

# **OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL**

## **STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK 2008 – 2009**



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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Oxford High School is a collaborative learning community dedicated to the personal, academic, and career success of every student. Working in partnership with parents, citizens, businesses, and civic organizations, we ensure the development of each individual's talents, skills, and character so that all of our graduates are prepared to be independent and successful members of our society.

## **PREFACE**

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather as "the student," "students," or "children." Likewise, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents need to be familiar with the District's Student Code of Conduct which is intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources.

Mr. Frank Samuelson is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **ADMISSION/PLACEMENT**

A student seeking enrollment in Oxford High School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student after such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child. Nonresidents may attend school on a tuition basis provided space is available. Nonresident students from other school districts within the state, (districts in the Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport and New London regions) who apply pursuant to Board of Education regulations, may enroll in particular programs or schools within the district on a space available basis, without payment of tuition, as part of the inter-district public school attendance program called Open Choice. The Regional Educational Service Centers will determine which school districts are close enough to make transportation feasible. A student who has attained the age of sixteen and who has voluntarily terminated enrollment in the district's schools and subsequently seeks admission may be denied readmission for up to ninety school days from the date of such termination. A student, nineteen years of age or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if he/she cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law and do not have a fixed residence will be admitted pursuant to federal law.

## **ADVERTISING**

The public schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students. District-prescribed standards shall be met.

## **ASBESTOS**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Request to review these plans may be made in the school office. There is no asbestos at Oxford High School.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or entertainment to the student community. A student's conduct in assemblies must meet the same standards as in the classroom.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance in school is the primary responsibility of the students and their parents. Oxford High School has established an attendance policy for the following reasons:

- Regular attendance and satisfactory performance in the classroom go “hand-in-hand.” First, the sequential presentation of concepts requires a continuity of instruction. Second, even if all work missed is adequately completed; students lose a great deal by absences. The classroom is a cooperative learning experience; the exchange of ideas with peers, the oral defense of opinion, the discovery through laboratory exploration, the discussion of material not covered in the text and the presentation of films and lectures are all essential components. Since excessive absence and tardiness prevent a student from gaining the total content and the full benefit of a course, attendance is a significant factor in grade determination.

- One of the objectives of Oxford High School is to prepare students for the outside world. Success on the job and in college depends on good attendance.

- Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence.

A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g. field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.

The parent or person having control of a child shall have the option of waiting to send the child to school until the child is six or seven years of age, upon signing an option form at the school district’s offices.

A student must remain in school until age 18, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 16 or 17. Oxford High School strictly adheres to the Connecticut Compulsory Attendance Law.

### **Truancy**

A student age five to eighteen inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered a truant. Disciplinary action may include after school detention for each class/study period missed (number of hours to be determined). Tests and academic work missed in class that day will be recorded as a zero grade.

Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. The Superintendent of Schools will file a written complaint with Superior Court Juvenile Matters if the parent fails to cooperate with the school in trying to solve the student’s truancy problem.

### **Attendance Requirement for Course Credit**

The attendance policy reflects the philosophy that attentive presence in class is essential for academic success at Oxford High School. The attendance policy is designed to be supportive of educational achievement. Parents are encouraged to work with teachers in implementing the provisions.

Students who accumulate **7 or more points** in a quarter from a single course will receive a maximum grade of **50% (F)**. If the student's average for that quarter is less than 50%, they will receive their earned average for the class.

Absences are accrued as follows:

A verified excused absence = Zero (0) points

An excused absence = One (1) point

An unexcused absence = Two (2) points

Two (2) Tardies = One (1) point Oxford High School Attendance  
Procedures

School affiliated activities (field trips, standardized testing, athletic events, and special assemblies) which cause absences from class do not count towards loss of credit.

Transfer students (students new to the school) will have their attendance requirement prorated based on the amount of time enrolled in the course. Students changing courses mid-quarter (level changes, etc.) will continue their attendance record from the previous course.

### **Excused Absences**

Legislation mandates school attendance. Oxford High School will excuse or verify excused absences for the following reasons:

- Personal illness
- Death in the family
- Court appearance
- Religious holiday
- College visit (3 per semester for juniors and seniors)
- Emergency medical appointment

## Examples of Absences

Unexcused (2 points)	Excused (1 point)	Excused(verifiable) (0 points)
<p>No note/phone call from parent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Note/phone call not in required time</li> <li>•Cutting class</li> </ul>	<p>Phone call/note from parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Personal illness</li> <li>•Ordinary doctor and dental appointments</li> <li>•Driving classes</li> <li>•“mental health” day</li> <li>•vacations</li> </ul>	<p>Documentation from official source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•death in family</li> <li>•court appearance</li> <li>•religious holiday</li> <li>•emergency medical appointment</li> <li>•college visit (3) per semester for juniors &amp; seniors</li> </ul>

Parents are requested to call the Main Office by 7:30 a.m. at 888-2468 if their child will be absent from, or tardy to, school. This line is available 24 hours per day. *Written* explanation for **any** absence is required upon the student’s return to school and must be received within **48 hours** of the absence. Excuse notes must be both written and signed by a parent or legal guardian (regardless of the student's age) and must include the student's name, the date(s) of absence, the reason for absence and a daytime phone number where parents can be reached to verify the note. **There is no negotiation of an absence after the 48-hour grace period.**

Doctor and/or dental appointments should be scheduled for after school hours. If after-school arrangements are *impossible*, then a written notice from the physician is required.

Discretion should be used in planning family vacations; travel should only be scheduled during school vacation periods. Please note that any absences due to vacation will be treated as any other non-school related excused absence from class and will, therefore, count toward loss of credit. Students and parents should realize that if extended vacations contribute to excessive absences, an appeal for reinstatement of credit will not be possible. **Please note that teachers are under no obligation to provide missed lessons or give extra help to students who miss class due to vacations.**

### **Oxford High School Attendance Procedures**

In case of illness while in school, the student must report to the health office. The nurse, with parental permission, will make the decision to dismiss the student from school. To miss class or to go home without the permission of the nurse will cause any absences to be considered unexcused.

Students are required to attend all classes. Students will not be excused from any class while they remain on campus. Therefore, written notes will not be accepted for classes missed during the middle of the day. Any student who needs to be dismissed early must bring proper notification from their parents to the Main Office when they arrive at school on the day for which it is being requested.

Any student who leaves school without permission will be subject to detention and the recording of an unexcused absence for each class missed. Students should not expect permission to go home for equipment, uniforms, projects, assignments, etc. If they have forgotten them, they will have to miss the activity or call parents to bring the needed material.

### **Unexcused Absences**

A student has 48 hours to provide a suitable written excuse from a parent or guardian for an absence. (See written explanation of excuse notes above.) After that time, all absences are considered unexcused. **There may not be negotiation of an unexcused absence after the 48-hour grace period has expired.**

### **Tardiness**

Any student who arrives to a first period class after 7:30 a.m. will be considered late to school. Only when the school is responsible for a student's lateness (i.e., the school bus is late) will tardiness be excused. Two (2) offenses of tardiness to any course, regardless of the number of minutes late, will constitute one attendance point for that class. Students more than 20 minutes late to class or miss more than 20 minutes of class unexcused are considered absent. Upon a student's first tardy the teacher will issue a warning to the student. Upon the second tardy and all subsequent tardies, the student will be issued an Office Detention.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

Throughout the school year, teachers, students and parents will closely monitor the number of absences and tardies that have been accumulated in each course. It is very important that students and parents carefully consider the necessity of any absence, taking into consideration the current number of accumulated absences and the potential impact on learning. Students and parents should contact the teacher with questions regarding the current number of accumulated absences for a specific class.

When a student has accumulated four (4) points within one quarter of a course, the student's guidance counselor and their parent(s) or guardian will be notified by the teacher. A student will receive a grade of 50% for the quarter in a course when the number of accumulated points reaches seven (7). Upon the seventh point, a copy of the student's attendance record will be sent to home along with a letter explaining the procedure for requesting a hearing from the Board of Appeals.

## Responsibilities

Parent	Teacher	“Administration”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Phone call by 7:30 is student will be absent from school</li> <li>•Written, signed note regarding absence, within 48 hours of absence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Notify parent and guidance counselor at 4 attendance points in one quarter</li> <li>•Notify parent and guidance counselor at 7 attendance points in one quarter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Through the attendance clerk, change an excused absence to a verified excused absence</li> <li>•Appeals Committee Chair: send letter to parents informing them of IA</li> <li>•Tardy detentions</li> </ul>

### **Right of Appeal**

The Attendance Procedures is not designed to deny credit to students who, through no fault of their own, are unable to attend school or class due to legitimate illness or other conditions beyond the student's and/or parent's control. At the end of each quarter, students who have received an "F" due to absences will have an opportunity to appeal to have their grade reinstated. To be eligible for the appeal process, students must continue classroom responsibilities and attend class faithfully.

### **Appeal Process**

The Appeals Board will be composed of a teacher, a guidance counselor, a school nurse and an administrator. The classroom teacher of the course in question, the student's counselor and the school nurse may be asked to provide information for discussion and/or the hearing. All cases will be considered on an individual basis, and when relevant, issues of confidentiality will be respected. The final decision is a majority vote of the Appeals Board membership.

The Appeals Board will accept prior documentation of unique circumstances. However, the appeal process only goes into effect at the end of each quarter. Students wishing to appeal will be instructed by letter to submit a written request and supporting documentation to the chairperson of the Appeals Board by noon on the first day of the next quarter or at the end of quarter four.

The supporting documentation must include justification for all absences and verification that the student has continued all classroom responsibilities since notification of the change in grade. If a student has been absent due to chronic illness, a statement from a physician must be son file with the school nurse. Appeals will only be considered if the student can show that there were unusual or extenuating circumstances causing the numerous absences.

If a hearing is deemed necessary, the student and parents will be notified of the date and time. In addition to the Appeals Board membership, the student and/or parents are invited and encouraged to attend the hearing.

In reaching decisions on reinstatement of the student's grade, the Appeals Board will reference all absences to the non-school related requirements for excused absences as indicated in the beginning of the policy. Absences that were not excused within the 48-hour grace period will endanger any reinstatement of credit. Grades will be reestablished only if it can be demonstrated that there were major extenuating circumstances that were absolutely beyond the student's or parent's control.

If the appeal is denied, the student's transcript will report a grade of F (maximum of 50%) next to the course grade. The grade will be included in the student's grade point average and may be used as a course prerequisite. If a student does not have valid reasons for appealing the F, the student should contact his/her counselor to identify ways to prevent further loss of grades.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The members of the Oxford Board of Education are:

Chairperson:	John DeGennaro	
Vice-Chairperson:	Paula Guillet	
Secretary:	Rebecca Piorek	
Members:	Lisa Hellauer	Karen Kelly
	Rose A. McKinnon	Ed Roman
	Jerry Schwab	Debbie Sherman

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Oxford Board of Education holds regular business meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at one of the schools. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement, not more than 5 minutes in length, or to express a viewpoint. In addition, if they give advance notice to the Superintendent, individuals with relevant issues for discussion may have such issues placed on a future Board agenda for a more thorough discussion of the topic.

The Board's main purpose is policy setting designed to improve student learning. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as any overt acts by a student or groups of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Bullying which occurs outside of the school setting may be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school. Such behavior will result in disciplinary action. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks
2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based put-downs
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. Exclusion from peer groups within schools.

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file a written report of conduct they consider bullying. Students may also make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to a teacher or administrator, who will promptly reduce the complaint to writing and forward it to the Building Principal for review and action.

## **CAFETERIA**

Rules of good manners, proper decorum, and cleanliness are to be observed at all times.

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the main office.

Food and beverages offered for sale to students, whether in the cafeteria, school store, or vending machines will meet federal and state standards and guidelines. All sodas and sports drinks will not be available for sale.

In conformity with applicable law, necessary accommodations will be provided, where required, for students with food allergies, including emergency procedures to treat allergic reactions which may occur.

## **CHEATING**

All forms of cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. The misrepresenting by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidences require disciplinary action. Consequences for cheating will take into account the severity of the misrepresentation.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

Teachers, principals, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and licensed nurses are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive yearly training in their use.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Every effort will be made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Parents will have an opportunity to provide information relative to placement.

### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that e-mail communications, using district computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for

students as defined in the Children’s Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

## **CONDUCT**

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school related activities include:

1. Being respectful to fellow students, school employees and school property.
2. Attend all classes as scheduled.
3. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
4. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.\*
5. Having a signed pass when in the halls while classes are in session.
6. Behaving in a responsible manner.
7. Paying required fees and fines.
8. Representing Oxford when participating or attending school sponsored events with the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.
9. Abiding by the code of conduct.
10. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
11. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
12. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
2. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property.
3. Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
4. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students or staff.
5. Disobeying directives from school personnel or school policies, rules, and regulations.
6. Being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other school employees.
7. Playing with matches, fire, or committing arson.
8. Committing robbery or theft.

9. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students, or school employees.
10. Disobeying school rules on school buses.
11. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
12. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail; that is, forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force.
13. Name-calling, making ethnic or racial slurs or derogatory statements that may substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
14. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact disruptive to the school environment or disturbing to other students.
15. Assaulting a teacher, staff member or other individual.
16. Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs such as: marijuana; a controlled substance or drug; or an alcoholic beverage.
17. Possessing a weapon or dangerous instrument.
18. Prescription drugs which are given to person other than who the drug is prescribed.
19. Smoking or using tobacco products.
20. Hazing.
21. No student is allowed to possess an electronic pager, “beeper” device, cellular telephone, two-way radio and/or other telecommunication device on school property without prior approval of the school principal.
22. Violating the district’s Internet Safety policy.
23. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member’s supervision and in the context of instruction.
24. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.

For students, high school is not only a time of academic challenge, but a time of balancing the need for increased independence and choices with a continued need for structure and support. As the final opportunity for students to prepare for post secondary experiences as responsible individuals, the Code of Conduct for the Maintenance of Order on School Property for students provides for individual discretion, while holding students responsible for their actions. To obtain this end, high school students must work cooperatively with all adults in the building and actively contribute to promoting mutual respect between all members of the high school community.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of publicized Board of Education policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In determining whether conduct is “seriously disruptive of the education process” for purposes of suspension and expulsion, the administration in cases of suspension, and the Board of Education or impartial hearing board, in matters of expulsion may consider, but consideration is not limited to (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school, (2) whether other students were involved, or whether there was gang involvement, (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats

of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon and whether any injuries occurred, and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

### **Dangerous Weapons and Instruments**

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as, appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school-activity will be expelled from school.

### **Dress Code**

Oxford Public Schools encourage students to dress in a manner that demonstrates pride in them and in their school.

The school system *requires* that attire be safe, appropriate to the activity, and not distracting or disruptive of the educational program.

I. The following guidelines apply to all regular school activities:

1. Shoes appropriate for school activities must be worn at all times. Footwear standards are maintained for the prevention of accidents and injury. High-heeled shoes or sandal styles that make walking, running or other activities less safe for students are discouraged.
2. Clothing and jewelry should be safe and free of writing, pictures, or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane, or sexually suggestive or which advocate violence, racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice, or the use of drugs or alcohol.
3. No clothing, article of clothing, or manner of wearing clothes that is inappropriately revealing is permitted. Underwear should not be visible.
4. Clothing or jewelry which is distracting, or disruptive to the educational program, or which is gang-related, or which poses a threat to the physical well-being and safety of the student or others, shall *not* be worn on campus or at school activities.
5. Any clothing or lack of clothing, which may distract from the educational process. Halter tops and other revealing types of clothing are not considered acceptable.

II. The administrator and staff may establish additional dress and grooming regulations, when necessary, for regular school activities and/or for times when students are engaged in extra-curricular or other special school activities.

III. Coaches and teachers may find it necessary to impose more stringent dress requirements to accommodate the special needs of certain sports and/or classes.

IV. The Principal/designee may confiscate inappropriate attire and provide a suitable substitute if available, and/or phone home to inform parents that a change of attire must be provided.

### **Smoking**

Student shall not smoke or use tobacco products on school property or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law. Students who are caught smoking will be subject to a fine, and summons, as provided by law. A disciplinary action will accompany said fine.

### **Substance Abuse**

As stated in the CONDUCT section of this handbook, the school prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities. Any student in violation of this will be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

Substance abuse or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia including alcohol may indicate serious, underlying problems. Every effort will be made to offer student assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment to private or community agencies and aftercare support.

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population and community in mind and with due consideration of the rights of students. However, consideration must be given to the fact that substance abuse is illegal and subject to criminal prosecution. Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale or consumption of dangerous drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages are considered grounds for expulsion.

Students are encouraged to consult with teachers, administrators and other professional staff on substance abuse problems. A staff member who is contacted by a student regarding a drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person in accordance with state law. However, the student will be encouraged at the earliest appropriate time to seek help from parents or guardians.

In such cases, the decision to involve the parents/guardians will be arrived jointly by the student and educator unless, in the judgment of the educator, the mental or physical health of the student is immediately and dangerously threatened by drug/alcohol use. If such danger is imminent, the parents/guardians and health officials will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken.

### **DISCIPLINE**

A student who violates the district's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. The (DISTRICT'S) disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as detention, removal from class, removal to an alternative education program, in school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion.

Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive to the educational process and violates publicized board of education policy even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.

### **Detention**

A student may be detained outside of school hours for not more than three hours on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until the students' parents have been notified of the reason for the detention (and can make arrangements for the student's transportation on the day(s) of the detention).

### **Expulsion**

A teacher may remove a student from all classes when the student deliberately causes a serious disruption to the teaching and learning process within the classroom.

The Board of Education may expel a student from school privileges if, after a full hearing, the Board finds that the student's conduct endangers person(s), property or the educational process or is in violation of a publicized Board policy. Students who have been expelled may be eligible for an alternative educational program.

Expulsion from school will result in the loss of all extra curricular and social privileges during the period of expulsion.

Student possession and/or use of weapons, including martial arts weapons, or other dangerous instruments in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school sponsored activity is cause for expulsion for a calendar year. A student who offers illegal drugs for sale or distribution on or off school grounds is also cause for expulsion for a calendar year. The Board may modify the expulsion period on a case-by-case basis.

Whenever a student is expelled, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled will be included on the student's cumulative education record. The record will be expunged if the student graduates from high school and the expulsion was not for weapon possession and/or for the sale or distribution of illegal drugs.

### **Suspension**

A teacher may remove a student from all class when the student deliberately causes serious disruption of the teaching and learning process within the classroom.

The administration may suspend a student for infraction of school rules. Suspension is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for not more than ten (10) consecutive days, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which suspension was imposed.

However, no student shall be suspended without an informal hearing before the building principal or his/her designee at which time the student shall be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation, unless circumstances surrounding the incident require immediate removal. In such instance the informal hearing will be held during the suspension.

Suspension from school will result in loss of extracurricular and social privileges during the period of suspension.

### **Persistently Dangerous Schools/Victim of Violent Crime**

Students enrolled in a school identified as “persistently dangerous” by the State Department of Education or a student who is the victim of a violent criminal offense, as defined by the State Department of Education, are entitled to transfer to a safe school elsewhere in the district with free transportation.

### **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communications. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

The principal or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate or position.
4. Does not promote profit making organizations.
5. Does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District has the right to impose neutral time, place and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not endorsed or sponsored by the District.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor or teacher. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbook.

### **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

To achieve its mission, Oxford High School’s learning experiences are designed to guarantee that every student achieves the following expectations:

- Think critically and inquisitively
  - Sustain processes of reflective inquiry and problem solving.
  - Listen, view and read with comprehension and purpose.
- Communicate effectively and creatively
  - Write clearly, imaginatively, cogently, and persuasively, in modes appropriate to the audience and point.
  - Speak confidently and effectively
  - Develop a personal creative voice and express ideas through a variety of media.
- Access, evaluate, and use information for a variety of tasks and purposes
  - Determine what is needed, identify and prioritize sources based on credibility and relevance
  - Use digital and print resources to access and retrieve information
  - Examine, evaluate and analyze ideas from multiple perspectives, audiences, and points of view
  - Evaluate information in terms of relevance, credibility and the social, economic, political, legal, and ethical issues that may impact it
  - Apply information to accomplish specified purpose.
- Master appropriate content and skills from a variety of disciplines
  - Build foundational understandings from a range of academic areas
  - Explore, retain, and interpret advanced concepts and knowledge in selected areas of interest
  - Demonstrate mastery of digital literacy in a variety of contexts.
- Make connections among and between critical concepts for learning
  - Make connections between one’s own life experiences and those of others.
  - Identify and analyze patterns of meaning that occur within areas of study.

**Civic and Social:**

- Demonstrate citizenship and social responsibility
  - Knowledge of foundational values of citizenship in a democracy.
  - Contribution to the community.
  - Understanding of interdependence, respect, and responsibility for others in and beyond the Oxford Community.
- Personal character and growth
  - Awareness of the importance of physical and emotional well being.
  - Respect for self and others.
  - Honesty and integrity.
  - Self awareness and purpose.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES, CELL PHONES AND GAMES (MP3 Players, etc.)**

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, or electronic devices or games at school,

unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, the items will be collected by teachers and turned into the principal. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day to be taken home by the student or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The use of walkmans, disc players, MP3 players and cell phones are prohibited during the regular school day. These items must be stored in lockers or backpacks upon entering the building and should not be visible on a student during the school day. In no case will any personal communication device be allowed that provides for a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet or which has the capacity to take photographs of any kind.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on radio stations STAR 99.9 FM, WICC, WEBE 108, WKCI FM, WELI AM, Channel 8, Channel 30, Channel 3. Emergency closings will also be posted on the districts website, <http://www.oxfordpublicschools.org>.

### **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION**

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

#### **Athletics**

Athletics are considered an integral part of our school's educational program. Whether participation is on the intramural, interscholastic, or class level, students have an opportunity to acquire qualities of fitness, self-discipline, and cooperation.

Student interscholastic activities shall be governed by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) regulations. Eligibility for participation is governed by state law as well as the regulation of the CIAC. Please refer to the OHS Athletic Handbook for more detailed information.

Any student athlete who has not reported to school by 9:00 a.m. will not be permitted to practice or play that afternoon or evening. Exceptions to this rule will be considered only if the player's parent explains the unusual circumstances to the principal or designee.

#### **Clubs and Performing Groups**

Student clubs, performing groups, athletic teams and other extracurricular activities may establish rules of conduct for participants that may be stricter than those of students in general. Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups may establish standards of behavior, including consequences for misbehavior, which are stricter than those for students in general.

### **Dances and Social Events**

School dances may be scheduled periodically during the school year. Only legally enrolled students of this school may attend dances unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the administration. Students are expected to dress appropriately for all dances.

Standards of dress, admission costs, and other pertinent instructions for a particular dance will be announced prior to the dance.

### **Student Publications**

The official student newspaper provides an instructional device in the teaching of writing and other journalistic skills. It also provides a forum for the opinion of students, school staff and members of the community, as well as to serve the entire school by reporting school activities.

The (newspaper advisor) shall have the primary responsibility of reviewing each article prior to its publication. The school principal or his/her designated representative other than the newspaper advisor may also review copy prior to its publication. However, such copy must be returned to the student editors within 72 hours\* after it is submitted for review. No copy may be censored except for reasons listed in board policy.

### **FACILITIES**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place.

After dismissed and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the campus immediately.

### **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided without charge to students. A student is expected, however, to provide his or her own supplies of pencils, erasers, and notebooks. The student may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

1. Club dues.
2. Security deposits.
3. The materials for a class project that the student will keep.
4. Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
5. Voluntary purchases of pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, etc.
6. Student accident insurance.

7. Insurance on school-owned instruments, instrument rental and uniform maintenance.
8. Parking fees and student identification cards.
9. Fees for damaged library books and school-owned equipment.\*
10. Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra curricular activities.
11. Fees for driver training courses, if offered.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal. While on a trip, all students are considered to be “in” school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact a guidance counselor, advisor or administrator to request confidential help.

### **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill may be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months.

Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.

The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. When the alarm sounds, students are to proceed along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

### **FUNDRAISING**

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the Oxford High School Booster Club at least 60 days before the event. Except as approved by the OHS Booster Club, fund-raising by students is not permitted on school property.

Any food items sold as part of any fund-raising activity must meet the nutritional standards published by the Connecticut Department of Education. Beverage or foods not allowed for sale during regular school hours may be sold provided: (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the

weekend, (2) the sale is at the location of such event, and (3) the food or beverage are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

### **Class Rank**

Per Oxford High School Program of Studies, pages 9-10.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students must successfully complete the required number of credits and must demonstrate proficiency in the skills identified by the board of education, as required for graduation. A multi-facet assessment procedure will be used, including specific target scores on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test.

### **Report Cards**

Written reports of student grades and absences shall be issued to parents at the completion of each grading period. At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, the parent will be notified if the student's grade average is near or below 70 or below the expected level of performance. If a student receives a (six) week grade of less than 70 in any class or subject, the parent will be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. The report card shall state whether tutorials are required or only recommended for a student who receives a grade below 70 in a class or subject.

Report cards are issued to students four times a year. Students are expected to deliver report cards to their parents.

### **Weighted Grading**

A weighted grading system will be used for honors classes only.

## **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the guidance counselors include helping the student function more successfully within the school environment.

Counseling is an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, educational or vocational. Counselors will listen and be open and honest with students. Guidance Counselors are encouraged to issue appointment request forms to students. Appointments may also be arranged by filling out a Guidance Appointment request form in the office or by stopping by the guidance office before school, between classes or after school.

Educational and career planning guidance is available along with information to develop a plan for the student's future. This may include a long range plan of studies for grades 9-

12 and selecting student's subjects year by year in keeping with student's career interests and special skills or talents. Parent's notification and involvement will be solicited.

Referral for psychological and/or psychiatric assistance by other social services agencies within or outside the school may also be recommended. Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parents/guardian's written consent.

### **HARASSMENT STATEMENT**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or any disability they may have. The district has zero tolerance for harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

A student who believes he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident to the principal or assistant principal. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

### **HAZING ACTIVITIES**

Hazing, bullying or abuse of students or staff will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in an act that injures, degrades or disgraces another student or staff member, disrupts the educational process, or interferes with a student's opportunity to obtain an education shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The nurse's office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information.

Parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. It is likewise important that parents notify the (school nurse) in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a

physician. The (school nurse) is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

### **Administration of Medication**

Parents of students requiring medication during school should contact the RN. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the RN. All medication must be in original container with proper labels.

In cases in which a student is able to self-administer medication, the parents or guardians must submit a signed statement that the medication must be taken during the school day and the student is capable of administering the medication. The statement must be accompanied by a physician's statement indicating the necessity and naming the medication, the strength, and the prescribed dosage. It must specify the schedule on which it is to be taken and the details of administration. Such statements must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education.

### **Communicable/Infectious Diseases**

Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

### **Disabilities**

School district will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

### **Emergency Medical Treatment**

Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency.

### **Homebound**

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of two weeks or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist or the Planning and Placement Team. Home instruction may also

be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

### **Homeless Students**

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is Mr. Samuelson.

### **Immunizations**

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Rubella and Hemophilus Influenza Type B.\* Parents or guardians of any children unable to have the mandated immunizations prior to initial school entry and the boosters as required in the later grades may have the immunizations, on the recommendation of the Board of Education, be paid by the town.

In addition to the required immunizations for initial entry into school for kindergarten, regular and special education preschool programs, additional immunizations are required for entry into seventh grade and for entry into eighth grade. The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records.

For further information regarding immunizations contact the RN.

### **Physical Examinations**

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a) Health assessment shall also be required in grade 10.

### **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals.

Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student's work in school.

### **INSURANCE**

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangements are contractual between the parent and insurance carriers and the Oxford Public Schools assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS**

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LRP) Students participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

### **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

Students are invited to use the books, magazines, newspapers, media, and other materials located in the media center. Students are responsible for any material they sign out. Materials must be returned to the librarian or the assistant at the circulation desk. Students must pay for any materials they lose or damage. A student's grades, transcript or report card may be withheld until a student's obligation is met.

Guidelines have been established for the use of the Internet. Student violations of the guidelines can result in the termination of access privileges and in disciplinary actions. It is the policy of the Board of Education that all students must sign an acceptable use policy which indicates that a student agrees to use the Internet exclusively for educational purposes. Each contract must also include a signature from the student's parent/guardian.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

A student will be permitted to make-up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence. Secondary teachers may assign a late penalty to any project in accordance with time-lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

For any class missed, students may be assigned make-up work based on the instructional objectives of the subject or course and the needs of the student. The student is responsible for obtaining and completing make-up work within the time specified by the teacher.

### **MIGRANT STUDENTS**

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

### **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires schools selected to participate in this national testing program to notify parents of children who will be taking the test of their right to exclude their child. Parents also have the right to inspect all NAEP data, questions and assessment instruments.

### **OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT**

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized board policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.

Examples of off-school conduct that may result in such discipline include but are not limited to:

1. Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including marital arts weapons;
2. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs;
3. Violent conduct;
4. Making of a bomb threat;
5. Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be typically held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference.

A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Conferences are held during school hours but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS**

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications and interactions. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the District's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at board of education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged.

### **The Oxford High School Booster Club**

The Oxford High School Booster Club is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Thus, parents are urged to join and take an active part in the Booster Club.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact Richard Carmelich at (203) 888 - 7754.

### **PROMOTION, RETENTION AND PLACEMENT**

Student promotion is dependent on each student's mastery and acquisition of basic learning objectives. Normally, students will progress annually from grade to grade. Students who master objectives at an exceptional rate may be considered for acceleration to another grade or class. Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate will be considered for retention. Retention and acceleration decisions are the responsibility of the teaching staff and principal, after prior notification and discussion with parents. The final decision rests with the school principal.

Students must demonstrate attainment of the basic skills needed for graduation based on the district's assessment program. A failure to attain these skills may necessitate involvement in additional courses, special help programs, summer school, retesting, etc.

## **PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline up to and including arrest or civil prosecution as deemed appropriate.

In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Each student is assigned a (desk), (hall locker) and/or other equipment. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, should be kept in good order and not abused.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the main office immediately if it is not functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students may not bring in locks from home and attach to assigned lockers. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

## **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

## **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline

- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff whom are over seeing the welfare of students.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS**

Students should start early to establish records worthy of scholarship consideration. In general requirements for scholarship consideration are some combination of the following: exemplary attendance record, serious attention to studies, good character, community service, financial need and involvement in the activities of the school.

Many scholarships and awards are available to qualified students. Students should consult a Guidance Counselor for information about what scholarships are available and how, when and where to apply.

### **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and President’s Day are encouraged. Oxford High School reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Non-participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student’s locker or desk under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student’s desk or locker contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities. Breathalyzers may be used, at the discretion of school personnel, when circumstances warrant.

Student vehicles parked on school grounds may be searched if there is reasonable cause to search.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) when the allegations are not minor and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Samuelson.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM/PEER PROGRAM**

Student volunteers are trained, through the peer mediation program, to assist other students in resolving conflicts. Mediation is a process used in which a neutral third party helps disputing parties find their own solutions to conflicts.

### **STUDENT AUTOMOBILE USE**

Students' use of motor vehicles at Oxford High School is a privilege granted by the school to authorized students only. Students should request an application for a parking sticker during the first week of school.

Students are subject to the rules, regulations and administrative guidelines in the parking regulations and must comply with all state laws and licensure requirements.

## **Driving/Parking Regulations**

- 1) Seniors and juniors who have paid for the privilege may drive to school. Each driver must have a permit that may be obtained in the Main Office. After the driving permit is signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school and the fee is paid, the student will be issued a windshield tag for his/her car. Parking tags may not be transferred to another student.
  - 2) OHS parking tags are to be hung from the rear view mirror.
  - 3) Any student parking on school property without a properly issued tag will be towed at his/her expense.
  - 4) Student parking areas are well defined, and students must use only these areas for parking.
  - 5) Students who drive by a school bus with flashing lights in operation while on school property will lose parking privileges.
  - 6) Students must observe all safety procedures.
  - 7) Students must obey the signals and directives of any staff members regarding the parking and operation of any motor vehicle on the school grounds.
  - 8) The privilege of driving a vehicle to school may be revoked if the student exhibits unsafe driving, has excessive tardiness, leaves school without permission or parks illegally.
  - 9) After cars are parked, the student must move immediately to the school. The parking lots and cars are off limits during the day.
  - 10) When a student is found responsible for one of the aforementioned infractions, the following may occur\*:
    - 1st Offense: loss of driving privilege for one week.
    - 2nd Offense: loss of driving privilege for one month.
    - 3rd Offense: loss of driving privilege indefinitely\*\*
- \*Students who are passengers may also receive appropriate consequences.  
\*\*Students must reapply to the assistant principal for use after a period of time.

## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

The Oxford High School staff encourages student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views and a means of communicating both within and beyond the school community.

All student publications must comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, also statements, materials advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school policies and/or regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

Expressions of personal opinion must be clearly identified as such and must bear the name of the author. Opportunity for the expression of opinions differing from those of the student publishers must be provided.

In addition, student newspapers and/or publications which are paid for by the school district and/or produced under the direction of a teacher as part of the school curriculum are not considered a public forum. In such cases, the Board of Education reserves the right to edit or delete such student speech which is feeling is inconsistent with the district's basic educational mission.

### **Distribution of Literature**

Students have a right to distribute literature on school grounds and in school buildings provided such distribution does not interfere with or disrupt the educational process. No literature may be distributed unless a copy is submitted in advance to the Superintendent of Schools and the Building Principal.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office.

Copies of student records are available at a cost of 25 cents per page, payable in advance. Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

Military recruiters or institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students names, addresses and telephone listings, unless a parent/guardian or secondary student aged 18 or over requests in writing that such information not be released.

The District will release to the Parent Teacher Association the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTA for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 5400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

The district's HIPPA Privacy Officer is Richard Carmelich.

### **STUDENT SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Changes during the first full week of school may be allowed for the following reasons only:

1. Required courses missing.
2. Schedule conflicts; for example, you have not been scheduled for a course you selected.
3. Not enough courses on your schedule. Students must attend all classes on their schedule until a change form signed by the principal, the student's counselor, the department chairperson(s), and the teacher, has been processed by the Student Counseling Department. Failure to attend a scheduled class, even if the student is planning to drop the class, is considered cutting and the student will incur disciplinary action.

If a student is applying for a medical waiver from physical education, the student must attend all gym classes until a written statement from the doctor is given to the school nurse and the nurse signs the waiver.

A student who drops a course after the first marking period will receive a withdrawal failure (WF) on the report card.

Changes after the first full week of school must follow this procedure:

1. Obtain and fill out a Course-Change form from the Student Counseling Office.
2. Obtain the signatures of the student's counselor, the department chairperson(s), and the teachers involved on the form.
3. Obtain a parent's signature(s) on the form.

4. Return the form to the guidance counselor for processing. Remember: you must attend your originally scheduled class until this form is processed.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL**

Students in danger of failing will be notified prior to a retention decision. The school district shall provide and may require a student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance, including summer school.

### **SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individual with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children.

Parents will be notified of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance administered by the school and which is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students.

### **TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.

### **TESTING**

All students in grade 10 will participate in the CAPT programs. Special education students participate in the CAPT programs except in the rare case when participation in an alternate assessment is detrimental to the student's PPT. In order to graduate, students must meet District standards for graduation, in addition to required course credits. The CAPT test is one of the measures to be used to determine if students have met the identified standards. Student scores on each component of the CAPT may/shall be included on transcripts and permanent records. Students attending a district school identified under the No Child Left Behind Act for improvement, corrective action or restructuring may, as required by law, may transfer to another district school and/or receive supplementary educational services at district expense in compliance with federal legislation.

### **TEXTBOOK CARE AND OBLIGATIONS**

Students are responsible for the care of books and supplies entrusted to their use. They will be assessed damage to textbooks, equipment or materials. In accordance with state law, the school reserves the right to withhold grades, transcripts, or report cards until the student pays for or returns the textbooks, library book or other educational materials.

### **TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES**

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

### **TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs.

### **TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Students withdrawing from school must notify the guidance office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms for their parents to complete. Included will be a formal written statement of withdrawal and release of records form.

On their last day of attendance, students will be given a form that must be signed by each of their teachers. This form will indicate their grade at the time of withdrawal and that all materials have been returned. Records cannot be forwarded until all materials have been returned.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditioned upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Unsatisfactory student behavior on the bus may result in suspension of transportation services or such other disciplinary action that is appropriate for misconduct.

The following rules shall apply to student conduct on school transportation:

1. Passengers shall follow the driver's directions at all times.
2. Passengers shall board and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest their home.
3. Passengers shall not stand while the bus is in motion.
4. Passengers shall keep books, instrument cases, feet, and other objects out of the aisle of the bus.
5. Passengers shall not deface the bus and/or its equipment.
6. Passengers shall not extend head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window nor hold any object out of the window nor throw objects within or out of the bus.
7. Passengers shall not smoke or use any form of tobacco.
8. Passengers shall not eat on the bus.
9. Usual classroom conduct shall be observed. Unruly conduct, including the use of obscene language, will subject the passenger to disciplinary action.
10. Upon leaving the bus, the passenger will wait for the driver's signal before crossing in front of the bus.
11. Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned.

The following procedures shall be followed when a discipline concern arises on a bus serving a regular route or an extracurricular activity:

1. A conference involving the principal, the student passenger, the driver, and the parent(s) may be required.
2. The principal may suspend the student's bus-riding privileges. If such a suspension occurs, the parents will be notified prior to the time the suspension takes effect.
3. In the case of serious misconduct that endangers the safety of other passengers or the driver, the driver shall have the authority to remove the student and call for law enforcement assistance. The principal and parents shall be notified of the situation as soon as possible. The student shall not be provided bus service again until a conference involving all persons listed above has been held.

Disciplinary sanctions and changes in transportation for a student with a disability shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

All vehicles coming into or leaving the school grounds are subject to the regulations of the school. A student may drive to school, provided the student abides by the traffic rules and has parental permission.

Students are not allowed to go to their cars during school hours. In case of emergency, they will be given a pass to do so by the administration. Any violation of proper

automobile use may result in the suspension of parking privilege or any such discipline which is appropriate for the circumstances.

### **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the District Business Manager. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

NOTE: Any Junior reported illegally parking at Oxford High School will not be eligible for a parking permit as an incoming senior for at least one-month after permits are distributed.

### **VACATIONS**

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations.

### **VIDEO RECORDERS ON SCHOOL BUSES/SCHOOL CAMPUS**

The district has installed video recording equipment on school buses to monitor school transportation and discipline. Videotaping will be done randomly during the school year, students will not be notified when a recording device has been installed and in use on their bus. Tapes will be viewed by the administration. Students violating bus conduct rules will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken. Videotapes shall be treated as protected student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Video/audio equipment will be used to monitor student behavior in common areas or campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used. The principal or his/her designee will review the tapes routinely and document students' misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the District's discipline policy.

### **VISITORS**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit district schools. All visitors must first report to the principal's office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

### **WEB SITES**

School web pages must contain material that reflects on educational purposes. School web pages are not to be used for personal, commercial or political purposes; and are considered a publication of the Board of Education. The Principal or his/her designee will approve all material posted on the school's web page. Students maintaining personal web pages may be subject to disciplinary action for the content of such sites under certain conditions.

### **WELLNESS**

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided.