Music	Micah Ewing	2572
Physical Education	Jim DeJoy	2582

Science	Heather Swensen	2514
Social Studies	Victor Harris	2535
Special Education	Ashley Marinich	2566

A directory of all staff can be found on the district website: www.sycamoreschools.org

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Students at Sycamore Junior High School must meet the eligibility standards as published by the Ohio High School Athletic Association and Sycamore Board of Education. Thus, a student must be passing subjects that earn a minimum of 5 credits per year toward graduation at the end of each quarter to continue athletic participation for the next quarter and maintain no less than a 1.0 grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale.

If a student fails to pass 5 credits in a quarter, the athlete is ineligible for the entire next quarter; Summer School credits do not affect eligibility requirements.

A coach, with the approval of the athletic director, has the option of establishing standards higher than those imposed by the state. Thus, a coach may require an athlete to be passing all coursework during the term in order to play in an interscholastic contest.

Special note: Physical education classes and proficiency classes are not used to determine athletic eligibility.

ATHLETICS

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the many athletic opportunities offered at Sycamore Junior High School. See the list of sports below. A student athletic handbook is available which details specific policies, guidelines, and required forms. The handbook can be found on the junior high website.

FALL SPORTS		WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Cheerleading	Boys' Soccer	Boys' Basketball	Boys' Lacrosse
Cross Country	Girls Soccer	Girls' Basketball	Girls' Lacrosse
Football	Girls' Tennis	Cheerleading	Fastpitch Softball
Boys' Golf	Girls' Volleyball	Swimming & Diving	Boys' Tennis
Girls' Golf		Wrestling	Track

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for successful school achievement. Therefore, students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. To this end, the following guidelines will be followed by all schools within the Sycamore Community Schools:

Legal Requirement

All children between ages six (6) and eighteen (18) are of compulsory school age and must attend school. **(Ohio Revised Code, Section 3321.01:)**

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure their child attends school, therefore, it is the obligation of the parent/guardian to report the child's absence or tardy each day the student is absent. **(Ohio Revised Code, Section 3321.03:)**

Procedure for Reporting Absences

1. On the day of the absence, a parent/guardian should call (**Attendance Line for All: 513.686.1707**) to report the absence before 8:57 a.m. No note is required if the parent calls or emails that the student is absent.
2. Following the absence, the student must report to the Attendance Office with a note or the Parent Communication Form ONLY IF **NO** PRIOR NOTIFICATION WAS MADE.
 - a. Date(s) of absence
 - b. Reason
 - c. Phone number where parent/guardian may be reached
 - d. Signature of parent/guardian
 - e. Students who are absent due to a doctor's appointment must provide a note from the physician upon return
3. If the student forgets to bring a note, the student absence will be recorded as an "unexcused" absence. If an appropriate note is presented within one school day the absence will be changed to an excused absence.
4. Any unexcused absence(s) will be regarded as truancy and may result in academic and disciplinary action. This could result in the student receiving a "0" for that time frame.

Excused Absences

A school logged parent/guardian phone call or written notification received by the attendance office (on each day of the student's absence), for any of the excused absences below, is sufficient to excuse the child's absence. After the student's tenth (10th) parent phone call or written notification, upon the student's return to school, the parent/guardian shall provide documentation from a treating physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant stating the day(s) absent and reason for such absence.

- Written documentation from the parent/guardian/non-doctor's note may be in the form of an e-mail or fax to the proper school authority or directly from a physician's office, if permitted by the physician's office. Doctor's notes must specify a period of time for which excused absence is necessary.
- If written documentation has not been received within 5 school days after returning to school following an absence, the absence will be "unexcused."
- The parent/guardian (and not the school) maintains responsibility to make certain the telephone call and/or absence note was submitted to the proper school attendance authority in a timely fashion.
- If the parent/guardian fails to contact the school and school personnel have to initiate contact with the parent/guardian via a phone call and they DO NOT make direct contact with a parent/guardian, the absence will be considered unexcused until a parent/guardian makes direct contact with the attendance office to verify the student's absence.
- The school should be notified in advance by the parent/guardian for any **planned** absence that includes 3 or more consecutive days.

The school administration will make the final decision whether an absence/tardy is excused or unexcused. In general, excused absences/tardies include (but are not limited to):

- Personal illness or injury.
- Medical or dental appointments (partial days, in most cases).

- Illness or death in the family.
- Funeral of immediate family members or relatives.
- Quarantine.
- Religious holiday (not counted against the ten (10) day rule).
- Appointments for court.
- Any known absences where school notification has been provided will be included in the ten (10) days.
- Head lice. Children excluded from school due to head lice are allowed one (1) excused absence on two (2) separate occasions in a school year. Absences beyond this number are unexcused unless the additional absences are covered within the ten (10) parent/guardian notes or a physician et al. excuse.
- Emergencies and other reasons deemed good and sufficient by the principal.

In general, unexcused absences/tardies include (but are not limited to):

- Missing the school bus.
- Experiencing transportation problems at home or on the way to school, including traffic.
- Remaining at home to complete school assignments.
- Missing school without legitimate illness.
- Oversleeping. Alarm clock (student's or parent's) failed to work.
- "My mom didn't get me up."
- Not having suitable clothing to wear to school.
- Working at a job during the school day without a proper work permit.
- Babysitting.
- Any form of recreation (unless included in prior notification days).
- Personal business that can be done after school or on weekends.
- "Helping at home" or "Was needed at home."
- "I had a game last night."
- Class pictures/portraits.

Attendance Accounting Definitions:

- Arrive at 7:57 a.m. - 8:57 a.m.= Excused/Unexcused Tardy (60 minutes after the start of the school day)
- Arrive between 8:58 am - 11:28 am = AM absence - Excused/Unexcused
- Arrive between 11:29 am - 1:59 pm = PM absence - Excused/Unexcused
- Early Dismissal 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm = Excused/Unexcused (60 minutes prior to dismissal time)
- Dismissal from the Nurse = Excused AM/PM absence based on the time of dismissal

Excessive Absences

- A student who has been absent from school for more than ten (10) times within a school year will be required to have a doctor's note to excuse additional absences.
- All absences beyond that number (10) without medical verification will be considered unexcused. A student must have a medical note for absences beyond ten (10) per school year. Doctor's notes will be presented to the main/attendance office. Any student who has an extended period of illness will need to have a doctor's note on file explaining the chronic illness.

Procedures for Excessive Student Absences

Absences/Tardies:

- After a student has **15 hours of missed time due to unexcused absences**, a courtesy notification letter will be sent by the school to the parent/guardian.
- After a student has repeated unexcused absences/tardies of **30 or more hours**, the school will make contact with the parent/guardian of the student to inquire about absences/tardies.
- After a student has repeated unexcused absences/tardies of **45 or more hours**, a warning letter is sent by the assistant principal and a meeting is scheduled by the school.
- After a student has repeated unexcused absences/tardies of **60 or more hours**, a communication is sent by the school to the District Attendance Officer referring the student to a Student Attendance Intervention meeting and a student attendance intervention plan is developed.
- If the pattern of absences continues after the student attendance intervention plan is put into place, a referral to Hamilton County Juvenile Court is generated and submitted. All documentation of interventions need to be submitted with the referral to the district attendance officer.

Tardy Policy for Grades 7-8:

1. **Contact #1:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **3 or more**, a meeting is set up by the administrative assistant in charge of attendance. An email is also sent to the parents of the child.
2. **Contact #2:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **4 or more**, a meeting is set up by the building attendance officers with the student.
5th tardy - Phone call home notifying parent/guardian of number of tardies accumulated
6th tardy - Phone call and after school detention, conference with parent/guardian
3. **Contact #3:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **7 or more**, a consequence is issued to the student and a meeting scheduled with the family.
7th tardy - Friday School and contact made by the assistant principal.
8th tardy - Saturday School and contact made by the assistant principal
9th tardy - 2 Saturday Schools and contact made by the assistant principal
4. **Contact #4:** After a student has any unexcused tardies of 10 or more, the student/family will be referred for an attendance intervention meeting.
10th tardy - In School Detention. ***Referral for attendance intervention meeting**
11th tardy - 2 day In School Detention.
 - Monitor progress of students for a period of 60 days. Attendance intervention team will initiate another referral if progress is not being made. Second diversion meeting will be held and a home visit by the district social worker.
5. **Contact #5:** After a student has any unexcused tardies after step 4 is complete (12 or more), the student/family will be referred to Hamilton County Juvenile Court with a "failure to send" complaint.

Extracurricular Activities Attendance

A student may not miss more than 10% of any school year to participate in activities, unless there has been an extended illness. Students absent from school for more than four periods in one day will not be permitted to participate in after school activities. Special circumstances may be appealed to the building administration.

Mandatory rules applying to students participating in extracurricular activities are as follows:

1. Participating Day of Practice, Meeting, or Performance

- a. Students absent from school for more than four periods in one day will not be permitted to participate in after school activities.
 - b. Special circumstances however, may be appealed to the administration
2. Class Cutting / Truancy – When a student who is involved in any extracurricular activity cuts class or is truant, the activity sponsor will be notified by the administration. Proper disciplinary action will be in accordance with the specific rules of the organization with a minimum of being denied participation from the next scheduled practice or meeting.

Dismissal Due to Illness

- A student who becomes ill during school hours **must report to the school nurse.**
- Permission will be granted only after a parent/guardian has been contacted.
- **No student is to leave the building without authorization.**

Early Dismissal

- A student must present a note from a parent/guardian to the Attendance Office requesting an early dismissal before the start of the first period,
- The note must include:
 - a. Date
 - b. Time and reason for dismissal
 - c. Phone number at which the parent/guardian may be reached for verification of the request
- If the student leaves school and returns the same day he/she must report to the Attendance Office upon returning.

Attendance Summary Chart

School/Attendance Office Contact Information	Contact must be made by	Tardy* tracking begins at:	Doctor's Note Required after absence	Habitual Truancy	Excessive Absences
Sycamore High School 7:20 A.M. - 2:10 P.M. 513-686-1777 HSattendance@sycamoreschools.org	9:20 A.M.	7:20 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Sycamore Junior High School 8:02 A.M. - 2:57 P.M. 513-686-1762 JHattendance@sycamoreschools.org	9:57 A.M.	7:57 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Edwin H. Greene Intermediate School 8:00 A.M. - 2:40 P.M. 513-686-1756 EHGattendance@sycamoreschools.org	10:00 A.M.	8:00 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Blue Ash Elementary 9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. 513-686-1714 BAattendance@sycamoreschools.org	11:00 A.M.	9:00 15 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month

				in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Maple Dale Elementary 9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. 513-686-1726 MDattendance@sycamoreschools.org	11:00 A.M.	9:15 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Montgomery Elementary 9:15 A.M. - 3:45 P.M. 513-686-1736 MTattendance@sycamoreschools.org	11:15 A.M.	9:15 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Symmes Elementary 9:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. 513-686-1748 SYattendance@sycamoreschools.org	11:30 A.M.	9:30 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year

***All hours, even tardies, count towards the total number of hours for truancy. For more information, please visit our website at www.sycamoreschools.org and click the “attendance” page.**

BELL SCHEDULE

Daily Bell Schedule

Period	Time
1	7:57 am - 8:42 am
2	8:47 am - 9:32 am
3	9:37 am - 10:22 am
4	10:27 am - 11:12 am
FLEX	11:17 am - 11:41 am
5	11:46 am - 1:20 pm
6	1:25 pm - 2:10 pm
7	2:15 pm - 3:00 pm

BUILDING HOURS

7:52 am – 3:02 pm Monday through Friday

The school building is open to students at 7:40 am. Students are not to loiter in the building after school hours or past 3:07 pm **unless they are in the after school tutoring program, or with their school sponsored extracurricular sponsor / coach.** No students may be in the building after school hours, including weekends, unless they are supervised or attending a school event. Students entering the building during unauthorized times will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

B.E.N.C.H: (Being Expected to Complete Necessary Classwork and Homework), Layover and other supports

Program	Goal	When Enacted
BENCH	Provide additional homework completion time after school	Not clear from description
Layover	Provide additional homework completion time and academic support during lunch	From description, appears to be when homework completion is not occurring at BENCH

The teachers at Sycamore Junior High work very hard to have all classwork and homework standards-based, age-appropriate and applicable to classroom experiences. Over the years, our staff, through a review of data, believes there is a significant correlation between student completion of classwork and homework and his or her individual learning. As a general rule, students should expect to have homework each night in their core academic classes.

Language Arts: LA 7/8 Honors - 45-60 minutes; LA 7/8 - 15-20 minutes

Math: 10-15 problems

Science: 15 minutes

Social Studies: 3 to 5 nights a week; no more than 30 minutes per night.

In order to assist parents in setting expectations for classwork and homework completion, we have two proactive programs at Sycamore Junior High.

The first program is called **B.E.N.C.H.** (Being Expected to Complete Necessary Classwork and Homework). The intent of the proactive program is to provide students who were unable to meet the expectation of completing classwork or homework ample time after school to do so for the benefit of his or her own learning.

While B.E.N.C.H. is a mandatory program, it is not a “detention” nor is it punitive. Its intent is to provide a quiet time for students to complete their work. Because we are sensitive to the developmental age of students, 7th graders do not begin in the program until September. For all students, a “parachute pass” is offered by every teacher every quarter which allows students to have an “oops” moment. The consequence for late work is subject to teacher policy. We also understand that there are occasionally more significant extenuating circumstances in family life and, in those cases, parents are encouraged to reach out to teachers to make arrangements directly with them. Students with disabilities or special accommodations are expected to complete assignments with their appropriate modifications in place. Students involved in athletic activities are also expected to complete work and are subject to the B.E.N.C.H. process.

We at Sycamore Junior High believe that students have enough grit to be held accountable to this expectation and that they are resilient enough if issued a B.E.N.C.H. to participate in the time to finish the work.

Additionally, data on our B.E.N.C.H. program indicates that students involved in completing their work showed significant academic progress in learning and achievement.

The second proactive program we have to support your child in meeting expectations is “Layover”. In some rare occasions, there are students who, despite their time in B.E.N.C.H., still fail to complete the necessary classwork or homework. In this case, in order to encourage work completion, students who have been issued a B.E.N.C.H., participate in that B.E.N.C.H., and yet do not turn in their assignment(s), will be offered another opportunity to finish their work during Layover. Layover will be held during the child’s lunchtime and will offer both language arts, math and science support. Students will continue to be provided support until they complete the necessary work in Language Arts, Math or Science. Students will be notified prior to Layover and sent a reminder to attend.

If you believe in your role as a parent that your child has challenges in completing classwork and homework, please be aware that we have additional, ongoing opportunities for your child to receive support. Our after-school Homework Club runs Monday through Thursday with transportation provided to home. In addition, your child may enroll in our Study Hall and Guided Study Hall which occurs during the school day. If you believe your child would benefit from enrollment in Study Hall or Guided Study Hall, please contact your child’s counselor.

Ben Brenner	Last Names A-G	brennerb@sycamoreschools.org
Rachel Morris	Last Names H-N	morrisra@sycamoreschools.org
Kristen Suter	Last Names O-Z & ESOL students	suterk@sycamoreschools.org

BICYCLES/ROLLER SKATES/SKATEBOARDS

Students assume the risk of using bicycles, roller blades, skates, and skateboards on school property and/or at school events. Schools are not liable for accidents, property damage or theft related to the use of such items on school property or at school events. Students who ride their bikes to school should use the bike racks by the front entrance to the school. We urge all bike riders to lock their bikes. Bike riders should enter and exit the property by the sidewalk along Cooper Road. Bikes should never be ridden across the middle of the parking lot. Any infraction of these rules could result in the loss of bike riding privileges.

BOOKBAGS AND COATS

Bookbags are permitted in classrooms. Please leave all sports, athletic, and extracurricular materials in your locker. Lockers can be visited at the start of the day, end of the day and during designated times. Students experiencing difficulty with their lockers should seek help from the counseling office.

BUILDING UNIFICATION PLAN

In the event an emergency evacuation of the building is deemed necessary by the building administration, all persons will evacuate and may be directed to an off-site location. If the evacuation will be for a prolonged period of time, require family reunification, or due to severe weather or other considerations, the school will transport students and faculty to the following locations:

All schools to Blue Ash Recreation Center (4433 Cooper Road)

BUS PASSES

Students must fill out a Parent Communication Form and have it signed by a parent/guardian in order to ride a different bus from school. The note should be submitted to the Attendance Office before the 1st bell. A bus boarding pass will then be issued. For your convenience, a copy of the Parent Communication Form can be found on the website or a hard copy is available at school.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

Breakfast, lunch, snacks, and beverages are available to purchase for all students each school day. Students may also bring their lunch to school, providing no glass containers are sent to school.

Breakfast is offered to students 15 minutes before the first warning bell rings daily. Students can report to either the cafeteria or concession stand outside the auditorium for a grab-n-go breakfast. Eating breakfast is essential at the junior high with the first lunch period not starting until 11:46 a.m.

At some time during the 5th period, students will be excused for lunch. Dismissal for lunch and the time for resuming class work are indicated by the classroom teacher. The duration of the lunch period is thirty minutes. Students may bring their lunch or purchase the school lunch. Lunches brought from home may not contain soda or energy drinks.

Thanks to our point-of-sale system, students in Sycamore Community Schools can purchase school meals or a la carte items by simply entering their student identification number into a Personal Identification Number pad, which immediately and confidentially alerts the cafeteria cashier of the child's food allergies, eligibility for federally-funded free- or reduced-price meals, and the student's account balance. The cafeteria staff can also look up a student's identification number if the ID number is forgotten.

The point-of-sale system also makes district cafeterias more efficient as sales transactions are streamlined and Child Nutrition Supervisors or the Child Nutrition Office can provide parents with a report of meal transactions. Parents can also add funds to their child's meal account online using Mastercard or Visa through Parent Portal, thus eliminating any concerns associated with students handling paper money and eliminating the possibility of losing a check. For help in creating a Parent Portal account, contact the Technology Department at 686-1790.

Meal prices:

Breakfast:

\$2.80

Lunch:

\$3.05; \$3.55; \$4.05

Meal Charge Procedure

The Sycamore Child Nutrition department strives to provide all students with an opportunity to have a well-rounded meal to be prepared to learn. The district has adopted a meal charge procedure to ensure students have a healthy meal on days when they don't have cash or funds available in their child nutrition accounts. **Only meals** will be able to be charged on lunch accounts at the 7-8 level. No la carte purchases such as snacks, ice cream, milk, etc. will be permitted when a student has a negative balance.

The 7-8 level does not have a charge limit in place, but if a student's account reaches an amount the Child Nutrition Director and Building Principal deem too high a plan will be put in place to suspend meal charging. It is very important for families to send money with their students or place money on their meal account online to avoid meal debt on their Child Nutrition account.

Notifications of low balances will be sent out from the district by an automated email every week. Parents can set up email notifications via parent portal to help track their student's lunch balance. The Principal or Child Nutrition Department may recommend that a family apply for free and reduced-price meals or recommend a payment plan. Payment arrangements can be made by contacting the Sycamore Child Nutrition department at (513) 686-1796.

CAR RIDERS/WALKERS

We encourage students to ride the bus or walk home whenever possible due to the congestion that results from a large number of afternoon pickups by car. All students being picked up are to exit through the courtyard gate and remain on the sidewalk on the east side of the building to enter vehicles. Parents are asked to remain in the pickup line until the car in front of them moves out of the lot. No student is permitted to cross through the lot for pickup. Walkers should enter and exit the building through the secondary entrance of the building in front of the Media Center along Cooper Road.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are not permitted to be used or carried by students during instructional hours unless instructed to do so for classroom usage by a certified staff member. Consequences for violating this policy may include, but are not limited to:

1st Offense	Warning issued to the student, cell phone confiscated and turned in to the front office. Parents/Guardians will be notified.
2nd Offense	Parent/Guardian responsible for picking up the phone.
3rd Offense	Detention and parent/guardian responsible for picking up the phone.
4th Offense	Saturday school and phone will be held by administration for one week. Parent/guardian responsible for picking up the phone after one calendar week.
5th and Subsequent	Repeated violations are considered insubordination and will result in more serious consequences. Parent/Guardian responsible for picking up the phone.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS, OR PHONE NUMBER

In order for school records to be current, and in the event it is necessary to contact parents for emergency purposes, parents must make any changes in a student's address and phone number, as well as parents' work telephone numbers or email addresses in Final Forms located on the district's home page at www.sycamoreschools.org. Proof of residence must be provided to the school when changing an address.

CHILD ABUSE

All Sycamore employees with reason to believe that a child under 18 years of age or a handicapped/disabled child under 21 years of age who has suffered, or faces a threat of suffering, abuse/neglect are required to report such information to appropriate authorities.

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Instant Communication System

Positive outreach and interaction are essential elements of a thriving school district. With that in mind, Sycamore Community Schools uses an instant communication system that enables district and school administrators to record a voice message, schedule the message delivery time, and deliver the message via a telephone call or email to parents.

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. If a parent/guardian would like to change or remove their contact number, please call the building or send an email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org with your request.

Social Media

Sycamore Community Schools uses social media to assist in communicating district information with parents, students, and community members. While the district will continue to communicate in traditional ways (website, newsletters, etc.), social media provides a platform for individuals to learn more about the district through exclusive content, videos, a showcase of events, two-way communication, and much more.

The integration of social media into the district's communication plan is the result of months of careful planning with input from staff, parents, students, and businesses and school districts that use social media. The district also developed social media guidelines to help individuals understand, from a wide range of perspectives, proper participation in social media. Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines, the district's Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy for Students, and the Student Code of Conduct. Questions regarding district social media platforms should be directed to the Community Relations Director at 686-1706.

Building twitter handle is:

- @SycamoreJrHigh

District social media platforms are:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSte160Qx-RfMilMb90DChQ>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sycamorecommunityschools/>

Twitter: www.twitter.com/sycamoreschools

Individuals wishing to launch a social media platform on behalf of the district, a school, or a school/district organization/club/team should obtain permission from the district's Community Relations Director.

COMPUTERS AND NETWORK AT SCHOOL

The Chromebook is the preferred device chosen by Sycamore Community School District. It will allow the school district to monitor student use at school and push out applications that students can use for classwork. The Chromebook was chosen for numerous factors including its lightweight, long battery life, integration with Google Apps for Education and security. School-issued Chromebooks will contain additional services and filters that non-district purchased Chromebooks will not. That being said, a student may bring his/her own device, but will use a district-owned Chromebook for all testing.

For complete information about computer and network policies of Sycamore Community Schools refer to the district website [One to One](#) link.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Notwithstanding the exceptions noted below, information concerning individual students is considered confidential and is shared with only those school personnel who have a need to know it in order to complete the functions of their job. No information will be shared with outside agencies without parental written consent

(the exception is law enforcement agencies). A student's name, address, phone number, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, degrees, and awards received may be disclosed unless a parent signs the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) form, available at each school and online at www.sycamoreschools.org. Student names and photos may also be released to the media, used in district publicity efforts, or posted online unless a parent signs the Media and Publicity Exclusion form, available at each school and online at www.sycamoreschools.org. Please read both forms carefully before deciding to sign or not sign them.

CULTURE - Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework for supporting behavior in school. PBIS places an emphasis on proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting student behaviors to create a positive school environment. Our buildings embrace the 4 core pillars of PBIS including:

- Specific defined behavioral expectations
- Explicit teaching of the desired school behaviors
- Acknowledging students for demonstrating expected behaviors
- Correcting behaviors before they occur and teaching alternative acceptable behaviors in the moment

At our buildings, we have defined four specific behavioral expectations. They include:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be a Problem Solver

Research has shown that punishment, when used inconsistently, and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Through modeling, specific instruction, and acknowledging students for the behavior we expect to see at school, we are taking a more positive and proactive approach.

Throughout the year our building newsletter will feature information about our school wide PBIS implementation. We encourage you to reinforce our language and expectations at home around our expected school behavior.

DISCIPLINE

While Sycamore embraces the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support framework for encouraging desired behavior, student accountability is imperative in teaching our children to be responsible citizens. The Sycamore Student Code of Conduct identifies in greater detail the expected behavior of students while in our classrooms, on our campus, and attending our events. Positive acknowledgement of these expected behaviors is an essential component in the PBIS framework, and is embedded in our culture. However, when students are not able to demonstrate expected behaviors, we believe in a restorative approach. This may include re-teaching of the expected behaviors, considering the impact of the behavior on others and our culture, and considering opportunities to make amends. Additionally, consequences may be administered for inappropriate or unexpected behavior. Administrators may exercise discretion in determining appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Prior history, seriousness of the offense, and individual student circumstances will be taken into consideration by the administrator.

DRESS CODE

The school dress code should be easy to understand and easy to enforce.

The Board believes that student dress should promote a positive self-image of students while abiding by standards of dress and grooming outlined as necessary to maintain order, secure student safety, and provide a healthy environment that is conducive to learning.

We are preparing students to act as adults. All students should understand they are responsible for managing their own personal distractions without the need to regulate individual students' clothing/self-expression. Students should be mindful of how to represent themselves as they prepare for a post-high school employment environment. Staff can focus on underlying physical, medical, and psychological issues students may deal with that impacts the dress code.

While the style of clothing and personal appearance of each student generally is a matter of taste, some standards of dress and appearance are necessary. While we recognize that appearance is a matter of self-respect and a matter of respect for others, the faculty and administration have a responsibility and an obligation to enforce a dress code that provides for the students' health, personal hygiene, safety, and effective education.

Please note that these guidelines will be emphasized and strictly enforced at all school functions. Students are not permitted to wear the following:

1. head coverings unless required for religious purposes, hats, hoods covering the head, or sunglasses
2. see-through garments, exposed midriffs, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, low cut shirts, pajamas, lounge wear, house shoes/slippers or muscle shirts.
3. clothing that has an intimidating message or which causes and/or is reasonably anticipated to cause a disruption to class
4. clothing that reveals undergarments
5. makeup deemed excessive or distracting
6. any potentially dangerous items, such as necklaces, bracelets, rings, or items with sharp or protruding objects exposed chains of any kind including but not limited to wallet chains
7. hairstyles deemed as a distraction in a learning environment
8. shorter length shorts and skirts
9. articles of clothing which promote the use of any alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco products, or violence/weapons
10. clothing which contains sexually suggestive language, pictures, inappropriate language, or gang related items
11. any other dress or style that interferes with the educational process as deemed by the administration

Consequences for violations of the Dress Code could include, but are not limited to:

1st Offense - Student warning from an administrator / teacher and change of apparel from locker or nurse's office

2nd Offense – Change apparel and receive detention

3rd & Subsequent - Repeated violations are considered insubordination and will result in more serious consequences.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES

The Board recognizes its share of the responsibility for the health, welfare and safety of the students who attend the District's schools. The Board is concerned about the problems of alcohol and drug abuse and

recognizes that illegal or inappropriate use of alcohol, narcotic drugs, depressants or other controlled substances is wrong and harmful and constitutes a hazard to the positive development of all students.

The Board does not permit any student to possess, transmit, conceal, offer for sale, consume, show evidence of having consumed or used any alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unprescribed drugs, look-alike drugs or any mind-altering substance while on school grounds or facilities; at school-sponsored events; in other situations under the authority of the District or in school-owned or school-approved vehicles. Included in this prohibition are any substances represented as a controlled substance, nonalcoholic beers, steroids, tobacco and tobacco products and drug paraphernalia.

The Board wishes to emphasize the following requirements:

A student is required to obey existing laws on school grounds and while involved in school activities. School authorities have the same responsibility as any other citizen to report violations of the law. The final disposition of any problem, however, is determined by the building principal with due consideration of the welfare of the student and of any other relevant factors involved.

Discipline is imposed independent of court action. Students are subject to immediate suspension or expulsion proceedings for possession or use of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages.

Parents and students are given a copy of the standards of conduct and the statement of disciplinary sanctions and are notified that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

If conditions warrant, the administration refers the student for prosecution and offers full cooperation in a criminal investigation.

A reduction in penalty may be considered if the student receives professional assistance. Professional assistance may include but not be limited to an alcohol/drug education program; assessment with follow-through based on the assessment findings, counseling, outpatient treatment or inpatient treatment.

The Superintendent establishes and the Board considers for approval detailed procedures for dealing with students who may have a drug or alcohol problem. These procedures are in compliance with all applicable laws and observed by all staff members. It is the desire of the Board for students with problems to feel secure enough to ask for help from their teachers or counselors without fear of reprisal. Confidentiality shall be maintained within the limits of the law. The long-range welfare of the student is paramount.

ELEVATOR USE

Students must present a doctor's note in order to use the elevator. The school reserves the right to deny a student access to the elevator if the student is not following the rules for using the elevator or if the student's safety is in jeopardy.

EXTRACURRICULAR INFORMATION

Get involved! A complete listing of all the activities and clubs that students can join is located in the counseling office or in the reception area, or on the junior high website. All interested students are encouraged to participate in clubs, activities, and/or athletics. If a student needs financial aid to enable him/her to participate in any of these programs, the student should contact the club/activity sponsor or coach to obtain that support.

For school-sponsored functions, every effort is made to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If specific auxiliary aids and/or accommodations are needed, please notify the building principal's office at least two working days prior to the event.

FEDERAL GRANT INFORMATION

At the beginning of each year, the district notifies the parents of each student in any Title I building that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher. Additional information regarding [Federal Grant compliance](#) can be found on our website, www.sycamoreschools.org under Parent Resources.

FEES

Fees can be paid online using Mastercard or Visa through Parent Portal or by check payable to Sycamore Community Schools.

The **Academic Fee** is \$40.00 per student. Students entering the district after the end of the semester will be charged a fee of \$20.00 and no fee to those beginning after the start of the 4th quarter.

The **Performing Arts and Athletic Program fee** is \$75.00 per sport for participation in junior high and high school athletics and the following performing arts programs: Junior High Drama, Junior High Boy Choir, and Junior High Singing Company.

Students participating in the federal free and reduced price lunch program will receive a waiver of student academic and extracurricular fees.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can be a positive learning experience when well-planned and related to the course of study. Parent permission will be sought for field trips outside of Sycamore Junior High School. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing make-up assignments from other classes missed due to a field trip. Students may be excluded from field trips if they are in poor academic or behavioral standing. Good behavior is expected on all field trips.

Any student who participates in a field trip (or is absent from class for an athletic contest) must notify his/her teachers in advance that he/she will be out of class. Participation in a field trip does not excuse a student from fulfilling his/her student responsibilities.

- If a paper or project is due on the day of the trip, the student must turn it into the appropriate teacher prior to leaving on the trip.
- If a test or quiz is missed, it must be made up as soon as possible at the teacher's convenience. This may be done after school on the same day after the student returns from the trip.
- A student is responsible for all work missed when on a trip. If a test, quiz, or project is scheduled for the day following the trip; the student will be required to complete the work with the class.

FUNDRAISERS

In order to be sensitive to our families, we limit our fundraisers to those necessary to provide support to school related and Sycamore Junior High extracurricular expenses. All fundraisers require administrative approval. PTO sponsors additional opportunities to raise money such as Kroger cards, Box Tops, and Pipkin's receipt program to benefit specific project needs during the year.

Bake Sales and other fundraising activities involving food and beverage items may not be held during the school lunch period. Any fundraising activities that involve selling food or beverages can ONLY sell smart

snack compliant items if during the school day. School day refers to midnight the night before to 30 minutes after school releases. If you need more information on smart snack compliant items, contact the Child Nutrition and Wellness Director.

GRADING INFORMATION

Sycamore Junior High School uses the following grading system:

90 – 100	A = Excellent- outstanding	4.0
80 – 89	B = Good – above average.....	3.0
70 – 79	C = Average – satisfactory.....	2.0
60 – 69	D = Passing – below average.....	1.0
Below 60	F = Failing – insufficient to pass.....	0.0

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss grades with teachers, counselors, or administration if there are any questions or concerns.

Interim Reports

Interim reports will be distributed during class time for students carrying D's and F's. All other grades can be viewed on Blackboard or Parent Portal.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed to students approximately one week following the end of each grading period.

HALL PASSES

Students are required to have a signed hall pass in order to be in the hallway during class time. Students should ask their teacher/staff member to sign a hall pass in order to leave the classroom for any reason.

HEALTH

Allergies

Animal/Pets In The Classroom: Due to the large number of children and staff members at risk for illness or allergic reaction to animals, animals/pets with fur or feathers are not allowed in classrooms. The exception to this is:

- Zoo presentations. (It is felt that the professional can manage this situation, and that children with allergies can be maintained at a safe distance. Teachers will assess this on an individual basis.)
- Guide dogs or Police drug dogs.

Reptiles, amphibians, and fish may be used for educational purposes; however, students are to be discouraged from handling these. If contact is made, hand washing should be required.

Balloons

Rubber balloons that decorate parties, carnivals, proms, etc. can pose a serious health threat to latex-sensitive individuals. People with chronic health conditions (spina bifida, hydrocephalus treated with shunts, etc.) who have been frequently treated with latex products are especially predisposed to this severe and possibly life threatening allergy. Latex allergy is also reported in healthy individuals, especially those with common conditions such as asthma and eczema. Routes of exposure include contact with skin, wounds, mucous membranes, and inhalation of latex laden powder particles from items such as rubber gloves or balloons. For these reasons, latex balloons are not permitted in all school buildings. Mylar balloons are suggested as safe substitutes.

Classroom Treats

Many students suffer from severe food allergies and eating, smelling, or touching certain allergens (i.e. peanuts, nuts, etc.) can be fatal to people who are sensitive. Because of issues such as these, parents are asked to carefully select food items when treating a child's class. The teacher should be asked if any students have food allergies and diabetes. Consideration of healthy food choices that are nutritious and not too high in sugar is appreciated. Non-food alternatives such as craft activities or prize bags can also be a choice to make classroom parties a healthy celebration. Sycamore's Student and Staff Wellness Program guidelines can be found on the Sycamore Website and serves as a great resource for classroom treat ideas.

Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

For any student with a food allergy, special dietary need or religious preference regarding food you will need to fill out the Food Allergy Notification Form and submit it to the school nurse. Once filled out once, this form does not need to be filled out yearly, only as the form needs to be updated due to changes. It can be found on the school website under the Child Nutrition Services tab or in final forms. Once the nurse gets a copy of the Food Allergy Notification form, it will be sent to the Child Nutrition and Wellness Director and placed on the student's meal account. This notification will pop up everytime the student's account is pulled up at mealtime.

If a student has a severe life threatening allergy or disability and is requesting a substitution the form has to be signed by a medical authority. Substitution requests need to be clearly stated on the form and do not pertain to food intolerances or non life threatening allergies. An example for a student severely allergic to milk would be "substitute juice or water for fluid milk".

Please contact the Child Nutrition and Wellness director if you have further questions. 513-686-1796

Dispensing Medication at School

Sycamore Community Schools has a medication policy that is in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code. Medication should not be given at school unless it is absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of the student. If medication must be given at school, a Physician/Dentist Medication Orders form must be on file at school, signed by a parent/guardian and a physician, before prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication may be administered. Such orders are also needed for students to carry inhalers or Epi-Pens (epinephrine auto-injectors). This form is available on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. For more information, please talk to your school nurse or review the Student Health Handbook, available at each school and online at www.sycamoreschools.org.

Medication should not be given at school unless it is absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of the student.

- A Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form must be on file at school, signed by a parent/guardian and a physician, before prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication may be administered. It is also needed for students to carry inhalers or Epi-Pens (epinephrine autoinjectors). This form is available on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org.

The following must be included with the order form

- a. Name and address of the student.
- b. Name of the medication and dosage to be given.
- c. Reason for administering the medication.
- d. Times at which medication should be given.
- e. Dates the administration of medication is to begin and end.

- f. Adverse reactions that should be reported to the physicians.
- g. Special instructions (i.e. sterile conditions, storage, etc.)
- h. Acknowledgement that the prescriber has provided the student with training in the proper use of the Epi-Pen.

NOTE 1: Any changes in a medication order require a revised statement signed by the physician.

NOTE 2: If a student does not take a daily scheduled medication for more than 30 days, a new order is required.

- Medication must be in the original container.
- Students may not transport medication to school. (Exception: Inhalers or Epi-Pens, with a completed Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form, may be transported by a student. Parents are requested to provide a backup inhaler, and are required by law to provide a backup dose of Epi-Pen.
- A new Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form is required each year for ongoing medication. All medication must be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the school year. If it is not picked-up, it is discarded.
- Only the school nurse, a substitute nurse, the principal, or a person designated by the principal, are authorized to administer medication at school. (Note: If an Epi-Pen is administered, emergency services will be called.)
- Parents/guardians are not permitted to administer medication to students on school property without a signed Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form.

Nurse

If a student becomes ill during the day, he/she should acquire permission from the classroom teacher or appropriate staff member to go to the health room. **STUDENTS MUST HAVE A PASS TO COME TO THE HEALTH ROOM** unless it is an emergency.

If your student has special health considerations (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, food/insect allergies) and will be involved in a school sponsored extracurricular activity, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to get physician orders for the medication and to notify the school nurse. The school nurse will then train the coaches or coordinators to respond appropriately.

The importance of a working telephone number in the case of an emergency is critical to the health and safety of your student. In case of a change of telephone numbers and/or address changes, please call school.

If a student contacts parents/guardians to be picked up from the nurse in lieu of going to the nurse first, there may be a consequence associated with this. Sycamore Junior High must know if students are feeling ill and needing to go home for the safety of the school building.

HOMWORK HELP

Students are encouraged to attend Homework Club should they need help with daily homework. Each session is staffed by a certified teacher Monday through Thursday from 3:15 to 4:00 P.M. A before school session is also held on Tuesday from 7:15 to 8:00 A.M. Transportation is not available.

Homework assistance is also available at lunch time in Student to Student peer tutoring sessions. Students are encouraged to use Academic Assistance passes during Flex Time to get additional help from their individual teachers.

HONOR ROLL

The junior high honor roll will be compiled by the counselors at the end of each grading period. The list will include the names of those students who have achieved an overall average of 3.4 or better in all courses. A letter grade of D or F in any subject automatically disqualifies a student from the honor roll. Any student who attains an overall average of 3.6 or better in all classes will be eligible to be included in the **Principal's Honor Roll**.

INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA CENTER (IMC)

A wide variety of material is available including books, magazines, and audiovisuals. Books are checked out for three weeks. Audiovisual items may be used in the IMC or taken to classrooms for presentations. All materials must be checked out before being taken from the IMC. Fines will be assessed on materials that are kept past the date due. If a library item is lost the patron will be charged the original price or the replacement price.

LOCKERS

All school lockers are the property of the Sycamore Board of Education and, in accordance with the law, lockers/cubbies and the contents therein may be the subject of a random search at any time. The Sycamore Board of Education may direct the principal or a designee to conduct random searches as a proactive means to reduce behavior that is not in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and/or the law.

One student will be assigned to each locker by his/her seventh bell teacher in which to keep books, coats, and other personal property. **Lockers are to be kept locked at all times.** While the school makes every effort to solve locker problems, the school is neither responsible nor liable for books or other items of value missing or taken from lockers regardless of the circumstances. Each student is responsible for his/her own possessions, for their replacement, and/or payment. Students who have a locker problem should seek help in the office.

MAKE-UP PRIVILEGES DUE TO ILLNESS

It is the responsibility of the student with an excused absence to complete make-up work. Students who are ill are allowed two days for every one day absent to turn in make-up work, however; assignments/tests due the day of absence are to be turned in or completed the day the student returns to school. Students are encouraged to utilize Blackboard to access assignments.

In cases when illness or convalescence results in an extended period of absence (3 or more days), arrangements should be made through the Counseling Center to send assignments home or have them ready for parent pick up by calling **686-1760, ext.#2510**.

PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal is a portion of the Sycamore Community Schools website that allows parents to:

- have access to class assignments and notes
- view a student's most current grades online
- pay academic, athletic, and summer school fees online using MasterCard or Visa
- track school expenses
- add funds to a student's meal account electronically/view meal account transactions
- access parent resources/web links
- online forms

Parent Portal also meets the busy schedules of parents and families as the information on Parent Portal is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Parents can also have peace of mind during financial transactions as payments are credited to a student's account within 24 hours, credit card information is not saved, a password is required, and transmissions are secure!

For information on creating a Parent Portal account, visit the district website (www.sycamoreschools.org) or email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Schools have specific days not in session or classes are dismissed early for the purpose of holding parent-teacher conferences. See the school district calendar for these designated days. Conferences may also be scheduled by parents or teachers anytime throughout the school year.

Parents wishing to have a conference with a teacher should call, email, or send a note to the teacher requesting a conference.

Per a law called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student records and information may not be shared with anyone who is not a legal parent or guardian and therefore, these individuals must be excluded from parent-teacher conferences.

If a situation requires the inclusion of a non-parent (such as a tutor, or grandparent), a conference waiver form must be signed by the parent, guardian, or custodial parent. Step parents living with the child have the same FERPA rights as a non-custodial parent regarding access to records however, they have no decision-making authority unless procured through court order.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The PTO helps to organize and implement programs that serve students, the staff, the community, and the world. All parents and guardians are encouraged to join the PTO as statistics indicate that there is a strong correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. PTO meeting times and locations are available through the school's main office, on the district calendar, and online at www.sycamoreschools.org. All parents and guardians are welcome at PTO meetings.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The school cannot be responsible for the personal property of the students. There should be no reason for a student to carry large sums of money or other valuables. However, should such an occasion arise, the main office will be glad to put such valuables in safekeeping until the student leaves school that day.

PHONES

There is a phone that students may use at the front desk. The phone may be used during lunch and after school. A pass is required to use the phone during school hours.

Only **emergency messages from parents will be delivered to students**. With so many students and teachers at the junior high, it is extremely time consuming and difficult to deliver messages. Please refrain from calling with a message unless it is an emergency.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION & SUPPORTS (PBIS)

PBIS is an evidence based framework for supporting positive behavior in school. PBIS places an emphasis on proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting student behaviors to create a positive school environment. Our buildings embrace the 4 core pillars of PBIS including:

- Specific defined behavioral expectations
- Explicit teaching of the desired school behaviors
- Acknowledging students for demonstrating expected behaviors
- Correcting behaviors before they occur and teaching alternative acceptable behaviors in the moment

At Sycamore High School, we have defined four specific behavioral expectations. They include:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be Proactive

Throughout the school year students will receive more specific and direct instruction about what these expectations look like in our classrooms, campus, and community. We encourage families to work alongside us in teaching our students these behavioral expectations, encouraging students to demonstrate these behaviors, and partnering with us to hold them accountable if they do not.

PHOTOS AND MEDIA

The district knows and understands the desire of a proud parent to videotape or photograph memorable school events and share those photos with friends and family members. However, families are reminded that not everyone wants to be in pictures or videos. Sycamore Community Schools will respect the rights of those parents who have requested that their children not be included in publicity efforts, website posting, videos, and photographs for various reasons. Thus, the district respectfully requests that parents obtain approval from their school principal prior to posting photos and videos on the internet and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or YouTube.

The Community Relations Director is responsible for submitting district information or story ideas to the media and creating social media channels on behalf of the district. Individuals who wish to release a photo or news item to the media and those who want to start a social media channel for the district or a school should contact the Community Relations Director at 686-1706.

PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

Students and parents are encouraged to follow our Problem Solving Model. Within this framework students and parents are encouraged to address any questions or concerns with the adult staff most directly involved with their concern, (i.e. grading, detentions, etc.) to find a workable solution. Should a student still have concerns after working directly with a teacher/staff member, they are encouraged to seek out the assistance of their school counselor. Parents are encouraged to follow the same guidelines prior to contacting school administration.

Define the problem	Gather the facts; what you know and what you need to find out. Check your facts and sources for accuracy.
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	Write a clear, objective description of the problem.
Determine who is involved	Initially include only those individuals who are at the point of concern and whose participation is necessary to solve the problem. For example, if your child is having a problem with a particular teacher, the problem at this point belongs only to you, your child, and that teacher.
Meet with those involved	Calmly share, listen to, and acknowledge all points of view.
Restate the problem together	Start by listing points of agreement. Move to the question that you need to address together.
Identify solutions and their consequences	Offer and consider all options. Be flexible. Discuss the potential outcome of each solution. Eliminate solutions unacceptable to either party. Choose the solution satisfactory to both parties.
Select a plan of action	Determine what needs to be done, by when, and in what time frame. Specify a means of assessment outcome.

**Do both parties agree?
If YES, follow the plan. The problem is resolved.
If NO, appeal to the next level of authority.**

Appealing to the next level of authority	An appeal may be necessary due to the complex nature of the problem, the need for additional resources, or due to disagreement over the most appropriate course of action. The appeal may be initiated by a phone call, a scheduled visit, or a letter to the person at the next level. (See levels of appeal)
Summarize previous results	Both parties should provide the person at the next level with a review of the outcome of the first meeting, the reasons for the appeal, and their recommendations.
Receive feedback	Within 10 working days beyond the appeal, all parties should receive a response that includes a strategy for dealing with the concern and a rationale to support all recommendations.

If the parties do not agree, the appeal process may be repeated, if necessary, throughout all the consecutive levels of authority.

Note: Directors of Transportation, Maintenance, Guidance and Child Nutrition Services are not part of the appeal process and may be called directly to address specific concerns unrelated to the education program.

Levels of Appeal

Remember, problem resolution always begins with those who are closest to the problem...

Involve the

TEACHER/COUNSELOR

To resolve issues related to classroom management; instruction; student or teacher conflict.

If there is no resolution, appeal to the



BUILDING PRINCIPAL or ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

To deal with issues to school goals, procedures and policies; staff performance; student services; extracurricular activities; community groups; and communications.

If there is no resolution, appeal to the



ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

To resolve issues related to the performance of building principals; the instructional programs of the district, including curricular offerings, budget, and expenditures.

If there is no resolution, appeal to the



SUPERINTENDENT

To review issues from other levels; policy amendments and additions; school calendar; community relations; district goal setting and other concerns of a district-wide nature.

If there is no resolution, appeal to the



BOARD of EDUCATION

To resolve issues that have passed through all other levels

SAFETY DRILLS

During the school year, we practice the following “safety drills” in an effort to prepare our students for emergency situations on our campus:

- Fire drills** once a month
- Tornado drills** once a month
- Lockdown/Intruder Response** once a quarter

Students are expected to participate in the drills in a serious manner to decrease the risk of harm to themselves and others.

SCHOOL CLOSING AND DELAYS DUE TO EMERGENCIES

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice message at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. All changes to contact information should be made in Final Forms.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

School closings and delays are based on concern for the safety of students, parents and employees, and most school closings occur during winter months. During inclement weather, Sycamore Community Schools will typically operate as follows:

School is Closed for the Day:

- Latchkey programs will not operate
- All after-school activities will be canceled, unless otherwise notified.

School Opening is Delayed:

- All schools and buses will run on a 2 hour delay
- Dismissal times will remain the same for all grades, except Preschool and Head Start
- Morning Preschool classes will be canceled
- Afternoon Preschool classes will operate as usual
- Morning kindergarten will be canceled
- Afternoon kindergarten classes will begin at 12:50 p.m. and end at 3:45 p.m.
- Latchkey operates under a 90-minute delay

If schools are delayed or closed, the district will inform all media and place an announcement on the district website (www.sycamoreschools.org), the district Facebook page (www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools) and the district Twitter account ([@sycamoreschools](https://twitter.com/sycamoreschools)).

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. If a parent/guardian would like to change or remove their contact number, please call the building or send an email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org with your request.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Damage to school property must be paid for by students and/or their parents. Students will be assessed the replacement cost of the lost or damaged book or item.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Sycamore Junior High School in conjunction with the Montgomery Police Department has a School Resource Officer assigned to the junior high school on a daily basis.

SERVICE LEARNING/OUTREACH

We believe students benefit from helping others in need, therefore we participate in several service projects throughout the school year. Our year long Sandwich Project gives students hands-on experience with feeding the hungry in the city. In addition, students will be encouraged to participate in school supplies, canned food,

and warm clothing drives, collections for our sister school Winton Hills Academy, and disaster relief as needed. Participation is encouraged but not mandatory.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records may not be released unless the proper consent form is signed by the parent/guardian of a student under the age of eighteen.

STUDENT VISITORS

Due to classroom size constraints and continued national concerns in regards to school safety / emergency procedures, students are not allowed to have other students attend classes or visit at lunch during the school day. Prospective students need to arrange for a tour through the Registrar or Assistant Principal.

SUMMER SCHOOL

1. If a student fails one or more core academic courses (Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies), he/she must successfully complete those courses in summer school. Failure to do so may result in retention.
2. If a student fails three academic courses, he/she must take and pass two of the three courses in summer school. Failure to do so may result in retention.
3. If a student who has failed two or three academic courses does not attend summer school, or fails summer school, the principal has the discretion to permit the student to take a competency test. The test will aid the principal in the decision on promotion to the next grade level.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished to students by the Board of Education. All books must be returned at the end of the year or when a student withdraws. Students are responsible for maintaining their books in the proper manner. **All textbooks assigned to students are to be covered.** Pupils are not assessed fines for normal wear of textbooks, only if lost, abused, or show excessive wear.

VISITORS

All individuals who are not part of a normal school day (regular students, staff, or faculty) shall report directly to the school office and state the reason for their visit each time he/she enters the school. For the safety of students and staff, Sycamore Community Schools is utilizing the LobbyGuard visitor badge system. All visitors must obtain a visitor's badge which must be worn at all times while in the school building. Parents who wish to visit a classroom must contact the teacher in advance to establish a time to visit the classroom. Once an appointment is made, parents must sign in at the school's main office and obtain a visitor badge. Parents may also eat lunch with their child at any time by either bringing their own lunch or selecting items from the lunch line. Parents bringing in lunch must sign in at the main office and are asked not to share with other students for lunch due to dietary restrictions, allergies, and the possibility of hurt feelings if all students are not involved

VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECKS

In an ongoing effort to ensure a safe and secure environment for all students, Sycamore has instituted a volunteer background check process. This process requires a criminal background check for any volunteer that is accompanying a school group on an overnight field trip or is working with students in an environment out of sight and sound of a district employee. Examples of individuals who do not need a criminal background check include, but are not limited to, playground volunteers (as long as there is a regular teacher or aide on the playground), an individual volunteering in the regular classroom, or any volunteer under staff supervision.

Background checks will be conducted only on those individuals authorized by the building principal and will be completed at the District Offices. Volunteers may be required to pay for their background check.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be permitted at the discretion of the principal.

All classroom volunteers are under the direction of the teacher and are asked to honor their commitment with punctuality and attendance. Each volunteer area will have specific guidelines and contingency plans in the event someone is unable to fulfill their responsibility on a particular day. Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of the educational setting related to student academic and behavioral issues and must not divulge information of this nature to any individual or group with the exception of the teacher in charge or other appropriate personnel. Discussing individual staff members or programs in a critical manner is inappropriate. When volunteering in the classroom, media center, or on a field trip, it is inappropriate to bring younger children. The volunteer's attention must be totally directed to the task at hand (The exception: cafeteria volunteers may bring a younger child to school while working so long as he/she does not keep the volunteer from performing the duties required.). When performing duties and questions or concerns arise, volunteers should consult with the person in charge at an appropriate time. Volunteers should be a positive example and role model for the children by being aware of verbal and nonverbal communication. Cell phones should be turned off or put on vibrate.

SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The violation on the part of a student of any one or more of the following rules of conduct may result in disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, suspension, emergency removal and/or expulsion. This Code and its provisions shall be applicable on school property, including buses and at any school sponsored activity. Students with special needs may be subjected to disciplinary action for violations of the Student Code of Conduct consistent with applicable Federal and State statutes. (orc. 3313.661 and 3312.662)

Alcohol, Drugs, or Narcotics, Including Counterfeit Drugs and Narcotics: A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, conceal, use, smell of, or consume any alcoholic beverage, drug (prescription and over-the-counter), inhalant, or narcotic except as prescribed by a duly licensed medical practitioner and registered with the school nurse or principal, nor shall a student possess, transmit, conceal, or use any counterfeit drug, rolling papers or other drug paraphernalia, or narcotic.

Assault or Fighting (Physical and/or Menacing Behavior), Hazing, Threatening: A student shall not assault or cause physical injury or mental anguish or behave in such a way that could cause physical injury or mental anguish to school personnel, other students or visitors. Hazing in any form is forbidden. A student shall not threaten violence or threaten to use weapons.

Cheating: A student shall not possess, sell, transmit, or receive any test information or other information that is meant for individual completion or preparation. Nor shall a student plagiarize or present another person's work as his/her own.

Damage or Destruction of Property: A student while under the jurisdiction of the school shall not deface, damage or destroy, or attempt to deface, damage or destroy, school or private property. Disciplinary action may include restitution.

Dangerous Weapons or Explosives: A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any weapon or object capable of causing injury to another person, including but not limited to chains, guns, knives, ice picks, brass knuckles, objects that propel projectiles, lighters, matches, firecrackers, smoke bombs, fireworks and chemicals or other look alike objects which could be construed as causing harm.

Disrespect (Profanity and Obscene Gestures): Students are expected to be courteous and considerate toward all students and staff. A student shall not use profane or obscene language, motions, signs, electronic or written messages.

Disruption of School: A student shall not, by the use of violence, force, noise, threat, intimidation, or coercion cause the disruption of any school function. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, disorderly conduct, false fire alarms, setting fires, bomb threats, walk-outs, strikes, sit-ins, inciting to disrupt, throwing food or objects, shouting, obstruction of entrances and hallways.

Dress Code: Appropriate attire should ensure the health, welfare and safety of all members of the student body and enhances a positive image of our students and the schools. Any form of dress or grooming that attracts undue attention, disrupts the learning environment, or violates the previous statement is unacceptable.

Electronic Equipment: Students are not permitted to use electronic devices that cause disruption to the educational process or school functions.

Extortion: A student shall not borrow or attempt to take money or a thing of value from another person by using intimidation or threat, real or implied.

Forgery: A student shall not write the name of another person or alter the date, time, grade, or other data on any school form or on correspondence directed to the school.

Gambling: A student shall not engage in any act of gambling.

Gangs: A student may not wear, carry, or display gang paraphernalia, or exhibit behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or cause and/or participate in activities which intimidate or negatively affect other students.

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Dating Violence: In accordance with policy, a student shall not verbally, non verbally, or physically threaten, harass, coerce or menace another person in any manner including electronically transmitted photos.

Insubordination: A student shall not fail to comply with the directive of authorized school personnel during any period of time when the student is under the authority of the school.

Motor Vehicles: A student shall not operate any motor vehicle in a reckless or dangerous manner on school property. A student shall not park in any area other than the student parking lot. Parking is a privilege offered to students. Should students choose to park on school property they should be aware that the Board reserves the right to search for illegal substances in any and all parking areas.

Public Display of Affection: Students should use good judgment in showing affection toward one another.

Public Indecency: A student shall not uncover or expose parts of the body which are regarded as private.

Student and Locker Searches: The right of inspection of a student's school locker or articles carried upon his/her person (book bags, purses, etc.) and the interrogation of an individual student is inherent in the authority granted school Boards. All other searches will be conducted sparingly and only when such search is reasonably likely to produce anticipated tangible results to aid in the education process, preserve discipline and good order, or promote the safety and security of persons and their property within the area of the school's responsibility. Student lockers are the property of the district, and since random searches have a positive impact on reducing drugs and other criminal activity, it is the policy of the Board to permit the building administrator to search any locker and its contents as the administrator believes necessary. Students are advised that the Sycamore Schools Board policy provides for the random, unannounced search of student lockers and for the use of canines in detecting the presence of drugs.

Theft: A student shall not remove, have in his/her possession, or take property belonging either to the school or another individual.

Tobacco/Nicotine or Tobacco Simulating Products: A student shall not use or possess tobacco or nicotine/tobacco-simulating products in any form including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, clove cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaporizer pens, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other tobacco.

Trespassing: A student shall not enter a school building or school grounds where the student is not authorized to attend. Exceptions would be made if the student is attending a school-sponsored event in which his/her regularly- assigned school is involved or with the permission of a building administrator. Students are not permitted on school property after operating hours unless there is a supervised school approved activity.

Truancy: A student shall not be absent from school or from a class except for the reasons provided by Ohio Revised Code and confirmation by the parent or guardian. Excessive unexcused absences may result in referral to a student attendance intervention meeting and/or truancy charges being filed with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court.

Use of Computer Technology: In accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy for technology, unauthorized, illegal use of computers, software, access to computer networks, telecommunications and related technologies; or being involved in willful acts that cause physical, financial, or other harm, or disruption of information technology in any manner by the student is prohibited.

Other: A student shall not engage in any other activity which the pupil knows or should know will disrupt the academic process or a curricular or extracurricular activity.

Adopted by the Sycamore Board of Education: 8/76, 5/83, 4/85, 7/88, 8/91, 5/93, 7/97, 6/98, 5/03, 6/13, 9/17.

HAZING AND BULLYING

(Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

The Board does not tolerate hazing, harassment, intimidation or bullying of any student on District property or at any school-sponsored event, regardless of whether the event occurs on or off District property (on school buses and other school-related vehicles). Students who engage in such behavior are subject to disciplinary

action, including suspension or expulsion from school. The Board's commitment to addressing such prohibited behavior involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a school atmosphere in which hazing, harassment, intimidation, dating violence and/or bullying will not be tolerated by students, staff or administration.

For purposes of this policy, the term hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of intimidation to any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

For purposes of this policy, the term "harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any unprovoked and intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both: (1) causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. For purposes of this policy, harassment and intimidation include violence within a dating relationship. (See Sexual Harassment section for additional information specific to such behaviors.)

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

The District includes, within the health curriculum, age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 to 12. This instruction includes recognizing warning signs of dating violence and the characteristics of healthy relationships.

Prohibited activities of any type, including those engaged in via computer and/or electronic communications devices or electronic means are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times. The District educates minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms as well as cyberbullying awareness and response.

No administrator, teacher or other employee of the District shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any of these activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, may plan, encourage or engage in hazing and/or bullying.

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees will be particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing and/or bullying. If hazing and/or bullying or planned hazing and/or bullying is discovered, involved students will be informed by the discovering school employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and will be required to end all hazing and/or bullying activities immediately. All hazing and/or bullying incidents must be reported promptly to the Superintendent/designee. School administration will ensure the appropriate disciplinary action is administered.

The Superintendent/designee must provide the Board President with a written summary of all reported incidents of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying on a semiannual basis. The summary will be posted on the District's website, to the extent permitted by law.

The administration provides annual training on the District's hazing and bullying policy to District employees who have direct contact with students. Additional training is provided to elementary employees in child abuse prevention. The District provides training in dating violence prevention to employees as required by the Ohio Revised Code.

The District provides age appropriate instruction on dating violence prevention in grades 7-12 as required by the Ohio Revised Code.

District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying. Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State law.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance or assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual. [Re-adoption date: May 16, 2012]

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the District to provide a learning and working environment for students and employees that is free from sexual harassment and intimidation. Sexual harassment is improper, illegal and will not be tolerated within the District.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and/or teacher-student or student-student relationship. All employees and students must be allowed to function in an environment free from unwelcome sexual overtures or inappropriate sexual labels.

Sexual harassment is behavior which is unwelcome, or which is personally offensive, or which debilitates morale, or which interferes with the work of its victims and their coworkers or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work/school environment. By law, sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- Quid pro quo - conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
- Hostile environment - Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
- Clergy crimes - Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

1. unwanted sexual advances, including propositioning, repeatedly asking someone out for a date after it is clear that the person is not interested;
2. submission to sexually based conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development;
3. making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
4. nonverbal conduct: leering; making sexual gestures; displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons or posters;

5. verbal conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes; making sexual-based remarks about another person's or one's own body;
6. verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations;
7. physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding or blocking movement and
8. computer accessing of programs or information in which the graphics or language is of a sexual nature.

In the event a student alleges that a staff member has been touching the student inappropriately in a manner that is of a sexual nature, the incident shall be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator and to the proper authorities to determine whether an investigation by the department of human services, the county prosecutor or the police department is warranted based on child abuse reporting requirements. The procedures outlined in the policy on sexual harassment shall not be implemented until the investigation is complete and the matter is turned back over to the schools for further consideration based on the outcome of the investigation.

The building administrator or investigator has the authority to involve local law enforcement officials, if an individual believes danger is imminent due to the alleged harassment.

The identity of both the charging party and the accused are to be kept confidential to the extent possible.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Formal Complaints:

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence. The report can be found on the district website, [Report Bullying](#) under the Services, Social and Emotional Wellness tab for public use. It also can be found on the individual school's websites under Bullying Prevention. Such written reports must be reasonably specific including person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

Informal Complaints:

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

Anonymous Complaints:

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their

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

Bullying is not tolerated in Sycamore Community Schools.

Therefore, this rubric is used when a school administrator has investigated and determined that the student(s) has exhibited behavior that constitutes bullying.

DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES

Offenses that Result in Disciplinary Action - Based on severity of the offense, final determination of a disciplinary consequence is at the discretion of the Administration.

Learning communities that are successful are those in which students and staff respect each other and share a common purpose toward excellence. An orderly and properly behaved student body is an essential component in order for everyone to be successful. Clear expectations for behavior and consequences for poor choices help to maintain the environment and our mission of excellence. While Sycamore embraces the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support framework for encouraging desired behavior, student accountability is imperative in teaching our children to be responsible citizens. Students who violate the Code of Conduct and infringe on the rights of others will be dealt with using discipline that is progressive and cumulative as described in this handbook. Categories of offenses and consequences have been outlined in order for students to see clearly defined boundaries and possible consequences of their actions. However, based on the severity of the offense, the final determination of a disciplinary consequence is at the discretion of the Administration. Other infractions, not specified by the handbook, may be eligible for consequences. Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses in any category or combination of categories could result in suspension. Based on the severity of the offense, final determination of a disciplinary consequence is at the discretion of the Administration.

Bus Conduct

Riding to or from school on buses furnished by the Board of Education is a privilege for high school students and also a convenience. In order to maintain the safety of all people on board a school bus, it is imperative that students maintain good behavior and follow all bus driver rules. The failure of the pupil to follow these rules and regulations may result in administrative discipline and/ or forfeiting the privilege of transportation by school bus.

[District Transportation Guidelines.](#)

Consequences:

- 1st Offense**-bus driver and administrative warning
- 2nd Offense**-disciplinary action based on the severity of the offense

Complicity/Compliance

A student who is in compliance with another student committing an offense listed in the code of conduct will be subject to punishment one category less than the offender (e.g. passing on threats or explicit sexual notes from one student to another). Students observing any infraction of the code of conduct must report it to a teacher or administrator or they could be held in compliance.

Category I Offenses

The consequences for a violation of any rule in Category I could be:

- 1st Offense – Extended School Day Detention**

2nd Offense – Saturday Probation

3rd Offense– In-School Suspension

4th Offense – 3 Days Out-of School Suspension

Chronic – Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses in any category or combination of categories could result in suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

- **FAILURE TO SERVE AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION:** (4TH Offense – 1-3 days Out-of-School Suspension pending parent conference)
- **FAILURE TO SERVE EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY:** A student who fails to report to Extended School Day will have the consequence rescheduled and receive an additional Extended School Day. (4TH Offense – 1-3 days Out-of-School Suspension pending parent conference)
- **DRESS CODE:** All students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly in clothes that are suitable for school activities so as not to create a distraction in the classroom. Modesty, safety, and maintaining the learning environment as described in the detailed Dress Code policy section should be followed.
 - Additional consequences for violations of the Dress Code could include, but are not limited to:
 - 1st Offense - Student warning from an administrator / teacher and change of apparel from locker or nurse's office
 - 2nd Offense – Change apparel and receive detention
 - 3rd & Subsequent - Repeated violations are considered insubordination and will result in more serious consequences.
- **HORSEPLAY:** This includes pushing, shoving, screaming, etc.
- **CLASSROOM DISRUPTION**
- **ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT:** Sycamore Junior High School is not responsible for loss or theft of any electronic equipment or personal items. The SRO will take a report on a legitimately stolen item once the correct form has been completed. These items are not the responsibility of Sycamore Community Schools or Sycamore Junior High School. Improper usage of electronic equipment that also violates another section of this Student handbook, for example, academic dishonesty, shall result in appropriate disciplinary action.
- **POSSESSION OR USE OF MATCHES OR LIGHTERS:** Objects will be confiscated.
- **FAILURE TO SERVE OR COMPLETE AN ASSIGNED TEACHER DETENTION**
- **LEAVING CLASS WITHOUT PERMISSION:** No excuse for leaving without permission will be accepted. All restrooms will be open before school, during lunchtime and during class exchanges. Students needing to make frequent restroom trips due to medical reasons should bring a note to that effect from a doctor. Student planners must be signed.
- **PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION:** Students should conduct themselves in a socially appropriate manner and refrain from excessive forms of affection.
- **LOITERING:** Sycamore Junior High School will open doors for students at 7:50 am. Students should plan to arrive no earlier than this time and leave the school grounds by 3:15 pm **unless they are staying for school-sponsored activities**. Students need to leave the building 30 minutes after their activity ends. They must wait in the area designated by the coach or supervising teacher. Students who have been charged with a theft must leave school grounds immediately at school dismissal or the conclusion of a supervised activity. Habitual loiterers will be served with a trespassing warning letter and may be charged with criminal trespass.

Category II Offenses

The consequences for a violation of any rule in Category II could be:

1st Offense – Saturday Probation

2nd Offense – In-School Suspension

3rd Offense – 3 Days Out of School Suspension

4th Offense – 5 Days Out of School Suspension

- **Chronic – Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses in any category or combination of categories could result in suspension and recommendation for expulsion.**
- **BUILDING SECURITY:** Students may not prop open any doors or open doors for anyone during the school day. All people entering the building during school hours must enter the main office doors.
- **UNAUTHORIZED LOCATION:** Students may not be in areas of the building that are off limits to students before, during and after school without permission of a staff member. These areas include the staff lunchroom at all times and locker bays and academic wings during lunch.
- **SKIPPING A CLASS/ OUT-OF-LOCATION:** Students are expected to be in their assigned class/location as indicated on their schedule or as directed by a teacher or administration. This could result in the student receiving a “0” for that time frame.
- **FAILURE TO REPORT TO SATURDAY PROBATION:** A student who fails to report to Saturday Probation will receive an in-school suspension.
- **DISRESPECT:** A student shall not direct toward a school employee or another student words, phrases, or gestures that are vulgar, or degrading.
- **INSUBORDINATION:** Students shall not disobey reasonable requests from staff. Refusal or failure to report to the office, an administrator or an alternative area is a violation. This includes rude behavior, gestures, profanity and serious classroom disruptions. Insubordination may include behavior intending to undermine authority or demean a staff member.
- **VERBAL ASSAULT/ABUSE:** A student shall not engage in any verbal confrontation that involves using profanity or vulgar language. Such action could also be considered disorderly conduct or harassment and could result in criminal charges.
- **PARTICIPATION IN OR INCITING A SCHOOL DISRUPTION**
- **CREATING A HAZARDOUS SITUATION**
- **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY** (including potential academic consequences)
 - a. **Cheating – Testing and Assignment Situations**

A student who possesses, provides, uses, or receives exam, test, or quiz information will receive a ‘0’ on the assignment. Students who plagiarize assignments will receive the same consequence. Also a written record of the incident will be filed with the appropriate assistant principal.
 - b. **Cheating – Other**

A student who illegally obtains test information electronically or from a teacher’s office area, files, classroom, etc. is subject to suspension on the first offense. A student who knowingly organizes a means to provide test materials to other students is subject to suspension on the first offense.

*Repeated offenses to anyone or any combination of the above areas will result in suspension, parent conferences, and written record placed in the student’s cumulative folder.
- **FALSIFYING INFORMATION:** A student shall not knowingly provide false information or withhold information from a school employee. This includes misuse or alteration of school forms or notes and misrepresentation of self or parents in phone calls or notes.
- **LYING IN AN INVESTIGATION**
- **STALKING**
- **GAMBLING/GAMING**

- **MISUSE OF INTERNET/ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** A student may not use school computers or personal devices for the purpose of viewing inappropriate Internet web sites, altering network settings, removing or adding files. Students may not make audio recordings, take or transmit pictures or video recordings, make video recordings or make online posts on social media of students or staff without permission. Restriction of network account may also apply.
- **LEAVING SCHOOL BUILDING/GROUNDS WITHOUT PERMISSION**
- **UNAUTHORIZED ATTENDANCE AT A SCHOOL FUNCTION**
- **DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY AND DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY OF ANY SCHOOL EMPLOYEE'S OR STUDENT'S PRIVATE PROPERTY:** Any restitution will be expected by student and/or parent. Charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.

Category III Offenses

All infractions covered in Category III are subject to 1-10 day(s) Out-of-School Suspension and may result in a recommendation for expulsion depending upon severity.

The consequences for a violation of any rule in Category III could be:

1st Offense – 3-5 Days Out-of-School Suspension

2nd Offense – 5-10 Days Out-of-School Suspension

3rd Offense – 5-10 Days Out-of-School Suspension with possible Recommendation for Expulsion

Chronic – Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses in any category or combination of categories could result in suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

- **THREAT MADE TO SCHOOL EMPLOYEE/STUDENT:** A student shall not make threatening gestures, comments, or remarks that suggest a threat toward school personnel or another student in any manner.
- **FIGHTING/AGGRESSIVE CONTACT:** Charges may be filed through the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **CAUSING INJURY TO ANOTHER STUDENT, INCLUDING HAZING, PIERCING, TATTOOING, ETC.**
- **USE OR POSSESSION OF ANY PRODUCT USED TO IGNITE, INGEST, OR INHALE NICOTINE, TOBACCO, OR NICOTINE/TOBACCO-STIMULATING SUBSTANCES.** Includes Vaporizer Pens, Electronic Cigarettes, or other objects at the discretion of administrators. This policy also includes the possession of related paraphernalia such as chargers, pods, cases, or liquid substances. Objects will be confiscated and charges will be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities. This will include a police citation for possession, use, transfer, or sale of any vape pen, product, substance, or paraphernalia anywhere on campus or at a Sycamore event. The first violation of any of these terms will result in a 5 day suspension. The second violation will result in a 10 day suspension with recommendation for expulsion.
- **HARASSMENT/BULLYING/INTIMIDATION/DATING VIOLENCE:** A student should never speak, write, wear, or gesture insults toward another student based on race, religion, sex, handicap, national origin or any other reason. See District Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy.
- **DEFACING SCHOOL PROPERTY, STAFF PROPERTY OR STUDENT PROPERTY:** Any restitution will be expected by student and/or parent.
- **VIOLATION OF EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**
- **TRESPASSING**
- **THEFT, KNOWLEDGE OF THEFT, RECEIPT, SALE, DISTRIBUTION OR POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY:** Objects will be confiscated. Charges may be filed through School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **EXTORTION:** This includes coercion and/or intimidation.

- **STUDENTS MAY NOT POSSESS OR TRANSMIT SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIAL**

Category IV Offenses

The consequences for a violation of any rule in Category IV could be:

1st Offense -10 days Out-of-School Suspension with a recommendation for Expulsion.

- **POSSESSION AND/OR USE OF A DEADLY WEAPON:** Object will be confiscated and charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **PHYSICAL ASSAULT/SEVERE VERBAL ASSAULT OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEE OR FELLOW STUDENT:** School Resource Officer or other local authorities shall be notified.
- **INDECENT EXPOSURE**
- **ENGAGING IN SEXUAL/INTIMATE ACTIVITY WITH A WILLING PARTNER**
- **SEXUAL CRIMES/UNWANTED SEXUAL CONTACT**
This includes but is not limited to forced sexual intercourse, gross sexual imposition, or sexual imposition according to the Ohio Revised Code. Charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **SALE, DISTRIBUTION, POSSESSION, USE OF OR HAVING CONSUMED DRUGS (including Cannabidiol, CBD), ANABOLIC STEROIDS, ALCOHOL, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, INHALANTS OR COUNTERFEIT DRUGS:** This policy also includes the possession of related paraphernalia. Students who are in the company of an individual(s) who is in possession or under the influence of the above substances will be subject to discipline. Objects will be confiscated and charges shall be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **EXPLODING, IGNITING, SELLING, DISTRIBUTING OR POSSESSING FIREWORKS, SMOKE BOMBS, OR OTHER SIMILAR DEVICES:** The object(s) will be confiscated and charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **UNAUTHORIZED FIRE:** Charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or other local authorities.
- **UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVATION OF A FIRE ALARM/CALLING IN FALSE ALARMS** Charges may be filed with the School Resource Officer or local authorities.
- **BOMB THREAT:** Charges shall be filed with the School Resource Officer or local authorities.
- **CHRONIC MISBEHAVIOR:** Chronic misbehavior and repeated offenses in any category or combination of categories could result in suspension and recommendation for expulsion.
- **COMPLICITY/COMPLIANCE:** A student who is in compliance with another student committing an offense listed in the code of conduct will be subject to punishment one category less than the offender (e.g. passing on threats or explicit sexual notes from one student to another). Students observing any infraction of the code of conduct must report it to a teacher or administrator or they could be held in compliance.

Description of Consequences:

Teacher Detentions

Teacher assigned detention will be scheduled from 3:15 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. or 7:30 to 8:00 A.M. and will be served in an area designated by the teachers. Lunch detentions may also be assigned to take place during the student's lunch period. This time may be spent with the assigning teacher or picking up the cafeteria. It is the student's responsibility to inform parents about detentions. Teacher-assigned detentions take precedence over administrative detentions; however, they do not replace the administrative detentions.

School Detentions

Administrative detentions (DT) are scheduled from 3:15 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. on Monday – Thursday. Students are expected to be on time and bring sufficient materials for studying or reading.

Friday School/Saturday School

Friday and Saturday Schools are disciplinary measures given to a student by an administrator. Friday school will be conducted from 3:15-5:45 P.M. and Saturday school from 8:00-11:00 A.M. Each will take place in a designated room on Friday or Saturday during the school year. Since Friday and Saturday Schools are considered an alternative to suspension in most cases, any misbehavior or failure to show for an assigned Friday or Saturday may result in suspension. Students should enter the school building at the front of the building for Saturday School.

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension (I.S.S.) is a disciplinary measure given to a student by an administrator. It will be held during normal school hours and will be supervised by staff. Students are expected to bring sufficient study and reading materials to work on during the entire suspension. A student in in-school suspension is not permitted to attend any previously scheduled field trips, assemblies, or other related activities during the time of the suspension. The student is also unable to participate in any after school activities throughout the suspension. Any misbehavior or refusal to attend an in-school suspension may result in out-of-school suspension.

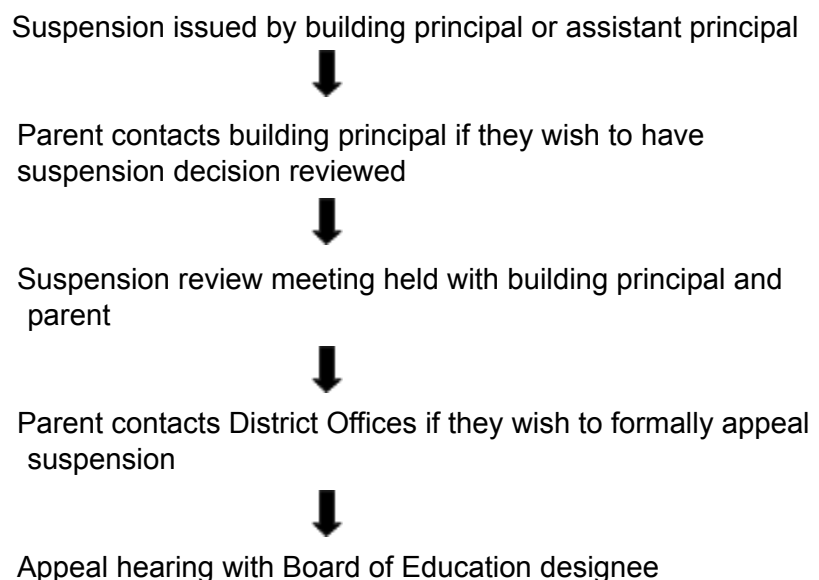
Out of School Suspension

A student may be suspended from school for up to 10 days. A suspended student is not allowed on school grounds or permitted to attend or participate in any school activities. In accordance with Ohio law, all students must be allowed to complete assignments missed for out of school suspension. Appeals to suspensions should be done first through contacting the building principal and making an appointment.

Expulsion

Only the superintendent may expel a student from school. The length of an expulsion may be for any length of time, up to and including eighty (80) consecutive school days. A student who may have committed a serious offense or have chronic repeated offenses may be recommended for expulsion. An expulsion hearing will then be set up at the Sycamore Community Schools District office in accordance with student due process procedures.

Suspension Appeal Procedures



Expulsion Appeal Procedures

Suspension for 10 days, with recommendation for expulsion, issued by building principal or assistant principal



Expulsion hearing with District Offices administration, building principal, and parents within 10 days of issue



Recommendation made to superintendent on how to proceed



Superintendent makes final decision based on recommendations



Parent contacts District Offices if they wish to appeal



Appeal hearing with Board of Education/or designee