

The Richard H. O'Rourke Middle School

Student Handbook & Code of Conduct 2026-2027



Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central Schools

O'Rourke Middle School

173 Lakehill Road

Burnt Hills, NY 12027

Property of:

Homeroom:

In case of emergency, please notify:

Name:

Phone #:

A FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING

Mission Statement: The Burnt Hills–Ballston Lake Central School District creates an educational environment that ensures opportunities for learning, personal growth, and social responsibility.

CORE BELIEFS

- The BH-BL community values its children and the quality of their education.
- Comprehensive public education is available to all. The district provides a variety of experiences to allow children to learn.
- High academic achievement is a priority.
- Students, staff, parents, and community members are partners, and all have a personal responsibility in the educational process.
- Students and staff need to be challenged to achieve excellence.
- Continuous improvement is essential.
- Change is the result of thoughtful study involving students, staff, and community.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Quality education is worth the investment and requires sound fiscal management.

KEY EXPECTATIONS

For Students

All students will:

- Respect and be respected.
- Be prepared to learn to the best of their abilities.
- Use opportunities available to set personal goals and make informed choices to accomplish those goals.

For Parents/Guardians

All parents/guardians will:

- Provide nurturance of children's health and basic needs.
- Provide a home environment conducive to learning.
- Support the belief that academics are essential.
- Be informed and actively involved in the educational process.
- Teach and model respect for all persons and property.
- Teach and model discipline and their own values.
- Provide open, honest, and timely communication with school staff and other partners in the educational process.

For Staff

All district employees will:

- Create an environment in which children are safe, treated fairly, and are prepared for the future with quality instruction.
- Strive for excellence by working hard, continuing to learn and grow, and being adaptable, qualified, and well prepared.
- Respect and be respected by students, parents and community.
- Work cooperatively and communicate openly with all partners in the educational process.
- Demonstrate their accountability by: using school and community resources responsibly; setting, achieving, and assessing measurable goals; and participating in on-going, proactive supervision.

For the Community

The community will:

- Value education.
- Be committed, supportive, and responsive to the schools.
- Share their expertise and resources.
- Provide bridges between school and life.
- Set high standards.
- Communicate and listen.

Adopted by the BH-BL Board of Education, February 1997

O'ROURKE MIDDLE SCHOOL

2026-2027

TO THE PARENT/GUARDIAN:

This handbook has been prepared to explain and clarify the procedures, policies, and regulations at O'Rourke Middle School. Please familiarize yourself with its contents and refer to it as needed throughout the year. If you have any questions, please contact one of our administrators.

TO THE STUDENT:

The faculty and staff welcome you to a new year at O'Rourke Middle School! We are looking forward to assisting you in fulfilling your educational goals. O'Rourke has established a tradition of fine academic and extracurricular standards that we expect you to pursue and achieve. We are here to help make your middle school years as successful as possible. This book includes your Agenda for the year to keep track of your assignments and responsibilities, a copy of the Student Handbook so you are aware of the school procedures, policies and regulations, and Hall Pass sign-out pages.

VISION - *To create a more child-centered Middle School which emphasizes critical thinking and problem solving in the context of the unique developmental problems of pre-adolescents with less emphasis on content oriented curriculum and more emphasis on process. (Adopted May 1991)*

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY - *The O'Rourke Middle School is, as the name suggests, a transitional school between the elementary and the high school. Because of the vast developmental changes and the wide range of intellectual capabilities characteristic of children during this period, our Middle School possesses a special kind of uniqueness which requires an educational program especially designed for the pre-adolescent youngster.*

*At O'Rourke Middle School, the curriculum is more exploratory in nature than the elementary school and less specialized than the high school. Realizing that the uniqueness of individual subject disciplines must be recognized, an emphasis on **interdisciplinary curriculum development** will be stressed. Curriculum programs should emphasize the natural relationship among academic disciplines that facilitate cohesive learning experiences for middle school students through **integrative themes, topics, and units**. The three major components of our middle school curricula are 1) subject content, 2) personal development, and 3) essential skills.*

Education does not begin and end with the curriculum. It must be a shared responsibility, with the student's family and the community at large, in order to enhance each student's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth. Exploratory opportunities are provided through well defined and structured club and activity programs, thereby creating opportunities for students to interact socially, to learn to respect the value and dignity of individual differences, and to develop and practice responsible behavior. (Adopted January 1987)

It is the intent of the staff to lead students toward being disciplined, productive, informed, independent and fulfilled individuals. To achieve these ideals, mutual respect and understanding must be present in the learning process on the part of all participants – the staff, students, and community.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We ask that you review the Student Handbook with your child and please sign below.

My child, _____ and I, have reviewed and understand the Student Handbook, and the O'Rourke Middle School Code of Conduct that is located on the District webpage for the 2026-2027 school year.

(Student Signature)

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

8TH GRADE PARENTS - 8TH GRADE STUDENT LIBRARY USAGE

September 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The middle school library is dedicated to providing students with relevant, engaging and diverse resources to cultivate a love of both reading and learning. The library also provides a variety of resources to support middle level instruction, including materials to enrich specific content areas, facilitate general research, and allow students to explore topics that interest them. We are proud of our collection and the opportunities it provides to support and enrich your child's education and personal growth. As students become young adults, it is important that they have a reasonable amount of freedom as they read and research. At the same time, BH-BL respects a parent's right and responsibility to review and have a general awareness of the materials their child is accessing through the school library. As such we welcome questions and suggestions and we want to make you aware of a couple of options available to parents of middle school students.

8TH GRADE ONLY SELECTIONS

The great diversity of resources in our OMS Speck Media Center physical collection presents varying levels of content and subject matter. While the library only contains materials that are recommended and suitable for middle school age students, some of the materials specifically identified for grades 8-12 may contain more mature subject matter. Our Librarians gather information and reviews from multiple professional organizations and publications (*School Library Journal*, *American Library Association*, *Association for Library Service to Children*, *Booklist*, etc.) to determine what books are appropriate to add to the MS collection. As a result, materials identified as having a more mature subject matter are shelved in an "8th grade only" section. These resources may contain varying degrees of adult language and adult situations. No 6th or 7th graders are allowed to access these titles unless specific permission is requested by the student's parent/guardian. We offer the parent/guardians of 8th grade students the opportunity to require parent/guardian permission prior to your student signing out materials from this section.

ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-8

Included with all middle school student's library accounts is access to several eBook collections (BH-BL, BOCES, and NY Reads). These collections are similar to the collection accessible through the local public library. Many students enjoy the eBook format and this collection provides a rich supplement to what we offer in our school library. While the titles and selections in this electronic collection are all deemed by the various organizations to be age appropriate for middle school students, they include both the "Juvenile" and "Young Adult" categories. The age ranges for the Juvenile Fiction and Young Adult Fiction classification varies depending on which professional body has assigned the classification.

By default, middle school students have access to both "Juvenile" and "Young Adult" eBook titles. The BH-BL Library Media staff does not have the ability to fine tune and categorize these titles. The 8th grade only option for the BH-BL hard copy collection (described above) does not exist in the eBook collections. As such we offer all parents/guardians of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders the opportunity to change their access to "Juvenile" only for the eBook accounts if they so desire by indicating their preference on the attached form. Please know that if you do opt for "Juvenile-only" for the eBooks, the collection will be largely elementary in nature. Our Library Media department continues to advocate for the ability to fine tune and customize these regional eBook connections on the local level.

Please sign and return the form below to the middle school library only if you wish to select one of the options described above. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Library Media Director, Doug Carlton (518-399-9141, x. 85117) or the MS Principal, Colleen Wolff (518-399-9141, x. 84001). We look forward to seeing your student in the library!

Sincerely,

Colleen Wolff, Principal
Doug Carlton, Director of Libraries
Lindsay Armbruster, MS Library Media Specialist

[] I am a parent/guardian of an 8th grade student. I would like to be contacted before lending my child any books or other resources from the 8th-grade-only section of hard-copy books in the O'Rourke library.

[] I am a parent/guardian of a 6th-8th grade student and would like to ask that you limit my child's access to the various eBook systems to "Juvenile" only.

Student Name: _____

Student Grade Level _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Updated July 2025

8TH GRADE PARENTS-8TH GRADE HEALTH EDUCATION

September 2026

Dear 8th Grade Parents/Guardians:

Your child is taking Health Education this year. Health Education is a subject mandated by New York State Education Law and includes units on a variety of topics including self-management, decision making, stress management, mental wellness, nutrition, substance use, relationships, communication, and sexual health. We are happy to talk with you to review the objectives and standards that guide instruction. You are invited to reach out to your child's teacher with any questions you may have regarding any topics of study in Health Education, specifically the relationships, communication, and sexual health unit which is the reason for this letter.

This unit is approximately three weeks in length and occurs towards the end of your student's time in Health. We acknowledge that parents/guardians are the primary educators of health topics for their child/children and we are committed to partnering with you to provide supplementary, medically accurate information to support you in this role. We encourage students to participate in this unit of study, as learning developmentally appropriate information with peers in a safe environment helps to create a culture of respect and understanding about these important topics.

Topics covered during this unit of student are:

- Effective Communication Including Active Listening
- Healthy Relationships (peer and family)
- Personal Safety, Consent and Boundaries in Healthy Relationships
- Benefits of Abstinence (emotional, physical and social)
- Adolescent Development, Puberty (emotional, physical and social changes)
- Gender Stereotypes (limitations they create)
- Family Life and Caring Supportive Relationships
- Sexually Transmitted Infection Awareness (including HIV/AIDS prevention)

Parents/guardians have the option to withdraw their child from this unit of study. An alternate unit of work will be provided for any student who is withdrawn. If you wish to exercise this option, please email Joe Scalise, the director of Health Education, at jscalise@bhbl.org to request withdrawal by November 2, 2026. Please be advised that HIV/AIDS education is mandated by the State of New York to all students, and as such, does not carry the same option to withdraw.

We would love for conversations about relationships and sexual health to continue at home, especially while we discuss these important topics at school. If you are in need of support in having and/or continuing these conversations, we are able to provide some guidance.

Sincerely,

Colleen K. Wolff, Principal

Joe Scalise, Director of Health Education

PEOPLE AND PLACES TO KNOW

The following can be reached at 518-399-9141 and the listed extensions

Principal's Office - Ext. 84001

Mrs. Wolff, Principal
Mrs. Doepel, Secretary

Main Office - Ext. 84000

Mr. Duell, Assistant Principal
Mrs. O'Donnell, Secretary

Attendance Office - Ext. 84002

Mrs. Brady, Attendance Secretary

Health Office - Ext. 84035

Mrs. Jewell, School Nurse

Academic Intervention Services - Ext. 84000

Library / Media Center - Ext. 84232

Mrs. Armbruster, Librarian

Counseling Center - Ext. 84040

Mr. DeBonis, School Counselor- Grade 6
Mrs. Hyde, School Counselor- Grade 8
Mr. Umina, School Counselor-Grade 7
Ms. Turnbull, Secretary, Guidance
Mrs. Jacqueline Somerville, School Psychologist
Mrs. Peterson, Social Worker
Mrs. White, Social Worker
Mrs. Weis, Speech Therapist

Curriculum - Ext. 84000

Mr. Antoski, Social Studies
Mr. Boule, Food Service
Mr. Carlton, Technology & Instructional Media
Mrs. Greco, K-12 Reading and Literacy
Mr. McQuay, Math and Computer Science
Ms. Muldoon - World Languages, ENL
Mr. Scalise, Athletic Director and Health
Mr. McQuay, Science and Technology
Mrs. White, Fine Arts

Main Office - The Main Office Staff is an excellent resource to use to seek help and information. If you have been absent, tardy or plan to leave school early, bring a written excuse from your parent or guardian to the attendance secretary in the main office before reporting to your homeroom.

Counseling Center - Guidance, psychological, and social work services are available through the Counseling Center. Services include assistance with educational planning, study help, career information, and social or academic issues.

Health Office - If you become ill or injured, inform your teacher, get a pass, and report directly to the Health Office. The nurse may administer specific medication **only** when the parent and the private physician have sent a written request (this includes all over-the counter drugs such as Tylenol, Advil, cough drops, etc.) Parents of students with **severe allergies or other chronic medical conditions** need to notify the nurse immediately so a medical safety plan can be implemented. For all immunization and physical exam information, please contact our school nurse at ext. 84035.

Cafeteria - The cafeteria provides a varied lunch menu each day. You may select the main lunch or choose from daily alternates and an ala carte menu to supplement a lunch brought from home. One lunch may be charged. Bring prepayments directly to the cafeteria manager. Prepayment will be accepted at any time. Make checks payable to the O'Rourke Middle School Cafeteria. All students will receive a student identification number consisting of 2 to 6 digits. As students approach the cashier, they will enter their ID number on the keypad. The student account on the computer screen is only visible to the cashier and will discreetly display the student status as being a recipient of free, reduced or full priced meals. Students should keep their identification number secure at all times.

ATTENDANCE

- **Students should not be in the school or on the school grounds prior to 7:00 a.m.**
- Parents/Guardians should notify the school in advance about all absences by submitting the online attendance form or emailing oms@bhbl.org. You may call 518-399-9141, ext. 84002, however a written excuse will still be needed.
- **A written excuse is required explaining the student's absence upon return (unless the online form is used to report attendance).** It should be given to the attendance secretary. The excuse should include student name, date(s) absent, reason for absence, and parent/guardian's signature.
- If a student has accumulated 6 absences or tardies, a letter will be sent home. If absences or tardies continue, another letter will be sent home, and a parent conference may be requested. Attendance for students at this level is compulsory so students need to be in school. Should absences continue and become extreme, schools will look to outside agencies (PINS, Person in Need of Supervision) or a referral for educational neglect may be instituted (CPS, Child Protective Services).
- **If a student has a chronic illness, and is therefore unable to attend school for an extended period of time, a PHYSICIAN'S NOTE and call from the parent/guardian is required.** Consultation with school personnel on meeting the needs of medically fragile students is advised.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- o Personal illness or injury
- o Trips for educational purposes
- o Emergency illness or death in family
- o Quarantine due to contagious disease
- o Requirement to be in court
- o Obligatory religious observance
- o Medical / Dental Appointment

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- o Vacation
- o Shopping
- o Skipping Classes
- o Missing the bus / sleeping late (oversleeping)
- o Babysitting while a parent works, shops, etc.
- o Working

- Students who are late to school with unexcused or excused absences will be responsible to make up the work they missed.
- Students are considered tardy if they are not in their homeroom by 7:45 a.m. Students arriving after 7:45 for any reason should report to the attendance office to sign in and to get a pass for homeroom. The homeroom teacher requires a yellow admittance pass issued by the attendance secretary to tardy students. **Students with chronic tardiness will be referred to administration.** Students who are tardy for legal reasons (see list of excused absences above) should turn in a written excuse to the attendance secretary.

DAILY PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL

1. No students will be allowed in the building before 7:00 a.m.
2. All students arriving by bus will enter the building through the door on the west side of the building.
3. Students arriving by car before 7:45 am will enter through the doors by the music room (east side/parking lot side).
4. The left lane is a thoroughfare for access to the parking lot. The right hand lane is a drop off lane.
5. All students will proceed directly to the library (6th grade), cafeteria (7th grade) or gymnasium (8th grade) to wait until the buses unload and all students are released to homeroom.

MORNING HOMEROOM

1. Students are expected in their homeroom by 7:45 a.m.
2. Students entering late should proceed to the attendance secretary for a pass to homeroom or to class.
3. Announcements are shared each morning after the Pledge, are posted on the middle school webpage and also displayed electronically in the building. Students should be listening to hear announcements of daily events.
4. Chronic illegal tardiness will be referred to administration and may result in consequences.

END OF DAY AND BUS DISMISSAL

1. At the conclusion of their last class, students are to go back to their lockers to gather their belongings and proceed to their bus dismissal zone.
2. Students who take their instrument home should get their instrument after their last class.
3. Students need to have written permission from a parent/guardian on file in the Main Office if they are not riding the bus.
4. Leaving on a different dismissal than the assigned one for any reason requires a parent note and/or a bus pass from the Main Office.

ACTIVITY PERIOD

Students may stay for an activity period if they wish to participate in intramurals or clubs, to meet with a teacher or to work in the library.

1. Activity period begins after the student dismissal on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons only.
2. Students arriving late for their activity must have a pass.
3. Students must remain under pre-arranged teacher supervision until 3:20 p.m.
4. Students who remain for the activity period should obtain a bus pass from the teacher in charge of the activity or they will not be allowed to board the bus home.
5. Students should check with their homeroom teacher or main office to learn the route number of their activity bus. Activity bus runs are posted in the cafeteria.
6. Bus transportation home is provided starting at 3:20 p.m. and lasting until approximately 4:00 p.m.
7. Students being picked up by parents should wait by the music room doors.

SPORTS/ACTIVITY STUDY HALL

All student athletes who are not under the supervision of an academic teacher until 3:20 p.m. must attend sports study hall during the activity period. All students are expected to work quietly in the sports study hall. Only those students participating in a school sponsored afternoon sporting practice/event are allowed to be present in the sports study hall.

PROCEDURES FOR GETTING OUT OF SCHOOL EARLY

If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school early to go to an appointment:

- The parents/guardians should notify the school in advance by submitting the online attendance form, sending in a note with their student, or calling the attendance office at 399-9141, ext. 84002. Teachers will be notified electronically of students who will be absent from their classes.
- Students should leave class at the excused time and wait in the Main Office. A parent/guardian must come into the Main Office to meet and sign out the student.
- Students will only be dismissed as "sick" through the Nurse's office and at the request of the Nurse.

Students are only released to approved persons as designated on our prescribed emergency information sheet and/or any legal document(s) provided by the student's parent/guardian.

MAKING UP HOMEWORK/WORK REQUESTS

If a student has been absent from school (with an excused absence) the student will be expected to make up the missed work. For absences of one or two days, students should obtain homework by emailing their teachers, or accessing other available homework resources: Google Classroom, Team Webpages.

In cases of extended absences, requests for a list of missed assignments should be made by calling 399-9141 (ext. 84000). Requests will be sent out to the teachers after the 3rd, 5th 7th, etc. consecutive days absences. A 24-hour notice is needed in order to collect books and assignments. Homework can be picked up in the Main Office 24 hours after you request it. **Teachers are not required to provide homework in advance of a family vacation that is scheduled during school.**

DRILL PROCEDURES

Fire Drills

As mandated by New York State law, schools are required to facilitate regular evacuation drills. The purpose of these drills is to practice safe and orderly emergency procedures.

1. At the fire drill signal, everyone should cease working and leave the room with the teacher in an orderly manner.
2. Students who sit by the windows are responsible for closing the windows.
3. The classroom door should be closed by the adult in charge of the class when exiting the room to be sure all students have left the room.
4. No talking or running is allowed during the entire emergency evacuation or reentry.
5. In every classroom there is a sign posted explaining the route of evacuation. Students should remain with their teacher at all times unless otherwise indicated. Should a student become separated from their teacher, the student should notify the closest adult and remain with that person.

Other Drills

The school conducts an emergency “go-home” drill each year to prepare for any situation in which students might need to be evacuated and sent home early, such as loss of heat in the building or a chemical spill in the area of the school. Students will be informed of the date of this drill, and their teacher will explain the procedure at that time.

Multiple security drills will be performed (Lock-Down, Lock-Out and Shelter In Place). The purpose of the drills is to simulate the procedures warranted during a variety of emergency situations that may occur in a school building. In addition, three bus drills will also be conducted during the school year to inform the students of the safety devices in the bus and their use in case of an emergency. Students will practice exiting the bus through the emergency door.

PHONE USE

1. At the discretion of the teacher, students may use either the classroom phone or be issued a pass to use the main office phone. Appropriate use of the phone includes:
 - Parent/guardian requested a return call.
 - Notifying parents/guardians of staying after school for help or detention.
 - Notifying parent/guardian of a cancellation.
2. Calls for forgotten items or to make personal visitation arrangements are discouraged.
3. At no time are students using their cell phones during school hours or activities.

VISITOR

A sign-in procedure is necessary for school safety and security. All visitors must sign in as soon as they enter the building. All visitors will be required to show a valid picture ID to sign in. Visitors will be issued a visitor’s pass, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on the grounds. Parents who need to drop off lunch money, clothes, musical instruments, etc. to school, must bring them directly to the main office. Please have all items marked with your child’s name and grade. The office staff will make all reasonable attempts to let your child know that an item should be picked up from the main office. Parents must not interrupt classrooms at any time.

STUDENT VISITORS

In order to maintain an academic atmosphere for all students, student visitors are discouraged.

LOST AND FOUND

If you have lost any article in the school building, check the lost and found bin (located outside of the cafeteria), then check the Main Office. If you should find an article, such as jewelry, electronics, etc., please bring it to the Main Office, so that the owner may claim it. Unclaimed items may be donated to charity periodically throughout the year.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

O'Rourke Middle School parents are urged to pay attention to all communications that come from our school and our school district. Here are some key information sources for parents:

Calendar: A printed district calendar is mailed to each BH-BL household in late August. Along with the school calendar, you will find information about building contacts, the Board of Education, daily schedules, bus routes and much, much more.

Website: Please check the district website at www.bhbl.org often, especially the O'Rourke Middle School homepage. The website is a great information source for everything from bus routes to the Middle School Daily Announcements. Also, please note that the website can be your BEST information source in an emergency or unexpected situation because we can post updated announcements there as often as necessary. Many of our teachers have classroom websites which can be accessed through the staff listing page on the Middle School website.

eSchool Parent Portal: The eSchool Parent Portal gives parents and students access to real-time information including attendance, grades and assignment descriptions. Students can use this tool to stay on top of assignments and parents are able to participate more fully in their student's progress. Different courses will have different items to post; some classes have daily assignments while other classes are more project-based and will post grades less frequently. Also, not all grading is done the same; different types of assignments can be weighted differently and count "more" or "less" toward a final average.

If something doesn't look right, start with asking your child. They can usually explain. Students and parents have their own usernames and passwords. For an initial access name and password, please contact your child's guidance counselor or the middle school main office

School Closings: When circumstances require that classes be canceled or delayed due to bad weather or an emergency, announcements are posted on our website at www.bhbl.org and on local TV stations. Announcements will normally first be given between 6:00 and 6:45 a.m. Unless otherwise noted, all scheduled use of the schools is canceled on a day when schools are closed for emergency or weather-related reasons. Parents may find that our website provides more information than the TV stations since there is no space limitation on the website. Also, although we rarely need to do this, all parents should instruct their children where to go if schools are dismissed unexpectedly during the day.

ACADEMICS AND GRADE REPORTING

REPORT CARDS

At the end of each quarter, report cards are issued. Students are expected to take the report cards home. End of the year report cards are mailed directly to your home.

If an incomplete (INC) appears on a report card, it signifies that the student is missing either a major project, a number of homework assignments, quizzes or tests (due to absence or other circumstances). This missing work prevents the teachers from reporting a fair and accurate grade on the report card. To replace the INC with a numeric grade, the student needs to speak with his/her teacher about the missing work and make it up. The make-up work must be submitted within 10 school days from the day report cards are issued to the students. When all missing work is submitted, the INC will be replaced by a numerical grade on the next report card. If the work is not submitted within the allotted time, the student's grade will be calculated with the missing work – the result being a lower grade. {Note – This provision is intended to provide a fair grade for students facing extenuating circumstances such as illness, death in the family, etc.}

If an "F" grade appears on a report card, it indicates that a student has earned a grade below a 65 for the quarter. The purpose of the "F" grade is to allow a student the opportunity to improve a failing grade by consistently demonstrating an improved attitude, effort and achievement in that course for the remaining quarters. The teacher, in reviewing the student's progress, may replace the "F" with a numerical grade ranging from 0-64, with the grade replacement not being lower than the earned grade.

HONOR ROLL AND GPA

<u>Student's Average</u>	<u>Award</u>
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94.50 or higher	Principal's Honor Roll
89.50 – 94.49	High Honor Roll
84.50 – 89.49	Honor Roll

In order to achieve Honor Roll status, no report card mark may be an “F” grade, “Unsatisfactory” or “Incomplete”. Honor Roll eligibility is determined by the GPA (grade point average) which is computed as follows:

Full year courses and half-year courses count as 1, every other day courses count as .5, and Band/Orchestra count as .6.

Example for Grade 8:	Math	80
	Science	70
	Social Studies	90
	English	80
	Spanish	70
	Technology	90
	Physical Education	40 (.5 of 80)
	Art	80
	<u>Band</u>	<u>56.4 (.6 of 94)</u>
	Total Points	656.4
	Total Courses	8.1 (6 full year, 2 half year plus 2 every other day courses)
	Average	81.04

8TH GRADE MEDALS

In 8th grade, students are awarded bronze, silver, and gold medals for the average of the first three quarters.

- Students having averages from 84.5 to 89.4 are eligible for the Bronze Medal.
- Students having averages from 89.5 to 94.4 are eligible for the Silver Medal.
- Students having averages from 94.5 or above are eligible for the Gold Medal.

PROMOTION POLICY

The O’Rourke Middle School promotion policy establishes a structured approach to help students advance based on academic performance and required interventions. Here’s an overview of the policy:

1. Promotion for Passing Students:

- Students who pass all academic courses will generally be promoted to the next grade.
- Retention may be considered if it is believed to benefit the student's development. In such cases, school staff, the student, their parent/guardian, and the Pupil Assistance Team (PAT) will consult to make this decision.

2. Conditional Promotion for Failing One Course:

- Students failing one course may still be promoted but might be required to attend the Summer STEP Program to complete **Essential Tasks** for the failed class.
- These students will be placed on academic watch in the next grade level to ensure they receive support.

3. Multiple Course Failures:

- Students who fail two or more courses are required to participate in the Summer STEP Program for each subject they failed, so long as they are offered over the summer. Students are required to fulfill the **Essential Tasks** for those courses offered during the Summer STEP program.
- Successful completion of the Essential Tasks for these courses may enable promotion. These students will remain on academic watch and may receive additional school-based support.
- Students who choose not to attend or fail the Summer STEP Program may be retained in their current grade.

4. Principal's Discretion and Final Decision:

- The building principal has the final say in promotion decisions related to summer attendance, student conduct and the successful completion of the summer program. This decision is made in consultation with school staff, parents, and relevant district resources.

This policy aims to provide students with the support they need through clear intervention plans and collaboration among school staff, families, and the PAT to promote academic success.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

The identification of student academic and developmental needs shall be comprehensive and exhaustive with the intent to provide each student with a successful educational program. This premise includes students at all levels of the learning spectrum. Every effort will be made to identify student needs at the grass roots level through individual teachers and teaching teams. Strategies will be applied at that level which differentiate instruction for each child and provide for their needs as best can be served within the structure of the greater population. When all classroom strategies and interventions have been exhausted through collaboration with parents/guardians and consultants, then the child's case will be referred to the Pupil Assistance Team (PAT) team for further determination. The PAT team will then review progress to date, consult with appropriate student managers, and evaluate personal student information to determine further intervention strategies and/or placements. At all times, the parents/guardians will be consulted on all matters.

The school will administer a variety of assessments, both local and standardized, to help determine student needs and placement. These measures will be used in conjunction with other researched and proven measures of evaluation. Each evaluation of a child should be comprehensive and consider all aspects of a child's development. Evaluation should be ongoing and progressive. All intervention strategies should be documented and monitored.

DROPPING BAND/ORCHESTRA

Students must remain in their chosen ensemble through the first semester. To drop an ensemble after the first semester, students need to obtain Add/Drop forms from the Guidance Office and submit them within the two weeks before semester 1 ends. Please note that switching out of an ensemble depends on available space in alternative classes.

STUDENT CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Clubs and Activities are an excellent way for students to get involved with others, to feel more connected and make school more enjoyable. These are some of the clubs we offer at O'Rourke.

Art Club	Future City Team	Newspaper Club
Best Buddies	German Club	Rugby Club
Book Club	Girl Fusion	Ski Club
Chamber Strings	Go Green Club	Spanish Club
Chess Club	ImPact	Student Council
Debate Club	KARE Club	Tri-M Honor Society
Drama Club	Mandarin Club	XPE Club
First Lego League	Math/Science Club	Yearbook
French Club	Middle School Jazz Ensemble	
Future Authors Club	National Jr. Honor Society**	

Students may approach the Principal about starting a new club pertaining to their own interests.

****National Junior Honor Society requirements for membership:**

- 94.0 average for the first 3 quarters of 7th grade
- No significant behavior incidents by the end of 3rd quarter in 7th grade
- Fewer than 10 illegal absences and tardies in 7th grade
- Completion of 30 hours service over the summer of 7-8 grade
- Completion of Character Statement by early September of 8th grade

MODIFIED SPORTS (GRADE 7 & 8)

Fall

Boys & Girls Soccer
Boys & Girls Volleyball
Girls Field Hockey
Boys & Girls Cross Country
Football

Winter

Boys & Girls Basketball
Wrestling

Spring

Boys & Girls Lacrosse
Baseball
Softball
Boys & Girls Outdoor Track
Boys & Girls Crew (Club)

Exceptional athletes will be selectively classified for the following upper level programs (Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity)

Fall

- Boys & Girls Cross Country
- Boys & Girls Golf
- Boys & Girls Volleyball
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Swimming
- Girls Field Hockey
- Girls Tennis

Winter

Boys & Girls Basketball
Ice Hockey
Boys & Girls Track

Spring

Boys & Girls Track
Boys & Girls Crew
Boys Tennis
Boys & Girls Lacrosse
Boys Baseball

CODE OF CONDUCT

PREFACE

The O'Rourke Middle School Code of Conduct is designed to create and maintain a school climate in which all of us can work and learn effectively. The Code of Conduct summarizes items of law, Board of Education policy, and administrative regulations. It is intended to ensure that each student has the opportunity to achieve as much as possible, that the educational program is free of interruptions, and that the rights and personal property of all individuals in the building will be respected.

The Source of Authority The BH-BL Student Code of Conduct is formally outlined by the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board of Education in accordance with New York State Educational Law. The Official BH-BL Code of Conduct can be found in [BOE Policy 5300](#), which is available via the district website (www.bhbl.org).

Application and Purpose All behavior which violates the Student Code of Conduct detailed in Board Policy 5300 will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures. While the District Code of Conduct applies to all students in Grades K-12, **this handbook serves as a way of explaining that policy in a manner specific to the Middle School environment**, providing expanded information on expectations, rules, and procedures for our middle school students.

Philosophy of Discipline Discipline is the positive direction of behavior toward established standards of conduct, fully understood and based on reason, judgment, and the rights of others. Ideal discipline is self-directed and self-controlled. The school, community, and parents share the responsibility for helping students develop self-discipline. Discipline is necessary to ensure an orderly environment in which each person may live and learn to his or her full capabilities in harmony with society.

Legal and Safety Notifications Those acts of an individual that are illegal in society are subject to the same penalties and procedures when they occur in school as when they occur in other locations. School authorities will request police assistance and will cooperate in the investigation of incidents occurring on school premises. The school authorities' effectiveness in detecting and penalizing persons responsible depends heavily on the willingness of responsible student citizens to provide information and to assist authorities when needed.

The effectiveness of any set of rules is limited in any society by the degree of acceptance by the members of the society and their cooperation in observing and enforcing them. The school conduct and discipline codes are part of New York State SAVE legislation; this handbook constitutes the required SAVE notification.

Any questions or concerns about the contents of this document should be directed to the Middle School principal.

STUDENT RIGHTS

All children have the right to:

- An appropriate education that fits their individual needs with equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnic, race, sexual orientation, disability and religious background.
 - Be educated in an atmosphere that targets their intellectual, emotional, physical, social and moral development. This applies to all aspects of the middle school environment, including the school bus, school grounds, hallways, classrooms, cafeteria and all school-sponsored events.
 - Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
 - Confidentiality of records and student information according to school policy and the Federal and Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
 - Express their point of view in a responsible manner and in compliance with guidelines established by the Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake School District Committee on Student Freedoms and Responsibilities.
1. The Board of Education is the only group that may take a stand representing the school institution.
 2. The right to use the school avenues of communication including newspapers, announcements and bulletin boards that are limited to student or staff personnel. (The restrictions in section 3 below also apply to bulletin boards.)
 3. Students have the right to publish materials provided they are:
 - a. free of obscene language and reference
 - b. accurate in fact

- c. free of personal attack
- d. not advocating illegal action or violation of school regulations
- e. free of derogatory references to people of any race or religion
- f. not designed for the purpose of commercial adventure or financial profit of any individual or non-school organization.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Dress and appearance must be within the limits of decency, cleanliness and safety.

- Dress should not be lewd, vulgar or offensive.
- Clothing should not create a hazard in performance of school activities nor be disruptive of the learning environment.
- Safe footwear is required at all times. * Example of unsafe footwear: Broken flip-flops, shoes that have platform or excessive heel height, slippers. Footwear should be commensurate with weather conditions.
- The wearing of hats and hoods is **not permitted in class** except for medical or religious purposes.
- Jackets and coats should remain off and in lockers unless students are involved in outdoor activities.

The following is not permitted to be worn in school: Clothing or attire which has an expression (phrase, word or words) or insignia (picture, symbol, patch or pin) which:

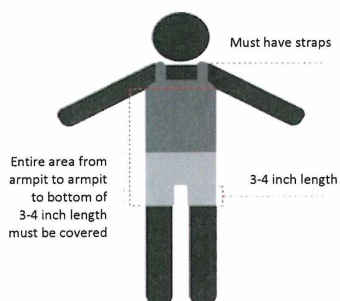
- Is obscene or libelous (that is, which contains objectionable language, including insults, whether directed to themselves or others);
- Advocates racial or religious prejudice;
- Depicts drugs, including alcohol, drug paraphernalia or drug use;
- Displays known gang colors or identification.

Students will be asked to remove:

- Spiked collars and bracelets
- Choke chains
- Nose, eyebrow, belly or other rings which may cause safety concerns.
- Undergarments should be covered at all times. Students shall not wear clothing that is revealing or see-through (including those that expose one's midriff and/or back or otherwise potentially expose private parts of the body, such as tube tops, halters, and similar garments.) No costumes, slippers, pajamas, or clothing that is distracting or unsafe to wear. Students should use discretion with the length of shorts or skirts, ensuring that they are properly covering students at all times.
- Pants and shorts need to be worn properly, covering oneself.

Students dressed inappropriately will be asked to change their attire. Students will not return to class until clothing has been changed. Repeat offenses may be subject to additional consequences.

Students may be asked to wear protective gear in certain classes. Please use this diagram as a quick reference.



BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is a privilege extended to students and may be suspended at any time for disruptive behavior. Students are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey his/her direction.

- Students should be at their stop 5-10 minutes before the bus arrives and board the bus in an orderly manner. Pushing and crowding while loading or unloading will not be permitted.
- All students must be seated, and are required to properly secure their seat belt.
- Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion. Changing of seats is not permitted unless by driver's direction.
- Students are to be courteous to fellow passengers, responsible behavior is expected at all times.
- The use of profane or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Drivers are not permitted to stop at places other than regular assigned bus stops, exceptions can only be made with a school administrator's authorization.
- Students are to board/exit via the front door only – side and rear doors are for emergency use only.
- No eating or drinking is permitted.
- Large items need to be placed on students' laps or under their seats.
- In case of an emergency, students are to remain in the bus until instructed by the driver or emergency personnel.
- Students wishing to ride on buses other than their assigned bus must present written permission from their parents to the Main Office on a special bus pass form. Forms are available at the Main Office.

Any student who becomes a discipline problem will be reported to an administrator. If a major problem arises with a student, the driver may return him/her to school and the parents will be called to come for the student. An administrator may remove students from the bus for a period of time for discipline problems.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

All students will be assigned a homeroom locker and lock. The lockers and locks belong to the school. Administration has the right to search lockers. Students should not share their locker or combination with other students and should keep lockers locked at all times. The school is not responsible for items taken from student lockers or cubbies. Students are encouraged to use their locker during the day as their schedule permits. In addition, all students will receive a physical education locker and instrumental students are provided a music locker.

CAFETERIA

All students have the right to a peaceful, enjoyable lunch. Discussion during lunch should be kept to a quiet conversational level. Food is to be eaten, not thrown or played with. Once seated, students should remain seated until dismissed. Students need to raise their hand and be recognized before leaving their seat. Each table of students will be responsible for keeping their assigned table and nearby area clean and neat. This will help develop pride in the condition of our cafeteria, and allow later students to eat at a clean table. Dismissal will be done at the direction of a staff member.

Weather permitting, students may be able to go outside. At no time will inappropriate physical contact be tolerated. Poor behavior may result in student(s) being restricted to stay inside. Table areas should be cleaned before going outside. If a student goes outside, she or he is to remain there until the end of the lunch block. Students should use the restrooms, if needed, before going outside. All students are restricted to the designated areas as assigned by the school personnel in charge. Specific cafeteria guidelines will be reviewed throughout the first week of school. Permission needs to be obtained from a lunch supervisor before leaving the cafeteria. All students must sign out if they have permission to leave.

BACKPACKS/BAGS

A small backpack can be used for carrying books during the school day. Large, oversized backpacks are not permitted. Please check with the office if you have any questions. We encourage students to use their lockers. Chromebook sleeves will be given to students to protect devices.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are to be stored in a student's locker from the beginning of the day until the end of activity period. If a student is discovered with a cell phone, if their cell phone goes off on their person or in their locker, the cell phone will be confiscated and turned in to the Main Office and the following procedures will be followed:

1st Offense – Returned to student at end of instructional day

2nd Offense – Returned to parent only

3rd Offense – Student loses privileges to have a phone on campus

Further Offenses – Returned to parent only and In School Suspension is assigned for insubordination

Any inappropriate use of a cell phone during the school day may result in further disciplinary action (i.e. texting, picture taking, calling, etc.)

Cell phones are forbidden to be out and used in a bathroom, locker room or any area where another student's privacy may be violated either intentionally or accidentally. Any student using a cellphone in the bathroom or locker room will lose their privileges to have the phone **after the first offense**. Significant disciplinary action may be taken against the student who violates the privacy of another individual. All incidents with violations of privacy will be handled in conjunction with the School Resource Officer. Any violation of privacy or unauthorized or unlawful invasion of personal privacy may result in a disciplinary hearing with the Superintendent.

POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Include but not limited to: cell phones, iPods, airpods, Apple (messaging) watches, mp3 players, electronic gaming devices.

- Are not required and the school is not responsible for their loss
- Cell phones and all other personal electronic devices should not be used during school hours or during school activities. All school rules apply regarding the use of electronic devices while attending school sponsored activities. (ie: Dances, Rec Nights, Movie Nights) Possession and/or use of the above will result in the item(s) being confiscated and turned into the Main Office. Items will be returned to the student or parent/guardian as determined by an administrator.
- Any unauthorized use of electronic devices to gain an academic advantage will be considered a violation of the District Code of Ethics and will be treated accordingly.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT P5310.4

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline. The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct. Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Running in hallways.
2. Making unreasonable noise.
3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
5. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
7. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.

B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
2. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
3. Skipping detention.

C. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples of disruptive conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.

D. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include:

1. Committing or threatening an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
2. Committing or threatening an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
3. Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
4. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
5. Threatening to use any weapon.
6. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
7. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.

E. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:

1. Lying to school personnel.
2. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
3. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
4. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
5. Harassment, including computer/electronic harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be, or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning.
6. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
7. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
8. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
9. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
10. Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing or smokeless tobacco or using a Vape, a Juul or similar type product.
11. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
12. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
13. Gambling.
14. Violation of building dress code including indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
15. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

F. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses, to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.

G. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. Plagiarism | 4. Altering records |
| 2. Cheating | 5. Assisting another student in any of the above actions |
| 3. Copying | 6. Unauthorized collaboration |

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

All school properties are designated as “Drug-Free School Zones”. Legal penalties for violators will be doubled in these zones.

- No alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia are to be in the possession of students on school property or at any school-related function at any time. Examples of drug paraphernalia include (but are not limited to) pipes, bowls, Juuls, electronic cigarettes, vapor pens, hookah pens, etc.
- The term “alcohol and/or other substance” refers to the use of all substances including, but not limited to, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alikes, and any of those substances commonly referred to as “designer drugs.” The inappropriate use, distribution, and/or possession of prescription, over-the counter drugs, (ex. cold medicines, caffeine pills, herbal supplements, etc.) are also forbidden.
- **Violation of these regulations will result in an automatic suspension from school for five days.** The decision about readmission rests with the Superintendent of Schools. Upon readmission, the student will be scheduled for three sessions with the school social worker or psychologist.
- This penalty will apply to students who are caught **buying, selling**, or are determined to be “under the influence” on school property and/or at a school sponsored event and to students who are part of a group where it has been determined that either drugs or alcohol were being used. School property also includes bus transportation.
- Depending upon the severity of the incident, police will be notified.
- Students should be aware that school officials have the right by law to search lockers or personal possessions when there is reasonable suspicion or violation.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

No student shall have in his or her possession on any school premises any rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, other firearm, knives, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or any object that is not necessary for school activities and could be used as a weapon. Facsimiles of weapons, destructive devices or dangerous instruments are also prohibited on school premises. **The building principal will suspend a student who brings a weapon to school and will report the situation to the proper police authorities and the Superintendent of Schools.**

In accordance with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, a student found guilty of bringing a firearm onto school property, or possessing a firearm on school property, after a hearing has been provided pursuant to Section 3214 of the Education Law, will be subjected to at least a one-year suspension from school. However, after this penalty has been determined, the Superintendent of Schools will review the penalty and may modify such suspension on a case-by-case basis.

DIGNITY FOR ALL

O’Rourke DASA Coordinator: Colleen Wolff, Principal

(518) 399-9141, ext. 84001

[Follow this link to access the DASA Reporting Form \[PDF\].](#)

Bullying is a conscious, willful, deliberate activity intended to harm in which the bully uses power to cause pain/and or misery. It can be verbal, physical, electronic and/or relational; may include as its focus but is not limited to:

- Physical attributes
- Mental ability/disability
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Weight
- Religious practice
- Gender
- Sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation)
- Social-economic status
- Other differences (perceived or real)

It includes all forms of hazing and cyberbullying that may have an effect on our school environment. It can be and often is continuous and repeated over time, but does not have to be. Once is enough to constitute bullying

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying or harassment, whether by a teacher, other student, or any individual on school grounds or at school activities, should report the alleged misconduct immediately to an administrator or another faculty/staff member. Any form of bullying by, between, or among students will result in disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

This may include, but is not limited, to the following:

- Verbal warnings
- Communication with parent(s)
- Loss of privileges
- Internal suspension
- External suspension
- Notification and involvement of outside law enforcement agencies
- Any other consequence or disciplinary action as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct

STUDENT SUSPENSION

Education Law Section 3214 - Chapter 16, Title IV, Article 65, Part I

The principal has the power to suspend a pupil who is insubordinate or disorderly or violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. The principal shall have the power to suspend a pupil for a period not to exceed five school days. In the case of such a suspension, the suspending authority shall provide the pupil with notice of the charged misconduct. If the pupil denies the misconduct, the suspending authority shall provide an explanation of the basis for the suspension. The pupil and the person in parental relation to the pupil shall, on request, be given an opportunity for an informal conference with the principal at which the pupil and/or person in parental relation shall be authorized to present the pupil's version of the event and to ask questions of the complaining witnesses. The aforesaid notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to suspension of the pupil unless the pupil's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the pupil's notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

No pupil may be suspended for a period in excess of five school days unless such pupil and the person in parental relation to such pupil shall have had an opportunity for a fair hearing, upon reasonable notice, at which such pupil shall have the right of representation by counsel, with the right to question witnesses against such pupil and to present witnesses and other evidence on his behalf. Where a pupil has been suspended in accordance with this subdivision by the superintendent of schools, the superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before him. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required and a tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the superintendent. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the superintendent may accept all or any part thereof. An appeal will lie from the decision of the superintendent to the board of education who shall make its decision solely upon the record before it.

DISCIPLINE

STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Student lockers, desks and other such storage spaces remain the exclusive property of the school and students have no expectations of privacy with respect to those areas. Any search of school property assigned to a specific student may be made if authorized school officials have a reasonable suspicion to believe that the property contains an item that constitutes a violation of the law, the district code of conduct, or threatens the disruption of the educational process. School district officials have the responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of the student population, which may require the search of student property in appropriate circumstances.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Violation of school rules, improper conduct, or unacceptable behavior will result in one or more of the following penalties:

- Conference between administrator and student
- Oral warnings
- Call home to parent/guardian
- Referral to Administrator
- Referral to Guidance Counselor, Social Worker or Psychologist
- Written warning with a written notification to parent/guardian
- Behavior Contract
- Request for parent/guardian conference
- Removal from classroom
- Assignment of lunch detention
- Assignment of after school detention
- Assignment of school and/or community service work

- Assignment to In School Suspension (ISS)
- Suspension from transportation
- Assignment of Out of School Suspension (OSS)
- Suspension from athletic competition, extracurricular activities, or social activities
- Referral to counseling or PAT (Pupil Assistance Team)
- Referral to the PINS process (Person In Need of Supervision) or other agency
- Expulsion from school
- Referral to the appropriate authorities

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

In all cases, severity of consequences will be based on intent, the student's prior disciplinary record, effectiveness of other forms of discipline, student's honesty and cooperation, student's role in the conflict, and information from parents/guardians, teachers and/or others, as appropriate. School administrators may take discretionary action when determining consequences for inappropriate behavior. Any actions that are deemed criminal in nature will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

DETENTION

Detention is held during activity periods on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. A student must report for detention the same day that it was assigned. The only exceptions will be for a medical appointment or extenuating family situations, HOWEVER these must be confirmed by an administrator before postponement will be granted. Missing administrative or teacher detentions will result in doubling the amount of detention time missed and/or the assigning of In School Suspension will result.

DETENTION PROCEDURES

1. Students must report to the office for detention at dismissal.
2. Students must remain in the detention room for the entire activity period.
3. Students are required to sit quietly.
4. Students are required to bring work to do during detention.
5. No sleeping, drinking, eating, gum, hats, electronic devices will be allowed in the room.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Students placed in In School Suspension will report to homeroom and then directly to the Main Office. The parent/guardian will be notified via phone and/or a letter within 24 hours of the infraction. All of the student's teachers will be notified to send appropriate material to occupy the student during the suspension day(s). Rules for behavior in the ISS room are posted and must be strictly obeyed. Students unable to behave while serving in school suspension could be suspended out of school.

Students who are in ISS may not participate in after school activities that day. They may, however, stay for academic work with a teacher based on administrative approval.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Students will be removed from the school for a period of time based on frequency and severity of the rules violation. The parent/guardian will be notified via a phone call and a letter within 24 hours of the infraction. A meeting with a parent may be a requirement for returning to school. Suspension will be served at the student's home supervised by his/her parent/guardian. By law the district will attempt to assign an equivalent tutoring experience for students where practicable.

USE OF BIKES / SKATEBOARDS / ROLLERBLADES

Bikes must only be parked in the bike rack area. Reminder: All children under 14 years of age are required by law to wear a helmet. **Skateboards and Rollerblades are not permitted on school property. Use inside the school building is not welcomed.**

DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Displays of affection (i.e. kissing, hugging, inappropriate touching, etc.) are not appropriate in school.

UNAUTHORIZED VENDING

The sale of items in school for personal profit is prohibited.

GAMBLING

Any form of betting games are prohibited.

FOOD AND DRINK

All food and beverages should be consumed in the cafeteria. Only water is allowed outside of the cafeteria. There are water refill stations that may be used throughout the day.

OTHER PROHIBITED ITEMS

- Squirt guns
- Slam books
- Other items deemed by administrators as distracting, dangerous, or inappropriate.

O'ROURKE MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The O'Rourke Middle School teaches students that academic honesty involves creating authentic pieces of work based on one's original ideas and credits/acknowledges the work of others.

Academic honesty is:

1. Completing assignments, quizzes, tests, and projects on your own.
2. Properly citing information taken from outside sources, translation apps, the internet, and/or AI when the source is used for class assignments.

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Avoid situations that might contribute to cheating or plagiarizing.
2. Avoid unauthorized assistance: receiving answers from friends, parents, or classmates.
3. Use sources as instructed by a teacher.
4. Document used resources by citing sources.
5. Avoid plagiarism by using quotation marks for statements taken from others, by acknowledging information and ideas borrowed from any source, and by consulting faculty members about questionable situations.
6. Avoid "cutting" and "pasting" from computer text without proper credit.

Teachers have the responsibility to:

1. Teach or review the correct use of sources and citations when assigning work.
2. Structure conditions during testing to alleviate the possibility of cheating.
3. Specify the types of collaboration that are discouraged and those that are encouraged.
4. Help students learn from their mistakes when an act of cheating or plagiarizing occurs.
5. Establish clear guidelines and model the ethical and transparent use of AI, as well as support healthy conversations and safe use of AI as a tool.

Possible Penalties/Consequences: Students who do not engage in academic honesty can expect one or more of the following penalties determined by the teacher and/or administrator: parent notification,

parent-student-administrator conference, being required to attend summer school to redo the assignment that did not follow our Academic Honesty policy, a lowering of the grade or receiving an F for the assignment, an alternative assignment or recompletion of the original assignment, loss of privilege, or suspension (ISS or OSS).

COMPUTER AND NETWORK USE POLICY

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Burnt Hills – Ballston Lake Central School District will use electronic resources as powerful and compelling tools for students to further understand all subjects and apply skills in relevant and rigorous ways. It is the District's goal to provide students with rich and ample opportunities to use technology as individuals do in workplaces and other real-life settings. The District's technology will enable educators and students to communicate, learn, share, collaborate and create, think and solve problems, manage their work, and take ownership of their lives.

These regulations are written to promote positive and effective digital citizenship among students and staff. Digital citizenship represents more than technology literacy: successful, technologically fluent digital citizens live safely and civilly in an increasingly digital world. They recognize that information posted on the Internet is public and permanent and can have a long-term impact on an individual's life and career. Expectations for student and staff behavior online are no different from face-to-face interactions. Access to the school's technology resources is a necessity for teaching and learning, but it comes with guidelines and responsibilities. All activities conducted using BH-BL resources are subject to monitoring by the District.

This Administrative Regulation is not intended to interrupt or inhibit classroom teaching and learning. If you feel that any of the stated policy prohibitions affect your ability to deliver prepared classroom lessons, please contact your Dept./Bldg. Supervisor or the Administrator for Technology and Instructional Media to ensure that a working solution can be implemented.

If a staff member or student is unsure whether a contemplated activity may be in violation of stated policies, he/she should contact his/her teacher, Dept./Bldg. Supervisor and/or the Administrator for Technology and Instructional Media to ensure that this activity can be implemented.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

District technology resources include (but are not limited to) the transmission infrastructure, wired and wireless equipment, files and storage, e-mail and Internet content (blogs, web sites, web mail, groups, wikis, etc.). The District reserves the right to prioritize the use of, and access to, all technology resources.

All use of district technology resources must support academic or classroom activities, educational research and other learning opportunities consistent with the educational mission of the District.

All users connecting to the network with a personal device (i.e. any device not owned and managed by the district I.T. Department) agree to the stated terms of usage when accessing the Guest network. All personal devices connected to the network must be free of malware, equipped with endpoint protection as appropriate, and must use browsers, operating systems, and other software that is updated to the latest version and fully supported by the developer. Non-compliant devices will be removed. The district reserves the right to deny network access to any device not owned and managed by the district I.T. Department.

Connection of any personal electronic device is subject to all guidelines in this document. Expectations for responsible use remain the same, whether a personal or district device is used. The District will not be responsible for personal property that is lost, stolen or damaged. The District will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations resulting from District-provided Internet access. Student use of internet-enabled devices is governed by AR 5300.31 and NYS Education Law § 2803.

Acceptable uses of technology resources by District students and staff include:

- Creation of files, projects, videos, web pages and podcasts using network resources in support of educational research.
- Participation by staff in online communities and the creation of content for podcasts, e-mail and web pages that support the mission of the district.
- Participation by students in District-approved online communities and the creation of content for podcasts, and web pages that support the mission of the district.
- Publication online of original educational material, curriculum-related materials and student work. Sources outside the classroom or school must be cited appropriately;
- Use of technology resources by staff for incidental personal use in accordance with all district policies and guidelines.

Unacceptable uses of technology resources by district students and staff include but are not limited to:

- Cyberbullying or cyber-threatening material, either in the form of text or images, posted on personal web sites, social networking sites, blogs or transmitted via email, discussion groups, message boards, chat rooms, instant messages, or via cellular phones is prohibited.
- The use of the District's Internet system, cellular devices on school district property, cellular devices not on district property or the use of an Internet system not owned or operated by District to bully or harass other students, faculty and staff is prohibited.
- Off-campus cyberbullying or cyberthreats – regardless of the form in which the message is transmitted – endangering the health, welfare or safety of students, faculty or staff within the District or adversely affecting the educational process is prohibited. Students engaging in this type of conduct will be disciplined according to the District's Code of Conduct or as outlined within this policy.
- Using network resources for personal gain, commercial solicitation and compensation of any kind;
- Downloading, installing, or using unauthorized software or applications (including but not limited to games, media files, or free/open-source software) without permission without permission or approval from administration;
- Supporting or opposing ballot measures, candidates and any other political activity;
- Hacking; cracking; vandalizing; introducing malicious software; phishing; and circumventing the internet content filter or other safety/monitoring tools.;
- Attempting unauthorized access to other district computers, networks, user accounts, and information systems;
- Posting, sending or storing information online that could endanger others (e.g., bomb construction guides, drug manufacture guides, personally identifiable information of staff or students, etc.);
- Changing, copying, renaming, deleting, or otherwise accessing others' files.
- Accessing, uploading, downloading, storing and/or distributing of obscene or pornographic material; and
- Connecting unauthorized equipment to the district network.

The District will not be responsible for any damages suffered by any user, including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or any other errors or omissions.

INTERNET SAFETY: PERSONAL INFORMATION AND INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Contributions to the Internet leave a digital footprint for all to see, therefore:

- Students and staff should not reveal personal information including a home address and phone number on websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, wikis, e-mail or as content on any other electronic medium.
- Students and staff should not reveal personal information about another individual on any electronic medium.
- No student pictures or names can be published on any class, school or district website unless the appropriate permission has been verified according to District policy.
- Students who encounter dangerous or inappropriate information or messages should notify the appropriate school authority.

FILTERING AND MONITORING

Filtering software is used to block or filter access to visual depictions that are obscene and all child pornography in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Other objectionable material could be filtered. The determination of what constitutes "other objectionable" material is a local decision.

- Filtering software is not 100% effective. While filters make it more difficult for objectionable material to be received or accessed, filters are not a solution in themselves. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the network and Internet and avoid objectionable sites;
- Filtering software will be used to directly alert school administrators to potentially dangerous internet usage. This includes searching and browsing activity pertaining to self-harm, violence, danger, sexual abuse, and so forth. School administrators will use this information to respond appropriately to each incident;
- Any attempts to defeat or bypass the District's Internet filter or conceal Internet activity are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: proxies, https, special ports, modifications to district browser settings and any other techniques designed to evade filtering or enable the publication of inappropriate content;
- E-mail inconsistent with the educational and research mission of the District will be considered spam and blocked from entering District e-mail boxes;
- The District will provide appropriate adult supervision of Internet use. The first line of defense in controlling access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet is deliberate and consistent monitoring of student access to district computers;
- Staff members who supervise students, control electronic equipment or have occasion to observe student use of said equipment online, must make a reasonable effort to monitor the use of this equipment to ensure that student use conforms to the mission and goals of the District; and
- Staff must make a reasonable effort to become familiar with district supported educational technology and instruct and assist students effectively.

COPYRIGHT

Downloading, copying, duplicating and distributing software, music, sound files, movies, images or other copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is generally prohibited. However the duplication and distribution of materials for educational purposes are permitted when such duplication and distribution fall within the Fair Use Doctrine of the United States Copyright Law (Title 17, USC) and content is cited appropriately.

All student work is copyrighted. Permission to publish any student work requires permission from the parent or guardian.

NETWORK SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Passwords are the first level of security for a user account. System logins and accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account, for authorized district purposes. Students and staff are responsible for all activity on their account and must not share their account password.

These procedures are designed to safeguard network user accounts:

- Follow all password policies as written and enforced by the District I.T. Department.
- Do not use another user's account;
- Do not insert passwords into e-mail or other communications;
- Do not use the "remember password" feature when using shared Internet browsers; and
- Lock the screen or log off if leaving the computer.

STUDENT DATA IS CONFIDENTIAL

District staff must maintain the confidentiality of student data in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and NYS Education Law § 2-d. Using student Google Accounts to connect to allowed educational software implies parental consent to use these apps, which have been deemed trustworthy and compliant by the District.

NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

The District provides the network system, e-mail and Internet access as a tool for education and research in support of the District's mission. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store, without prior notice, information about the content and usage of:

- The network;
- User files and storage utilization;
- User applications and bandwidth utilization;
- User document files, folders and electronic communications;
- E-mail;
- Internet browsing/activity history; and
- Any and all information transmitted or received in connection with network, computer, and e-mail use.

No student or staff user should have any expectation of privacy when using the District's network. The District reserves the right to disclose any electronic message to law enforcement officials or third parties as appropriate. All documents are subject to the public records disclosure laws of the State of New York.

When using district user accounts on personal devices, there is a chance that certain software (such as browser based extensions) may be downloaded to your browser and collect browsing data. This document should be used as a reference for information about when your data may be collected by the District in addition to best practices for avoiding accidental data collection.

ARCHIVE AND BACKUP

Backup is made of all district e-mail correspondence for purposes of public disclosure and disaster recovery. Barring power outage or intermittent technical issues, staff and student files are backed up using cloud-based backup tools. Refer to the District Records Policy P1120 for specific records retention requirements.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All users of the District's electronic resources are required to comply with the District's policy and regulations and agree to abide by the provisions set forth in the District's Responsible Use Agreement.

Violation of any of the conditions of use explained in the District's Responsible Use Agreement or in these procedures may

be cause for disciplinary action, including arrest, suspension or expulsion from school and suspension or revocation of network and computer access privileges.

O’ROURKE ONE-TO-ONE TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

Regular student use of a laptop computer is becoming more and more necessary as educational resources, communication options, and productivity tools move online. For several years, BH-BL has provided, and will continue to provide students use of district owned chromebooks. All students will be provided a chromebook that should travel with the student during the school day, stored in a proper bag for safe keeping.

Whenever students are using this device, they will be accessing the school network and all of its associated resources. That means that the computer will always pass through the CIPA (Children’s Internet Protection Act) compliant district filters when it is being used. In effect, this is a “work computer” rather than a computer for recreational use. Users must follow district and school policies and procedures including the Acceptable Use Policy and the Responsible Use Guidelines outlined previously in the Student Code of Conduct. These same policies govern home use of school-issued Chromebooks.

NOTE: Please know that any time that a student logs into their school Google account (bhbl.net) their internet session will always be run through the CIPA compliant BHBL filter. This includes bhbl.net sessions from a private home computer. The BHBL filter cannot be disabled on a school issued computer. The filter can be bypassed on a private computer by logging out of the student’s bhbl.net account.

We have identified a few important expectations for student:

- Students are expected to bring their Chromebooks to school fully charged. Chargers should be kept at home, as they are easily misplaced and can also easily damage the Chromebook in transit. Students should take care and precaution when inserting cables/cords into the device, to prevent damage. Students will be financially responsible for replacing lost/damaged chargers and stylus pens. Replacements will be available for purchase in the main office by mid-September.
- Students are not to borrow or use another student’s Chromebook. If a device is not working, students should report to Room 201A for assistance.
- Students should take reasonable precautions to keep the Chromebooks safe and functional. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Making sure the Chromebook is never left unattended, or in an unlocked, unsupervised area.
 - The Chromebook should be kept in an impersonalized state. No stickers or permanent markings should be placed on the Chromebooks. Cases (provided by students) can be decorated with luggage tags, ribbons, identification (in provided insert space) and any other non-permanent modifications. Chromebook bags are also available for purchase.
 - In case of theft, an official theft report will be required. Students should see the Assistant Principal for additional information and assistance in this area.
- Student email
 - All students in grades 6-8 are issued a BH-BL email.
 - Students are responsible for messages sent from their accounts.
 - Student email is provided by the district and is district property. BH-BL reserves the right to archive, monitor and/or review all use of its email system, and users should not have any expectation of privacy in any electronic message created, sent or received on the District’s email system. This is necessary to keep students safe and prevent inappropriate use of the email system.
- General Internet use
 - Listening to music on a student device is subject to teacher or parent discretion.
 - Online gaming must be in support of the district’s educational program and directed by teacher(s)/staff. All other gaming will be blocked and is prohibited.
 - Watching movies/YouTube videos on the device is only allowed with permission from a teacher or parent/guardian for educational purposes. All web content must remain school appropriate and will be filtered via the district’s web filter.

DAMAGE TO CHROMEBOOK

- In the event of damage, students should notify the Assistant Principal or contact our building IT (Room 201A) so that the proper procedure can be initiated. Loaner Chromebooks will be available for sign-out while repairs are being conducted.
- Students will be financially responsible for accidental damage to their Chromebook. Students who cause intentional damage to a Chromebook (theirs or that of another student), will be financially responsible for the damage and also face disciplinary action.

DATA PRIVACY

BH-BL takes student data privacy very seriously. We comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (see Policy P5500) and U.S. Department of Education Regulations (see Education Law 2-d) for student data privacy. All software and third-party applications that we use, including any software accessible by the student issued laptops are evaluated through multiple sources for compliance with student data privacy regulations by our district Data Privacy Officer. We are members of RIC One Data Privacy Service, the NY Schools Data Analysis Technical Assistance Group ([DATAG](https://www.common Sense.org)), and the Privacy Evaluation Initiative Consortium (<https://www.common Sense.org>). All of these organizations help us to put steps in place to safeguard student privacy. More information on BH-BL's student data privacy policies can be found at <http://www.bhbl.org/ParentResources/studentdataprivacy.cfm>.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Speck Library Media Center is a learning center. Students must be respectful and courteous to staff and other students. We promote a climate that is conducive to quiet work, reading, and contemplation.

Coming to Speck

1. Students most often come to the library for a scheduled **lesson** in the Main Room or the Speck Lab. Their class may meet with the Library Media Specialist for instruction, or classroom teachers may conduct their classes at Speck for access to library materials and computers.
2. Students may also come to the library from study hall with a pass. Students must stop at the circulation desk to sign in and out. Students may come to Speck on a pass to:
 - sign out or return library materials,
 - work on research,
 - use a computer for class assignments, or to
 - read books & magazines.
3. Students wishing to work in the library during the Activity Period are required to have a pass from their subject-area teacher whose assignment they will be working on.

Independent access to the Library Media Center is contingent on a student's behavior and borrowing record. Inappropriate behavior or overdue materials will result in the loss of library privileges.

RULES FOR PROPER USE & CARE OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Students are responsible for library materials they borrow. In case of loss or damage, the students are required to pay the replacement cost of the materials.

1. Students will care for and protect library materials from loss or damage due to water, food, pets, mark-ups or otherwise.
2. Students will return library materials in a timely manner. Students with overdue library materials may not be permitted to borrow additional materials and may be restricted from independent access to the library.
3. Students will be responsible for the replacement cost of library materials that have been lost or damaged beyond repair. The replacement cost and the extent of the damage is to be determined by the Library Media Specialist.

For More Information...

... and for access to our library catalog, databases, and recommended Internet links, please visit the [Speck Library Media Center website](#).