

2011-2012

**Unionville-Sebewaing Area Schools
Middle School Handbook**



**USA Middle School
2203 Wildner Road
Sebewaing, MI 48759**

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The Unionville-Sebewaing Area Schools, in its policies, programs, and practice, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status in all activities and employment.

Student (Parent) Handbook

for the

UNIONVILLE-SEBEWAING AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

School Year 2011-2012

WELCOME TO USA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to USA Middle School. This handbook is designed to explain the policies and procedures that have been adopted by the Unionville-Sebewaing Area School Board for the USA Middle School. The teachers, support staff, and administration at USA all have high expectations for themselves and our students. We believe that each student is a vital part of his or her family, school, and community. We believe that students should dress and act in a manner that reflects positively on all three. We believe that respect and responsibility are learned both at home and at school. We hope that each student will set goals to do the best that they can to learn as much as possible and grow as a person during this school year.

Todd Laventure, Principal (883-3140x116)

Lindsay Bitzer, Guidance Counselor (883-3140x196)

Teresa Dinsmoore, Secretary (883-3140x104)

Kim Deneen, Secretary (883-3140x105)

George Rierson, Superintendent of Schools (883-2360)

Adopted by the USA Board of Education at the August 2011 Board Meeting

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2011-2012

OFFICE	NAME	ADDRESS	TERM	EXPIRATION
President	Lori Kemp	17 North Beck St. Sebewaing, MI	4 year	2015
V. Pres.	George Eurich	4805 Caro Road Sebewaing, MI	6 year	2015
Secretary	Kurt Ewald	4949 Unionville Rd. Unionville, MI	4 year	2015
Treasurer	Terry Gruehn	9928 Canboro Road Sebewaing, MI	6 year	2017
Trustee	Jonathan Link	2543 W. Hoppe Rd Unionville, MI	2 year	2013
Trustee	Donna Sting	West B.C./Forestville Unionville, MI	4 year	2013
Trustee	Michelle Currey	6241 N. Colling Road Unionville, MI	6 year	2017

BOARD MEETINGS are scheduled:
Second (2nd) Monday of each calendar month
Time: 7:00 p.m.

**USA MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHING STAFF
2010-2011**

TODD LAVENTURE

PRINCIPAL

LINDSAY BITZER

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

GRADES 5 & 6

TAMMIE WHITTAKER
LISA BARRIGAR
KARI STECKER
SHERENE MCCLOY

Mathematics
Language Arts
Science
Social Studies

GRADES 7 & 8

KRISTI EURICH
AMY PFAFF-BIEBEL
DAVE BITZER
DAISY HARRIS

Mathematics
Language Arts
Science
Social Studies

SPECIAL EDUCATION

SHARON KRZYZANIAK

EXPLORATORIES

ISAIAH GAINFORTH
KARI GEURTS
JON GRADY
JASON PARMENTER
BARBARA TILT
GARY VANSUMEREN

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FOREWORD

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of June 30, 2011. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2011, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

NORTH CENTRAL ACCREDITATION



The USA Middle School is fully accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement. To achieve accreditation, schools must meet NCA CSI's quality standards, be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the schools, and engage in continuous school improvement focused on increasing student performance. As part of this school improvement process, three target goals have been established. These goals are:

1. All students will improve their ability to read and respond to various literary forms.
2. All students will improve their ability to apply mathematical knowledge and skills to solve real world problems.
3. All students will improve their understanding of American Democracy in relation to other countries of the world, global economics and the environment, and key events in American History.

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL

The mission of the USA Middle School community is to develop in each student the essential attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in school and in life. As we work together to become a Professional Learning Community, our staff development initiative is based on the following questions:

1. What essential knowledge must all children obtain?
2. How will we know when children have not obtained essential knowledge?
3. How will we support children when they do not obtain essential knowledge?

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

The staff expects students to arrive at school prepared to learn. It is the student's responsibility to arrive on time and be prepared to participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the Guidance Counselor.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should submit those needs, in writing along with proper documentation by a physician, to the school office.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer listed below:

George Rierson
Superintendent
(989) 883-2360

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT USA SCHOOLS BOARD POLICY FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Policy Rationale:

Research and practice experience indicates parent involvement has multiple benefits for students and schools. Student benefits can include improved grades and test scores, better attendance, higher rates of homework completion, more positive attitudes towards school, less disciplinary actions, higher graduate rates and increased post-secondary enrollment. School benefits can include improved teacher morale, better ratings of teachers by parents, improved community perceptions, positive changes in student achievement.

Participants in Plan Development:

The planning process for parent involvement should include parents/caregivers, students, classroom teachers and other educators. It may include representatives with expertise in child/youth development and others.

Policy – Unionville-Sebewaing Area Schools:

Unionville-Sebewaing Area School District supports parental involvement as both a valuable resource and ally in teaching and learning for our students. We consider parents/guardians essential partners in the educational and psychosocial development of their children.

The Superintendent will act as the key liaison for parent involvement. The Superintendent will provide leadership for the development and implementation of a parent involvement plan. Parent involvement may include both school and home activities. The parent involvement plan will include specific attention to obstacles, which preclude parent/guardian participation with intended remedies. The plan will also include specified objectives with periodic assessment to determine the status of and progress for parent involvement in the District.

Optimally, parent involvement will occur at all grade levels in every school in a broad range of activities reflecting interests and commitment of parents/guardians and other caregivers.

SCHOOL DAY

Doors to the Middle School are open at 7:30 a.m. Breakfast is served beginning at 7:30 a.m. Classes begin at 7:55 a.m. and end at 3:15 p.m.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission from the teacher to go to the office. The office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the Principal.

The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document,
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- C. proof of residency,
- D. proof of immunizations

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. The Guidance Office will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT

The Unionville-Sebewaing Area Middle School is organized into teaching teams by grade level. Students are placed into heterogeneous groups for homeroom and core classes. All students will also participate in each of the exploratory classes offered each quarter.

EARLY DISMISSAL

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent or a person whose signature is on file in the school office or the parent coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without a permission note signed by the custodial parent(s).

TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT

If a student plans to transfer from Unionville-Sebewaing Middle School, the parent must notify the Principal. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the Principal for specific details. School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the Principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the Principal.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

The Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form completed and signed by his/her parent in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extra-curricular activities and co-curricular activities.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each year. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student's educational program.

USE OF MEDICATIONS

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b and F1c must be filed with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- C. All medications must be registered with the Principal's Office.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.

Medication may be conveyed to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.

Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.

- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by the school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.

G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

Asthma Inhalers and Epi-pens

Students with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan developed by the school principal and updated annually.

Non-prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician does not have to authorize such medication but all of the other conditions described above under prescribed medications will also apply to non-prescribed medications. The student may be authorized on the request form by his/her parent to self-administer the medication in the presence of a school staff member. No other exceptions will be made to these requirements.

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent authorization, s/he will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received.

Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription and instructions from the child's physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication. The parent must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines.

CONTROL OF NON-CASUAL CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In the case of non-casual contact communicable diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual contact communicable diseases include: sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), Hepatitis B, and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

Noncasual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with Disabilities Act (A.D.A) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (EEA) and State law. Contact the Special Education Department at 883-3140 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the Principal at 883-3140 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

STUDENT RECORDS

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the Board nor its employee's shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

The Board designates as student "directory information": a student's name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation or awards received.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such directory information: upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) notice which can be found in the Superintendent's Office.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential and education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records, please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the building principal. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;

- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose;
- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses: FERPA@ED.Gov and PPRA@ED.Gov

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND SUPPLIES

USA Middle School may charge specific fees for some non-curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit.

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes.

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Their use may be needed by others.

STUDENT FUND-RAISING

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules will apply to all fund-raisers.

Students involved in the fund-raiser are not to interfere with students participating in other activities in order to solicit funds.

A student will not be allowed to participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which s/he is not a member without the approval of the student's counselor.

No student may participate in fund-raising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.

No house-to-house canvassing is allowed by any student for any fund-raising activity.

Any fund-raisers that require students to exert themselves physically beyond their normal pattern of activity, such as "runs for", will be monitored by a staff member in order to prevent a student from over-extending himself/herself to the point of potential harm.

No student may participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the Principal.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The school cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the Principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

MEAL SERVICE

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents interested in being involved should contact Jean Heck, Food Services Director.

USA Middle School participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee of \$1.80 and breakfasts available for \$1.05. Extra milk is \$.40 cents.

Discounts on school meals will be available as follows:

\$100.00 in account - \$2.00 credit

\$300.00 in account - \$6.00 credit

Students may put money into their lunch account by placing it in the designated box in the Middle School Office in an envelope with their name, student number and amount deposited written on the front.

Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. Ala carte items are available for purchase on Fridays after students have finished their regular lunch. No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the Principal.

Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes that s/he is eligible, contact the middle school office.

FIRE, LOCK DOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with state law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the state. The alarm signal for tornados is different from the alarm signal for fires and consists of a siren with no fire alarm lights flashing.

Lock down drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of two (2) times each school year. The alarm system for a school lock down is different from the alarm system for fires and tornadoes.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify the following radio and television stations and will post on the USA web site at www.think-usa.org:

WJRT TV12

WLEW 1240 AM

WKYO

WNEM TV 5

WLEW 102.1 FM

WEYI TV 25

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect student from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District's *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy* and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request.

VISITORS

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the Principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to schedule a mutually convenient time. Students may not bring visitors to school without first obtaining written permission from the Principal.

USE OF THE LIBRARY

The library is available to students throughout the school day. Passes may be obtained from a student's teacher or from the librarian. Books on the shelves may be checked out for a period of two weeks and renewed for two weeks more. To check out any other materials, contact the librarian.

In order to avoid late fees of \$.05 per day, all materials checked out of the library must be returned to the library or renewed within two weeks.

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Students must receive the permission of the teacher before using any equipment or materials in the classroom and the permission of the Principal to use any other school equipment or facility. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and safe-keeping of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

LOCKERS

Lockers will be assigned the first day of school. The principal is the only person with the authority to change student locker assignments.

1. Do not leave money or other valuables in your locker. Bring them to the office for safekeeping.
2. No items should be kept in lockers that would endanger the health or safety of any individual or is a violation of the law.
3. The Principal shall have the authority to conduct a search of any locker whenever there is reason to believe the use of the locker may be unlawful, in violation of school policies and rules or dangerous to others.
4. Locks are available in the office for a \$5.00 deposit. Do not give your lock combination to other students.
5. Lockers should be kept clean and orderly. Appropriate pictures may be hung in lockers using magnets. No tape, putty, or other adhesives may be used. Lockers will be cleaned out periodically.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is in the hallway outside the office for items of clothing or in the office for other valuables. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

STUDENT SALES

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the Principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

USE OF TELEPHONES

The school phone in the office is for student use **only** in case of emergency or for school business. Calls from parents and other necessary calls may be answered at the close of a class period or a note will be delivered at the end of class.

A student may possess a cell phone or electronic communication device on school property, but **must** turn it in to the school office during school hours.

ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

No announcements or posting of outside activities will be permitted without the approval of the Principal. A minimum of twenty-four (24) hours notice is required to ensure that the principal has the opportunity to review the announcement or posting.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

COURSE OFFERINGS

Students in each grade will study mathematics, social studies, language arts and science within their grade level teams. Students will also participate in a variety of exploratory courses, which may include:

Grades 5 and 6: art, physical education, library skills, computer keyboarding, music/band and foreign language

Grades 7 & 8: art, physical education, choir, band, computer applications, health, character education, essential living skills and foreign language

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

Attendance rules apply to all field trips.

GRADES

USA Middle School has a standard grading procedure, as well as additional notations that may indicate work in progress or incomplete work. The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. Each teacher may place a different emphasis on these areas in determining a grade and will so inform the students at the beginning of the course work. If a student is not sure how his/her grade will be determined, s/he should ask the teacher.

The school uses the following grading system:

94 to 100%	= A = Excellent achievement
90 to 93%	= A-
87 to 89%	= B+
84 to 86%	= B = Good achievement
80 to 83%	= B-
77 to 79%	= C+
74 to 76%	= C = Satisfactory achievement
70 to 73%	= C-
67 to 69%	= D+
64 to 66%	= D = Minimum-Acceptable achievement
60 to 63%	= D-
Below 60%	= E Failing to meet minimum standards for credit

I = Incomplete

CR = Credit

Grading Periods

Report cards are a periodic report to students and parents showing the academic progress of each student. Parents and students should read the card carefully together and refer to the comments for a more complete understanding of the student's performance in the classroom. Questions or concerns about a student's grades should be directed to the student's teacher. A conference with the teacher, counselor, and principal can be set up if desired by contacting the Principal's Office at 883-3140.

Incomplete grades will only be given if, in the judgment of the teacher, circumstances have made it impossible for the student to complete the requirements of the course by the end of the marking period. Incomplete grades will automatically turn to an "E" grade if the necessary coursework has not been completed within seven calendar days of the ending date of the quarter. Extensions may be granted by the building principal in consultation with the teacher.

Students shall receive a report card at the end of each 9-week period indicating their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term.

When a student appears to be at risk of failure, notification will be provided to the parents at three and six weeks into each grading period so they can talk with the teacher about what actions can be taken to improve poor grades.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT AND RETENTION

Students must successfully pass 19 of 24 nine-week grading periods to be promoted to the next grade level. Other factors that may be considered are: current level of achievement, potential for success at the next level, and emotional, physical and/or social maturity.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students who have displayed significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include but are not limited to: academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism.

Honor Roll

To make the honor roll each quarter, a student must have an overall average of "B" or better and have no grade below a "C". To make the high honor roll a student must not have a grade below an "A-".

HOMEWORK

Homework is a vital part of the normal academic routine at USA Middle School and, as such, a student can expect to have homework to do on most evenings. Homework provides the practice necessary for students to master concepts and skills essential to their success in school and later in life. As a general rule, students can expect about 10 minutes of homework multiplied by their grade level per night.

For example: 5th graders can expect 50 minutes/night, 6th graders can expect 60 minutes per night, etc.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may enhance his/her school career through participation in the school's computer network, s/he and his/her parents must sign an agreement, which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school or referral to law enforcement authorities.

The use of the Network is a privilege, which may be revoked by the District at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited to, the altering of system software or the placing of unauthorized information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the computer system in either public or private files or messages. The District reserves the right to remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student for other disciplinary actions.

COMPUTER USE POLICY

The technology of Unionville-Sebewaing Area School District has been established for educational purposes, including classroom activities, career information, and limited self-learning activities. It is a privilege, not a right.

Students have access to Internet World Wide Web information resources through their classroom, library or school computer lab. Students can be provided with an individual e-mail account.

Student responsibilities:

1. **For your protection, do not share your password** with anyone or post personal contact information (address, phone number, etc.) about yourself or other people. Do not agree to meet with someone you contacted on-line without your parent's approval. Let your teacher or other school employees know if any message you receive makes you feel uncomfortable. Any attempt by another to access your or the school's private files will be considered theft.
2. **Use appropriate language.** Do not use any language that could be determined as obscene, profane, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful. Do not engage in personal attacks or harassment. If someone tells you to stop sending him or her messages, you must stop.
3. **Do not access questionable materials.** You must respect the technology as an educational tool for collecting information. Our district extends its library selection policy to include Internet sources. Questionable material includes, but is not limited to, pornography, documents encouraging violence or illegal acts, and racist tracts or hate speech. If you access this information by mistake, immediately tell your teacher or other school employee. This will protect you against a claim that you had intentionally violated this policy. Do not use the system for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the system.
4. **Respect the technology as school property.** Take precautions to avoid damaging systems or equipment, including computer hardware and software. Any software to be used in our district must be approved by the technology committee.
5. **Understand your limited right of free speech.** This system is a limited forum based on educational value, such as in the school paper. Criminal speech, such as instructions on breaking into computer systems, drug dealing, etc. are not allowed, as well as revealing personal information about others.
6. **Understand your limited right of privacy.** It is similar to the rights you have in the privacy of your locker. If there is a reasonable suspicion that you have violated the policy, an investigation will occur. It is also possible that in routine maintenance of the system a violation could be discovered.

7. **Be aware of copyrights. Do not plagiarize.** It is unethical to copy software unless permission has been obtained from its creator or to claim someone else's work as your own.

8. **The computer system must remain secure.** Do not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any part of our system or any other system. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or accessing another person's files. Do not make a deliberate attempt to disrupt the system or destroy data. These actions are illegal and could result in serious consequences. Disks brought in from outside the school should be virus scanned before using. This can be done from the menu option on the bottom of the main menu screen.

9. **Respect the limits of our system.** Check your e-mail frequently, and delete unwanted messages promptly. Do not post chain letters or unnecessary messages to a large number of people.

10. **Be responsible in saving important data.** The USA District shall be "held harmless" for data lost by an individual as a result of delays, service interruptions, etc.

11. **Be aware that any violation of the above may result in the follow disciplinary action:**

- loss of computer privileges
- financial responsibility for damages
- possibility of a police report for illegal activities

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Additional group tests such as STAR Reading and Math Tests and the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Classroom tests will be used to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected or prepared by teachers to assess how well the students have achieved specific objectives.

Vocational and interest surveys such as the Differential Aptitude Test (DAT) may be given to identify particular areas of student interest or talent. These are often given by the guidance staff.

If necessary, intelligence tests, speech and language evaluations, individually administered achievement tests, and other special testing services are available to students needing these services.

Students will not be required, as part of the school program or District curriculum, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information of a personal nature in accordance with Board policy and Federal guidelines.

Depending on the type of testing and specific information requested, parent consent may need to be obtained. USA Middle School will not violate the rights of consent and privacy of a student participating in any form of evaluation.

SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

USA Middle School provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. A curricular-related activity may be for credit, required for a particular course, and/or contain school subject matter.

A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's extracurricular participation.

The school has several student groups that are authorized by the School. It is the District's policy that only authorized groups are those approved by the Board of Education and sponsored by a staff member. Authorized groups include: Quiz Bowl, student council, and yearbook.

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the school curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non-school sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the Principal. The application must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. School rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as prescribed by law is not permitted. All groups must comply with School rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

No non-district sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

ATHLETICS

USA Middle School provides a variety of athletic activities in which students may participate providing they meet any eligibility requirements that may apply. A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and participation. The following is a list of activities currently being offered. For further information, contact Mark Gainforth, Athletic Director at 883-3140.

Students in the seventh and eighth grades may participate interscholastically in boys' football, boys' and girls' basketball, girls' volleyball, boys' and girls' cross country and boys' and girls' track.

Students will follow the athletic guidelines established by the Board of Education. Each athlete and their parent must sign the Athletic Code before participating in any sport during the school year. All athletes must also have passed a physical examination and have a physical card signed by a parent on file in the Principal's Office. Athletic codes and physical cards are available in the office.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The school does not encourage students to take jobs outside of school that could interfere with their success in school. If a student believes that s/he must maintain a job in addition to going to school, s/he must first make contact with his/her counselor to discuss any legal requirements and obtain any needed documents.

DRIVER EDUCATION

Driver education for qualified students is being offered by Kars Driver Training. Anyone interested may contact at (810) 635-1772.

SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE

School Attendance Policy

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Much important learning results from active participation in classroom and other school activities, which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic, which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the School wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

Truancy

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant will receive no credit for schoolwork that is missed. After 9 days of truancy in any semester, a student will be considered a "habitual truant" which can result in:

- assignment to an alternative placement with loss of participation in school activities and events; a hearing before a judge in a court of law; a report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school for one of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed schoolwork and/or tests:

- personal illness but not illness in the family unless the circumstances are approved by the Principal; death in the immediate family; recovery from accident; bona-fide religious holiday; professional appointments that cannot be scheduled at non-school times; absences approved by the Principal for good cause.

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

Parents must provide an explanation for their child's absence by no later than 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence or by the following day. They are to call the Middle School office at 883-3140 and explain the reason for the absence. If the absence can be foreseen and the "good cause" must be approved by the principal, the parent should arrange to discuss the matter as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up the missed school work.

Students who are excusably absent for more than 13 days in a semester, regardless of the reasons, will be considered "frequently absent". If there is a pattern of frequent absence for "illness", the parents will be required to provide a statement from a physician describing the health condition that is causing the frequent illness and the treatment that is being provided to rectify the condition.

During the next grading period, a 'frequently-absent' student will be placed on 'attendance watch' to monitor whether or not the pattern continues. If it continues, the student may be denied the opportunity to participate in non-curricular school activities and events and a notation made on his/her grading record and transcript concerning his/her frequent absence from school. Such a report may be provided postsecondary institutions and/or possible employers.

Suspension from School

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up schoolwork lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from the guidance office beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school.

The student will be given credit for properly-completed assignments and a grade on any made-up tests.

His/her grade for work ethic will be diminished and indicate "absence from school due to discipline".

Excusable, Non-approved Absence

Generally it is not in the best interest of a student to be absent from school. If a student is absent from school because of suspension or vacation, the absence will not be considered a truancy, and s/he may be given the opportunity to make up the schoolwork that is missed.

Unexcused Absences

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant and the student and his/her parents shall be subject to the truancy laws of the State. No credit shall be given for any schoolwork not completed as a result of truancy.

Notification of Absence

If a student is going to be absent, the parents must contact the school (883-3140) by 9:00 a.m. and provide an explanation. If prior contact is not possible, the parents should provide a written excuse as soon as possible. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

An excused absence allows the student to make up all possible work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of schoolwork such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

The skipping of classes or any part of the school day is considered an unexcused absence and no make-up of class work will be permitted. Disciplinary action will follow.

Tardiness

Each student is expected to be in his/her assigned location throughout the school day. If a student is late in arriving at school, s/he is to report to the school office before proceeding to his/her first assigned location. Students who have accumulated three unexcused tardies to any class will be disciplined to make up the lost class time.

Vacations During the School Year

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the Principal and the student's teacher(s) to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip.

Make-up of Tests and Other School Work

Students who are excusably absent from school or who have been suspended shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact the Guidance Office as soon as possible to obtain assignments.

Make-up work due to suspension must be completed by the time the student returns to school.

Students will be given the number of days of excused absence within which to make-up work. If a student misses a teacher's test due to excused absence, s/he may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If s/he misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the Guidance Counselor to arrange for taking the test.

MiBLSi

This is the third year USA Middle School will be implementing the MiBLSi program. The information below is a summary of this statewide initiative to improve student achievement through addressing both academic skills and social behaviors.

Our implementation of the program may also result in subtle adjustments to our behavioral expectations and academic programs during the school year. We will inform parents and students of these changes if they are necessary.

Mission Statement:

To develop support systems and sustained implementation of a data-driven, problem solving model in schools to help students become better readers with social skills necessary for success.

What is MiBLSi:

MiBLSi stands for Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative. Funded by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), this project is designed to help schools develop school wide support systems in reading and behavior. MiBLSi is a Response to Intervention (RtI) model that takes approximately three years to complete. Schools that participate in the MiBLSi grant have a series of trainings designed to help them implement reading and behavior systems. Most sessions are provided regionally; larger groups are provided in Lansing. The training sequence is heavy in the first year and tapers off in the second and third years. Schools typically send a leadership team of five to seven people to the trainings. Principal attendance is essential! Buildings are responsible for delivering the information received back to their building staff.

MiBLSi as Response to Intervention (RtI):

MiBLSi is a successful implementation of a Response to Intervention (RtI) model. According to the RtI Action Network, RtI is a multi-tiered approach to help struggling Learners. Students' progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both.

There are several key features of an RtI model:

- Universal screening
- Data-based decision making and problem solving
- Continuous progress monitoring
- Focus on successful student outcomes
- Continuum of evidence-based interventions
 - A core curriculum is provided for all students
 - A modification of this core is arranged for students who are identified as nonresponsive
 - A specialized and intensive curriculum for students with intensive needs

Why focus on reading and behavior?

Schools that have been using the MiBLSi process are finding that as disruptive behavior decreases, reading scores increase, as schools are free to address instructional needs. MiBLSi also helps schools use student data to intervene early with students that are struggling in reading and/or with behavior issues.



Patriot PRIDE



Ppractice Responsibility

Respect Self and Others

Increase Learning

Demonstrate Safety

Envision Success

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at USA Middle School is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

USA MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

To create an effective environment for learning, the following behaviors are expected of all USA Middle School students:

- A. Be prompt and prepared**
 - 1. Come on time
 - 2. Come with needed materials
 - 3. Come with assignments complete.
- B. Respect authority**
 - 1. Listen to authority
 - 2. Follow directions promptly
 - 3. Accept responsibility for behavior
- C. Respect rights of others**
 - 1. Use appropriate voice and language
 - 2. Listen to speaker
 - 3. Respect opinion and points of others
 - 4. Refrain from harassment
- D. Respect property**
 - 1. Respect property of others
 - 2. Respect own property
- E. Display a concern for learning**
 - 1. Remain on task
 - 2. Allow others to remain on task
- F. Display appropriate social skills**
 - 1. Cope (disagreement, teasing, failure)
 - 2. Display courtesy and tact
 - 3. Interact with others appropriately
- G. Display appropriate character**
 - 1. Display positive character
 - 2. Display productive character

USA MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL PLAN

The intent of this school discipline process is to teach students who are acting as a disturbance within the school environment, how to search within themselves, decide how they want to be, then learn to think of ways of achieving their goals without violating the rights of another. A discipline process, to be effective, must treat students the same way as those having difficulty in an academic subject: in a non-punitive, non-controlling atmosphere with understanding, respect, and patience.

This is the Responsible Thinking Process (RTP).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Respect self, others and property.
- Bring required materials to class and be ready to work when class begins.
- Follow directions the first time given.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Show common courtesy.

RESPONSIBLE THINKING PROCESS

When a disruption occurs - teachers will ask these questions:

- What are you doing?
- What are the rules?
- What happens when you break the rules?
- Is this what you want to happen?
- Where do you want to be?
- What will happen if you disrupt again?

RESPONSIBILITY ROOM RULES

If a student chooses to disrupt, he/she will be sent to the Responsibility Room

- You are required to contact your parent/guardian
 - You must sit at your desk and remain quiet.
- You must raise your hand if you need help
- You may do school work.
 - You may read.
 - You may sit and think
 - You must write a plan before you return to class
 - You may be allow to return to class once you have written an acceptable plan, negotiated and display appropriate behavior

CHARACTER

Core democratic values are the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles of American society. Some of these core democratic values include: truth, patriotism, diversity, equality, individual rights, and the common good. These values unite all Americans. The USA Middle School staff believes that many democratic values are taught and learned both at home and at school.

As a measure of how well each student has mastered the application of these values to their daily school life, each student will receive a character grade from each of their teachers according to the following scale:

- A – outstanding
- B – above average
- C – acceptable
- E – unacceptable

At USA Middle School a student who exhibits an outstanding character acts in the following manner:

- Respect:** Is courteous to school personnel and fellow students
Always follows the school rules of conduct and is helpful in encouraging others to do the same.
Communicates with others in an appropriate manner
- Caring:** Takes proper care of school property and the USA Middle School building and grounds
- Trustworthiness:** Always does his/her own work. Never cheats.
Works independently and productively when not directly supervised
- Fairness:** Respects others' opinions and values their ideas
Respects all students' right to a safe school environment
Respects each teacher's right to teach uninterrupted
- Responsibility:** Comes prepared to class and participates to their maximum potential
Pre-arranges absences when possible and completes homework ahead
Asks for missed assignments when returning from an absence
- Citizenship:** Leads by a positive example
Is willing to work for the common good in class and around the school

Character honor roll

Students who earn all "A" or "B" grades in character for any given quarter will be named to the character honor roll for that quarter. A "C" grade will keep the student from being on the character honor roll, as will any suspension from school for that quarter.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their schoolwork and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as non-participants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The School will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a School activity. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events regardless of the location.

Code of Conduct

A major component of the educational program at USA Middle School is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Expected Behaviors

Each student shall be expected to:

- abide by national, State and local laws as well as the rules of the school;
- respect the civil rights of others;
- act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- be prompt to school and attentive in class
- work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability or ethnic background;
- complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly and productive;
- act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family and in the school

Dress and Grooming

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

Students should consider the following questions when dressing for school:

Does my clothing expose too much? (no)

Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors? (no)

Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing? (no)

Would I interview for a job in this outfit? (yes)

Am I dressed appropriately for the weather? (yes)

Does my clothing imply or suggest an inappropriate message? (no)

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting. The building principal will have the final authority in determining if a student's manner of dress is hazardous or disruptive.

Specific dress restrictions include but are not limited to:

1. Hats are not to be worn in the Middle School building at any time.
2. Hair must be clean, well groomed and out of the eyes. Hair that is not of natural color, which may cause distraction or attention, will not be allowed.
3. Shoes must be worn.
4. Short shorts and mini-skirts are not allowed. Shorts and skirts should be loose fitting
5. Any type of garment which is not long enough to be tucked in or not long enough to meet the lower garment and/or unduly exposes any portion of the body, will not be worn in school. This includes body suits, half shirts, and tank tops.
6. Garments with holes above the knees will not be allowed.
7. Garments, buttons, and patches, which advocate the use of tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs are prohibited.
8. Garments, buttons, or patches with profane, provocative, vulgar, or obscene suggestions, language and symbols are prohibited.
9. Adornments which are potentially dangerous or a disruption to the educational process will not be allowed. (including wallet chains, or other heavy chains used as jewelry.)

Students who are representing USA Middle School at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

Gangs

Gangs which initiate, advocate or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or which are disruptive to the school environment are not tolerated.

Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations or related activities which are likely to cause harm or personal degradation are prohibited.

Students wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures which symbolize gang membership or causing and/or participating in activities which are designed to intimidate another student will be disciplined. Prohibited gang paraphernalia will be specifically identified and posted by the building principal.

Care of Property

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the school staff's responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

The following chart provides examples of major areas that could result in disciplinary action. An explanation of each behavior and possible consequence follows the list. The absence of a behavior or any specific action from the list does not mean that such conduct does not violate the discipline code or cannot be punished.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE*

BEHAVIOR	PROBABLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION			
	DISCRETIONARY	RESTRICT	SUSPEND	EXPEL
1. Use of Drugs Possession Distribution Sale Use			X	X
2. Use of Breath Test Instruments	X			
3. Use of Tobacco Possession Use	X		X	
4. Disorder/demonstration	X		X	X
5. Possession of a weapon			X	X
6. Use of an object as a weapon			X	X
7. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence	X	X	X	X
8. Purposely setting a fire			X	X
9. Physically assaulting a staff person, student or other person			X	X
10. Verbally threatening a staff person, student, or other person	X	X	X	X
11. Extortion	X		X	X
**12. Gambling or cheating	X		X	
**13. Falsification of schoolwork, identification, and/or forgery	X		X	
14. False alarms, false reports, bomb threats			X	X
15. Explosives			X	X
16. Trespassing	X	X	X	X
17. Theft	X		X	X

*This list of unacceptable behavior is only a guide and is not intended to cover all behavior which may be disciplined. In addition, the school may vary from the stated disciplinary action as it deems necessary.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

	BEHAVIOR	PROBABLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION			
		DISCRETIONARY	RESTRICT	SUSPEND	EXPEL
**18.	Disobedience	X	X	X	X
**19.	Damaging property	X	X	X	X
**20.	Persistent absence or tardiness	X	X		
21.	Unauthorized use of school or private property	X	X	X	X
**22.	Refusing to accept discipline	X	X	X	X
**23.	Aiding and abetting violation of school rules	X	X	X	X
**24.	Engaging in displays of affection	X	X	X	
25.	Possession of electronic equipment	X	X	X	
**26.	Violation of individual school or classroom rules	X	X	X	X
27.	Violation of bus rules	X	X	X	X
**28.	Disruption of the educational process	X	X	X	X
29.	Harassment	X	X	X	X
30.	Possession of a firearm, arson and criminal sexual conduct			X	X

** Subject to teacher initiated suspension

Teacher Initiated Suspension

A teacher may suspend a student from class, subject or activity for up to one (1) full school day for certain conduct as specified in the Code of Conduct. The teacher shall immediately send the student to the Principal and specify the reason for the suspension as specified in the Student Code of Conduct. As soon as possible after the suspension, the teacher shall schedule a parent-teacher conference regarding the suspension. If feasible, a counselor, psychologist or social worker shall attend the conference. The Principal may attend upon request of the teacher or parent. The student shall not be returned to the class, subject or activity that school day without the consent of both the teacher and the Principal.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

1. Use of drugs

A student's use or sale of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and extracurricular participation.

The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic and extracurricular participation.

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, use, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

The sale, distribution, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants or look-alike drugs that has a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes non-alcoholic beers and wines and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

1st offense--Nine-day suspension, parental conference, police may be contacted
· Verification of enrollment in a drug awareness/prevention program must be submitted as a condition of reinstatement.

2nd offense--Indefinite suspension pending a board of education hearing for long term suspension or expulsion.

2. Use of Breath-Test Instruments

The Principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

Drinking or possession of alcoholic beverages

1st offense—Nine-day suspension, parental conference, and police may be contacted. Verification of enrollment in an alcohol awareness/prevention program must be submitted as a condition of reinstatement.

2nd offense--Indefinite suspension pending a Board of Education hearing for long term suspension or expulsion.

3. Use of tobacco

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

1st offense—Three-day suspension and parental conference. Police may be contacted and a fine of up to \$100.00 may be issued.

2nd offense—Nine-day suspension, parental conference, police contacted and evidence of enrollment in a smoking awareness/prevention program must be submitted as a condition of reinstatement.

4. Student disorder/demonstration

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

5. Possession of a weapon

A weapon includes, but is not limited to: firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item

B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle

C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

6. Use of an object as a weapon

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to expulsion.

7. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

8. Purposely setting a fire

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and may subject the student to expulsion.

9. Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor, which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

Hitting another student with intent to harm: One to three day suspension.

Fighting: *1st offense*--Three-day suspension with parental conference.

2nd offense--Five-day suspension with possible board hearing.

10. Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered a verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

1st offense--Warning

2nd offense--Two-day suspension and parental conference.

3rd offense--Five-day suspension and possible board hearing.

11. Extortion

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

1st offense--Three-day suspension and parental conference.

2nd offense--Five-day suspension and possible board hearing.

12. Gambling

Gambling includes: casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

13. Falsification of schoolwork, identification, forgery

Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false ID's are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Instances of cheating include but are not limited to stealing answers, possessing stolen answers, using crib sheets to take tests, copying other student's homework, knowingly allowing another student to cheat, plagiarism, or looking at other students' answers. Violations of this rule could result in suspension.

1st offense--A zero grade for the assignment or test. Phone call to parents.

2nd offense--A zero grade for the assignment or test, parental conference, and one-day suspension.

14. False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank, is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

15. Explosives

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

16. Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

17. Theft

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the principal. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

1st offense--Three-day suspension and parental conference.

2nd offense--Five-day suspension and possible board hearing.

18. **Disobedience**

School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in suspension or expulsion.

19. **Damaging property**

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion. Student is responsible for cost to repair or replace. Three-day suspension, if intentional.

20. **Persistent absences or tardiness**

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to in-school suspension.

21. **Unauthorized use of school or private property**

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guideline. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

22. **Refusing to accept discipline**

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

23. **Aiding or abetting violation of school rules**

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

24. **Displays of affection**

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

25. Possession of Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs)

A student may possess a cell phone or electronic communication device on school property, but **must** turn it in to the school office during school hours.

Sexting is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students; but also can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission of possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the wireless communication device (WCD).

Except as authorized under Board policy, use of cellular telephones or other electronic communication devices (ECDs) and electronic storage devices (ESDs) in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions will be subject to disciplinary action.

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy”. A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action including suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, s/he will fail the exam and receive a one-day suspension. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.

26. Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

27. Profanity and obscene gestures

Inappropriate comments and gestures including swearing will result in consequences varying from a warning to detention or suspension at the discretion of the building principal.

28. **Violation of bus rules**

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules.

29. **Disruption of the educational process**

Any actions or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events. Violations of this rule may result in suspension or expulsion.

30. **Harassment**

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the district to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the Principal or Guidance Counselor or may report it directly to the Superintendent at 883-2360. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it it's a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

- A. submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- B. submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcome conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- C. the unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment, may include, but is not limited to

- A. verbal harassment or abuse;
- B. pressure for sexual activity;
- C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- D. unwelcome touching;
- E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance of public duties.

- G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- H. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

Note: An inappropriate boundary invasion by a District employee or other adult member of the School district community into a student's personal space and personal life is sexual harassment. Further, any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State law. M.C.L.A 722.621 et. seq.

31a. **Hazing**

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- A. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
- B. physical punishment or infliction of pain
- C. intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
- D. dangerous activity;
- E. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
- F. forced detention or kidnapping;
- G. undressing or otherwise exposing initiates.

Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff are involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

31b. **Bullying**

The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

Bullying – intimidation of others by acts, such as but not limited to:

- A. threatened or actual physical harm;
- B. unwelcome physical contact;
- C. threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications;
- D. taking or extorting money or property;
- E. damaging or destroying property;
- F. blocking or impeding student movement.
- G. electronically transmitted acts – i.e., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device for text messaging, instant messaging, blog web sites or online bullying through social networking sites (e.g., my space.com, facebook.com) to harass through unpleasant or aggressive messages.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior including bullying or hazing, should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent.

Confidentiality

Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure names and allegations.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be annually, circulated to all school building and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires of the District will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related compliant procedure.

32. Possession of a firearm, arson and criminal sexual conduct

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

over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the Principal's Office.

Criminal acts

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to, theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

Safety Concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards and scooters in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Profanity

Any behavior or language, which in the judgment of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the Principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the School shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

Informal Discipline

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It includes:

- writing assignments;
- change of seating or location;
- lunch-time or after-school detention;
- in-school restriction;
- Saturday school.

Detentions

A student may be detained after school or asked to come to school early by a teacher, after giving the student and his/her parents one (1) day's notice. The student or his/her parents are responsible for transportation. Failure to timely serve a detention may result in an in-school suspension. A student who refuses to serve an in school suspension will be suspended out of school until they are ready and willing to return to school to serve the in-school suspension.

The following rules shall apply to in-school restriction:

- Students are required to have class assignments with them.
- Students are not to communicate with each other unless given special permission to do so.
- Students are to remain in their designated seats at all times unless permission is granted to do otherwise.
- Students shall not be allowed to put their heads down or sleep.
- No radios, cards, magazines, or other recreational articles shall be allowed in the room.
- No food or beverages shall be consumed.

Formal Discipline

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense.

If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to the superintendent and a formal appeal hearing will be held.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to attend. The Board Discipline Committee then takes testimony and determines if a recommendation to expel is to be made to the Board of Education. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

Students involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the School rules.

If a student commits a crime while at school or a school-related event, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the community's legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime).

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Suspension from School

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the Principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the superintendent. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

During the appeal process, the student shall not be allowed to remain in school.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, and the like or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

Long-term suspension or expulsion from school

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- * the charge and related evidence;
- * the time and place of the Board meeting;
- * the length of the recommended suspension or expulsion;
- * a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- * a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- * a statement that the student or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired students or parents;
- * a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- * a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction;
- * the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if Board/hearing officer approved.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Superintendent/School Board during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within ten (10) days after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the Superintendent/School Board. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

USA Middle School makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the Principal.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.).

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

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

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

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, non-commercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. A material cannot be displayed if it:
1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent, or vulgar,
 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
 3. intends to be insulting or harassing,
 4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
 5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations or the commission of an unlawful act.

B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the Principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the Principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. As with suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the Principal or to the student government.

A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION BUS POLICIES

Transportation of students to and from school and school activities is a service provided to families in the USA school district. To insure a safe and orderly trip the following bus policy has been adopted. Student misbehavior on the bus or at bus loading areas puts all students at risk of injury. Students who are unwilling to follow bus rules may lose the privilege of transportation services and will become the parents' responsibility for transportation to and from school.

1. All students shall be seated immediately upon entering the bus and in seats assigned by the driver.
2. No student shall stand or move from place to place while the bus is in motion.
3. Windows may not be opened more than halfway.
4. Students' heads and arms must stay inside the bus.
5. Students will use the back door only in case of emergency.
6. Eating and drinking on the bus is not allowed.
7. Students' will remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver opens the door.
8. When waiting for the bus, stand back. Do not crowd out toward the bus. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and the driver opens the doors before attempting to board the bus.
9. Students' who must cross the road after leaving the bus must pass in front of the bus, coming to a complete stop at the left front fender. Before crossing the road, look for traffic in both directions and walk across the road. Do not run.
10. Be ready for the bus; it does not wait. Wave the driver on if you are not riding.
11. Students will not be let off the bus at any place other than their regular stop unless they have a note which has been approved by a Principal or the Transportation Director.
12. Fighting, throwing of objects, profane language, indecent conduct and other misbehavior is strictly forbidden. Offenses will be reported to the Principal and the Transportation Supervisor.
13. Students engaged in serious or repeated misconduct will be denied transportation privileges. Parents will be notified by a building principal.
14. School rules of conduct also apply on school buses, including the regulations governing the use of alcohol, tobacco or the use of weapons.

Videotapes on School Buses

The Board of Education has authorized the installation of video cameras on school buses for the purposes of monitoring student behavior. Actual videotaping of the students on any particular bus will be done on a random-selection basis.

If a student is reported to have misbehaved on a bus and his/her actions were recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

BUS BEHAVIOR PLAN

Respect and Responsibility Target Area Goal:

All students, K-12, will demonstrate respect for others and their environment.
Students will be responsible for their behavior.

The following major offenses will not be tolerated on buses:

1. Weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, lighters
2. Fighting
3. Spitting
4. Disrespect to driver
5. Destruction of property

The following minor infractions will not be tolerated on buses:

1. Swearing, foul language, inappropriate gestures
2. Creating disturbances (yelling, etc.)
3. Changing seats while the bus is in motion
4. Throwing things

Bus drivers will use the following guidelines to enforce these rules:

1. Review the rules with the child
2. Warn the child, reinforcing the rule
3. Written Behavior Improvement Plan (courtesy call made by bus driver to parents)
4. Written bus conduct to building principal
 - copy to transportation supervisor and parents
 - include suspension dates
5. Suspension - 3 days minimum and a parent meeting prior to reinstatement.

(Students will start with a clean slate at the end of each semester, unless the suspension is for the entire year)

The following suspension guidelines will be used:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st suspension | 3 days |
| 2nd suspension | 10 days and a behavior contract |
| 3rd suspension | Removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year |

(Principals will communicate suspensions to drivers)

**PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK
2011-2012 School Year**

We _____
Parent/Guardian signature

Student signature

have **received** and **read** the Unionville-Sebewaing Area Middle School Student/Parent Handbook. We understand the rights and responsibilities pertaining to students and agree to support and abide by the rules, guidelines, procedures, and policies of the School District. We also understand that this handbook supersedes all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects.

Date