



## Grades K-6

# 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.

<b>Blue Ash Elementary</b> 9541 Plainfield Road Cincinnati, Ohio 45236 513-686-1710	<b>Maple Dale Elementary</b> 6100 Hagewa Drive Cincinnati, Ohio 45242 513-686-1720	<b>Montgomery Elementary</b> 9609 Montgomery Road Cincinnati, Ohio 45242 513-686-1730	<b>Symmes Elementary</b> 11820 Enyart Road Loveland, Ohio 45140 513-686-1740	<b>Edwin H. Greene Intermediate</b> 5200 Aldine Drive Cincinnati, Ohio 45242 513-686-1750
<b>Leslie Combs</b> Principal  <b>Jenny Ament,</b> Assistant Principal	<b>Mindy Zellner</b> Principal  <b>Keena Westmoreland</b> Assistant Principal	<b>Amy Debelak</b> Principal  <b>Sally Ganz,</b> Assistant Principal	<b>Jessica Ralston</b> Principal  <b>India Richardson</b> Assistant Principal	<b>Jay Meno</b> Principal  <b>Lindsay Combs</b> Assistant Principal  <b>Patricia Constable,</b> Assistant Principal

**Be Respectful! Be Responsible! Be Safe! Be a Problem Solver!**

## TABLE of CONTENTS

<b>Statement of Purpose</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>District Mission</b> -District Vision -District Values	<b>3</b>
<b>District Directory</b> -District Office Administration -Board of Education -Child Nutrition -Registration -Transportation	<b>3-4</b>
<b>K-6 Directories</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Attendance</b> Edwin H. Greene Intermediate Arrival and Dismissal	<b>5-8</b>
<b>Bell Schedules</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Bicycles/Roller Skates/Skateboards</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Building Unification Plan</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Cafeteria</b> -Meal Prices -Meal Charge Procedures	<b>12</b>
<b>Cell Phones/Electronic Devices</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Change of Address, E-Mail Address, or Phone Number</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Child Abuse</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Communication and Social Media</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Computer and Network</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Culture</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Discipline</b> -Student Code of Conduct - Sycamore Community Schools -Hazing and Bullying (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence) -Complaint Procedures -Bullying Rubric, PK-4 -Bullying Rubric, 5-6 -Office Referrals -Emergency Removals -Discipline Consequences -Discipline Related to COVID-19 Building Safety Measures	<b>15-23</b>
<b>Dress Code</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Emergencies</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Federal Grant Information</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Fees</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>24</b>

<b>Grading/Report Cards</b>	<b>24-25</b>
<b>Health Information</b> -Allergy Information -Students with Special Dietary Needs -Hearing and Vision Screenings -Immunizations -Medication Dispensing at School	<b>25-26</b>
<b>Homework</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Lockers/Cubbies</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Lost and Found</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Parent Portal</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Parental Rights</b> -Child Custody -Custody - Joint/Shared Parenting	<b>27</b>
<b>Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Parking/Driving on School Property</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Phones</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Photos and Media</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Problem-Solving Model</b> -Levels of Appeal	<b>28-30</b>
<b>Recess</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>School Bus Transportation</b> -School Bus Safety Rules -School Bus Responsibilities of Driver -School Bus Responsibilities of Parents -School Bus Responsibilities of Students -School bus Misconduct Procedures	<b>30-33</b>
<b>School Closing and Delays Due To Emergencies</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>School Closing and Delays Due To Inclement Weather</b>	<b>33-34</b>
<b>School Property</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>School Supplies</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Support Programs in Sycamore Community Schools</b>	<b>34-35</b>
<b>Visitors</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Volunteer Background Checks</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>35</b>

## 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.

## 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 OFFICES 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**

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

**REGISTRATION**

Registrar	Angie Spyrou	686-1709
-----------	--------------	----------

**TRANSPORTATION**

Director	Michael Miller	686-1785
Supervisor	Tony Huber	686-1785
Dispatcher	Mary Ann Buchanan	686-1785
Secretary	Sue Vollman	686-1785

**BLUE ASH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Principal	Leslie Combs	686-1710
Assistant Principal	Jenny Ament	686-1710
Administrative Assistant	Jennifer Janson-Rizzo	686-1710
Administrative Assistant	Lauren Stevens	686-1710
Nurse	Diana Wyrick	686-1713
Attendance Line		686-1714

**MAPLE DALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Principal	Mindy Zellner	686-1720
Assistant Principal	Keena Westmoreland	686-1720
Administrative Assistant	Kathy Lake	686-1720
Administrative Assistant	Heather Voellmecke	686-1720
Nurse	Carolyn Adee	686-1723
Attendance Line		686-1726

**MONTGOMERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 9609 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**

Principal	Amy Debelak	686-1730
Assistant Principal	Sally Ganz	686-1730
Administrative Assistant	Teka McCown	686-1730
Administrative Assistant	Teresa Hagedorn	686-1730
Nurse	Susan Linton	686-1733
Attendance Line		686-1736

**SYMMES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Principal	Jessica Ralston	686-1740
Assistant Principal	India Richardson	686-1740
Administrative Assistant	Heather Shultz	686-1740
Administrative Assistant	Alyssa Schmeling	686-1740
Nurse	Julie Ferron	686-1743
Attendance Line		686-1748

**EDWIN H. GREENE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL 5200 Aldine Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**

Principal	Jay Meno	686-1750
Assistant Principal	Lindsay Combs	686-1750
Assistant Principal	Patricia Constable	686-1750
Administrative Assistant	Deanna McKeown	686-1750
Administrative Assistant	Cassandra Arfstrom	686-1750
Administrative Assistant	McCristy Gould	686-1750
Nurse	Laurie Dobrowolski	686-1753
Attendance Line		686-1756

## 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 9:00 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 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.

**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.

High School only - Excessive absences and tardies (10% of the school year) will result in the inability to apply for a parking pass the following school year. Check online for updates to this information.

**Procedures for Student Attendance K-6**

**Absences/Tardies:**

- After a student has **15 hours of missed time**, 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.

**Tardies:**

1. **Contact #1:** After a child has repeated unexcused tardies of **6 or more**, a letter is sent by the assistant principal. The Assistant Principal meets with the student.
2. **Contact #2:** After a child has repeated unexcused tardies of **9 or more**, a letter is sent by the assistant principal after a phone call to the parent/guardian inquiring about the tardiness. The Assistant Principal meets with the student.
3. **Contact #3:** After a child has repeated unexcused tardies of **12 or more**, a letter is sent by the assistant principal and a meeting is scheduled with the parent/guardian about the tardiness. Letter will clearly state any further tardies will result in a referral for an attendance diversion hearing with the District Attendance Officer. The Assistant Principal meets with the student.
4. **Contact #4:** After a child has any unexcused tardies after step 3 is complete, the student/family will be referred for an attendance intervention meeting.
  - 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 child has any unexcused tardies after step 4 is complete, 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 on the 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.

**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 AM	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				30 consecutive hours	38 hours excused or



8:00 A.M. - 2:40 P.M. 513-686-1756 EHGattendance@sycamoreschools.org	10:00 A.M.	8:05 A.M. 1 - 60 min.	10	unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	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.	9:15 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
Maple Dale Elementary 9:15 A.M. - 3:45 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org) and click the "attendance" page.

### BELL SCHEDULES (ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL)

Blue Ash Elementary 9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Edwin H. Greene Intermediate 8:00 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.

Maple Dale Elementary 9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Montgomery Elementary 9:15 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Symmes Elementary 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

A.M. Head Start - Symmes 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

P.M. Head Start - Symmes 12:35 p.m. – 4:05 p.m.

A.M. Kindergarten -Blue Ash 9:15 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

P.M. Kindergarten - Blue Ash 12:50 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

A.M. Kindergarten - Maple Dale 9:15 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

P.M. Kindergarten - Maple Dale 12:50 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

A.M. Kindergarten - Montgomery 9:15 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.

P.M. Kindergarten - Montgomery 12:50 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

A.M. Kindergarten - Symmes 9:30 a.m. - 12:25 p.m.

P.M. Kindergarten - Symmes

1:05 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

A.M. Preschool

9:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

P.M. Preschool

1:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

**All Elementary Schools:**

Assignment to these sessions is based on home address.

**Arrival, Tardy and Dismissal Times**

SCHOOL	ARRIVAL	TARDY	EARLY DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL
Blue Ash Elementary	Cannot arrive before <b>9:05 a.m.</b> as the school does not have personnel available at that time to provide supervision.	Students arriving after 9:15 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy need to report to the office with a parent to receive a tardy slip before going to their classroom.  Kindergarten children arriving after 10:15 a.m. will be counted absent for one-half day.	For reporting purposes, early dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m.. Students requesting to be dismissed prior to 2:45 p.m. will be counted absent for one half day.	Parents picking up children at dismissal will pick them up in the car line at the end of the day. Students must be picked up no later than 4:00 pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. Elementary school staff hours end at 4:05 p.m. in Blue Ash Elementary therefore the school does not have personnel available for adequate supervision beyond that time. Administrators may need to work with local law enforcement to ensure children are supervised and are transported home.
Maple Dale Elementary	Cannot arrive before 9:05 am as the school does not have personnel available at that time to provide supervision.	Students arriving after 9:15 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy need to report to the office with a parent to receive a tardy slip before going to their classroom.  Kindergarten children arriving after 10:15 a.m. will be counted absent for one-half day.	For reporting purposes, early dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m.. Students requesting to be dismissed prior to 2:45p.m. will be counted absent for one half day.	Parents picking up children at dismissal may do so at 3:45 p.m.following school procedures for car dismissal. Students must be picked up no later than 4:00pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. Elementary school staff hours end at 4:00 pm in Maple Dale Elementary therefore the school does not have personnel available for adequate supervision beyond that time. Administrators may need to work with local law enforcement to ensure children are supervised and are transported home.
Montgomery Elementary	Cannot arrive before <b>9:05 a.m.</b> as the school does not have personnel available at that time to provide supervision.	Students arriving after 9:15 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy need to report to the office with a parent to receive a tardy slip before going to their classroom.  Kindergarten children arriving after 10:15 a.m. will be counted absent for one-half day.	For reporting purposes, early dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m.. Students requesting to be dismissed prior to 2:45 p.m. will be counted absent for one half day.	Students must be picked up no later than 3:45 pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. Elementary school staff hours end at 4:00 in the Montgomery Elementary therefore the school does not have personnel available for adequate supervision beyond that time. Administrators may need to work with local law enforcement to ensure children are supervised and are transported home.

Symmes Elementary	Cannot arrive before <b>9:15 a.m.</b> as the school does not have personnel available at that time to provide supervision.	<p>Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy need to report to the office with a parent to receive a tardy slip before going to their classroom.</p> <p>Kindergarten children arriving after 10:30 a.m. will be counted absent for one-half day.</p>	For reporting purposes, early dismissal begins at 3:00 p.m.. Students requesting to be dismissed prior to 3:00 p.m. will be counted absent for one half day.	<p>Parents picking up children at dismissal may do so at 4:00 p.m. by following school procedures for car dismissal. Students must be picked up no later than 4:15 pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. Elementary school staff hours end at 4:15 pm in Symmes Elementary therefore the school does not have personnel available for adequate supervision beyond that time. Administrators may need to work with local law enforcement to ensure children are supervised and are transported home.</p>
Edwin H Greene Intermediate	<p>Car Drop-Off Process</p> <p>Cannot arrive before 7:15 am as the school does not have personnel available at that time to provide supervision.</p>	Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. but before 9:15 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy, and students returning to school after an appointment during the school day, need to report to the office prior to going to their classroom to sign in to school. Students arriving after 9:15 a.m. will be counted absent for one half day. Students can sign themselves into school.	<p>If it is necessary for a student to leave school early (before the regular dismissal time), the student is required to bring a note to their teacher the morning of the day the early dismissal is needed. Parents should come to the school's main office to have the student called from class and to sign the student out of school. If there is an occasion when a parent needs to pick up their child early but did not know ahead of time or provide a note to the teacher, the parent should call or e-mail the school's main office prior to 1:30 p.m. In such an occasion, parents must also come to the school's main office to sign a student out of school. Parents are not permitted to go directly to a classroom to pick up their child. For reporting purposes, early dismissal begins at 1:40 p.m.. Students requesting to be dismissed prior to 1:40 p.m. will be counted absent for one half day. Notification will also be required if a child is being picked up by anyone other than the custodial parent, or is going home in any way other than his/her typical procedure, such as riding a bike</p>	<p>Car Pick-Up Process</p> <p>Parents picking up children at dismissal may do so at 2:45 pm by following school procedures for car dismissal. Students must be picked up no later than 3:10 pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. Greene school staff hours end at 3:10 pm. Therefore, the school does not have personnel available for adequate supervision beyond that time. Administrators may need to work with local law enforcement to ensure children are supervised and are transported home.</p> <p>Please do not pull into the exit drive (along the main sidewalk entrance to the school) at any time during the school day as this creates a very dangerous situation.</p>

			<p>or walking home. (please note that students will not be permitted to ride a different bus to another student's home). To ensure safety, identification will be required to pick up a student. Students who are not picked up by 3:02 will be taken to the Front Office to wait .</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

A note will be required if a child is being picked up by anyone other than the custodial parent or is going home in any way other than his/her typical procedure. This includes walking and/or riding a bike, staying after school activities, or a latchkey program. To ensure student safety, identification may also be required to pick up a student. Permission by phone, voicemail, or email cannot be accepted.

If it is necessary for a student to leave school early (before the regular dismissal time), the student is required to bring a note to their teacher the morning of the day the early dismissal is needed. Parents should come to the school's main office to have the student called from class and to sign the student out of school. If there is an occasion when a parent needs to pick up their child early but did not know ahead of time or provide a note to the teacher, the parent should call the school's main office before 3 p.m. Parents are not permitted to go directly to a classroom to pick up their child.

### **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 bikes, use rollerblades, or skateboards to get to and from school must wear a helmet. A note giving permission for a child to ride a bicycle to school must be sent to school on the first day of school each school year. Students who have their parents' permission may ride their bicycles to school if the school permits it. Some schools have bike racks to enable students to ride a bike to/from school. Elementary students who choose to ride a bike to school need adult supervision therefore it is recommended that elementary students are not permitted to ride bikes to school.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Students often like to celebrate their birthday with their classmates. Parents **must** contact the child's teacher prior to making any birthday celebration arrangements or bringing in items or snacks to share to be made aware of student allergies and the number of students in a class. Due to student allergies, certain foods, and balloons are not permitted in school or certain classrooms. As an alternative, we ask parents to consider donating an indoor recess game or a book to the Media Center. A special bookplate commemorating the child's birthday will be added to the book. Invitations to birthday parties outside of school are not to be distributed at school unless the entire class is invited.

### **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:

**Blue Ash Recreation Center (4433 Cooper Road)**

## 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.

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.

For those who do not wish to add funds online, students can continue to visit the cafeteria before school if they have cash or a check to add to their accounts. Checks should be made payable to Sycamore Child Nutrition Services. At the end of the year, money remaining in a student's meal account will automatically roll over to the next school they attend. If a student leaves the district or graduates, the remaining balance will be refunded when requested.

Parents who have questions regarding the foodservice program, lunch menus, point of sale system, or daily lunch activity, or food choices being offered, should see our website at <https://www.sycamoreschools.org/domain/492> [www.sycamoreschools.org](https://www.sycamoreschools.org) or call Child Nutrition Services at (513) 686-1796.

### 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 K-6 level. No a la carte purchases such as snacks, ice cream, milk, etc. will be permitted when a student has a negative balance.

*The K-6 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.

## CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

If children bring cell phones/electronic devices to school they must be turned off and must be kept in backpacks at elementary schools and lockers at Edwin H. Greene Intermediate, unless given permission by a school official. If cell phones or electronic devices are seen or heard during the school day, they will be kept in the front office until a parent comes to school to retrieve it. The school is not responsible for devices that are lost, stolen or broken.

## **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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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 Handles are:**

- E.H. Greene School: @EHGreeneSchool
- Jessica Ralston, Principal, Symmes: @SymmesElem
- Amy Debelak, Principal, Montgomery: @Montgomery\_Elem
- Mindy Zellner, Principal, Maple Dale: @MapleDaleElem
- Leslie Combs, Principal, Blue Ash: @BlueAshElem

### **District social media platforms are:**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools](http://www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSte160Qx-RfMiIMb90DChQ>

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

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/sycamoreschools](http://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**

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. .

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](http://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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org). Please read both forms carefully before deciding to sign or not sign them.

## **CULTURE - Positive Behavioral 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

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.

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

- Be respectful
- Be responsible
- Be safe
- Be a problem solver

While your children may not be able to fully explain PBIS, they can certainly tell you about the "Four Be's" at K-6 buildings; Be Respectful! Be Responsible! Be Safe! and Be a Problem Solver! These "Four Be's" are recognized in every setting in the school day: classroom, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, playground and even on the bus! Every setting has a poster stating the expected behaviors in each setting. Your children are learning about each of these through videos, class discussions and role playing in the classrooms.

A big part of PBIS is that these expectations carry over into EVERY setting! No matter if your children are in school, on the bus, at the football game on Friday night or out in the community, those Aviator Expectations are the same.

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.

### 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.

### Student Code of Conduct - Sycamore Community Schools

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 of conduct applies to all school events, facilities, school buses, campus locations, and any other venue or activity that is sponsored by Sycamore Community Schools. 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 enhance 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.

**Gaming:** 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 Community Schools Board policy provides for the random, unannounced searches 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 in 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.

## **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 (including 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 "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.

Harassment - Harassment is defined as intimidation by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation, by whatever means, including the use of electronic communication devices, of a climate of hostility or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting or stigmatizing an individual.

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]

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

### **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.

**Bullying Rubric, PK-4:**

Behavior	1st Office Referral	2nd Office Referral	3rd Office Referral	After 3rd Time
<b>Teasing, Taunting, or Exclusion:</b> (Examples include: unkind words, spreading rumors, name-calling, insulting others, mean gestures, exclusionary behaviors, and/or any behaviors that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Phone call home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Student calls parent</li> <li>Spend 1 lunch/recess in office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Student calls parent</li> <li>Spend 3 lunch/recesses in office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan Develop an Individual Behavior Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Contact:</b> (Examples include: hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, spitting, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Student calls parent</li> <li>Spend 1 lunch/recess in office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Student calls parent</li> <li>In-School Suspension (1/2 day)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Student calls parent</li> <li>In-School Suspension (1 day)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an Individual Behavior Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Severe Hitting, Threats of Violence, Harassment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Conference with parent prior to returning to class</li> <li>In-School Suspension (1 day)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference with Administrator</li> <li>Conference with parent prior to returning to class</li> <li>In-School Suspension (2 days)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After two incidents develop an Individual Behavior Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene a meeting with parents and school team</li> </ul>

**Bullying Rubric, 5-6:**

Behavior	1st Time	2nd Time	3rd Time	4th Time
<b>TEASING:</b> Name-calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves <b>EXCLUSION:</b> Starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and/or teacher calls parent/ guardian</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and/or teacher calls parent/guardian</li> <li>1 lunch/inside recess with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and/or teacher calls parent/guardian</li> <li>2 lunches/inside recesses with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> <li>Consultation with guidance counselor as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student and/or teacher calls parent/guardian</li> <li>3 lunches/inside recesses with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> <li>Individual plan is developed</li> <li>Office is notified</li> </ul>

<p><b>HITTING:</b> Pushing, slapping, grabbing, tripping, or other similar behaviors</p> <p><b>THREATENING:</b> saying you will hurt someone or damage something that belongs to them</p> <p><b>HARASSMENT:</b> unpleasant behavior toward someone that takes place regularly, for example threats, offensive remarks, or physical attacks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or teacher calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 1 lunch/ inside recess with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or teacher/administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 2 lunches/inside recesses with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or teacher/administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 3 lunches/inside recesses with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or teacher/administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 1 day of academic classes only</li> <li>▪ Individual plan is developed</li> </ul>
<p><b>SEVERE HITTING:</b> Punching, kicking, and similar behavior that is likely to hurt someone</p> <p><b>SEVERE THREATS OF VIOLENCE:</b> Saying you will severely hurt someone</p> <p><b>SEVERE HARASSMENT:</b> Racial, ethnic or sexual name calling, or other severe harassment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 1 day academic classes only with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ 2 days academic classes only with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Reflection sent home to be signed and returned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ In or Out of School Suspension with written reflection during consequence time</li> <li>▪ Individual Plan is written</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student and/or administrator calls parent/guardian</li> <li>▪ Implementation of consequence outlined in individual plan</li> <li>▪ Revise plan as needed</li> </ul>

### Office Referrals

In instances of gross insubordination, possession of weapons or drugs, or extreme acts of violence, an office referral is initiated. Office referral consequences may include:

- An administrator talking to the teacher to gain perspective/information
- A phone call to parents/guardians from the teacher or the administrator
- A conference with parent(s) and/or student(s) regarding inappropriate behavior and how to correct it and possibly developing a “plan of action”
- A verbal or written warning from an administrator
- An apology note written by the student
- No participation in an activity
- Time spent in the principal’s office
- Lunch detention
- After-School detention
- Full-day or part-day in-school suspension with the student completing school work in the principal’s office
- Out-of-school suspension for 1-10 days

### Extracurricular Activities

Get involved!!! A complete listing of all the activities and clubs that students can join is provided at the start of the school year. 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.

### **Emergency Removals**

A student in grades Pre-K - 3 may be removed only for the rest of the school day and shall return the next day. No written notice or hearing is required for these removals and returns the next day.

### **Discipline Consequences**

#### **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. Teachers will provide 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 additional consequences..

#### **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. A student in Pre-K - 3 may not receive an out-of-school suspension or expulsion unless the student:

- Brings a firearm to a school or school event, activity, property
- Brings a knife capable of causing serious bodily injury
- Commits an act that is a crime for an adult that results in serious physical harm to persons or property while at school, event, or activity
- Makes a bomb threat to a school building or premises of an activity
- Or a 10 day suspension if necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, classmates, classroom staff and teachers or other school employees.

### **Suspension Appeal Procedures**

Suspension issued by building principal or assistant principal

Parent contacts building principal if they wish to have suspension decision reviewed



Suspension Review meeting held with building principal and parent



Parent contacts District Offices if they wish to formally appeal suspension



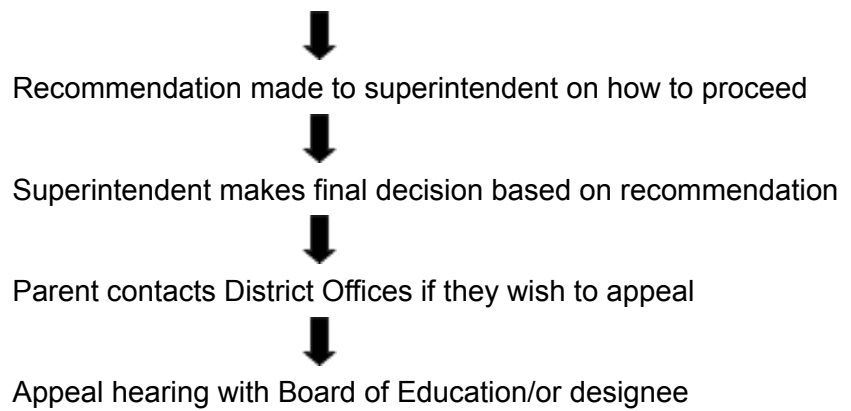
Appeal hearing with Board of Education designee

### **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



The Sycamore Code of Conduct was developed to help students identify and maintain safe and responsible behavior. We will continue to model our PBIS framework which includes restorative and instructional responses to student misbehavior. Our first response to these specific safety expectations will always include an administrative conference where expectations will again be reviewed and instructed. **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. Consequences will be at the discretion of the building principal.

## DRESS CODE

Parents and students are encouraged to use their best judgment when it comes to dressing for school. Clothing which is determined to be potentially harmful to health and safety or styles that may cause a distraction or inhibit instruction as determined by the administrator will not be permitted. This includes any type of clothing with slogans, pictures, or advertising that are inappropriate for a school setting; bicycle shorts, or ~~tank-tops~~ spaghetti-strap tops; shirts that expose bare midriffs; low rise shorts or pants that allow the tops of underwear to show; lycra shorts; short shorts; and platform shoes. Face paint and hairstyles deemed as a distraction in a learning environment are not permitted. Hats are not to be worn indoors during the school day. (The exceptions to the above would be a special hat theme day, special class events, or other special situations authorized by the school administration.)

The physical education program requires gym shoes and clothing that does not restrict range of movement. Students wearing shoes determined to be unsafe on playground climbing equipment will be asked to stay off the equipment until appropriate shoes are worn. (A written statement from the parent or doctor is required when a student requests permission to be excused from physical education.)

## EMERGENCIES

District staff are prepared to take action should an emergency arise during the school day. Fire, tornado, intruder, and special security drills are conducted periodically to provide students the opportunity to practice and be prepared for such scenarios. In addition, bus drivers conduct evacuation drills with their students. Should an emergency cause school to be closed early, announcements will be made on local television stations and on the district website. In the event of an emergency, every attempt will be made to provide a safe and reassuring environment for all students. It is in the best interest of both parents and students for parents to refrain from driving to the school to pick up their child since it could be extremely disruptive to the emergency procedure being implemented.

## 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org) under Parent Resources.



## FEES

An academic fee may be charged to offset the cost of consumable instructional materials (workbooks, art and science supplies, etc.). 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. Fees will be collected at the beginning of the school year. 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 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

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

## FIELD TRIPS

Sycamore recognizes that there are multitudes of learning resources outside of school walls that can enhance education through hands-on, meaningful experiences. Therefore, field trips that are educational in nature may be arranged.

Field trips are not to be considered “outings” or days off from school. They are, in fact, extensions of the curriculum and of the school. Therefore, all field trips will be educational in nature and will be related to the subject matter and the objectives of instruction at a particular grade level. Field trips are lessons. Appropriate instruction will precede and/or follow each field trip.

No student will be allowed to participate in a field trip without the permission of a parent and a completed “Medical Authorization” form in Final Forms. Written permission slips will be sent home by the classroom teacher several days prior to the trip. Parents should sign and return the permission slip promptly. Parents acting as chaperones will be asked to cover costs associated with field trips for him/her. Background checks will be required for chaperones if they will be accompanying students “out of sight and sound” of a Sycamore employee. (Also see “Volunteer” section)

## GRADING/REPORT CARDS

Report cards are sent home at the end of every quarter (approximately 45 days). Special subject report cards will be given at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarter. Interim reports will be sent home following the midpoint of the grading period at the discretion of the teacher. The procedures used for communicating student progress on daily assignments will vary among the teaching staff. Parents can access student grading information via Parent Portal (See Parent Portal section of handbook) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Parents are always welcome to contact the teacher when questions or concerns arise regarding a subject or a student. The recommended grading scale is:

90-100 =	A
80-89 =	B
70-79 =	C
60-69 =	D
59 and below	F

In grades K-2, Sycamore Community Schools utilizes a standards-based report card to report student progress. The grades are reported as follows:

An 'M' stands for Mastery. This indicates that the student demonstrates academic achievement and/or engagement characteristics that meet expectations for this grade level. Student consistently applies the learning standard at an independent level or with minimal teacher support and guidance.

An 'A' stands for Approaching. This indicates that the student demonstrates progress toward meeting academic achievement and/or engagement characteristic expectations for this grade level. Student demonstrates inconsistencies in applying behaviors, concepts and

skills. Student requires additional teacher support and guidance. It is expected that progress will continue.

A 'D' stands for Developing. This indicates that the student demonstrates emergent learning toward academic achievement and/or engagement characteristic expectations for this grade level. Student demonstrates inconsistencies in applying behaviors, concepts and skills. Student requires individualized support and/or additional learning experiences. It is expected that progress will continue.

An 'E' stands for Exceeding. This indicates that the student demonstrates academic achievement and/or engagement characteristics that exceed what is expected for this grade level. Student consistently applies the learning standard independently, across disciplines and in a variety of settings.

X = Exempt

NA = Not assessed at this time

Shaded Area = Not evaluated at this time

## HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents are required to complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form each year to let the school know who to contact and/or what to do in the case of a student illness or emergency and should be completed on Final Forms. In the event a child becomes ill at school, it is the parent's responsibility to get the child home or to a doctor. Therefore, parents should choose an emergency contact who is readily available and lives within a short distance from school. Parents should also inform the alternate person that they might be called upon to pick a child up from school if the student is ill. The school's main office must be notified of any changes in emergency contact information.

If a parent/guardian is going out of town and student(s) are to be left in the care of someone else, parents must complete and return to school an Out of Town Vacation form, available at each school and on the district website, [www.sycamoreschools.org](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

Medical information will be shared with pertinent staff members. If you have any questions, please call the school nurse.

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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

## 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 professionals 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.
- Police drug dogs.
- Therapy 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 allergies. 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 or 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 and are recommended. Sycamore's Student and Staff Wellness Program guidelines can be found on the Sycamore Website under the district wellness committee 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.

## **Hearing and Vision Screening**

Vision and hearing screening tests are given by the school nurse. 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

## **Immunizations**

The Ohio Department of Health requires that students have proper immunizations. 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

## **Medication Dispensing 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](http://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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an extension of what is taught in the classroom and an opportunity for students to apply skills and concepts learned. Parents should stress that homework is the students' responsibility. Homework in grades K-6 is given on a fairly regular basis. Guidelines for daily homework are as follows: 10-15 minutes for students in grades K-1, 20-30 minutes for students in grades 2-3, and 30-60 minutes for students in grades 4-6.

When a family emergency prevents the student from completing assignments and/or when a student frequently does not understand or cannot complete homework assignments, the parent should notify the teacher.

## **LOCKERS/CUBBIES**

All school lockers/cubbies 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.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

To help students when they misplace items, it is advised that parents write a student's name on clothing, backpacks, and lunch containers. Each school also has a "lost and found" for misplaced items. Students should check this area from time to time to see if he or she has misplaced an item of importance. Articles of value such as eyeglasses, watches, jewelry, keys, calculators, electronic devices, retainers, etc. will be kept in the front office. Please contact the school's main office if you or a student is missing one of these items. Any items not claimed will be donated to a local charity at Winter Break, Spring Break, and the end of the school year.

## **PARENT PORTAL**

Parent Portal is a portion of the Sycamore Community Schools website that allows parents to play an active role in their child's education 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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, 2-12
- pay academic, athletic, and summer school fees online with a MasterCard or Visa credit card
- track school expenses
- add funds to a student's meal account electronically
- online emergency 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org) or email [helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org](mailto:helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org).

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

### **Child Custody**

It is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with the most current copy of child custody documents to be kept in the student's cumulative file. Any natural parent, adoptive parent, or legal guardian has the right to review student records and communicate with school personnel concerning his/her child's progress in school. To pick a child up from school, parents should be prepared to show identification. Custodial parents must present a note specifying when a non-custodial parent may pick up their child.

### **Custody-Joint/Shared Parenting**

If a parent would like school or class information sent to more than one address (ie: in the case of shared parenting), parents must notify their child's teachers. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school informed of any changes in custody. In order for school personnel to follow custody orders, a current copy of the court-ordered arrangement must be on file in the school office. For student safety, identification may be required when picking up students from school until school staff is familiar with both parents. (Also see section "Parental Rights")

## **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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org). All parents and guardians are welcome at PTO meetings.

## **PARKING/DRIVING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Parking in places other than designated parking spots is not permitted. Use caution when parking and walking through parking lots when school buses are in the parking lots. Do not drive through playground or school driveway areas when buses or students are in the vicinity. Drive slowly through parking lots at all times.

## **PHONES**

Students may use the school telephone when necessary. They must receive permission from their teacher or other adult supervisor. Students will not be called from class to answer telephone calls except in cases of emergency. (Please also refer to the "cell phones" section of this handbook.)

## **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 Chief Public Relations and Communications Officer 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. 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

## **RECESS**

When the weather permits (no rain, no ice or snow accumulation and temperatures above 20 degrees Fahrenheit considering the wind chill factor), all students will be taken to the playground with their class during recess times. Parents should ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather. During recess, students are supervised by school personnel. When a parent feels it absolutely necessary that a student not go outside due to illness, parents must send a note to the teacher expressing their request.

## **SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Every day, each bus driver in Sycamore Community Schools transports students on three separate routes in both the morning and afternoon to seven district schools, four vocational schools, and fifteen non-public schools.

To do this, Preschool, Head Start and Kindergarten students are picked up and dropped off by their home whenever possible, as a parent or authorized adult must supervise younger students before the bus arrives in the morning and receive students at the end of the day.

Elementary students may be asked to walk to a designated bus stop, usually located in front of a home of a younger student, at the corner of their residential street, or at the clubhouse or common area of an apartment complex.

By grouping bus stops together, the Sycamore Transportation Department is able to maintain time schedules and consolidate costs by not having to pay for additional fuel, drivers and buses, which would be required if each student was to be picked up and dropped off at their home.

Busing assignments will be available prior to the first day of school. To ensure students have continuous transportation service, please notify the Registration Office (686-1709) and the student's school.

If a student missed the bus, parents (or their designated alternates) will be notified.

Any questions or concerns regarding transportation should be referred to the Transportation Department at 686-1785.

Parents have the responsibility for the safety and well-being of their child until the child boards the bus and after the child gets off the bus. Therefore, it is recommended that parents or designee be visible at the elementary bus stop areas.

The bus driver's primary responsibility is to safely transport students to and from school. Strict discipline must be maintained by the driver in order to accomplish this. Students are assigned seats and are notified of the rules during the first few days of school. When a student insists on regularly disregarding the rules established for the bus, the bus driver, after verbal warnings, will complete a bus discipline report and submit it to the school administration. A copy of the report will be sent home so parents are aware of the misconduct. Should other instances of misbehavior occur, the bus driver might again refer the child to the office. At this point, the student and his/her parents will be notified that future bus referrals may result in suspension from the bus. If misconduct continues to occur by the same student, a longer bus suspension or expulsion could result. Bus transportation is a privilege reserved for those students displaying appropriate and safe behavior.

## **School Bus Safety Rules**

1. Wait at the bus stop in the driver-designated place of safety in an orderly manner. Avoid getting in the way of traffic and respect private property where you may be waiting. Do not ask to get in front of another student in line.
2. Help the driver maintain his schedule by being ready when the bus arrives. Too frequent stops and unnecessary waiting increases traffic congestion and multiplies hazards for the bus and its occupants.
3. Wait until the bus stops and you get a signal from the driver before boarding the bus.
4. Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus so that the driver can see you. Look both ways before crossing the street.
5. Avoid crowding or pushing when getting on or off the bus.
6. Take your assigned seat as soon as you get on the bus and remain in your seat until the bus stops at your stop and you are ready to get off.
7. Share seats with other students when directed by the driver to do so.
8. Always keep arms inside the bus when a window is open.
9. Do not throw anything in the bus or out through open windows.
10. Do not eat or drink on the bus at any time, unless there is a documented medical reason for a student to do so. Do not use tobacco, tobacco products, or any form of a vaping product while on the bus or at the bus stop at any time.
11. Do not hit, push, or otherwise abuse another pupil while riding the bus.
12. Talk quietly at all times. At intersections and at railroad crossings there is to be no talking.
13. Book bags, backpacks, etc must be secured on the student's lap.
14. Do not damage the bus furnishings in any way. Damages will be paid for by the student.



## **School Bus Responsibilities of Driver**

1. The driver is responsible for the orderly conduct of his passengers. While on the bus, the student is under the authority of and directly responsible to the bus driver.
2. In the event of unacceptable misbehavior, the driver may report the offending student's name to the principal.
3. Parents may be informed should a second occurrence of unacceptable behavior be written up by the Transportation Department and reported to the principal. Necessary disciplinary measures will be taken, including suspension from riding the bus, if unacceptable behaviors continue.

## **School Bus Responsibilities of Parents**

1. Parents are responsible for the safety and supervision of their children to and from the designated bus stops and while the children are waiting for transportation. Bus stops may be located up to five-tenths of a mile from the child's residence. Parents may want to personally supervise the stop or arrange a schedule with other parents to rotate supervision.
2. Ensure that children are at their bus stop at least five minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time. Please note that drivers may not wait for a child that is late because of the impact on the rest of the route.
3. Ensure that children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Please avoid clothes with drawstrings.
4. Ensure that children ride their assigned bus and exit the bus at their designated stop.
5. Parents are responsible for any damage done to a bus by their child and will be required to make restitution to Sycamore Community Schools.
6. All parents are responsible for reviewing, explaining and discussing the importance of following the rules and school bus safety with their children. The school bus is an extension of the classroom.

## **School Bus Responsibilities of Students**

Students have duties and obligations to contribute to a safe and orderly bus ride, and therefore, are responsible for complying with the following rules:

1. Students are to arrive at their designated stop in their driver-designated place of safety five minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time.
2. Students should maintain social distancing while at the bus stop.
3. Students should stand on the sidewalk or in a driveway, not in the street. Students must respect the property of others while waiting for the bus.
4. All students board or depart from the bus shall wait for the driver to signal to cross. If the student has to cross the street to board the bus, the student shall then cross the street, staying at least ten feet from the front of the bus. After exiting the bus, students must proceed to their driver designated place of safety. Students must remain at the place of safety until the bus has left the area. Students may then proceed to their home.
5. Immediately upon entering the bus, students shall take the seat assigned to them by the driver.
6. Students shall not be loud or use offensive language.
7. Windows and vents shall not be adjusted without permission of the driver. Students shall not stick any object or part of their body out the bus window.
8. No student shall attempt to get on or off the bus until it has come to a complete stop. Students shall remain seated at all times during the route.
9. Students should not talk to the driver except when necessary. This causes the driver's attention to be diverted from the traffic and could jeopardize everyone's safety.
10. Students shall conduct themselves on the bus as they would in an orderly classroom. Reasonable quiet conversation is permitted except at all railroad crossings.
11. Students are never permitted to bring animals, glass objects, balloons or other potentially dangerous objects on the bus.
12. The use of tobacco products (smoke and smokeless) and lighters/matches is absolutely prohibited on the bus.
13. No possession of and/or lighting of firecrackers and/or explosives on the bus.
14. Students must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus. Prescription medication may be transported, but must remain in the possession of the driver. The driver will then release the medication to a school official.

15. Students are prohibited from bringing any weapons and/or firearms on the bus.
16. Skateboards, hockey sticks and lacrosse sticks are prohibited on the bus.
17. Eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted under Ohio State Law unless there is a documented medical reason for a student to do so.
18. No littering. A receptacle for waste is provided on the bus.
19. No student will enter or exit the bus through the emergency door unless specifically instructed to do so by the driver or emergency personnel. The exit (aisle way and doors) must always remain free of obstructions.
20. After a student has entered a bus, she/he may not leave the bus without the permission of the driver. Students may only exit the bus at their designated stop.
21. Students may only bring items on the bus that can be held in their laps.
22. All the rules in the "Student Code of Conduct" apply to students while they are on the bus.

### **PK-6 School Bus Misconduct Procedures**

- 1st Offense: A referral report will be shared with the parent/guardian, along with a letter as notification that an incident has occurred
- 2nd Offense: The referral report will be shared with the parent/guardian along with a letter requesting assistance in order to resolve the continued misbehavior
- 3rd Offense: A 3-day suspension of riding privileges will be issued to the student
- 4th Offense: A 5-day suspension of riding privileges will be issued to the student
- 5th Offense: A 10-day suspension of riding privileges will be issued to the student

Please note that serious infractions and behavior that jeopardizes the safety of them and/or others will be dealt with more severely. This may include a suspension prior to the third report. A student may have their riding privileges suspended for the remainder of the school year following due process.

### **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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org) as well as on the district's social media pages. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a recorded call and text 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 CLOSING 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](http://www.sycamoreschools.org)), the district Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools](http://www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools)) and the district Twitter account ([@sycamoreschools](https://twitter.com/sycamoreschools)).

## 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 SUPPLIES

Parents must provide school supply items that are outlined on school supply lists, available at each school and online at [www.sycamoreschools.org](http://www.sycamoreschools.org).

## SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Counseling	A counselor is available to coordinate the counseling program and work with teachers, small groups of children, or individual children to provide a variety of support experiences. The school counselor is not trained for long-term counseling concerns.
ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages)	The goal of the Sycamore Community Schools ESOL Program is for students to become proficient in all areas of English language acquisition so that students may participate fully in all mainstream classes in which the target language is English. ESOL teachers provide support services to help students reach English proficiency in areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Instructional services for ESOL students in Sycamore Community Schools are based on the philosophy of inclusion and participation to the maximum extent possible.
Gifted Services	Gifted Education/Intervention Specialists provide services inside and outside of the regular classroom. Students are identified as being gifted according to the guidelines of state Senate Bill 262. The criteria include student achievement and student ability assessments. These assessments are administered to students during the school year. Results of these assessments are sent home to parents. Parents are notified if their child qualifies for the gifted program.
Intervention	Intervention teachers provide specific skill intervention. Students will receive individual and/or small group instruction through various learning modes. The classroom teacher will provide primary instruction. The responsibility of the intervention teacher is to review, reinforce, and remediate on a short-term basis the identified curricular areas. This is a direct teaching intervention program - not an independent practice.
Occupational/Physical Therapy	Occupational therapy is a related service for students who are identified as having a state recognized handicapping condition. When a significant discrepancy exists between a student's expected performance and actual performance, occupational therapy intervention is provided to meet identified educationally related goals in the least restrictive environment
Parent Resource Coordinator	The Parent Resource Coordinator helps support families in understanding the special education process by providing the information and resources needed to become effective partners for the education of their child/children with special needs. The coordinator's role is to listen to questions and concerns expressed by parents and provide helpful information. The Parent Resource Coordinator focus is working with families and school personnel to collaboratively solve as a team to help maximize and support the learning process for the student.
Special Education	Special education services include speech and language therapy, and services for hearing-impaired, vision impaired, orthopedically handicapped, developmentally handicapped, multiple handicapped, and behaviorally disabled students. Due process procedures, according to Ohio law, are followed on the evaluation and placement of a child in any special education program. Certificated staff and aides

	work with children who qualify. Children are included in the regular classroom with age appropriate peers as much as possible. Each child's case is unique and is dealt with on an individual basis.
Speech And Language Therapy	Individual and small group help is provided for children who qualify. All kindergarten children are screened each year.
School Psychology	School Psychologists are available upon request of school administration, whenever, in the opinion of the teacher and/or parent, a child is not progressing academically, as might be expected. The School Psychologist may also intervene with students in crisis but is not trained to administer on-going psychological counseling.
Social Worker	The Social Worker supports the team effort of the family and staff. The Social Worker serves as a resource person and assists in finding solutions to a variety of needs.

## 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 digital 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 not allowable. 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.