

Gilbert Middle School

Student Handbook 2021-22



Every Student. Every Day.

Dear Students and Families,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to Gilbert Middle School for what promises to be our best year yet. Since its start in 2006, GMS has been widely recognized as a top-rated middle school with a proud tradition of student success. I am honored and humbled to serve as principal and am looking forward to the upcoming school year.

The staff at GMS works exceptionally hard to provide our students with a safe and caring environment where relationships and connections are key. Our teachers appreciate and value the uniqueness of adolescents and provide learning experiences that are rigorous and relevant, offering deep exploration of issues that hold value beyond school. Our many activities, interventions, enrichments, and extracurriculars help us meet the district's challenge of "Every Student, Every Day".

The information on the following pages should serve as a guide during the upcoming school year. Please refer to it whenever questions arise regarding policies or procedures. The information refers to school board policy when possible and is updated annually. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The middle school years are a time when students grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically and academically. We appreciate this opportunity to share the journey with you. As the school year unfolds, please keep in mind one important thing - you belong here. Go Tigers!

Respectfully,



Michael Danilson
Principal

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to help students and parents clearly understand the policies and procedures of Gilbert Middle School and create a safe learning environment. Each student is responsible for the contents of this handbook. The policies in this handbook are subject to change due to revision of Board policy. This handbook is an extension of board policy and serves as a guide for students and their families about the Gilbert Community School District and Gilbert Middle School.

This handbook does not contain all of the rules and procedures under which Gilbert Middle School is operated. A complete list of Board policies can be found on the school's website at www.gilbertcsd.org.

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Abuse of Students by Employees

(Board Policy 402)

The Iowa Code, Chapter 102, requires all school districts to appoint investigators to review allegations of Abuse of Students by School Employees. The Level I Investigators for the Gilbert Community School District are Mike Danilson, Carrie Clark, Amy Griffin, Staci Edwards, and Vic Vanderpool.

Individuals with concerns regarding allegations of student abuse by school employees should contact one of these Level I Investigators:

Carrie Clark 103 Mathews Drive Gilbert, Iowa; 50105 515-232-3740 clarkc@gilbertcsd.org	Mike Danilson 201 E. Mathews Gilbert, Iowa; 50105 515-232-0540 danilsonm@gilbertcsd.org
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Attendance

Regular attendance by the students at school is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the educational program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students will attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Absences for any reason will be addressed as follows:

- Ten absences that are not related to illness over the course of the school year will result in a letter to parents indicating the number of absences and explaining the importance of regular attendance.
- Twenty absences that are not related to illness over the course of the school year will result in a meeting with parents, the guidance counselor, principal, superintendent (as needed), and the student. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the reason for absences, identify a plan to improve attendance, consider the possible consequences of future absences, and determine whether or not additional absences warrant referral to the county attorney.

Attendance - Excused Absence

(Board Policy 501)

Regular attendance by students is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students will attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Student absences approved by the principal are excused absences. Excused absences will count as days in attendance for purposes of the truancy law. These absences include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergencies, recognized religious observances, appointments that cannot be scheduled outside the school day and school-sponsored or approved activities.

The district believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students. However, there may be rare and unusual circumstances created by public emergencies declared by state or local officials which temporarily prevent students from attending traditional, in-person school. In these circumstances, the superintendent will have discretion to make reasonable accommodations for students, on a case-by-case basis, to attend school through remote learning opportunities within the available resources of the district and as permitted by law. During approved remote learning, attendance will be taken, assessments may be administered, and grades will count towards students' cumulative grade point average as if they were attending in person. The provision of special education

and accommodations for students who have individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans will be determined by each respective IEP or Section 504 team.

Students whose absences are approved will make up the work missed and receive full credit for the missed school work. It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a procedure with the student's teacher to complete the work missed.

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored activities must attend school full day the day of the activity unless permission has been given by the principal for the student to be absent. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. Absences are to be reported to the office at **515-232-0540** or **msoffice@gilbertcsd.org**. The principal may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence.

Attendance - Leaving School During School Hours

When a student must leave the school premises during the school day, he/she must obtain permission and sign out in the office. If a student arrives at school after the school day has begun, he/she should report immediately to the office to notify office personnel of his/her presence. In both of these cases, students are responsible to report to the office personally and not depend upon others to fulfill these duties. Failure to follow proper procedures may result in loss of privileges, the assignment of detention time, or suspension from school.

Attendance - Make-Up Work

Students will be allowed to make-up all work missed due to any absence and will receive full credit for make-up work handed in on time. Teachers will not have attendance or grading practices that are in conflict with this provision. School work missed because of absences must be made up within two times the number of days absent, not to exceed ten (10) school days. The time allowed for make-up work may be extended at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Attendance - Tardiness

A tardy is defined as arrival to class after the published start time. Arrival more than fifteen minutes after the period begins will be considered an absence. Any student arriving at school after the school day has started should report to the office immediately upon his/her arrival at school to record the time of arrival and the reason for being late.

Students who are tardy will be addressed as follows:

- 4th-6th Tardy per semester will result in detention (except at the elementary) and a letter to parents after the 4th tardy indicating the number of times the student has been tardy and explaining the importance of being on-time to classes.
- 7th Tardy per semester will result in a student meeting with the principal to discuss the violation of the mandatory attendance laws.
- 8th Tardy per semester will result in a meeting with parents, the guidance counselor or principal, and the student. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the reason for tardies, identify a plan to improve attendance, consider possible consequences of future tardies, and determine whether or not additional tardies warrant a referral to the county attorney.

Attendance - Unexcused Absences & Truancy

(Board Policy 501)

Truancy is the failure to attend school for the minimum number of

days established in the school calendar by the board. Truancy is the act of being absent without a reasonable excuse. These absences will include, but not be limited to: tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in parties and other celebrations, and employment. Truancy will not be tolerated by the board. Absences listed may be excused if the student is with a parent/guardian.

Students are subject to disciplinary action for truancy, including suspension and expulsion. It is within the discretion of the principal to determine, in light of the circumstances, whether a student may make up work missed because of truancy.

The principal will investigate the cause for a student's truancy. If the principal is unable to secure the truant student's attendance, the principal will refer the matter over to the county attorney. The school will participate in mediation if requested by the county attorney. The principal will represent the school district in mediation. The school district will monitor the student's compliance with the mediation agreement and will report any violation of the mediation agreement to the county attorney.

Discipline

(Board Policy 503)

The board believes inappropriate student conduct causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment, interferes with the rights of others, or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. Appropriate classroom behavior allows teachers to communicate more effectively with students.

Students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Consequences for the misconduct will be fair and developmentally appropriate in light of the circumstances.

Students who fail to abide by this policy, and the administrative regulations supporting it, may be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school district or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to participate in or obtain their education; conduct that is violent or destructive; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension, probation, and expulsion.

A student who commits an assault against an employee on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school-owned or school-operated chartered vehicles; or while attending or engaged in school district activities will be suspended by the principal. Notice of the suspension is sent to the board president. The board will review the suspension and decide whether to hold a disciplinary hearing to determine whether to impose further sanctions against the student which may include expulsion. In making its decision, the board shall consider the best interests of the school district, which shall include what is best to protect and ensure the safety of the school employees and students from the student committing the assault.

Assault for purposes of this section of this policy is defined as, when, without justification, a student does any of the following:

- An act which is intended to cause pain or injury to, or which is intended to result in physical contact which will be insulting or offensive to another, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act; or
- Any act which is intended to place another in fear of immediate physical contact which will be painful, injurious, insulting or offensive, coupled with the apparent ability to execute the act; or
- Intentionally points any firearm toward another or displays in a threatening manner any dangerous weapon toward another.

The act is not an assault when the person doing any of the above and the other person are voluntary participants in a sport, social or other activity, not in itself criminal, when the act is a reasonably foreseeable incident of such sport or activity, and does not create an unreasonable risk of serious injury or breach of the peace.

Disciplinary Action - Removal From Class

Teachers may send students from class when the continued presence of the student interferes with the ability of other students to learn. This disruption could be for excessive talking, insubordination, as well as other reasons. Upon being sent from class, a student should go directly to the principal's office. The student will meet with the principal and/or counselor and remain in the office for the remainder of the class period. A second removal from class that day may result in the student being kept in the office for the remainder of the day.

If the student is removed from the same class on more than one occasion, the student may lose the opportunity to attend that class for a period of time up to the remainder of the semester.

Disciplinary Action - Detention

(Board Policy 503)

Detention means the student's presence is required during non-school hours for disciplinary purposes. The student can be required to appear prior to the beginning of the school day, after school has been dismissed for the day, or on a non-school day. Whether a student will serve detention, and the length of the detention, is within the discretion of the licensed employee or the building principal, disciplining the student.

Teachers may assign detention in their room with one day's notice for inappropriate behavior in class. In order to require a detention, a teacher must contact parents. If a student does not attend detention, the teacher will inform the principal and the opportunity to serve detention will be given. If a student still refuses to serve detention, suspension will begin until the student serves the detention. Lunch detentions may also be assigned at the principal's discretion.

Disciplinary Action - Suspension

(Board Policy 503)

Suspension means; either an in-school suspension, an out-of-school suspension, a restriction from activities or loss of eligibility. An in-school suspension means the student will attend school but will be temporarily isolated from one or more classes while under supervision. An in-school suspension will not exceed ten consecutive school days. An out-of-school suspension means the student is removed from the school environment, which includes school classes and activities. An out-of-school suspension will not exceed ten consecutive school days. A restriction from school activities means a student will attend school and classes and practice but will not participate in school

activities.

The principal will conduct an investigation of the allegations against the student prior to the imposition of an in-school suspension. The investigation will include, but not be limited to, written or oral notice to the student of the allegations against the student and an opportunity to respond. Written notice and reasons for the in-school suspension will be sent to the student's parents.

A student may be given an out-of-school suspension for a commission of gross or repeated infractions of school rules, regulations, policy or the law, or when the presence of the student will cause interference with the maintenance of the educational environment of the operation of the school.

Notice of the out-of-school suspension will be mailed no later than the end of the school day following the suspension to the student's parents and the superintendent. A reasonable effort will be made to personally notify the student's parents and such effort is documented by the person making or attempting to make the contact. Written notice to the parents will include the circumstances which led to the suspension and a copy of school board policy and rules pertaining to the suspension.

Both types of suspensions (in-school and out-of-school) will be treated as excused absences. If a student is suspended, it will also cause that student to be ineligible for extracurricular activities including practices for the period of suspension. In the event of a second case of suspension, the student may be refused re-entry to school until a conference between the student, parent(s), and the principal has been held.

Discipline Issue - Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty occurs when a student uses or attempts to use unauthorized information in the taking of an exam / quiz; or submits as his or her own work essays, reports, drawings, or other products prepared by another person; or knowingly assists another student in such acts. Such behavior is unacceptable to the school district and students found guilty of academic dishonesty may receive no credit for the work involved.

Discipline Issue - Dangerous Weapons

(Board Policy 502)

Gilbert Community Schools believes weapons, other dangerous objects and look-alikes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects and look-alikes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes will be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Students shall not possess toy weapons on school property or at school except with the knowledge and permission of the building principal and then only for school or educational purposes. Violation of this policy shall result in confiscation of the "weapon" and detention or suspension, depending upon the student's disciplinary history.

Objects that resemble dangerous weapons include, but are not limited to, a toy pistol or rifle, squirt gun, cap gun, rubber knife, or

plastic grenade. Students who display any object in such a manner as to reasonably place another person in fear for his or her safety shall be subject to discipline by the principal or superintendent including possible suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

See Board Policy 502 for more information.

Discipline Issue - Disruptive Behavior

It is the responsibility of school staff to ensure a safe and orderly environment for all students. As such, behavior that includes the use of physical force or fighting; the use of profanity; the use of threats or verbal aggression; the use of derogatory speech in regards to one's color, creed, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, or familial status; or otherwise disruptive behavior (making loud noises or yelling in classrooms or hallways, destroying property, throwing objects, etc) may result in disciplinary action including detention, suspension, the involvement of law enforcement, and/or the loss of participation in future middle school events (dances, assemblies, etc).

Discipline Issue - Harassment

(Board Policy 104)

The Gilbert Community School District is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, staff, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed. Therefore, it is the policy of the state and the school district that school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior in school, on school property, or at any school function or school-sponsored activity.

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- "Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- "Harassment" and "bullying" shall mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student based on the individual's actual or perceived age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status, and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
 1. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
 2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
 3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance.
 4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Trait or characteristic of the student" includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

A Complainant who wishes to avail himself/herself of this procedure may do so by filing a complaint with the superintendent or building administrator. Complaints shall be filed within 180 days of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The building principal (hereinafter "Investigator") will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging bullying or harassment. The Investigator shall consider the totality of circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes bullying or harassment.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include suspension and expulsion. Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion.

Discipline Issue - Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs

(Board Policy 502)

Gilbert Community Schools prohibit the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol, tobacco, vapor products, other controlled substances, or "look alike" substances that appear to be tobacco, beer, wine, alcohol or controlled substances by students while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

The board believes such illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials generally cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors.

Violation of this policy by students will result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Use, purchase or being in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or tobacco products, and vapor products for those under the age of eighteen, may be reported to the local law enforcement authorities. Possession, use or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol and/or of a controlled substance may also be reported to the local law enforcement

authorities.

Discipline Issue - Vandalism

(Board Policy 502)

Students will treat school district property with the care and the respect they would treat their own property. Students found to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school district property may be required to reimburse the school district. They may be subject to discipline under board policy and the school district rules and regulations. They may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities.

Display of Posters

Students wishing to display posters within the school building must have these posters approved in the office prior to their being displayed. Posters should be restricted to providing factual information and may be limited in size, quantity, and location of posting. Posters that have not been approved will be removed. A limit of three posters may be posted in the middle school building.

Dress Policy

(Board Policy 502)

The Gilbert Community School District believes inappropriate student appearance may cause a material and substantial disruption to the school environment or may present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors. Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting.

Appearance disruptive to the education program will not be tolerated.

1. Headwear (including hoods) for both males and females is not to be worn in the building during the school day except for medical reasons, religious exceptions and in the form of a stocking hat on the way to/from recess.
2. Clothing/apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed.
3. Shoes must be worn in the building at all times.

The following student attire is deemed inappropriate for school:

1. Exposed undergarments
2. Clothing that reveals cleavage, one's backside or midriff
3. Clothing that calls undue attention to an individual and may disrupt the educational climate

The building principal will make the final determination of the appropriateness of student appearance. Infractions of this policy will result in progressive discipline that begins with being asked to change into clothing that meets the student dress standards. Continued infractions may result in detentions and suspensions. The intent for this policy is for students to understand that school is a workplace, and what is appropriate outside the workplace may not be appropriate at work.

Eligibility For Interscholastic Programs

(Board Policy 504)

The Board of Directors believes that a dynamic program of student activities is vital to the complete development of the student. Such activities offer opportunities to serve the institution, to assist in the development of fellowship and social good will, to promote self-realization and all-around growth and encourage the learning of qualities of good citizenship. Guidelines governing student participation in athletics are also addressed through the

district's athletic handbook.

Eligibility - Academics

The teachers, coaches, and administration at Gilbert Middle School believe that extracurricular activities like interscholastic athletics or fine arts performances (jazz band, musical, etc) are an important part of a young person's development. We also believe that students should be accountable for their academic work in order to participate in them. Students with 5 or more missing assignments are demonstrating they need more time to complete their work and, therefore, may be withheld from participation in rehearsals, practices, performances and/or games at the principal's discretion until such work is completed. Students would be eligible to participate again as soon as they have fewer than 5 missing assignments. Work that is missing as a result of excused absences will have an equivalent amount of time to be made up before it counts under this policy.

Eligibility - Admission Prior to Determination

If a student comes forward to a coach, administrator, or activity sponsor to admit (self-report) a violation of the Good Conduct Rule prior to the date on which a meeting is held with the student and administrator on the alleged violations, the student's penalty may be reduced by 1/2 for a first violation, by 1/4 for a second violation, or 1/4 of a third violation within the student's high school career. The reduction in penalty is only the time period. The community service will remain the same.

Eligibility - Appeal Process

Whenever a student is found to be in violation of the Good Conduct Policy, the following appeal procedure will be set in motion. During the appeal process, penalties assessed to the student will be enforced. The student and his/her parent/guardian shall be immediately notified in writing regarding a decision on the application of this policy. In this letter, the length of the period of ineligibility and a specific explanation of the reasons for the ineligibility will be stated.

Any student who is found by the administration to have violated the Good Conduct Policy may appeal to the Superintendent by contacting the Superintendent within 3 days of being advised of the violation. The Superintendent shall offer to meet with the student and his or her parents before rendering a written decision on the matter. If the student is still dissatisfied, he or she may seek further review by the school board by filing a written appeal with the board secretary at least 24 hours prior to the next board meeting. A special meeting of the board will not be called.

The review by the board will be in closed session unless the student's parent (or the student, if the student is 18) requests an open session. The grounds for review by the school board are limited to the following: (a) the student did not violate the Good Conduct Policy; (b) the student was given inadequate due process as provided in this policy; (c) or the penalty is not in compliance with Board Policy.

The penalty will remain in effect pending the outcome of the meeting with the board. If the school board reverses the decision of the administration, the student shall be immediately eligible and shall have any record of the ineligibility period and violation deleted from the student's record.

Eligibility - Good Conduct Policy

To maintain eligibility for participation in Gilbert extra-curricular activities, students must conduct themselves as good citizens both in and out of school at all times. Students who represent the

school in an activity are expected to serve as good role models to other students and to the members of the community.

Gilbert school administration will make the determination if a student has violated the Good Conduct Policy, and such determination will not require a legal conviction in a court of law. Any student accused of violating this Good Conduct Policy shall be provided an informal hearing by a school administrator at which time the student shall be informed of the allegation, informed of the basis of the allegation, and given an opportunity to tell the student's side. School administrators will determine by a "preponderance of the evidence" whether a student violated this good Conduct Policy by engaging in any of the following behaviors. Any violations also may be reported to law enforcement, to other school personnel, or to the student and/or his or her parents.

- Possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products, vapor products, or lookalike products
- Possession, use, or purchase of alcoholic beverages, including beer or wine, or participation with other students in such activities
- Possession, use, purchase, or attempted sale/purchase of illegal drugs, or the unauthorized possession, use, purchase or attempted sale/purchase of otherwise lawful drugs without a prescription, or participation with other students in such activities
- Engaging in any act that would be grounds for arrest or citation in the criminal or juvenile court system (excluding minor offenses such as traffic or hunting/fishing violations), regardless of whether the student was cited, arrested, convicted, or adjudicated for the act(s)
- Engaging in other inappropriate or offensive conduct such as assault, insubordination, refusing to cooperate with school officials or law enforcement authorities, hazing or harassment of others, etc. Note: this could include group conduct. Any student whose conduct, either in or out of school, is such as to make him or her unworthy to represent the ideals, principles and standards of the Gilbert Community Schools, shall be declared ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities by the administration.

Eligibility - School Attendance

Students who miss any part of a school day due to illness will not be eligible to participate in a contest, practice, game or any school sponsored event held on the same day. This includes taking part in after school practice sessions. Students missing for medical or dental appointments will be required to provide written verification of this from the provider.

Students who miss school for reasons other than illness must have their absences excused prior to the day they will miss, either in writing, by phone, or in person to be eligible for that day's events as either a participant or a spectator. The Principal or Designee has the discretion to allow participation on the day of the event, without an excused absence from the prior day, only after direct contact with the student's parents.

Truancy and unexcused absences will eliminate a student's eligibility to participate until the student resumes attendance and truancy or unexcused absence is resolved.

Eligibility - Student Conduct

In addition to any other portions of this policy, any student who is disqualified from an interscholastic contest by game officials for flagrant, violent, or verbal misconduct will be ineligible for the

next regularly scheduled game/meet at that level of competition and all other games/meets in the interim at any level. The second violation carries four regularly scheduled games/meets ineligibility. (In instances of double headers or double duals, etc.; the student is penalized for any remaining activity on that day, as well as the next regularly scheduled contest.)

If penalties are imposed at the end of the season and no contest remains, the penalty is carried over in that particular sport until the next school year. The penalty is not imposed from one sport program to the next sport program, unless the student is a senior. Then the penalty is carried over to the next sport program in which the student participates. This policy is in effect in all interscholastic contests, grades 7-12.

Also, any student intentionally striking an official shall be immediately suspended for the duration of that athletic season. For a second offense, the student shall be suspended from all interscholastic athletic activities for the duration of his/her school career. Any student that is disqualified from an event is required to meet with the Principal and Athletic Director before the student becomes eligible to participate.

Eligibility - Time Frames

A student may become ineligible at a time when he or she is not participating in any extracurricular activity. In this case the period of ineligibility begins as soon as the student does become a participant any time in the next twelve-month period. For the purpose of this policy, a week is defined as any week consisting of at least three days of school.

- 1st Violation: 25% of season
- 2nd Violation: 50% of season
- 3rd Violation: 1 calendar year (from the date of infraction) plus 150 hours of community service.
- 4th Violation: Permanent ineligibility.

Students are expected to attend practice during a time of ineligibility. Also, if a student is ineligible at any time while participating in a sport, that student must complete the entire season in order for any/all of ineligibility to be deleted through participation in that sport. Exceptions may be granted because of extenuating circumstances such as injury or extended illness.

Grading Policies

Gilbert Middle School uses a standards-based grading philosophy that focuses instruction, assessment, and learning on established learning standards. Teachers will focus on evidence of student learning of key learning standards. Behavior standards will also be assessed and shared.

Our grading rubric is as follows:

- 3 - Meets Expectations
- 2 - Progressing Toward Expectations
- 1 - Does Not Meet Expectations

Health Education

(Board Policy 603)

Students in grade levels preschool through twelve will receive, as part of their health education, instruction about personal health; food and nutrition; environmental health; safety and survival skills; consumer health; family life; human growth and development; substance abuse and nonuse, including the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and poisons on the human body; human sexuality; self-esteem; stress management; interpersonal relationships; emotional and social health; health resources; prevention and control of disease; and communicable diseases, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome. The purpose of

the health education program is to help each student protect, improve and maintain physical, emotional and social well-being.

Parents who object to health education instruction in human growth and development may file a written request that the student be excused from the instruction. The written request will include a proposed alternate activity or study acceptable to the superintendent. The superintendent will have the final authority to determine the alternate activity or study.

Non-Discrimination Policy

(Board Policy 102)

It is the policy of the Gilbert Community School not to discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, sex, religion, marital status, ethnic background, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic background in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Section 216.9 of the Iowa Code. The policy of the District shall be to provide educational programs and opportunities for students as needed on the basis of individual needs, interests, abilities and potential.

It is also the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and a variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a pluralistic society.

Inquiries and grievances regarding compliance with Title IX, Title VI, Section 504, or Section 216.9 should be directed to the district's Equity Coordinator: Carrie Clark, Curriculum Director, Gilbert Central Office, 103 Mathews Drive, Gilbert, Iowa; 50105, 515-232-3740, clarkc@gilbertcsd.org.

Inquiries may also be directed to: Director, Region VII Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 800, Milwaukee, WI, 53203-2292, 414-291-1111

Public Complaints

(Board Policy 213)

The board recognizes that situations may arise in the operation of the school district which are of concern to parents and other members of the school district community.

The board firmly believes concerns should be resolved at the lowest organizational level by those individuals closest to the concern. Whenever a complaint or concern is brought to the attention of the board it will be referred to the administration to be resolved. Prior to board action however, the following should be completed:

1. Matters should first be addressed to the teacher or employee.
2. Unsettled matters from (a) above or problems and questions about individual attendance centers should be addressed to the employee's building principal.
3. Unsettled matters from (b) above or problems and questions concerning the school district should be directed to the superintendent.
4. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the superintendent, it may then be brought to the board for consideration. To bring a concern, the individual shall notify

the board president or board secretary in writing, who may bring it to the attention of the entire board.

It is within the discretion of the board to address complaints from the members of the school district community, and the board will only consider whether to address complaints if they are in writing, signed, and the complainant has complied with this policy. The board is not obligated to address a complaint and may defer to the decision of the superintendent. If the board elects not to address a complaint, the decision of the superintendent shall be final. If the board does elect to address a complaint, its decision shall be final.

Respect for Property

Students who damage or vandalize school property or the property of others will be responsible for replacing the damaged property. Other consequences may also apply based on other policies contained in this handbook.

Students who lose items at school or suspect they have been stolen should report this to the office and fill out a theft report as soon as possible. Students should refrain from bringing valuable items or large amounts of money to school and lock their PE and hallway lockers if such items are brought to school.

Safety Drills

Gilbert Middle School will periodically conduct emergency drills as a regular part of training and preparedness in the school setting. Such drills include fire, tornado, lockdown and evacuation drills. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. Students are expected to remain orderly during a drill or an emergency.

School Cancellations

The cancellation of school for any reason will be announced first using the school alert system as soon as such a decision is made. The district has established a school alert system to provide notice to parents in case school is postponed, cancelled, or dismissed early. Parents are automatically called/mailed upon entering that information at school registration. More information can be found under the "Parents & Students" page of our website.

School Day

The school day starts at 8:05 AM and ends at 3:05 PM. Students are expected to be in their assigned classroom when the school day starts. We strongly recommend arriving at school at least ten minutes prior to the tardy bell (8:05 AM) to ensure adequate time to gather materials and arrive in class on time.

Search and Seizure

(Board Policy 502)

School district authorities may, without a search warrant, search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated. The search is in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the school district facilities.

The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, will not create a protected student area and will not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility.

School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized or

contraband materials discovered in the search. Items of contraband may include, but are not limited to, non-prescription controlled substances, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, apparatus used for controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, weapons, explosives, poisons and stolen property. Such items are not to be possessed by a student while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

Possession of such items will be grounds for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to local law enforcement officials. The board believes that illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials may cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

Student Complaints

(Board Policy 502)

Student complaints and grievances regarding board policy or administrative regulations and other matters should be addressed to the student's teacher or another licensed employee, other than the administration, for resolution of the complaint. It is the goal of the board to resolve student complaints at the lowest organizational level. If the complaint cannot be resolved by a licensed employee, the student may discuss the matter with the principal within three-five 5 school days of the employee's decision. If the matter cannot be resolved by the principal, the student may discuss it with the superintendent within three-five 5 days after speaking with the principal. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the superintendent, the student may ask to have the matter placed on the board agenda of a regularly scheduled board meeting in compliance with board policy.

Student Directory Information

(Board Policy 506)

Directory information is information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The district may disclose "directory information" to third parties without consent if it has given public notice of the types of information which it has designated as "directory information," the parent's or eligible student's right to restrict the disclosure of such information, and the period of time within which a parent or eligible student has to notify the school in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information designated as "directory information."

Prior to developing a student directory or to giving general information to the public, parents (including parents of students open enrolled out of the school district and parents of children homeschooled in the school district) will be given notice annually of the intent to develop a directory or to give out general information and have the opportunity to deny the inclusion of their child's information in the directory or in the general information about the students. Parents wishing to have their child excluded should notify the building principal in writing of this request.

Student Expression and Protest

(Board Policy 502.3)

Students will be allowed to express their viewpoints and opinions as long as the expression is responsible. It is a responsible

expression if it does not violate the following: the expression will not, in the judgment of the administration, encourage the breaking of laws, defame others, be obscene or indecent, or cause a material and substantial disruption to the educational program.

The administration, when making this judgment, will consider whether the activity in which the expression was made is school-sponsored and whether review or prohibition of the students' speech furthers an educational purpose. Further, the expression must be done in a reasonable time, place, and manner that is not disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the school district. Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary measures. Employees are responsible for ensuring students' expression is in keeping with this policy.

Student Fees, Fines, and Charges

(Board Policy 503)

The board believes students should respect school district property and assist in its preservation for future use by others. Students may be assessed fines, charges, or fees for the materials needed in a course, for overdue school materials, for participating in activities, or for misuse of school property.

Student Fee Waivers

(Board Policy 503)

The board recognizes that while certain fees charged students are appropriate and authorized, certain students and their families are not financially able to pay the fees. The school district will grant either full waivers, partial waivers or temporary waivers depending upon the circumstances and the student or student's parents' ability to meet the financial criteria.

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or who are in foster care are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Students whose families are experiencing a temporary financial difficulty may be eligible for a temporary waiver of student fees. Parents or students who believe they may qualify for temporary financial hardship should contact the Superintendent's office for a waiver form. This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.

Student Health

(Board Policy 507)

When a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the school district will attempt to notify the student's parents as soon as possible. The school district, while not responsible for medical treatment of an ill or injured student, will have employees present administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. An ill or injured child will be turned over to the care of the parents or qualified medical employees as quickly as possible.

Our primary aim is to prevent accidents through close supervision and teaching safety in the school. However, if an accident should occur, or a child becomes ill at school, the parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible. For this reason, it is very important for your child's contact/emergency information to be up-to-date and complete.

For the health benefit of your child and the other children that are in contact with them, keep your child home if any of the following conditions exist:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or greater (within 24 hours)

- Vomiting or diarrhea (within 24 hours)
- Earache lasting more than one day
- Persistent cough, croup or chest congestion
- Labored or painful breathing
- Reddened, mattered, or crusty eyes
- Moist, draining lesions on the lip or skin

Student Health - Medication

(Board Policy 507)

GMS is committed to the inclusion of all students in the education program and recognizes that some students may need prescription and nonprescription medication to participate in their educational program. Medication will be administered when the student's parent or guardian (hereafter "parent") provides a signed and dated written statement requesting medication administration and the medication is in the original, labeled container, either as dispensed or in the manufacturer's container. This includes over-the-counter preparations, as well as prescription drugs. Permission forms can be obtained from your student's building office and from the Gilbert Community School website under the school registration section at www.gilbertcsd.org.

When administration of the medication requires ongoing professional health judgment, the licensed health personnel shall develop an individual health plan with the student and the student's parents. Students who have demonstrated competence in administering their own medication may self-administer their medication. A written statement by the student's parents, including student competency in administering their own medication, shall be on file when requesting co-administration of medication. By law, students with asthma or other airway-constriction diseases may self-administer their medication upon approval of their parents and prescribing physicians regardless of competency.

Student Interpersonal Relations

Public displays of affection on school grounds or at school activities are not appropriate. Students engaging in public displays of affection will be warned. If further issues occur, students may be subject to consequences including detention or suspension.

Technology

(Board Policy 605)

Because technology is a vital part of the school district curriculum, the Internet will be made available to employees and students. Appropriate and equitable use of the Internet will allow employees and students to access resources unavailable through traditional means. The school district will monitor the online activities of students and will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting on social networking sites and chat rooms. Students will also be educated on cyberbullying, including awareness and response.

A student handbook is available online that specifies the policy and regulations regarding internet use and students are expected to comply.

Technology - Personal

Personal cell phones, gaming devices, computers, tablets, or music devices should not be used in the building between the hours of 8:05 AM and 3:05 PM with the exception of lunch period. The principal or classroom teacher will grant permission for exceptions to this policy. Use of personal devices at inappropriate times will result in confiscation of the device and

returning the item to the student at the end of the school day. A second offense may result in a parent/guardian meeting and returning the device to the parent/guardian after the meeting.

Students are solely responsible for the care and custody of all personal electronic devices they choose to possess. Students should take care to secure these devices. GMS shall not assume responsibility for loss, damage, destruction, or theft of any electronic device brought to school.

Cell phones with cameras and other portable Handheld Technology Devices capable of storing and/or transmitting and/or receiving images are banned from use for any purpose in locker rooms and restrooms at ALL times. Use of such technology in these areas will result in disciplinary action.

At no time are students or visitors authorized to video capture, photograph, or audio record others in the school building, on school property (to include school vehicles), or at school activities (unless recording a public performance, such as a school play, game, concert, contest, etc.), without the consent of a teacher, coach, or school administrator.

Technology - School-Provided

(Board Policy 605)

Every student at GMS will be provided with a Chromebook and district email. The use of each will be regularly monitored and no expectation of privacy should be assumed. When school technology is misused, the following will occur:

- First Offense: Warning and Parent Contact
- Second Offense: Suspension of technology determined by administrator.

After the second offense, the administrator will handle each loss of technology privileges individually based on the type and severity of the offense.

Technology - Repair/Replacement

When school-issued Chromebook devices are damaged or lost, the student assumes responsibility for repair and/or replacement of the device in the following manner:

- First incident of damage - family is responsible for 50% of actual repair cost
- Second incident of damage - family is responsible for 75% of actual repair cost
- Repairs beyond the second - family is responsible for 100% of actual repair cost

The student is responsible for the appropriate care and storage of the school issued Chromebook device both at school and at home. Examples of inappropriate storage and use include the following:

- Leaving the Chromebook unsecured or unattended
- Lending the Chromebook to another individual
- Using your Chromebook in an unsafe environment
- Using your Chromebook in an unsafe manner
- Loss of your Chromebook

This procedure mirrors our textbook replacement procedure. When any school issued device is damaged or lost, report the situation to the principal immediately. In the case of theft, the student, parents, and the district will file a police report in an effort to recover the device. Investigation of these incidents, due process, and appeals will be handled as outlined in the appropriate sections in this handbook.

Transportation - School Bus

(Board Policy 711)

Elementary and middle school students living more than two miles from their designated school attendance centers and high school students living more than three miles from their designated attendance centers are entitled to transportation to and from their attendance center at the expense of the school district.

Students utilizing school transportation will conduct themselves in an orderly manner fitting to their age level and maturity with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of the school vehicle driver and the other passengers. Students who fail to behave in an orderly manner will be subject to disciplinary measures.

All persons riding in school district vehicles will adhere to the following rules. The driver, sponsor or chaperones are to follow the school bus discipline procedure for student violations of this policy. Video cameras may be in operation on the school buses.

1. Bus riders will be at the designated loading point before the bus arrival time.
2. Bus riders will wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
3. Riders must not extend arms or heads out of the windows at any time.
4. Aisles must be kept clear at all times.
5. All bus riders will load and unload through the right front door. The emergency door is for emergencies only.
6. A bus rider will depart from the bus at the designated point unless written permission to get off at a different location is given to the driver.
7. A rider may be assigned a seat by the driver.
8. Riders who damage seats or other equipment will reimburse the district for the cost of the repair or replacement.
9. Riders are not permitted to leave their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
10. Waste containers are provided on all buses for bus riders' use.
11. Permission to open windows must be obtained from the driver.
12. Classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the bus except for ordinary conversation.
13. The driver is in charge of the students and the vehicle, and the driver is to be obeyed promptly and cheerfully.
14. Students will assist in looking after the safety and comfort of younger students.
15. A bus rider who must cross the roadway to board or depart from the bus will pass in front of the bus (no closer than 10 feet), look in both directions and proceed to cross the road or highway only on signal from the driver.
16. Students will not throw objects about the vehicle nor out through the windows.
17. Shooting paper wads, squirt guns or other material in the vehicle is not permitted.
18. Students will keep feet off the seats.
19. Roughhousing in the vehicle is prohibited.
20. Students will refrain from crowding or pushing.
21. The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or look-alike substances is prohibited in the vehicle.
22. The Good Conduct Rule is in effect.

A student reported to an administrator by a bus driver for misconduct will be warned and the incident will be reported to parents. The second report of misconduct will result in the student being suspended from riding privileges for one week.

Further infractions will result in progressively more severe penalties.

The board supports the use of video cameras on school buses used for transportation to and from school as well as for field trips, curricular or extracurricular events. The video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior and may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. The videotapes are student records subject to school district confidentiality, board policy and administrative regulations.

Transportation - To / From School Activities

Students will be required to ride to and from all school activities, in which they are participants, in school-owned or authorized vehicles with the following exception: Students may be transported to and from such activities by their own parents or guardians or by parents of other students involved in the activity. Parents or guardians of students involved must notify the principal or his/her designee in advance of any such trip. Under no circumstances will student participants be allowed to drive to and from such activities.

Visitor Policy

School administration is responsible for the safety and learning of the students in the school. All visitors to GMS must make arrangements with the principal in advance of their visit. Visitors must sign in and out, wear a visitor's badge during the length of their visit, and are to remain in the office for the duration of their visit unless they otherwise have permission of the principal.

Visits to a classroom are to be scheduled for a time that does not coincide with classroom assessments or district-wide testing. The school administrator may restrict the number of visitors and the length of their visit or may refuse a visit if the principal feels it would disrupt the learning environment. Former students or friends from other schools are allowed to have lunch with current GMS students but are not allowed to attend classes or school events, such as school dances.