

# **Zeeland Middle School Handbook**

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# Zeeland Middle School Handbook

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that students and parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board of Education policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Becoming familiar with the following information and keeping the handbook available for frequent reference would be a good idea. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to 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 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 August 2022. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after August 2022 the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

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## **MISSION OF SCHOOL**

Zeeland Public Schools, with family and community, prepare students for a lifetime of learning.

### **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

At Zeeland Public Schools, we believe in...

#### **Committing to Achievement:**

1. By holding high expectations for all students and staff;
2. With challenging and relevant curriculum in all areas of school life;
3. By developing higher-level thinking and self-directed learners;
4. While celebrating success.

#### **Creating Effective Learning Environments:**

1. With safe and nurturing schools that encourage active participation by all;
2. By recognizing change as an opportunity for growth;
3. While providing the necessary resources in an efficient and responsible manner.

#### **Relationships:**

1. Through active engagement and cooperation among students, staff, families, and community;
2. While recognizing our community's pride in its schools, staff, and students.

### **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of ZPS 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:

**Dr. Brandi-Lyn Mendham**

*Superintendent Zeeland Public Schools*

616-745-3002 / [bmendham@zps.org](mailto:bmendham@zps.org)

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**

Parent involvement is very important to the success of our students.

### **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

The staff of Zeeland Middle Schools realize how important it is for parents to have current information about their student's progress. Therefore, we would like to outline the most effective ways of communicating with middle school teachers.

**Parent Portal** – A web-based tool parents can use to view their student's information. Parents may view only the student information for their household, and it is easy to use. This is also a way to view your student's grades and attendance. Because of this, it has become unnecessary to mail home report cards. Please contact the main office with any questions regarding attendance or grades. Simply click on the description for the information you would like to view. To sign up, [visit the Parent page](#), and click on the Parent Portal option to fill out the application or stop by your student's school. If you are signed up but have problems viewing your student's information, please contact Laura Eisen at 616.748.3023.

**Telephone Calls / Emails** – We value communication with our families. Feel free to call or email your student's teacher(s). All middle school teachers' email addresses are available on the school's website or in the main office. Feel free to email your questions throughout the school year. Staff can be reached via their extension or by calling the school's main office.

**Conferences**– We have parent/teacher conferences during the year, and we encourage you to attend to meet your child's teachers.

## **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 to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure safety of all students and to protect the classroom/school learning environment for all students.
- Zeeland Public Schools encourages diversity and civic responsibility. While the district is prohibited from interfering with the First Amendment rights of our students, we are able to set limitations that ensure a school environment and culture that represent our Safe, Valued, and Loved motto for all. This means that, if speech is threatening, vulgar, profane, or likely to create a substantial disruption, the district will take action consistent with protecting our school environment and culture.
- 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, email 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.
- Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program. If this is not possible, the student should seek help from their teachers or counselors.

## **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 deliver written notice about such needs along with proper documentation by a physician to the School Office.

## **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 to go to the office. An appropriate adult in 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. 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 inability to participate in an educational program.

- Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications will be reviewed by our administration team. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.



## Section I – 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 must be enrolled by their parent or a legal guardian.

Enrollments may be done in person or through the [ZPS Online Enrollment](#).

When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- an original birth certificate or similar document,
- court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- proof of residency, or school of choice, proof of immunizations,
- enrollment packet and/or transcripts from previous school

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

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the office staff. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need to pass prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without the school officials getting permission from the student's parent or guardian. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

## **TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT**

Parents must notify the office staff about plans to transfer their child to another school. 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.

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 student will not be allowed to attend school until this is done. 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 office staff.

## **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 extracurricular 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 a prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- 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.
- All medications must be registered with the main office.
- 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.
- Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- 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 both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- 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 a physician and updated annually.
- Non-prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications – Note: Zeeland Public Schools does not claim to give medical advice in regards to allowing students to take over the counter medications. Therefore, the school will take the conservative position of requiring that all students must have a physician’s prescription or order to allow students to take non-prescription medication at school.

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 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.

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 (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 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 (IDEA) and State law. Contact your building administrator or your school's psychologist 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 their building principal with any questions pertaining to EL services.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

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

Neither the Board nor its employees 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.

**Directory information:** Each year the Board will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as “directory information”. 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
- Dates of attendance
- Awards received
- Honor rolls
- Telephone numbers for inclusion in school or PTO directories
- School photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs.

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such “directory information” upon written notification to the District within ten (10) days after receipt of the District’s public notice. The District may disclose “directory information” on former students without student or parental consent. 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 policy 8330. 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 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:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- sexual behaviors or attitudes;
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- 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:

- 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);
- The administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in 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 20202-4605

Washington, D.C. [www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco](http://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**

1. Zeeland Public Schools charges 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.

2. 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. (See Policy 6152)
3. Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.
4. 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.
5. Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Their use may be needed by others.
6. Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of grades and credits.

## **STUDENT FUNDRAISING**

Only 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:

1. Students involved in the fund-raiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.
2. Students must not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members without the approval of the administration of the school.

3. Students may not participate in fund-raising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.
4. Students may not 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. Any parent who wishes to review materials 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**

1. 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.

2. The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee. Ala carte items are available. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. No students are allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written/verbal permission granted by the principal.
3. Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are available to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes that s/he is eligible, contact our food service at 748-3128 or see the main office for an application.

## **FIRE, LOCK DOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS**

1. 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. The alarm signal for fire drills consists of fire alarms and lights.
2. Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State. The alarm signal for tornadoes is different from the alarm signal for fires and lock down drills.
3. 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**

1. If the school must be closed, or the opening delayed, because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will notify local radio and television stations. All information should be available by 6:00 a.m. This information can also be accessed via our website, and a Z for Me will be sent to registered email addresses. Parents and students are responsible for checking available resources for information on emergency closings or delays.
2. Families should already have their mobile phones registered for ZPS School Messenger, but may need to opt in for services.
  - a. To ensure enrollment for ZPS School Messenger TEXT: Y or YES to 67587 (if there are any technical issues, please contact the ZPS Technology Office at 748-4526)
3. Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

## **VISITORS**

1. Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school with permission from the principal. 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.
2. Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the Principal.

## **USE OF THE MEDIA CENTER**

The Media Center 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 set period of time. To check out any other materials, contact the librarian.

## **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 protection of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Students who have lost items should check the lost and found which is in a designated area in each building. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of each semester or other announced time.

## **STUDENT SALES**

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

## **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

### **Statement on Student Technology:**

Zeeland Public Schools encourages the use of student technology when that use enhances the educational experiences of our students. Zeeland Public Schools discourages the use of student technology when that use distracts the user from the classroom experience, disrupts the educational experience



of others, or compromises the integrity of the classroom. Students and parents should also be aware that electronic items are often targeted for theft.

**Personal Electronics Policy** – Any non-school issued electronic devices such as, but not limited to, Cell Phones/Radios/Recorders/Cameras/DVD, CD and MP-3 players, are only allowed to be used by students before and after the school day or at the discretion of school staff. Students may not use electronic devices in restrooms or locker rooms for any reason. Non-school issued electronic devices brought to school must be stored in the student's locker during the school day. Any non-school issued electronic device entering class may be confiscated if they are being used without permission of the teachers during scheduled class time, disrupt normal school business and/or instruction, or as deemed necessary by school personnel. Any electronic devices may be used in the classroom with permission of the class instructor. Prior approval from the instructor must be given for a student to use any electronic device during class time and is at the sole discretion of the instructor.

**Chromebooks** – Please consult your Chromebook policies and procedures manual for questions concerning the use and care of the Chromebook. Students are responsible for the care and all information acquired and stored on the Chromebook, while in their possession. While games, music, videos, and sound use are allowed in school; students are not allowed to play music or videos out loud anywhere on school grounds without permission from a teacher or administrator. Please refer to our ZPS Parent and Student Chromebook Handbook for more information.

**Unauthorized Recording and Pictures** – No student shall use an electronic device to record (audio and/or video) or take still pictures of other students or staff without their knowledge and approval. Any student found in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

## **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal.

## **Section II – Academics and Course Offerings**

Each grade level has four core subjects that students take every school year. Those subjects are English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. There are two elective options in a student’s schedule as well.

### **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 extracurricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent. Behavior rules and the student code of conduct apply to all field trips.

### **GRADES**

Zeeland Middle Schools have 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. 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:

- A 94-100
- A- 90-93
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 73-76

- C- 70-72
- D+ 67-69
- D 63-66
- D- 60-62
- F 59 and below

**Grading Periods** – Students shall receive information via Infinite Campus for updated grades (every 4.5 weeks) and report cards (every 9 weeks) indicating their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term. Please refer to the Parent and/or Student Portal in Infinite Campus for these grade updates. Students are encouraged to meet with their teachers during DEAL to improve their grades or to work with our Academic Interventionist in Success Time at lunch.

## **COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

Computer Information Technology is provided to assist in each students' educational growth and aid student, teacher, and parent communication. Further information is available in the Parent and Student Chromebook Handbook.

The following are expectations of all Computer Information Technology users:

1. Will only utilize technology that facilitates learning and promotes educational information exchange consistent with the goals of ZPS.
2. Will adhere to any established classroom rules and obtain permission where and when it is required.
3. Will refrain from malicious use of technology resources to disrupt computer use by others or to harass or discriminate against others.
4. Will report any observed misuse of Computer Information Technology to the supervising teacher or principal.
5. Will respect the privacy and use privileges of others on this campus and for sites accessible through the network.

6. Will not intentionally seek information, modify files or data, and obtain passwords or anything else with malicious intent or with the intent to breach the privacy of another user or infiltrate unauthorized computer systems.
7. Be responsible for all material received via the Internet including any inappropriate material such as pornography, malicious software or inappropriate files.
8. Will properly use hardware and software and will report existing or created problems to someone in authority.
9. Will adhere to copyright guidelines in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of files, or information on the Internet to and/or from other sources.
10. Be aware that their data or email files are not private and are subject to review when deemed necessary.
11. Will obtain permission from a school official before accessing an outside email account for the sole purpose of sending/receiving school related information.
12. Will be responsible for the use of their accounts and access privileges and are prohibited from publishing or discussing passwords or leaving accounts unattended.
13. Will not attempt to use, harm or destroy another user's account, or any information on another user's account.
14. Will be held responsible for the use of her/his account and/or access privilege. Any problems that arise from the use of a student account are the responsibility of the account holder. A violation of the Technology Use Policy may result in consequences. These consequences might include: a short-term or long-term loss of all computer privileges; an In School or Out of School Suspension; or being dropped from a class. Extreme violations may result in expulsion.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

1. M-Step Testing is administered to all middle school students and will include various core related tests based on grade level. These state assessments are traditionally given during an April/May testing window.
2. The PSAT8 is given to 8th grade students on a predetermined date (usually the week after spring break) set by the College Board.
3. Additional assessments such as the STAR are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.
4. 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.

## **Section III – Clubs and Activities**

### **NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

1. Non-school sponsored student groups may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that 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. However, each group or club must have a staff sponsor. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.
2. 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.
3. No non-district sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

### **ATHLETICS**

ZPS provides a variety of athletic activities in which students may participate providing they meet any eligibility requirements that apply. A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and participation. For further information, contact the Athletic Director.

### **STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK**

The rules governing interscholastic athletes and co-curricular participants are set forth in the Athletic Code of Conduct. The rules are in addition to the rules established in the Student Code of Conduct. The rules governing athletes begin at the time a student enrolls in middle school and high school and apply until the student athlete graduates. Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right. Student athletes are required to conform to athletic policies throughout their middle school and high school career to promote the philosophies consistent with our mission. A student may be disciplined for violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Athletic Code of Conduct Handbook arising out of the same incident. The responsibility for the enforcement of the Athletic code of Conduct rests with the coaches of the various teams, subject to the authority of building administrators and the Board of Education. Coaches are responsible for reviewing the Athletic Code of Conduct with the student athletes. The student will be required to sign a statement indicating that he/she is familiar with the athletic code of conduct before the season begins. For a list of available sports, the rules of eligibility, physical forms, or to view the athletic code of conduct, please refer to the appropriate athletic web site.



## **Section IV – Student Code of Conduct**

### **STUDENT CONDUCT AND ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY**

Zeeland Public Schools take the position that for a student to progress in school, regular attendance is essential. The Michigan School Code states that it is the responsibility of parents to insure that their children regularly attend school until the age of 18. Our Middle Schools seek to develop students academically and socially and prepare them to be responsible in their adult lives. A crucial component of the student's success in middle school is daily attendance. Absences, regardless of the reason, negatively impact the student's ability to master the subject matter, to receive direct instruction from teachers, and to participate in the exchange of ideas with other students.

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

In an effort to monitor students' missing and excessive amount of class time, we will be monitoring the total number of absences; excused, unexcused (UA), and tardies for each student.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Excessive excused absences fall under poor attendance and are subject to truancy violations. Authorized school activities (athletic competition, field trips, band trips, etc.) that take students out of the normal school day will not be counted as days absent on student school records. For those activities, however, all classroom assignments are to be made up in advance. It is the student's responsibility to see all teachers prior to such activity.

We understand that each student's attendance situation is unique and that excused absences may occur due to unavoidable events such as family medical emergencies or court summons. These events will be taken into consideration and may not count toward cap with written documentation from a physician or government agency.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Unauthorized absenteeism will not be tolerated. Students are subject to not earning credit for coursework during an unexcused absence.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE POLICY**

Unexcused absences (skipping class) throughout the day will result in making up the time they missed through specific building interventions.

If a student is planning on being absent for more than 3 days, a pre-arranged absence form must be completed. Applications must be completed one week prior to the absence. Forms are available in the main office. Assignments are to be made up in advance or completed to each teacher's satisfaction. Each classroom teacher, plus an administrator and a parent must sign the form. Before taking your son/daughter out of school please be aware of the following information: All work is to be completed upon the student's return unless other arrangements are made. Any quizzes, tests, or exams are to be completed upon return. The student has the responsibility to do this. Students and parents must realize that not all missed work such as lectures, lab experiments, etc., will be able to be made up and that the teaching staff, because of their schedules, may have limited time for help in making up missed work.

When a student is absent from school due to illness or other valid reasons, it is the parents' responsibility to make sure that they call the Attendance Office at their son/daughter's school between the hours of 7:30am and 2:45pm on the day of the absence. After 2:45pm and until 7:30am the following morning, the same number may be called to leave a recorded message. If a parent or guardian fails to report an absence the day of the absence on or before 7:30 a.m. office personnel will attempt to contact parents or guardians of the student.

## **TARDINESS**

Students are considered tardy to class when they are not in their assigned classroom at the time that class is scheduled to begin. An attendance mark of tardy is given to a student when he or she is up to 10 minutes late to class without a valid reason. After 10 minutes the student is considered to have an unexcused absence for that class. Students who fail to arrive to class on time will be issued consequences as outlined in the tardy plan.

## **TEST MAKE-UP AND OTHER SCHOOLWORK FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Students who are excused from school shall be given the opportunity to make up work that has been missed. It is the student's responsibility to approach teachers about missed assignments. Make-up work due to one excused absence must be completed within 1 day after returning to school, or according to arrangements made with each teacher. For more than one day, students will be given the number of days of excused absence within which to make up work. If a test is missed due to an excused absence, the student must make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If any type of standardized test is missed, the student should consult with his or her counselor to arrange for taking the test. If physically able, it is encouraged that a student check Google Classroom while they are out for assignments posted.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

1. The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.
2. However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, 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.
3. 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 in Zeeland is to prepare students to become responsible 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.

**Cell Phone Policy** – For the safety of our school community and to maximize student learning, students bringing cellphones to school are required to keep the phone in their locker during the school day. Students are permitted to check their cell phone before and after school and between classes at their locker provided they still are on time for class. Students are not allowed to have a cellphone on their person unless permission is given by school administration. Consequences will be given for students not abiding by this policy. It is strongly recommended that students not bring cellphones to school, as these items are prime targets for theft.

**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?
- Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors?
- Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing?
- Would I interview for a job in this outfit?
- Am I dressed appropriately for the weather?
- Do I feel comfortable with my appearance?

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 following styles or manners of dress are prohibited but not restricted to:

- Items that promote drugs, alcohol, or tobacco;
- Items with profane or sexually suggestive writing/pictures/images;
- Items that exhibit involvement in gangs or other organization deemed to be in conflict with school policies and practices;
- Items that conflict with district policy, or state law;
- Non-prescription sunglasses within classrooms;
- Going without shoes;
- Mesh shirts or see-through attire, bathing suits,, revealing or suggestive clothing;
- Flags of any kind worn as capes/clothing
- Chains, handcuffs, and other metal paraphernalia;
- Hoods/hoodies worn on one's head;
- Earbuds;
- Coats worn in classrooms (exceptions will be made where appropriate);

- Pants worn so undergarments are visible.

Students who are representing ZPS at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements.

**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, intimidation 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.

**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 is not liable for loss or theft.

**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.

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

### **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 31.2.3.1 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, 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 have a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic 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.

## **USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS/VAPES**

Smoking, vaping 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, vapes, or other electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time, on school grounds, 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, vapes, 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, vaping products, or other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

## **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 a 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.

## **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:

- Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item
- Any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle
- Any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. Air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)
- 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.”

**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 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.

**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.

**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.

**Falsification of school work, identification, and forgery** – Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false IDs 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. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**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.

**Explosives** – Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, stink bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result

in suspension or expulsion.

**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. Students not in a school sponsored activity may not be on school grounds more than 30 minutes prior or 30 minutes after the scheduled school day.

**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 building principal. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

**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 expulsion.

**Damaging property** – Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

**Persistent absence 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 disciplinary action and truancy referral.

**Unauthorized uses 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 guidelines. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

**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.

**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.

**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.

## **POSSESSION OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES (WCDS)**

- A student may possess a wireless communication device (wcds) or other electronic communication device (ecds) and electronic storage devices (esds) in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school related functions provided that during school hours, school events, and on a school vehicle its use is not disruptive or distracting to the educational process, the scheduled activity, or other participants.
- Except as authorized under Board policy, use of wcds and electronic storage devices 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 up to and including suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

- “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 can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the WCD.
- Taking or transmitting images or messages during testing is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, s/he may fail the exam and receive days of Alternate Day Assignment or be suspended. S/He also faces automatic withdrawal from the class depending on the severity of the incident. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.

**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.

**Violation of bus rules** – Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules.

**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.

## **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 handheld 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 assistant principal. 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 an 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 fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

**Harassment:** 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; 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; 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:

- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Pressure for sexual activity;
- Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety,;
- 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;
- 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. 722.621 et. Seq.]

## **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 at any 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:

1. Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
2. Physical punishment or infliction of pain
3. Intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
4. Dangerous activity;
5. Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
6. Forced detention or kidnapping;
7. Undressing or otherwise exposing.

## **BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS**

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.



This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, 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. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

## **PROCEDURE**

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the principal, assistant principal, social worker or counselor. The student may also report concerns to a teacher who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on

the basis of an anonymous report.

## **NON-RETALIATION/FALSE REPORTS**

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

## **DEFINITIONS**

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

**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. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

**At School** is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

The definition of **Bullying** is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. Internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or,
- Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

**Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual

orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**Intimidation/Menacing** includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

**Staff** includes all school employees and Board members. Third parties include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as harassment, see policy 5516, 5517 MCL 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011) Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education.

## **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.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade 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 superintendent'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, scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device 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.

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 – (STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY CENTER)**

Our middle schools utilize the Student Responsibility Center (SRC/CBC) for low level disciplinary issues. These are typically minor disruptions to the classroom environment or chronic misbehavior. The Student Responsibility Center (SRC/CBC) is where students are referred when they continue to violate rules or the rights of others. In the SRC/CBC, students work on a plan to learn how to achieve what they want without interfering with the rights of others. If a student chooses to disrupt the learning process in the classroom, the teacher will initiate a series of questions that are designed to allow students to think about what they want in relation to the rules of the classroom. If the student continues to be disruptive, then he/she has made the choice to go to the SRC/CBC.

In the SRC/CBC, the student will create a written plan to deal with their disruptions. The plan must be negotiated and discussed with the teacher before returning to class. It is the student's responsibility to make and keep an appointment with the teacher to negotiate a plan. Students, who choose to violate the rules of the SRC/CBC, choose to go home. Any student who chooses to go home must return to school with a parent and a completed plan of improvement.

Parents will be contacted through email with a copy of the student's "Plan of Improvement" once completed and approved. If the student exhibits chronic or excessive misbehavior or disruption, additional consequences may result. These may include: lunch or after school detention; or in-school or out-of-school suspension.

### **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 building principal 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 Superintendent of Zeeland Public Schools, then takes testimony and presents all information gathered to the Board of Education, which has the authority over all expulsion decisions. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period.

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**

1. 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. Factors to be considered before suspending or expelling a student:

- student's age
- student's disciplinary history
- whether the student has a disability
- the seriousness of the violation or behavior
- whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of a student or staff member.
- whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

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 and or via the phone 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 building principal. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

During the appeal process, the student is allowed to remain in school unless safety is a factor. If that is the case, the student shall be immediately removed under the Emergency Removal Procedure.

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 while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, 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 a recommendation for expulsion;
- A brief description of the hearing procedure;
- A statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- A statement that the student and/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 of Zeeland Public Schools/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 2 days (as in AG 5610) after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the Superintendent of Zeeland Public Schools. 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. Additionally, (as in AG 5610) the Superintendent may suspend a student for a period longer than (10) days, and the Board of Education shall act on any appeal of the decision. The Board may expel a student, and no appeal may be taken.

Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

ZPS 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 building assistant principal or 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, 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. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

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/Chromebooks loaned to students or 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 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. Any 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**

## **TRANSPORTATION BOARD POLICY**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide transportation for those District students whose distance from their school makes this service necessary within the limitations established by State law and the regulations of the State Superintendent of Instruction. Such laws and rules shall govern any question not covered by this policy.

### **DROP OFF / PICK UP**

Parents should not bring their child to school before 7:15am, as school doors may not be open. At the end of the day, students not participating in after school activities supervised by a teacher, coach or another staff member, will be asked to leave the building and grounds by 2:45pm.

Bus routes shall be established so that an authorized bus stop is available within reasonable walking distance of the home of every resident student entitled to transportation services. Each student will be allowed to have one (1) pick-up location and one (1) drop-off location, be it home or a caregiver, and shall not be permitted to use any other bus without prior written permission from the Director of Transportation or designee.

### **TRANSPORTATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

Riding a school bus is a privilege and convenience for students and their parents; as such, everyone accepts certain responsibilities to ensure student safety while utilizing this service. Students and parents are advised that the Zeeland Public Schools student code of conduct will be enforced relevant to student behavior on the school bus. The school will cooperate with parents and law enforcement agencies relevant to behavior to and from school. Students and parents are advised of the following responsibilities as per the Michigan Regulations for School buses, Bulletin #431 and local policy:

#### **DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of Zeeland Public Schools to:

1. Develop bus routes and schedules.

2. Determine the mile computation as required by the Board of Education and State requirements.
3. Provide appropriate student information to bus drivers.
4. Provide vehicles that meet or exceed the requirements of state law pertaining to vehicles utilized to transport school students.
5. Provide appropriate insurance coverage.
6. Hire certified and qualified staff.
7. Provide ongoing training for the transportation staff.
8. Recommend to the Superintendent when schools should be closed due to inclement weather.
9. In conjunction with Building Principals, develop and administer disciplinary procedures for students who exhibit inappropriate bus riding behaviors.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of each parent to:

1. Provide for your students' safety to, from, and while at the bus stop.
2. Have the student at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes ahead of the scheduled stop time.
3. Always stress **Safety** at stop locations and on the bus. Students are to stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
4. Make sure each child has a backpack for lunch, school books, etc.
5. No pets or large items such as large boxes, sleds, skateboards, bats, etc. are allowed on the bus. Items which are sharp or breakable should be carried in a box. Laser pointers are prohibited and will be confiscated. Loose hanging items attached to the backpacks such as key chains are prohibited due to safety concerns.
6. Make arrangements to have an appropriate person at home at the designated drop-off time after school.
7. Sign the blue School Bus Misconduct Notice slip, if your child receives one for an infraction of the bus rules. The child must return the signed slip to the bus driver before being allowed back on the bus.
8. Check Parent Portal for up-to-date bus stops and times.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of each student to:

1. Observe classroom conduct while riding the bus. The same rules apply to the bus as in the classroom.
2. Ride the assigned bus and use a specific bus stop; only assigned students may ride school-boundary homebound buses. In addition, students may ride only their assigned bus, getting on and getting off at their designated stop. The Director of Transportation may grant permission for students to ride a different bus or use a different stop. Such permission may be granted only after receiving appropriate written request form from the parent/guardian for a specified period of time subject to the following conditions and limitations:
  - ( a. ) The requested change must not result in overcrowding of any bus, alteration of any regular bus route, bus stop, or time schedule, or in any way interfere with the regular operation of the transportation system.
  - (b.) Emergency and/or unusual reasons may be approved by the Director of Transportation.
3. To assure no overloads, we do not allow students to bring home friends (either from another bus run or from a non-busing area) for parties, scouts, homework, etc.). It is the parents' responsibility for this type of transportation.
4. Obey the driver at all times and report promptly to school officials when instructed to do so.
5. Stay in their seat facing forward while the bus is in motion.
6. Keep hands and feet to themselves.
7. Place all carry-on items on one's lap.
8. State law mandates that no animals or glass containers be allowed on buses. No pets or large items such as large boxes, sleds, skateboards, bats, etc. are allowed on the bus. Items which are sharp or breakable should be carried in a box. Laser pointers are prohibited and will be confiscated. Loose hanging items attached to the backpacks such as key chains are prohibited due to safety

concerns.

9. Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
10. Leave the bus only with the consent of the driver.
11. Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a stop, except in case of emergency.
12. Stay off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
13. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and then board or leave the bus promptly.
14. Talk in a normal tone of voice while on the bus and use appropriate language.
15. Do not destroy property and report any damage observed to the driver.
16. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary, orderly and safe.

## **BUS RULES**

Follow these bus rules – same as all classrooms

1. Be polite to everyone on the bus.
2. The bus driver may assign seats
3. For everyone's safety, do not distract the driver.
4. Do not swear or use inappropriate words.
5. Electronic devices including; Chromebooks, iPads, and cellphones are to be kept to yourself and not shared with others.
6. No photographs or videos to be taken on the bus.
7. Remain seated at all times. Do not change seats.
8. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
9. Keep your hands to yourself.
10. No smoking, vaping or lighting matches/lighters.
11. Do not deface or destroy anything on the bus.
12. Keep the aisle clear of feet, backpacks and bodies.
13. School buses are a NO-BULLYING ZONE!
14. Do not eat or drink on the bus; keep the bus clean
15. All sports gear is to be enclosed in a sports bag.
16. Misbehavior on Bus: Penalty at discretion of transportation director and/or principal depending on circumstances (may include



removal from bus for 1 to 10 days or permanent removal from bus by a formal hearing). Serious misbehavior on the bus may also be cause for punishment up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

## **STUDENT CROSSING PROCEDURE**

To Board the Bus:

1. Students wait in a group at the designated bus stop at least 10 feet away from the edge of the roadway and watch the bus driver for the signal to cross.
2. Bus drivers will display a sign (see below) to indicate when it is safe to cross the street.
3. Students proceed directly across the road, always staying well in front of the bus and boarding the bus.
4. Do not stop in the middle of the street or cross behind the bus.
5. Bus stops will be placed at legal locations consistent with Board policy or if required by law.

## **WHEN EXITING THE BUS:**

1. Students exit the bus and take 10 giant steps in front of the bus staying on the side of the street.
2. Students stand in a group and look to the bus driver for the signal to cross.
3. Bus drivers will display a sign to indicate when it is safe to cross the street.
4. Red stop sign means "STOP" Yellow smiley face means "CROSS SAFELY"
5. Students proceed to a point even with the left side of the bus and stop.
6. Students look left and right for passing cars.
7. Students look to the driver for instruction to complete the crossing.
8. Do not cross behind the bus.
9. If a paper or article goes under the school bus, always ask the bus

driver for help.

10. Do not get mail from roadside mailboxes until after the bus leaves the stop
11. The Zeeland Public Schools Transportation Department's mission is to provide the safest and most efficient means of transporting your students to and from school.

## **CONTACT US!**

To contact the ZPS Transportation Center, please call 616.748.3425 or email our transportation office staff.