

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Student-Parent HANDBOOK 2009-2010

SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

MISSION

Empowering all learners to succeed in their world

WELCOME TO SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL!

The faculty and staff welcome you back from a summer of fun-filled activities and vacations to a year of learning and growing - another step up the ladder to adulthood. We are looking forward to the opportunity of assisting you in this step - some as a first-year middle school student and others as "veterans".

We would also like to welcome your parents and solicit their cooperation in establishing a partnership which will provide the best educational atmosphere possible for you. This partnership develops through everyone's knowledge of what is expected from our school community and working together to help our young people attain their greatest potential.

This handbook has been prepared to introduce you to Sycamore Middle School in the hope that you will become acquainted more quickly with our school.

Middle School years can be the best years of your school career! It is a time for exploration—learning more about yourself and your relationships with others, learning more about how you learn, learning how to manage your time to meet deadlines and responsibilities, and learning where your talents and gifts lie. Some of these lessons will be academic lessons, while some will be in the arenas of sports, the arts, music, or other activities.

Our staff know and understand the myriad of learning experiences you will encounter while in middle school, and we are committed to helping you learn in any way we can! What we need from you is your best effort to meet expectations for learning! We want to help you reach your potential—that's our job as outlined by our mission statement: "Empowering all learners to succeed in their world!"

Have a great year!

SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 427

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MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

This is a buzz-word that is used regularly to refer to the educational process for adolescents. **But what is it?** There are two approaches to education of emerging teens, junior high and middle school. Differentiation between them is NOT about the grade levels; it's about the emphasis of the education, whether more based on content or subjects taught, or centered around the child. **Junior High and Middle School are NOT the same!**

Junior High philosophy is centered around **subjects**. The school is organized in the same way: a math wing, science wing, English wing, and social studies wing, along with an Allied Arts wing and gyms and locker rooms for PE. Students attend their classes in the various wings, mixing with all other students in different grade levels across their day as they attend their classes.

Middle School Philosophy is centered on the **child**, how he or she learns, and accounts for a student's growth--physical, emotional, social, and academic. Pre-adolescence and adolescence are the most difficult times of growth and transition for students K-12. Middle School Philosophy is the educational approach designed to best meet these unique needs.

In Sycamore, we strongly believe that middle school philosophy meets students' needs very well. **How do we do it?** First, we structure all students on teams to make the school smaller. Each student works with 2-6 core academic teachers, depending on grade level, as well as with a PE teacher, and an Allied Arts teacher. Students are in grade level wings, where their teams are located in close proximity. This way 6th grade stays primarily with 6th grade, 7th with 7th, and 8th with 8th. Because the teachers share a common (small school) group of students, middle school is not a giant leap from the elementary, where the focus was on the whole child. Instead, teachers work together to keep the focus on the child and his or her developmental needs, while progressing with the curriculum.

An adolescent's brain goes through a great deal of growth, as much or more than the period of time between birth and age two. Their learning needs are different, too. They benefit from connections working in teams. The core academic teachers meet every day to design learning to meet their team's student needs, to strategize ways to help individual students with behavior and learning, and to plan ways to make connections to make learning relevant. During their team planning time, teachers and assistants work toward best practice for adolescent learners. The National Middle School Association (NMSA) identifies 14 school practices and cultural characteristics that, when consistently integrated and fully implemented, create successful schools for young adolescents. They are:

School Practices

Health, Wellness, and Safety

Guidance and support

Organizational Structures

Relevant, challenging, integrative, exploratory curriculum

Multiple learning and teaching approaches

Assessment and evaluation

Cultural Characteristics

Safe environment

Adult Advocate for every student

Courageous, collaborative leadership

Knowledgeable Educators

Shared Vision

High Expectations

Active learning

School-Initiated partnerships

Working in teams, including Allied Arts and PE, we put the students' well-being first. We provide a safe learning environment and teaching approaches that meet students' needs in our grade level "houses." There is a shared emphasis on the well-being of the child and the curriculum and approaches to teaching in a middle school. We are grateful for the continued opportunity to follow middle school philosophy through teaming, because it puts the primary focus on the child.

Sycamore Middle School is committed to helping each child explore his/her learning strengths and opportunities for improvement, while offering athletics, music, and many different types of activities through clubs and organizations. Our goal is to help students develop into better learners, young people with good social skills and with an idea where their talents lie, so when they progress to high school and life beyond, they are ready for new challenges!

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SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

	All Settings	Classroom	Commons	Hallways	Extra-Curricular	Lunchroom
Respect for: Learning Surroundings Yourself Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep hands, feet, voice, & objects to yourself. ▪ Chew gum & dispose of it appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use active listening skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat others with respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use school-appropriate language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show appreciation appropriately. ▪ Use school-appropriate language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow lunchroom supervisors' directions. ▪ Clean up after eating & push in chair.
Responsibility Accountability for one's choices, actions, and obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take responsibility for your actions. ▪ Chew gum & dispose of it appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Model empathy for others. ▪ Be there, be ready. ▪ Show respect for learning. ▪ Risk helping another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remain seated in the same place until dismissed. ▪ Talk in a quiet voice. ▪ Sit appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk on the right side. ▪ Walk at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect & follow all school rules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remain seated in the same place until dismissed. ▪ Enter/exit lunchroom in an orderly manner.
Relationships Positive Interactions using effective communication, empathy and problem-solving skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep hands, feet, voice & objects to yourself. ▪ Model empathy for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use active listening skills. ▪ Model empathy for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat others with respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect others' space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain school-appropriate body contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be polite. ▪ Welcome others.
	Assemblies	Dismissal	Bathrooms	Field Trips	Bus	Bus Lines
Respect for: Learning Surroundings Yourself Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be polite. ▪ Show appreciation appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow supervisors' directions. ▪ Use school appropriate language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect school property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect your surroundings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect driver's authority. ▪ Food & drink free zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow supervisors' directions. ▪ Leave bus sidewalk open.
Responsibility Accountability for one's choices, actions, and obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enter & exit in an appropriate manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walkers leave the grounds immediately. ▪ Walk at all times & on the sidewalk. ▪ Stay in line on the sidewalk. ▪ Enter a car that has pulled fully forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flush. ▪ Wash your hands after using the bathroom. ▪ Report unsanitary conditions properly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Represent SMS positively. ▪ Follow supervisors' directions. ▪ Stay with your group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat seats and all bus equipment appropriately. ▪ Enter & exit in an orderly manner. ▪ Keep aisles clear. ▪ Remain seated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk at all times & on the sidewalk. ▪ Stay in line on the sidewalk. ▪ Remain a safe distance from buses and the driveways.
Relationships Positive interactions utilizing effective communication, empathy and problem-solving skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect others' space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect others' space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect privacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be polite. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat all others with respect. ▪ Be polite. ▪ Welcome others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respect others' space. ▪ Board buses in a safe and orderly way.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Board of Education and Sycamore Middle School is committed to providing educational programs and services designed to meet all students' individual needs and abilities. The District will not discriminate against any individual for reasons of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, economic status or disability.

Handbook Jurisdiction

All handbook and school rules apply to all school-sponsored events, even those activities occurring off-campus.

DISCIPLINE

Self-discipline means responsibility for one's actions and is one of the ultimate goals of education. The behavior of our students should at all times model the core values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Caring, Fairness, Integrity, Honesty, Loyalty, and Cooperation. We expect students to model the school's behavioral expectations outlined on the behavioral matrix on page 5. Our three expectations are: **Respect, Responsibility, and Relationships.**

It is our philosophy at Sycamore Middle School that when students do not meet these expectations, disciplinary action is required. At the same time, it is our feeling that students who do meet these standards should be recognized for their effort. Therefore, we have devised a discipline practice that contains both positive and negative consequences.

Discipline

Teachers and administrators in Sycamore Community Unit School District #427 assume the same role for students under their direction or supervision as parents or guardians do outside the school day for their own children. In addition, the Board of Education has the responsibility for providing a safe environment for all of its students and an atmosphere which is free from disruption to learning. Behavior that interferes with the educational opportunities of students, that endangers people or property, or reflects adversely on the school or its reputation necessitates disciplinary action which can ultimately result in Suspension and/or expulsion from school. Parents should be prepared to come to school when called about student discipline problems and possibly to remove their child from school.

The complete Discipline Policy for Sycamore C.U.S.D. #427 is [on the district website](#). The general policy statements and pertinent definitions are listed on the following pages.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary consequences are the discretion of Sycamore Middle School staff and administration.

School policy dictates disciplinary action which may include, depending on the nature of the conduct, any of the following: Warning, Parent Conference, Detention, In School Supervision assignment (ISS), 1 to 10 day Suspension, Police Referral, Expulsion Warning and/or Expulsion Proceedings, in accordance with Illinois State School Code.

- A. Students committing acts of disobedience or misconduct may be placed on probation, detained during non school hours, placed in an alternate education program (ISS), suspended from school, suspended from riding the school bus, expelled from school, or otherwise disciplined.
- B. If a student receives 3 days or less for a suspension, they will pick up their make up work when they get back and have the same amount of days as the suspension to make the work up. If a student receives 4 days or more of suspension, they may request homework. The office will have two days to gather up the homework. The student will then be responsible to turn in all the work when he/she returns from suspension.
- C. The Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean of Students are authorized to suspend a student from school or from riding the school bus. Only the Board of Education may expel a student. Teachers may remove disruptive students from a classroom.
- D. Prior to removing any student from the school, the authorized administrator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parents by telephone and take any other steps reasonably necessary to ensure the safety of the student being removed from school or the school bus.
- E. There may be students with specific discipline plans developed through an I.E.P. Specific procedures for school Suspension and expulsion and a more in-depth definition of gross disobedience and misconduct can be found in the Board Policy Manual.

Classroom Discipline Plans

All teachers and teams develop behavior expectations and consequences. These are discussed with students. Sycamore Middle School also has a school-wide point system to record positive and negative behavior.

Point System Discipline Plan

Accumulated Positive Points

Students whose accumulated point total shows a positive value will be periodically recognized for such effort through a school developed positive incentive program.

Positive Points

- Each week a student is not absent more than 2 days and earns no negative points, he/she will earn **2 positive points**.
- Each week a student is not absent more than two days and earns only one negative point, he/she will earn **1 positive point**.
- **Number of positive points are unlimited.** Students earn positive points for demonstrating the core values of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Caring, Fairness, Integrity, Honesty, Loyalty, and Cooperation. Teachers have the discretion to award positive points in different ways, and different teams have different approaches. While not all of these are given every time, the ways to earn positives is unlimited, and some examples are listed below.

Examples of Ways to Earn Positive Points

Improved behavior	Exceptional behavior	Bringing in needed supplies	Working without being asked
Proof of carrying learning over at home	Helping another student or the teacher	On task behavior all week in study hall	Walking on the right side of the hallway
Showing respect for others in excess of normal	Picking something up for someone else	Waiting patiently for assistance	Returning a parent signature before it's due
Pulling all the way up in line before getting out of the car in the morning.	Parent signature on tests, report cards, midterms, rubrics, etc.	Filing, sorting, stapling of papers-clerical help to teacher	Honesty about grading mistakes made on tests (in student's favor)
Helping another student with something without being asked.	Helping someone beyond the call	Excellent behavior for a substitute	Showing superior respect for another student or teacher

Negative Points

Students who display improper behavior in violation of the classroom rules or in violation of the school rules listed below shall receive negative points in the values listed below. Negative points shall accumulate with the consequences becoming more severe as the point value increases (see consequences). Students will be immediately notified if they have received negative points and will be asked to sign a **negative point slip** indicating such notification.

Negative Point Values

Code	Description of Behavior	Negative Point Value
A	Chewing gum improperly/eating	-2 (-3 in P.E.)
B	Tardiness (including arrival to school in morning)	-2
C	Inappropriate behavior	-1 to -5
D	Materials not brought to class	-1
E	In the hallway without a pass	-2
F	Failure to serve classroom discipline time	-3
G	Inappropriate language or profanity	-1 to -5
H	Hitting or pushing another student	-1 to -5
I	Student does not have or is not wearing ID	-1
J	Intentional damage/misuse of school property	-3 to -5
K	Throwing objects	-3
L	Disturbing class/inappropriate or unsafe behavior	-2 to -5 pts.
M	Disrespect or lying to a staff member or substitute	-2 to -5 pts.
N	Cruelty/disrespect to another student, intimidation	-1 to -5

If a student receives -5 points from a staff member, an attempt will be made to notify the parents or guardians.

Consequences of Accumulated Negative Points

Step 1 (-5 pts.)	Conference with assistant principal and parent notification
Step 2 (-10 pts.)	Letter home AND 1-hour detention after school Referral to Assistant Principal
Step 3 (-20 pts.)	Letter home AND 2-hour detention after school Behavior contract offered to reduce negatives
Step 4 (-30 pts.)	Letter home – 1-hour detention AND Loss of Privileges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent use of learning center/computer lab ▪ Loss of privilege passes ▪ Alternate lunchroom assignment ▪ Loss of the privilege of participation in extra curriculums (athletics, cheerleading, pom poms, student council, yearbook, music activities, and other school activities) ▪ Loss of the privilege of attending positive point activities, field trips and after school events sponsored by the faculty or PTO ▪ Passing period limited whenever possible
Step 5 (-40 pts.)	Letter home AND 4-hour detention after school One full day in ISS for every 10 points beyond –40

Excessive negative points (-10) in a week, **regardless** of point total, will result in disciplinary action.

1st time – 1-hour detention	3rd time – 3-hour detention
2nd time – 2-hour detention	4th time – 4-hour detention

If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the time will be doubled. If the student fails to serve the doubled detention, the student will be required to serve a full day of In School Supervision.

Students can receive periodic updates of their accumulated points if requested by a parent or guardian.

Procedures for **After School Detentions**

- A common room will be assigned twice per week for all students scheduled to serve time after school.
- The room will be supervised by a staff member.
- Students are responsible for bringing study materials with them.
- After school time is to be served from 3:05 until 5:05 on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays.
- After school time may be postponed only by prior arrangement with the assistant principal and only for emergency reasons.
- Failure to serve time assigned after school on the prescribed day shall result in the time being doubled.
- If the student fails to serve the doubled detention, the student will be required to serve a full day of In School Supervision.
- Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation. (They will not be permitted to ride the Spartan Reach bus.)

In School Supervision Program

The In School Supervision Program (**ISS**) is part of the school's discipline system. **ISS** is used in place of a student's regular classroom assignment when the student has reached this consequence stage, or it may be used as a consequence for a specific behavior which violates the Sycamore Middle School discipline policy. Students in **ISS** are required to do all work assigned in the regular classroom. Staff members are assigned to monitor each period of the day. Parents will be notified of **ISS** assignment by phone or by mail.

Examples of behavior possibly resulting in assignment to In School Supervision (**ISS**) are, but not limited to:

- Disrespect
- Insubordination
- Class disruption
- **Intimidation or bullying**
- Unsafe behavior
- Inappropriate lunchroom behavior

- Failure to serve a detention
- Persistent misbehavior
- Verbal altercation
- Inappropriate language, gestures or swearing
- Physical aggression
- Use of electronic devices for video or audio recording without prior permission.

Students may be assigned to ISS for a full day or a partial day. During this time they will be bound by the following rules and regulations.

RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE IN SCHOOL SUPERVISION PROGRAM

1. No talking is permitted unless to ask questions of the supervisor; in which case a student must raise his/her hand and wait for permission to speak.
2. While serving in the ISS, students must be working on assigned school work. If all assigned work is completed, the supervisor will assign further work or reading. If the student does not make progress with his/her school work additional time in the ISS room may be assigned.
3. No cards, radios, MP3 players, Ipods, etc. are allowed, and any brought into the ISS room will be turned in to the office.
4. Students are not to leave their assigned seats without permission of the supervisor and are not to move the furniture.
5. Students are not to write on the desks, tables, books, etc.
6. Students are to cooperate and show respect to the supervisors at all times or risk further consequences.
7. Failure to serve placement in the In School Supervision Program will result in disciplinary action.
8. Students assigned ISS for any portion of a day may not participate in nor attend extra curricular activities.

Full Day of In School Supervision

If a student is assigned to ISS for a full day, the following additional rules apply:

1. A brief washroom break will be permitted in the morning, during lunch break, and in the afternoon.
2. Students are to report to the ISS room (Room 108) on time, after attendance is taken in homeroom.
3. Students are to bring ALL of their textbooks, reading material, paper, pens and pencils, etc. to the ISS room by 8:20 AM or at the time of their assignment to the ISS room during the day. Failure to bring needed materials may result in further assignment.

Out of School Suspension Procedures

Examples of serious behavior possibly requiring Suspension are, but not limited to:

- Smoking on school property
- Possession or distribution of tobacco products, lighters, matches, or other smoking paraphernalia
- Physical aggression or fighting
- Willful damage to property
- Written or Verbal abuse directed toward staff or students
- Open defiance - refusal to comply with a specific, reasonable request made by a teacher or staff member
- Flagrant use of profane, vulgar, or obscene language
- Gang affiliation
- Violations of any state or local laws
- Possession of, use of, or distribution of any contraband substance, i.e., alcohol, drugs, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, aerosol cans, and misuse of any over the counter medicines
- Intimidation or attempting to intimidate peers or school personnel
- Possession of a weapon (any device that could be used to hurt or harm a student or staff member)
- Possession of a weapon facsimile
- **Bullying or intimidation**
- Partaking in any action that creates an unsafe situation for the student or others

- Any threat or intentional physical contact with a staff member
- Sexual harassment
- Theft
- Threats
- Continued or repeated misbehavior

A direct relationship exists between the conduct of the student and the school's educational function if the conduct: 1) has, or is reasonably likely to have, a direct impact on the order and discipline maintained in the school; 2) poses a threat to the orderly delivery of the instructional program; 3) poses a danger, or is reasonably likely to pose a danger, to the safety of the students, staff, or school property.

Suspensions may require parents to make immediate arrangements to pick up their child from school. In cases where students have violated the law, the school resource officer or police may be summoned.

A. Condition of Suspension

1. Suspension is a major penalty that may be caused by a single serious case of misconduct or by repeating cases of misconduct.
2. If a student is placed on suspension, he/she may **not** come to school or be on/or around school property, **nor at any school function, including extra-curricular activities**, at any time unless he/she has permission from an administrator.
3. Students returning to school may be required to have a parent conference before readmission is granted. This condition depends upon the length of suspension and severity of the offense.

B. Pre-Suspension Conference

1. The authorized administrator shall confer with any student who is under consideration for suspension prior to taking such disciplinary action.
2. Prior to or during a pre-suspension conference, the authorized administrator shall ascertain whether the student is a special education student or may be eligible for special education services. If so, the authorized administrator must also follow the procedures set forth in Board Policy.
3. The student shall be advised of the reasons for the proposed suspension and the evidence in support of those reasons. The student shall also be afforded an opportunity to respond.
4. The authorized administrator conferring with the student shall make a written record of the conference.
5. The authorized administrator, after following the above pre-suspension procedures, may then determine whether to suspend the student in accordance with the notification requirements set forth below.
6. When, in the opinion of the authorized administrator, a student poses an immediate threat to school personnel, other students or school property, or poses an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the student may be summarily removed from school without holding a pre-suspension conference as set forth above. In such event, written notice sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, shall be given to the parents.

C. Student Suspension Notification

1. If the pre-suspension or post-suspension conference results in a decision to suspend, the parents of the student shall be advised immediately of the decision **by phone and/or followed by a written notice sent by certified mail, return receipt requested.**
2. The notice to the parents shall include:
 - a) a statement of the reasons for the suspension, including any school rule which has been violated;
 - b) the dates and duration of the suspension;
 - c) a statement of the parents' right to request a review of the suspension with the District Hearing Officer **or** the Board of Education;
 - d) a statement that the failure to request such review within five (5) days after receipt of the notice, or eight (8) days after date of the mailing, whichever is earlier, shall be deemed a waiver of the right to a review hearing with the **Hearing Officer or the**

Board;

- e) notification of the right to be represented at the suspension review hearing by an attorney or other representative; and
 - f) a copy of the suspension review hearing procedures.
3. A request to review the Suspension may be oral or in writing, directed to the superintendent's office. Oral notification shall be confirmed in writing by a letter to the parents. If a request for review of the suspension is made within outlined time limits, the parents of the suspended student shall be given written notification of the time and place at least one (1) week prior to the review with the Hearing Officer or the Board of Education. If the parents, in requesting a review of the suspension, assert that the student is a special education student, then the authorized administrator shall follow the procedures set forth in Section VIII.
4. The superintendent and the Board of Education shall be notified of student suspensions by the authorized administrator, who shall forward a copy of the parental notice of suspension to the superintendent or to the Secretary of the Board.

Bullying, Intimidation, and Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is interpreted to be any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. Such conduct is a violation of school and district policies and will be handled through the school's disciplinary code. Disciplinary action could include any of the following depending on the severity of the conduct: warning, issuance of negative points, detention, assignment to in school Supervision, suspension, police referral, or expulsion proceedings.

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional infliction of physical, verbal and/or emotional suffering on another person or group of persons. Any improper use of power in order to intimidate, threaten, distress, or hurt others is bullying. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, direct behaviors (e.g., teasing, taunting, intimidating, threatening, name calling, ridiculing, belittling, extorting, hitting, physical attacks, and/or violence) and indirect behaviors (e.g., spreading rumors, causing social isolation or psychological isolation).

Expulsion

A concerted effort will be made to modify disruptive behavior and to alleviate any unsafe conditions. Expulsion may be recommended if the student cannot change disruptive behavior, solicits, sells or buys drugs or alcohol, **makes threats that cause safety concerns**, or would create an unsafe environment for students and/or staff. According to state law, a recommendation for expulsion for one year is recommended for possession of weapons; such as guns, firearms, shotguns, explosives, and **all "look-alikes" if such items are used, or attempted to be used, to cause bodily harm**. The Superintendent on a case-by-case basis may modify the length of these recommendations. The superintendent shall send a letter by certified mail to the parents or guardian of the student notifying them of the proposed expulsion. This letter will include the reason for expulsion, the time and place of hearing, and the hearing procedure. Only the superintendent or his designee may recommend a student for expulsion.

Anti-Gang Policy

It is the school's responsibility to maintain a safe and disruption-free school environment. "Gangs", as defined in this policy, shall mean individuals who associate with each other primarily for criminal, disruptive, and/or other activities prohibited by law and/or by the School District's rules and regulations. Gangs, gang-related activities, and secret societies are not acceptable in the school setting. The Board of Education is aware that their presence interferes materially and substantially with the educational process and the requirement of appropriate discipline. They also foster anti-social behaviors, attitudes, and practices which may endanger the health, safety, and welfare of our students. Therefore, students are prohibited from participating in any activity related to a gang, secret society, and public school fraternity or sorority while attending school-sponsored events.

Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. Soliciting and/or recruiting others for membership;
- 2. Participating in and/or inciting physical violence;
- 3. Extorting or soliciting money and/or services, requesting any person to pay for protection, insurance, or

- the payment of dues;
4. Coercing, harassing, and/or otherwise intimidating, threatening, or causing harm to any person or living creature;
 5. Wearing, possessing, using, displaying in any manner, distributing, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other item commonly associated with membership in or affiliation with a gang, secret society, or any public school fraternity or sorority;
 6. Using any communication, verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.), suggesting or showing membership in, or affiliation with, a gang, secret society, or any public school fraternity or sorority;
 7. Engaging in any activity intended to promote or further the interests of any gang or any gang activity or society including, but not limited to, distributing literature, drawing or displaying unauthorized symbols on any surface, or teaching others to "represent" or act like a member of a gang, secret society, any public school fraternity or sorority; or
 8. Any act or activity which violates any law or any policy of Sycamore School District #427 when such act or activity is taken to further the interests of a gang, secret society, any public school fraternity or sorority.

School Resource Officer

As part of our on-going partnership with the Sycamore Police Department, a School Resource Officer will be made available for use by all schools in District #427. School administration empowers the SRO, as a staff member, to enforce all school and district rules. The objectives of the SRO program are as follows:

- Provide law enforcement and police services to all schools, school grounds and areas adjacent to the school. Investigate allegations of criminal incidents per police department policies and procedures
- Enforce state and local laws and ordinances.
- Make appropriate referrals to juvenile authorities or other governmental agencies
- Work to prevent juvenile delinquency through close contact and positive relationships with students.
- Develop crime prevention programs and conduct security inspections to deter criminal or delinquent activities.
- Monitor crime statistics and work with local patrol officers and students together to design crime prevention strategies
- Establish and maintain a close partnership with school administrators in order to provide for a safe school environment
- Assist school officials with their efforts to enforce Board Of Education policies and procedures. Ensure school administrator safety by being present during school searches which may involve weapons, controlled dangerous substances or in such cases that, the student's emotional state may present a risk to the administrator.
- Assist school administrators in emergency crisis planning and building security matters
- Provide a course of training for school personnel in handling crisis situations which may arise at the school
- Be visible within the school community
- Attend and participate in school functions.
- Build working relationships with the school's staff, students and parents
- Develop and implement classes in law-related education to support the educational efforts of the faculty. Work closely with teachers in designing and presenting topics relating to law and the role of police in our society
- Work with guidance counselors and other student support staff to assist students and to provide services to students involved in situations where referrals to service agencies are necessary
- Assist in conflict resolution efforts
- Initiate interaction with students in the classroom and general areas of the school building.
- Promote the profession of police officer and be a positive role model.
- Increase the visibility and accessibility of police to the school community

BUS CONDUCT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The following regulations shall apply to all students riding school buses in the Sycamore School District #427. It shall be the responsibility of the student and parent to be familiar with and obey the following rules.

Passenger Regulations

Sycamore school bus drivers are responsible for students riding their buses just as teachers are in charge of their classroom. Students are required to obey the driver at all times. The privilege of riding the bus is dependent on good behavior and following rules. The purpose of these rules is to provide for a safe bus ride for all. Bus drivers are required to report any student who violates these rules. Violations are reported to the student's principal or designee who may take away the student's privilege to ride the bus until such time as permission to ride is reinstated. Students who are suspended from riding the bus must be present in school during the period of suspension. Failure to attend school during a period of suspension may result in referral to the county truant officer.

Passenger Regulations for Riding Sycamore School Buses

The following regulations apply to all students riding buses. The regulations have been categorized either as Minor Infraction or Major Infraction depending on its severity. Bus misconduct may also result in school disciplinary action.

Minor Infractions

1. Excessive and unnecessary noise of any kind
2. Extending any part of the body out of a bus window or yelling out of the window
3. Feet or body parts in the aisle
4. Spitting, littering, eating, or drinking
5. Standing while the bus is in motion.
6. Making a noise of any kind at a railroad crossing

Bus Conduct Report (for Minor Infractions)

- **1st Minor Infraction** – Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **2nd Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A **minimum three (3) to five (5) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **3rd Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the principal or designee and the student involved. A **minimum five (5) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.
- **4th Minor Infraction** -- Conference held between the or designee and the student involved. A **minimum ten (10) day suspension**. A copy of the Bus Conduct Report sent to parent/guardian.

Major Infractions

1. Fighting, harassment, intimidation, injury or property damage
2. Insubordination
3. A physical attack toward anyone
4. Throwing or shooting any objects inside the bus, out bus windows, or at the bus
5. Vandalism of any kind to inside or outside of bus
6. Using obscene or unacceptable language, gestures, remarks, or signs directed at anyone
7. Possession or use of tobacco (any smoking materials including matches and/or lighters), firecrackers, alcohol, or a controlled substance
8. Possession or use of weapons, look-alike weapons, or anything that can be used as a weapon

Bus Conduct Report (for Major Infractions)

When applicable, restitution for damages must be paid prior to reinstatement of bus riding privileges.

- **1st Major Infraction** -- **Minimum three (3) to five (5) day** bus suspension.
- **2nd Major Infraction** – **Minimum five (5) day** bus suspension.
- **3rd Major Infraction** -- **Minimum ten (10) day** bus suspension.
- **4th Major Infraction** -- **Minimum fifteen (15) day** bus suspension.

In cases involving repeated misconduct (Minor or Major Infraction) or in cases of an extremely serious nature or gross misconduct, bus privileges may be withdrawn for the remainder of the school year.

A parent may request a conference regarding their child's bus transportation and/or conduct with the bus driver, Director of Operations, building principal, or designee at anytime.

When a conference is held to review bus conduct, which may result in bus privileges being withdrawn for the remainder of the school year, the bus driver(s) may be present along with the Director of Transportation and the building principal or designee.

Bus disciplinary problems regarding special education students will be handled on an individual basis according to I.E.P.'s, state regulations and Board of Education policies.

This policy and the disciplinary procedures have been adopted by the Board of Education. The appeal process for any disciplinary action is the same as stated in the Sycamore School District #427 Policy Manual.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in extra/intra-curricular and interscholastic athletics at Sycamore Community School District No. 427 is a **privilege** extended to the student body by the Board of Education. Student participants act as ambassadors of the School District. **Accordingly, they are expected to conform their conduct at all times to the highest standards of propriety.**

The Sycamore community has also defined a set of core values. They are: Honesty, Integrity, Trustworthiness, Loyalty, Fairness, Caring, Respect, Citizenship, Responsibility, and Cooperation. We expect all students and staff to strive toward developing and displaying these core values. Since student activities are a privilege, students who choose to be involved have the additional opportunities and accompanying responsibilities related to the district's goals to learn, accept and display these core values.

Application of Extra/Intra-Curricular Discipline Policy

The policy applies to all students in extra/intra-curricula activities and interscholastic athletics at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427.

Standard of Conduct

Any student who participates in extra/intra-curricular or interscholastic athletic activities is prohibited from engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct or any other conduct during the entire calendar year, **either on or off school grounds**, which does not meet the ideals for good character, citizenship, and sportsmanship including, but not limited to, conduct for which an arrest has been made by law enforcement officials.

Definitions

1. **Gross Disobedience or Misconduct** is any conduct, behavior, or activity, as defined by the Board of Education in its policies, which causes or may reasonably cause school authorities to forecast substantial injury or disruption or material interference with school activities or the rights of other students or school personnel. Gross disobedience may occur on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school function. It also may occur off school grounds, provided, however, that a direct relationship must exist between the conduct of the student and the school's educational function.
2. **Other conduct** is any conduct, behavior, or activity which does not meet the ideals for good character, citizenship, and sportsmanship including, but not limited to, conduct for which an arrest is made by law enforcement officials or conduct which violates the code of conduct.
3. **Interscholastic Athletic Activity** is an athletic activity sponsored by the School District which involves athletic competition between students sponsored by the School District and students sponsored by other school districts or private schools.
4. **Extra/Intra-Curricular Activities** (including attendance at dances, assemblies, athletic events, etc.) are those activities sponsored by the school district which have open membership to interested or qualified students. All or part of the activities take place outside the classroom, and interaction may or may not include students from other schools or communities.
5. **Participation Rules:** The Athletic Director, coaches, sponsors or other supervising faculty may establish participation rules, including but not limited to: curfew, attendance at functions, attire, or other rules deemed necessary by the coach/sponsor. These rules shall be distributed in writing, as well as explained verbally. In the event a new rule is activated during the year, it is the coaches'/sponsors' responsibility to disseminate the information verbally as well as in writing.
6. **Suspension**, as defined in this Student Activities Code of Conduct is the exclusion of a student-athlete from

extra/intra-curricular activities or interscholastic athletic activities for more than one activity or contest or date if there are multiple activities on one date. The suspension of a student for one athletic contest or one extra/intra-curricular activity can be administered by a coach or sponsor as a consequence of violating team rules or this code of conduct.

7. **Review Board** is the board governing any appeals within the extra/intra-curricular and interscholastic athletic programs at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427. This Review Board shall consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, one non-coaching/sponsor faculty member (appointed by the Principal) and one coach/sponsor (appointed by the Athletic Director).

STUDENT ACTIVITIES DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY

Procedures and practices will be distributed by the coaches before the season begins.

Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427 stands strongly behind the commitment to a drug-free extra/intra-curricular program and believes in the educational value of extra/intra-curricular activities. The following rules apply to all high school and middle school extra/intra-curricular participants. **Violations of these rules carry significant consequences. The consequences for rule violations are cumulative from first infraction throughout your eighth grade year.**

Extra/Intra-Curricular Rules

1. Every extra/intra-curricular participant shall not use or possess any form of alcoholic beverage or drugs unless prescribed by his/her physician.
2. Every extra/intra-curricular participant shall not smoke or chew tobacco nor possess it.

Self-Help Clause (1st Infraction Only)

It is the desire of Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427 to assist all students with the rehabilitation of substance abuse problems. In keeping with this philosophy, an extra/intra-curricular participant will have the opportunity to seek self-help without jeopardizing his/her immediate participation or eligibility by following these procedures (such a self-referral is recorded as a step one violation) by following these procedures:

1. Student must notify building administrator or student assistance team member voluntarily of his/her involvement with drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
2. Parent notification will be made by the building administrator or student assistant team member.
3. Student immediately goes through a school approved assessment program at his/her own expense.
4. Assessment recommendations must be followed at the student's own expense.
5. Agency verification of the student's completion of #3 and #4 must be made to the school.

Infraction of Rules

All infractions must be observed by a certified/non-certified staff member of this school district or a law enforcement agency and must be submitted to the building administrator within ten school days of the violation. If these infractions occur in school or at school-related events, students are also subject to disciplinary actions outlined in the "Student Behavior and Discipline" section of the student handbook.

Consequences to violations are as follows:

1st Infraction: Non-Athletic Extra/Intra-Curricular

- Suspension from participation and attendance of all extra/intra-curricular activities that the student is involved in for four weeks. If there are less than four weeks remaining in the school year, the time will be pro-rated to the next year.

1st Infraction: Athletic

- Suspension from 20% of contests for the current season, or if there is not 20% remaining the suspension will be pro-rated to the next season of participation.
- Athletes must attend all practices or meetings, although they will not be allowed to participate in any contests.
- *The extra/intra-curricular participant will be strongly encouraged to seek an assessment program at his/her own expense.*

2nd Infraction

Suspension from participation in extra/intra-curricular activities for the season, term or year, depending on the structure of the program. The student **must** undergo and complete an assessment of potential chemical problems at his/her own expense and follow recommendations made. This completed assessment is **required** to re-enter the Sycamore extra/intra-curricular program. Notification of this completed program **must** be made in writing from the assessment agency to the school administrator.

3rd Infraction

Suspension for up to two calendar years, but not less than one year. The student **must** undergo and complete an assessment program and strictly adhere to assessment recommendations at his/her own expense before he/she re-enters the Sycamore intra/extra-curricular program.

4th Infraction

Suspension from either extra/intra-curricular programs while in attendance at Sycamore Community Unit School District No. 427.

The participant may appeal a suspension within five school days. This request to review the suspension may be oral or in writing, directed to the Athletic Director. The Administration will convene a Review Board in accordance with the Extra/Intra-curricular Policy.

Sycamore School District #427 is committed to drug-free activities and is a member of DCP/SAFE (DeKalb County Partnership for a Safe, Active, and Family Environment).

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Section 1. Purpose

Sycamore Community Unit School District #427 staff are committed to providing a learning environment for all students which will enhance their academic, social, and personal growth. The staff recognizes that some students with disabilities will require modified approaches to discipline and behavior. In instances when a student, due to the nature of his/her disability, requires a modified behavior plan utilizing behavioral interventions, both the plan and the specific interventions will be included in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Staff members involved in implementing such a modified plan will be provided with the necessary information or training to implement it.

Behavioral interventions should be used by teachers and administrators to promote and strengthen desirable adaptive student behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. A fundamental principle is that positive, non-aversive interventions designed to develop and strengthen desirable student behaviors should be used whenever possible. The most effective and humane manner of reducing undesirable behavior is by developing, strengthening, or generalizing desirable behavior to compete and ultimately displace the undesirable behavior.

While positive approaches alone will not always succeed in managing extremely inappropriate behavior, the use of more restrictive behavior interventions should be considered to be temporary and approached with utmost caution. The use of restrictive interventions for students with disabilities should be based on assessment, planning, supervision, evaluation, documentation, and protective measures. The use of restrictive interventions should maintain respect for the student's dignity and personal privacy and adhere to professionally accepted instructional practices.

Section 2. Method for Developing Behavioral Interventions

Staff Members, Parents, Administrators and Students have participated in the development of procedures that conform to the Illinois State Board of Education guidelines on behavioral interventions for students with disabilities. The procedures will be provided to parents or guardians each school year. In addition, students will be informed annually of the contents of the procedures.

Section 3. Behavior Intervention Consultant

Each school building will have access to individuals (either learning facilitator, school social worker, or psychologist) to serve as behavior intervention consultants. The duties of the behavior intervention consultants include assisting school building staff in developing behavior management plans for students, consulting with teachers and other staff on the proper use of behavioral interventions, monitoring the implementation of intervention plan procedures, and ensuring that restrictive behavioral interventions are implemented appropriately and in a humane manner.

Section 4. Designation of Behavioral Interventions by Level of Restrictiveness

Behavioral interventions are categorized into 4 levels of restrictiveness: 1) nonrestrictive, 2) non-restrictive with caution, 3) restrictive, and 4) prohibited.

Non-restrictive Interventions

Non-restrictive interventions are the preferred interventions because of emphasis on positive behavior change. These interventions may be used without the development of a written behavior management plan as part of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). They are: allowing student to escape task, calling and notifying parent, differential reinforcement, direct instruction, environmental or activity modification, instructional assignment, modeling, peer involvement, planned ignoring, positive reinforcement (individual or group), prompting, proximity control, redirection (verbal), response-cost, self-management, shaping, teaching alternative behaviors, teaching self-reinforcement, token economy, verbal feedback, and verbal reprimand.

Non-Restrictive with Caution:

contingent exercise, extinction, positive practice over-correction, redirecting student (physically), restitutive over-correction, and time-out

Depending on a student's needs and IEP, these interventions may be restrictive in nature. If these are used extensively they will be considered restrictive and all procedures for restrictive interventions will be followed.

Restrictive Interventions

Restrictive interventions may be used in emergency situations or when less restrictive interventions have been attempted and failed.

Restrictive interventions should only be used after functional analysis of behavior has been conducted, a behavioral management plan written, and the IEP amended to include the behavioral management plan.

Restrictive interventions shall only be used in the following situations:

- 1) in emergencies
- 2) after nonrestrictive interventions have been attempted and failed
- 3) in conjunction with positive interventions designed to strengthen competing behaviors

These are:

detention (before and/or after school, weekend), exclusion from extracurricular activities, food delay, forced physical guidance, manual restraint, Supervision (in school), suspension (out of school), time-out (isolation/quiet room)

Prohibited Interventions

are illegal and cannot be used under any circumstances: corporal punishment, expulsion with cessation of services, faradic skin shock, physical manipulation or procedure that causes pain and/or tissue damage when used as an aversive procedure

Section 5. Functional Behavior Management Plan

A written behavior management plan will be developed by the IEP team for students with disabilities who have significant behavioral and/or emotional needs and who require the use of restrictive interventions. A behavior management plan will be developed for all students whose IEP indicates that an alternative behavior plan is required.

Section 6. Emergency Use of Restrictive Interventions

"Emergency" refers to a situation in which immediate restrictive intervention is necessary to protect students, other individuals, or the physical site from: 1) physical injury (to self or others), 2) severe emotional abuse due to verbal and nonverbal threats and gestures, 3) severe property damage, 4) serious and continuous disruption of the school/classroom environment, and 5) other acts involving harm. When confronted with an emergency, personnel should use interventions that are the least intrusive to reasonably respond to the situation.

Should such emergency situations arise with any frequency, the student's IEP team should convene to review and/or revise the student's program. The parents or guardians should be notified within twenty-four hours when a restrictive procedure is used in an emergency situation.

- 1) A description of the time, place, events, and participants in the incident that required the emergency intervention
- 2) A description of the emergency intervention used, including all staff involved

- 3) A description of injuries and/or damage to property
- 4) The student's response to the emergency intervention;
- 5) Recommendations for avoiding future incidents

Section 7. Parent Communication

In order to both communicate effectively and comply with statute, these procedures, and related policy, must be provided to the parents of students with disabilities on an annual basis. Further, some reference to these procedures and related policy, needs to be provided to all parents on an annual basis.

Section 8. Provisions for Training and Professional Development

To the extent practical, all new special education teachers and related services personnel employed will have training in the management of behavior for children with disabilities. Training will be provided annually to new personnel on the implementation of the procedures in this document. Special education teachers and related services personnel presently employed will receive in-service training on the implementation of these procedures.

ATTENDANCE

Sycamore Middle School staff are committed to helping all students succeed educationally. An important factor in achieving this goal is for students to be in school on a regular basis. Regular attendance is one of the most important factors in determining success in school. Class discussion, demonstrations, labs, and hands-on activities cannot be regained by make-up work. Poor attendance results in lower grades, disinterest in school, and ultimately dropping out of school or retention. No student should miss class without valid cause or prior approval by the building administrator.

Reporting an Absence

A student's absence must be called in. **Please call 899-8182 or 899-8170 to report an absence.** Leave the student's name and reason for the absence.

Excused Absence

Valid Cause for absence means illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, court-related actions, circumstances which cause parent concern for the safety and health of the child, and family emergency (as deemed valid by school building administration). Valid cause absences shall be considered excused, and work missed is allowed to be submitted for credit. The school principal has the right to determine what constitutes an excused absence. "Take Your Child to Work Day" in April will result in an absence on the student's attendance record.

If a student has been ill for three or more days, a doctor's excuse MAY BE REQUIRED.

If the illness will cause more than a one-day absence, parents may inform the secretary on the first day and then they will not have to call every day for the same illness. Students will have one day per each day missed to make up absence-related work.

School Related Absence

Students are considered to be in attendance and are expected to make up work for credit when absent from school, on a field trip, or other school-related trips.

Vacation Absence

Vacation absences are absences for recreational/enjoyment reasons. Sycamore School District strongly encourages parents to plan vacations to coincide with the school calendar and avoid taking valuable educational time away from their children. Students who know in advance that they will be absent from school for vacation must check with the attendance office. The student must request a special form at least 5 days in advance. A phone call from a parent is required either prior to or at this time. Vacation absences will be considered as excused (absences with valid reasons) for up to five days, unless parent has been notified that a doctor's note is required for all absences. However, they are included as days absent for the total absence policy including the truancy stage. More than 5 days will be considered unexcused. Work may or may not be prepared in advance; that is up to teacher discretion. Any work assigned over vacation is due upon return. Vacation absences may impact your child's learning and/or grade. All work/tests will need to be made up upon return in a timely manner (one day per day missed) in order to receive full credit.

Unexcused Absence (Truant)

- **Truant** means a child who is absent without valid cause for a school day or portion of the day. Students in truancy may not be allowed to attend extra-curricular activities such as dances, per principal's discretion.
- **Chronic or Habitual Truant** means a "child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 10% or one of the previous 180 regular attendance days"
- **Truant Minor** means a child who is a "chronic truant to whom supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention, and remedial service, alternative programs, and other school and community resources have been provided and have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy, or have been offered and refused."

Using the definitions cited, the school district shall determine if the student is a truant, chronic or habitual truant, or a truant minor. Every attempt will be made to determine the reason for a student's truancy through talking with him/her, through parent conference, or through other means. Work may or may not be accepted from students who have an unexcused absence per administrative discretion.

The following support services may be offered to a student who is experiencing an attendance problem:

- Conferences: Student or Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Counseling: Counselor or Social Worker
- Schedule Changes
- Parent Letter or Telephone Call
- Involvement of School Nurse
- Referral to Student Teacher Assistance Team
- Consideration of alternative education programs
- Information about existing Community Services

When the supportive services of the school district have been offered to the student, and if these measures prove ineffective and the behavior persists, the building principal will refer the student to the DeKalb County Truancy Prevention Program.

20 Full Day Absence Plan

- 6th Full Day of Absence - Letter to parent.
- 10th Full Day of Absence – Letter to parent.
- 14th Full Day of Absence- Letter to parent.
- 16th Full Day of Absence – Parent notification/Doctor's note required for subsequent absences.
- **9th Day Unexcused in last 180 days**-Referral may be made to DeKalb County Regional Office of Education Truancy Intervention/Prevention Program.

Doctor's Note Required

*After sixteen absences per school year, to excuse each absence thereafter, a physician's note stating specific medical reasons for the student's absence will be required within **24 hours** of the student's return to school. While seeking a medical excuse, the student's parent or guardian must still comply with absence notification procedures. Should a parent or guardian choose not to secure a medical excuse, the absence will be considered unexcused. Medical notes must be signed by a doctor and state specific days that a student is excused from school.

After nine unexcused absences during the previous 180 days of school attendance, a referral may be made to the DeKalb County Regional Office of Education Truancy Intervention/Prevention Program.

Tardiness

If a student is late in the morning, he/she must get a pass from the office to enter class. Students will be asked to explain the reason for the tardiness. Five unexcused tardies will result in a 1 hour detention, 10 will result in 2 hour detention, 15 will result in a 3 hour detention, and 20 will result in a 4 hour detention. If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the time will be doubled. If the student fails to serve the doubled detention, the student will be required to attend Saturday School.

Unexcused Tardies

Unexcused tardies will be monitored carefully. **Two unexcused tardies will equal 1 full day absence.** During the school day there are four (4) minutes given between class periods. Any tardiness during the school day will be dealt with by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to be in their seat when the final bell sounds at the beginning of each period.

Unexcused Absences for Failure to Call

Any full day or partial day absence, which is not called in by a parent within two hours of the beginning of the school day for the reasons identified as “excused absences,” will be termed “unexcused.” A parent’s call does not make the absence excused if the reason for the absence is not excusable (e.g. shopping, sleeping, hunting, babysitting, car problems, etc.) Work may or may not be accepted from students who have an unexcused absence per administrative discretion.

Suspensions

Suspensions are considered excused absences. Students **may** make up assignments given during their suspension per Board of Education policy. (See suspensions in the Discipline section.)

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students must be in attendance during the school day to participate in, or attend, school activities. Students absent from school for more than four periods (1/2 day) or who were assigned ISS during the day for any portion of the day are not eligible to participate or attend activities.

RESIDENCY FORM

It is the expectation of the district, that at the time of any initial registration, the parent/guardian of the student(s) will complete a form that indicates they have met the residency requirements of the district prior to the student being accepted.

HEALTH INFORMATION

ILLNESS

If a student becomes ill in school, he/she may want to lie down or may need to go home. Except in cases of emergency, the student needs to get his/her assignment notebook (pass) signed by his/her classroom teacher to see the nurse. If the nurse is not available, the secretary on duty or the principal will assist the student. The nurse's health room is located in the main office.

If the student feels better after having rested for a short time, the nurse or an office staff member will arrange for the student to return to class.

A student will be sent home if he/she:

- has a fever of 100°F or over
- has vomited or has diarrhea

It is **important** that parents supply the nurse with updated names and phone numbers of at least two adults who will be able to pick up your child if you can not be reached.

Students must be symptom free for 24 hours before turning to school.

ADHD/ADD

If a child’s physician requests documentation to be completed by the team of teachers (either to obtain a diagnosis or to follow medication effectiveness), this paperwork must be given to the nurse. She will facilitate the distribution and collection of the documentation or observation notes as needed.

PE EXCUSES

Students unable to participate in PE because of an injury or illness per doctor’s orders, **MUST** have a doctor’s note releasing them to resume participation.

VISION and HEARING SCREENINGS

Students will be screened according to state mandated vision and hearing laws and the results will be shared with the school. Parents should notify the school if consent for screening is denied.

Vision screening is completed on all 8th graders, all new students, students receiving special education services, and on students for whom there is a teacher recommendation. Hearing screening is completed on all new students, students receiving special education services, and those recommended by a teacher.

Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye exam and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed

and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months.

All kindergarten students, all students entering the school from out of the country or from being home-schooled will also be required to have a complete eye exam done by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

HEALTH INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

Illinois law requires that all 6th grade students have a completed physical exam before entering school each fall. Completed physical forms are to be turned in to the school nurse before a student can attend classes. **Any student who arrives at school the first day without a physical will be sent home** and will not be allowed to return to school without the completed physical form. The physical must be completed on the current Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination form. In addition to the physical, the student must show evidence of protection against:

Measles (rubella), Mumps, Rubella (3-day measles), Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Pertussis (whooping cough), and Hepatitis B (series of 3 immunizations) and proof of having the varicella vaccine or history of chickenpox.

All students new to the district must also comply with these regulations within 30 days of enrollment. Transfer students, as well as students with no physical exam but verification of a doctor's appointment, will be conditionally enrolled. Exceptions to the law are valid for medical contraindications or religious objections provided the exemption is on file in the student's health folder.

Exclusion from school

1. Students who do not have physicals, immunization or other letters (medical or religious) on file
2. If there is an outbreak of disease (i.e. measles), those students who have not had immunization due to medical or religious reasons will be on the susceptible list and will be excluded until 21 days after the last reported case of the disease.

Individual schools shall keep an up-to-date list of all children who have not presented evidence of immunity against diphtheria pertussis (to age six), tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, and mumps.

DENTAL REQUIREMENT

The State of Illinois through Public Act 93-946 has mandated that all students in K, 2nd and 6th grade must have a dental exam completed prior to May 15 of that school year.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION

If the nurse feels that emergency services are indicated, 911 will be activated and your child will be transported to the nearest hospital for immediate medical attention. The closest hospital for the Sycamore School District is Kishwaukee Community Hospital.

HEAD LICE

Anyone can get head lice. It is a popular belief that head lice only thrive in an unclean environment, but having head lice in no way implies poor housekeeping or a lack of personal cleanliness. Head lice come from direct contact with another person or indirect contact through use of lice-infested clothing, bedding (staying overnight), hairbrushes or combs, hats, theater seats, or any number of ways. **Please check your child's head closely!** Parents should check their child's head for lice nits every week. Sycamore schools have a "No Nit" policy to address the problem of head lice. In the event that a student acquires head lice, he or she is not permitted to return to school until the nits (lice eggs) are no longer present. Report any lice outbreak to the school nurse for specific suggestions and follow up.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Most medication a child takes does not be administered at school. If he/she is to take it 3 times a day or less, it should not be sent to school but should be taken at home. If your child takes daily medications, they should be taken at home with very few exceptions. Over-the-counter medications cannot be given at school. Aspirin, cough medication, etc. should not be sent to school. The nurse does stock Tylenol, Ibuprofen, and liquid antacid, which can be given to students with parent permission. A parent permission form must be on file in the nurse's office. It is encouraged that if your child takes these medications on a frequent basis, you obtain permission from a physician and bring in your child's own individual medication into the school. All medication is to be taken in the nurse's office.

MEDICATION POLICY

Administration of medication to students is the responsibility of the parents and should be given at home whenever possible. Only in cases where failure to take prescribed medication could jeopardize the student's health and/or education should medication be given at school. The following guidelines must be followed when school personnel are required to administer medication.

1. A written order for prescription and non-prescription medications must be obtained from the student's physician. (ALL physician orders must be updated every school year)
2. A written request for giving the medicine from the parent/guardian must accompany the above order.
3. Medication must be brought to school in a pharmacy labeled container. All containers should display:
 - a. Child's Name.
 - b. Prescription Number.
 - c. Medication Name/Dosage.
 - d. Administration Route.
 - e. Date & Refill.
 - f. Physician's Name.
 - g. Pharmacy Address and Phone Number.
4. Any medication that is designated a controlled substance (such as Concerta, Ritalin, Dexedrine, and Adderall) must be brought to school by the parent or another adult.
5. Each dose of medication administered shall be recorded with date and initials of the person administering it and placed in the student's health record.
6. Medication must be kept locked in a supervised area.
7. The school nurse assigned to the school should be notified of all medication requests and changes including those that are to be self-administered such as bronchial inhalers. He/She will then monitor and counsel the student as needed.
8. The school may refuse to administer prescription or non-prescription medication unless the above guidelines are followed.

FIELD TRIP MEDICATION PROCEDURES

For field trips, the school nurse will dispense medication into individual envelopes marked with the student's name. Designated school personnel (not necessarily the school nurse or health aide) will carry the medication and supervise student self-administration. Self-administration means the student will be responsible for opening the envelope and recognizing his/her medication prior to taking it in front of the staff member.

ASTHMA/EPIPEN MEDICATION

Illinois School Code requires that all schools permit students to carry and self-administer prescribed asthma and Epi-pen medication at school. In order for a student to carry asthma and/or Epi-pen medication at school, written permission from the parent and physician must be on file in the nurse's office. The permission for self-administration of medication is effective for the school year and needs to be renewed each subsequent school year. If a student will be carrying and self-administering these prescribed medications, and parents have not turned in the required forms, the school nurse should be contacted. The school district and its employees are to incur no liability, except for willful and wanton misconduct, as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication by the student.

CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION

TESTING

Each year, students take ISAT tests. These are tests required by the state of Illinois. Students in sixth grade are tested in Reading, Math, and Writing. Seventh graders take Science, Reading and Math, and eighth graders are evaluated in Reading, Writing, and Math. Looking at your child's achievement on these assessments over his/her school career is helpful in finding his/her strengths and areas of academic weakness.

Typically, these tests are administered in March. In addition, eighth graders take the Explore test. This test is published by the same company that publishes the PLAN test and ACT which students take in high

school. These scores, too, help parents examine a student's learning profile and his/her academic strengths and weaknesses.

The best preparation for these important tests is adequate rest, good nutrition, and hydration to fuel the best possible thinking.

HOMEWORK

Homework that contributes to the student's scholastic and/or social progress is a normal and important part of school life. It is important that each student complete all homework assigned on the due date. A normal and reasonable amount of homework to expect at this age level would be from five (5) to seven (7) hours per week. One of the biggest causes of lack of student accomplishment at this level is students not completing work on time. Parents are encouraged to discuss homework with their child, check Homework Live.com, and establish a regular procedure to assure its completion on time. If additional help is needed, students are encouraged to speak with the teacher to set up time for extra help.

Cheating or Forgery (Academic Honesty)

Sycamore Middle School expects academic honesty. Any action intended to get credit or help someone get credit for work which is not one's own is considered academic dishonesty. **Plagiarism** (including Internet copying/pasting) is considered academic dishonesty. Consequences for academic dishonesty will be administered at the discretion of the teacher and administration, but could result in a zero for the assignment.

Forgery is dishonest. Students who forge a parent's signature will receive consequences for academic dishonesty. These can include classroom consequences, negative points, or an office referral.

ASSIGNMENT REQUEST

Students absent for one day or less should contact a fellow classmate or check HomeworkLive.com for makeup assignments. Parents who wish to request assignments for students absent two or more days may call school. Please understand that because teachers may not have time during the school day to prepare makeup assignments, not all assignments will be available immediately at the end of the day. Therefore, parents may wish to call before coming to school to pick up assignments.

Students are generally given 1 day to make up work per day absent (maximum 3 days). Students whose makeup work is not completed within the required time may be not be given full credit for that assignment.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Saturday School is an initiative that is designed to meet different student needs. Saturday School is an intervention that requires students to come to school on Saturday, where they can work with two certified teachers to receive support for behavior, work completion, and academics.

- SMS is experiencing greater numbers of students who are falling behind in work completion. Many initiatives have targeted this need: before/after school help sessions, use of HomeworkLive.com to allow parents and students to access assignments on line, including worksheets and notes that can be downloaded, weekly notification of missing work sent to parents, Parent Portal, and other individual team initiatives. These have been largely unsuccessful, as the number of students with incomplete work continues to rise, and gaps in learning are a result. Coming to Saturday school at the end of a week where a student has fallen behind will serve to close learning gaps.
- Students earn detentions for tardies and accumulated negative points. If a student fails to serve an assigned detention, the length of the detention doubles. If a doubled detention is skipped, the student earns a day of In School suspension. Saturday School is an intervention which allows students to be accountable for their lack of punctuality or behavior without losing instructional time.
- Students who have a serious discipline infraction may earn Out of School suspension. This results in a loss of instructional time. In certain circumstances, Saturday School can be offered as an alternative to suspension.
- Saturday School is also available for students in the credit recovery program to make up learning where they have earned an F.

EXTRA HELP SESSIONS FOR STUDENTS

Students finding they need extra assistance from a teacher may meet with that teacher before school the next morning (7:50 - 8:15 A.M.). Teachers also are available to assist students after school. The SMS staff is

dedicated to helping students. However, there are times they may have already scheduled a student or parent conference or have a staffing or meeting. To avoid such times, it is a better procedure to check with the teacher in advance.

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

The LRC provides a wide selection of reference materials, magazines, newspapers, and books. Students may use the scanners, camcorders, digital cameras, opaque and other technology with teacher approval for classroom assignments in school. The LRC is open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:15 pm each day.

Students must present their picture ID or bar code in their assignment notebook in order to check out materials. Students may check out books for three weeks and magazines for one week. Up to six materials may be checked out to a student. This privilege is suspended when books are overdue or lost and not paid for. **Students who have missing materials or fines due at the end of the year will not participate in celebrations planned by the team or school until they have resolved the issues. This includes the 8th grade party.**

Student must have their assignment notebook signed by a teacher in order to go to the LRC from class or study hall. The assignment notebook will be signed by a librarian when the student leaves. If a student needs to return during study hall, he/she will need to show the study hall teacher the librarian's signature from earlier in the day. During study hall, students may use the computers in the LRC lab if a class is not using them.

COMPUTERS

Use of school computers is considered a privilege. Any student who damages or misuses any type of computer hardware or software, in addition to disciplinary action, may lose his/her computer privileges for a period of time to be determined by a building administrator.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY **SYCAMORE CUSD #427**

Purpose of Technology Use: The Sycamore Community Unit School District is pleased to offer students access to our computer network as well as the Internet. We are happy to be able to provide this service and believe it offers vast, diverse, and unique resources. Our goal in providing this service is to continue to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, engaged learning, and communication. Students' use of the District's computer network will be teacher directed and for academic-related assignments only.

Opportunities and Risks of Technology: Internet access will enable the exploration of thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other sources of information around the world. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may still find ways to access inappropriate materials. We believe that the benefits to users from access to the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their child(ren) access to the Internet. Even though the District does use filtering software to keep students from unauthorized sites, no filter is guaranteed to be error free or totally dependable. Among other matters, the District is not liable or responsible for:

- any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties;
- the accuracy or suitability of any information that is retrieved through technology;
- breaches of confidentiality;
- defamatory material; or
- the consequences that may come from failure to follow District #427 policy and procedures governing the use of technology.

Privileges and Responsibilities of Technology: It is a general policy of the Sycamore Community Unit School District to promote the use of computers in a manner, which is responsible, legal and appropriate. Use of the District's network is a privilege. Failure to adhere to this Technology Acceptable Use Policy will result in the revocation of access privileges. Should a user's privileges be revoked, there shall be no obligation to provide a subsequent opportunity for access to the District's network.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the District's network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the District's computer resources. Users are advised never to access, save, print, or send anything that they would not want parents and teachers to see or read. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review communications and files to maintain system integrity and to ensure that the network is being used responsibly.

No student will be provided with a school email account. If email is necessary for the accomplishment of a class project, a class account shall be used under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. Students are not to check personal email accounts while at school. This includes but is not limited to accounts set up through Hotmail, Yahoo, Excite, AOL, etc.

Network Etiquette: Network users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite and nonabusive in your messages to others;
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language;
- Do not reveal the personal addresses or telephone numbers of students;
- Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users;
- Adhere to the rules of copyright law and assume that all software is copyrighted (unless it is labeled "freeware" or "public domain");
- Adhere to the licensing agreements governing the use of shareware;
- Be responsible at all times for the proper use of access privileges and for complying with all required system security identification codes including not sharing such codes;
- Close any site (URL) that has inappropriate material. Contact or report the site to a lab supervisor or teacher, and do not share such sites with other users;
- Respect the right of others to use equipment and therefore do not use it for non-school activities; and
- Protect the privacy of other users and the integrity of the network by avoiding misuse of passwords and others' files, equipment and programs.

Unacceptable Use: Users are responsible for their actions and activities involving the network. Network users will not:

- Use offensive, obscene, inflammatory or defamatory speech;
- Harass other users;
- Use the account or password of another user;
- Misrepresent themselves or others;
- Violate the rights of others including their privacy;
- Access, submit, post, publish, download or display any defamatory, intentionally inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal material;
- Post material authored or created by another without his/her consent;
- Post anonymous messages;
- Use the network for commercial or private advertising or for the sale or purchase of materials for personal use;
- Download unauthorized software programs or files including but not limited to the following types: exe, zip, mp3, mpeg, avi, streaming audio, etc.;
- Wastefully use network resources such as file space;
- Use any electronic form of communication, including but not limited to chat rooms, email, forum, article forwarding, document forwarding from home, libraries or other outside sources;
- Gain unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Use the network for private financial or commercial gain;
- Vandalize data, programs, and/or networks;
- Damage technology hardware and/or software;
- Use of any personal equipment attached, connected, and/or installed to any district equipment.
Exceptions: Flash or jump drives
- Spread computer viruses;
- Use the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or State regulation;

- Reveal their personal address or telephone number or those of others; and
- Use the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked.

Disciplinary Action: Failure to comply with this policy and any administrative regulations and guidelines governing the use of technology may result in disciplinary action and/or payment for causing equipment damage.

Confidentiality: Network users must recognize that there is no assurance of confidentiality with respect to access to transmissions and files by persons outside or from persons inside the District. Also, the District reserves the right to log technology use, to monitor file server space utilization by users, and to examine users' files and materials as needed. Therefore, users cannot expect absolute privacy from District personnel as to their use of technology.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

At Sycamore Middle School there is a continuum of Special Education programming available to meet students' unique learning needs. Most students receive special education services within the regular classroom. Sometimes that means that they are in a collaborative setting, where two teachers, a special educator and general education teacher co-teach together. Other times, students only require the occasional support of an assistant in the classroom. If there is a more pronounced academic need, there are smaller classes of twelve or fewer students taught by a special education teacher.

Some students have difficulty managing their behavior, and a classroom with structure and behavior management supports is provided at times during the school day where they need support. The behavior support teacher works closely with the student's team to provide support in the least restrictive environment.

Another program that meets students' needs is designed to provide functional, pre-vocational, and community based learning. Students work with an assistant and special educator to learn daily living and life skills within the school and community setting.

This continuum of services is designed to meet students' unique learning needs, and we are proud to be inclusive in our programming.

GIFTED and TALENTED EDUCATION SERVICES (GaTES)

Sycamore School District #427 offers opportunities for identified gifted students in the areas of math (GaTES Math) and literature (GaTES Literature). The purpose of the GaTES program is to meet the needs of students whose abilities require a quicker paced and more challenging curriculum than their regular grade level class would provide.

Identified GaTES Math students are clustered together in single sections for math instruction. Students receive a math accelerated and compressed curriculum as well as enrichment within their regular classroom setting. Students who move through this middle school program and complete algebra successfully are eligible for the high school gifted geometry course.

Students qualifying for our GaTES Literature program are clustered together into single sections for literature instruction. Students are presented with challenging materials that provide for in depth discussions, vocabulary growth, thoughtful reflection, and independent work. Classroom teachers work collaboratively to plan progressively more challenging concepts each year, and with High School teachers to articulate the expectations of Pre-AP and AP classes offered at the High School.

In both programs there are specific criteria used to identify students. Scores from multiple tests - Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – determine the initial pool of candidates. The data of those students is then placed on a matrix to determine eligibility.

Students are identified at the end of their fifth grade year as they prepare to enter Middle School. There are procedures in place for identifying students new to the district and an appeal process also exists. GaTES serves five to seven percent of the district's student population.

Sycamore Middle School Physical Education Program:

Requirements: Physical Education regulation clothes are purchased by the student from local stores. Sweatshirt and sweatpants may be used along with the required uniform but they must be gray, black or gold in color. The required uniform includes:

- Gold Sycamore T-shirt and black shorts (labeled – Sycamore)*
- Tennis shoes*
- Cotton athletic socks*
- Sweatpants and sweat shirt (recommended)*

All gym clothing must be adequately labeled for accurate identification. Students will not be allowed to wear clothing belonging to another student.

Black, gray or gold sweatshirt and sweatpants are recommended for use in Physical Education classes during the cooler days. (The middle school PE program has coordinated with the high school program regarding color choices.) A student will be allowed to wear their sweats over their PE uniform, once their teacher has checked for their proper uniform shirt and shorts. (If this is abused, students will need to wear their sweats under their PE uniform.) For hygiene purposes, students may not wear sweatshirts or sweatpants that have been worn to school for physical education classes. It is recommended that students keep sweats in their PE locker during cooler months. For safety purposes, students are not allowed to wear sweatshirts that have zippers. For similar reasons, warm-up jackets, windbreakers and/or jackets are not permitted. **Also, as a safety measure, gum/candy is NOT permitted during PE classes.**

All students are required to participate in physical education classes unless there has been a doctor's note restricting activity. A parent/guardian request, stating the nature of the injury or condition, will be accepted for restricted/limited activity based on the recommendation of the school nurse. This parent/guardian request is valid for up to two consecutive days.

Any student participating in an extra curricular activity must participate in physical education. If on a given day, a student-athlete does not participate in PE because they refuse, do not have the proper uniform, are sick or injured, that student/athlete is not eligible to participate in athletic practice or games that evening.

ALL padlocks used on gym lockers are furnished by Sycamore Middle School. Each student will receive a padlock from his/her PE teacher in 6th grade or if a new student to SMS. Replacement locks can be purchased during registration for a fee of \$5.00 from the student's PE teacher. This padlock is to be used to protect belongings during PE class and the PE uniform when not in class.

It is the responsibility of each student to lock their padlock to ensure that their belongings are safe.

Students are discouraged from bringing money, jewelry, or valuables to school and also from sharing their combinations with others. The PE department will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

PE participation policy:

For safety and hygiene purposes, appropriate clothes for participation are required of all students. Each PE teacher has access to clean PE uniforms that can be borrowed for a class period on days when students have not come prepared. A student borrowing clothes will receive a negative point for not bringing materials to class, and will not be assessed any other penalty for class participation. **Students may borrow no more than three times within a semester.** The following outlines the procedures followed when a student is not prepared more than 3 times.

4th offense: an **office referral** is completed and the student will be sent, with a written assignment to be completed, to ISS

5th offense: an office referral is completed, the student will be allowed to borrow clothes, and a **one hour detention** will be assigned by the office

6th or more offenses: an office referral is completed, the student will be allowed to borrow clothes, and a **two hour detention** will be assigned by the office

Appropriate athletic shoes are necessary for participation in PE activities. For hygiene reasons, tennis shoes are not handed out for students not having appropriate footwear. The following outlines the procedures followed when shoes are missing:

1st offense: student will stay in PE class and complete a written assignment

2nd offense: **office referral** will be completed, ISS assigned for that class period

3rd offense: **office referral** will be completed (**1 hour detention** assigned)
student will stay in PE class and complete a written assignment

4th or more offenses: office referral will be completed, (**2 hour detention** assigned), student will stay in PE class and complete written assignment

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM

Sycamore Middle School has a strong commitment to the belief that our children have the right to an education in a drug free environment. In order to carry out this belief we have developed a substance abuse program designed to educate students to the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and to provide assistance to students and their parents when substance abuse has been diagnosed.

To help in the implementation of this philosophy, Sycamore Middle School has developed a Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT) that consists of teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, the school nurse, and the social worker. This team receives referrals from persons who have concerns about a student. This team then attempts to provide assistance to the student and the family.

ASSEMBLIES

General assemblies are held occasionally for those students displaying a positive school attitude and for the purpose of providing entertainment, knowledge and experience of being an audience. These are held at various times during the day and students leave from their regular classes and sit with their classroom teacher.

At these occasions, the Sycamore Middle School shows to outside guests and performers within the school the courtesy and attention that are characteristic of our school. Friendly and enthusiastic applause is welcome. Whistling, stomping, booing, and other unsuitable noises are not acceptable.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are an extension of classroom learning in a location outside school. Because students represent Sycamore Middle School, they must be in good standing for consideration for a field trip. Team discretion for attendance on field trips will be used for students who are at -30 or below, or other students whose behavior record causes concern for the safety and well-being of all students. These cases will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Students who are deemed ineligible to attend a field trip will remain at school with appropriate curriculum materials for learning. All Field Trip permission slips must be returned on time or the student will not be able to go on the trip. Students who remain at school will be provided with educational activities for the day.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTING (Report Cards)

Pupil progress is reported to students and parents formally on a quarterly basis. Students will be given a copy of the grade card following the nine-week grading period as soon after as computer time will permit. After the first four weeks of each grading period, parents will be sent a mid-term progress report for students where a problem exists or when a teacher feels it necessary to do so. Provision is also made for communication to parents from teachers to praise work well done or where a student has realized success.

The school encourages open communication between parent and teacher. Parents should feel free to ask for conferences with staff members at any time rather than waiting for grading periods.

Student achievement is graded on the following basis:

90-100	A - for superior achievement
80-89	B - for above average achievement
70-79	C - for average achievement
60-69	D - for below average achievement
0-59	F - student consistently chooses not to meet expectations

Parents and students need to be aware the above standards may be influenced by other factors such as student attitude, student effort, and individual teacher's curving of grades.

"S" and "U" marks may be used for an individual student if approved by multi-disciplinary team. The "S" mark indicates that the student has not been able to acquire the necessary skills to work effectively at the grade level at which he/she is now placed, but is working to capacity at the lower level where he or she is receiving instruction. The "U" mark indicates that a student is working and receiving instruction at a grade level below which he or she should be placed and still is not doing satisfactory work at that level.

Plus or minus marks may be used with letter grades of A, B, C, D.

STUDENT RECORDS

As specified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students and parents have a right to review, object to, or challenge certain material placed in a student's records. Those rights are also set forth in Board policy.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule changes are extremely difficult to honor, because one change causes many others to be necessary. Therefore, while parents are welcomed to call and express their concerns regarding a schedule, it is not likely any changes will result.

MUSIC DROP/ADD

Students who wish to drop or add a performance music class will only be permitted to do so if the following requirements are met:

- Student must get a music class drop form from the counselor and have it signed by a parent.
- Student must return the drop form to the music teacher at least one week before the quarter ends.
- Student must also speak to a counselor about this request before any changes will be made.
- **Requests will only take place at the quarter (or within the first 2 weeks of school).**

RETENTION/SUMMER SCHOOL

Sycamore Middle School feels strongly that students must be held accountable for their learning and effort in school. Students who fail a course for first semester will be required to make up missed learning through a credit recovery program at Saturday School. If they continue successful work second semester, they may not be retained.

Students who fail a course second semester will be required to attend summer school credit recovery. A student who is unsuccessful in making up the missed instruction may be retained. Students **will** be held accountable for completing each grade successfully.

It is the practice of the middle school to promote students one grade each year or retain in the same grade based on the best academic program for each individual student. The staff will make every effort to help every child achieve a passing grade in each of their subjects throughout the school year. All appropriate personnel, teachers, parents, guidance counselor, Student Teacher Assistance Team may be consulted if work from a student is showing a decline.

If all efforts do not produce desired results and a student has not made adequate progress for promotion, the following may apply:

- The principal will contact the parents of a student who has earned failing grades, and he/she will be required to attend summer school to be promoted. His/her success will be evaluated at the end of the summer school session to consider retention/promotion.
- Special education students will be considered separately.

Parents will be working partners with school personnel in this retention/promotion procedure. However, the final decision on retention/promotion remains with the school administration.

HONOR ROLL

Two honor rolls have been established for the purpose of encouraging high academic performance and to recognize those students who have made high achievement. The subjects that will determine the honor roll are English, social studies, science, mathematics, physical education, allied arts, health, orchestra, chorus, and band.

1. High Honors - a student must have earned "A's" in all the subjects listed above. "A-" is considered an "A".
2. Honors - a student must have **earned 3.0 overall average, with no grade lower than a "C"** in any of the subjects listed. In computing the overall average, a "B-" equals 2.75 and a "C-" is considered lower than a "C".

The office will determine eligibility for each of the honor rolls and will post them. Copies will be given to each teacher for more personal recognition.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Each month, teams select students who merit recognition. Smaller teams select one student; larger teams select, depending on the enrolled number of students on the team. Teams use the following criteria in their selection discussions:

Academic performance (though not necessarily As)
Citizenship/Modeling of Core Values
Involvement in school activities

Attendance
Positive attitude and effort
Class participation

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

School bus riders, while in transit, are under the jurisdiction of the school bus driver. It is recommended that all riders, parents of riders, and teachers become thoroughly familiar with the following regulations governing school bus riders.

1. According to state regulations, student transportation is provided from home to school and school to home only for students who live more than 1½ miles from school.
2. Students must be picked up and dropped off at the same location, Monday through Friday. Those requests to be transported to and/or from a daycare provider must be submitted to the Transportation Department for approval. Requests will be honored only if both the daycare provider's address and the student's home address qualify for transportation.
3. Due to the large number of students eligible for transportation, it is not possible to allow guests to ride with the regular bus students to or from school. Transportation **will not** be provided for birthday parties, overnights, girl/boy scouts, music lessons, dance lessons, study groups, etc. Bus drivers are not authorized to approve written or verbal requests. If a student has a special transportation need, parents or guardians must contact the Transportation Office at 899-8106 twenty-four hours prior to transportation being provided. Requests will be approved or denied on an individual basis. The Transportation Office hours are 7:00 – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when school is in session.
4. If a student moves and is eligible for transportation, it is imperative to contact not only the student's school, but also the Transportation Department to make necessary arrangements prior to the student being transported to and from school.
5. Permanent bus routes, stops and approximate pick up/drop off times have been established. Do not ask bus drivers to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; drivers are not permitted to do this except by proper authorization from the Director of Operations.
6. All students should be on time at their designated school bus stops to help keep the bus on schedule. Riders should be outside and ready to board the school bus a minimum of 5 minutes prior to the designated time the bus is scheduled to arrive.
7. Students should step on and off the bus in a timely manner, quietly, without crowding, pushing, or shoving.
8. LOADING
 - Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Stand quietly.
 - Do not move toward the bus until the bus has been brought to a complete stop.
 - When pupils must cross the road to be picked up, the driver, after looking for approaching cars, will give a hand signal to the pupils motioning them to cross. Pupils should wait for the driver's hand signal and cross promptly.
9. UNLOADING
 - Observe safety precautions at discharge points. Where it is necessary to cross the roadway, proceed to a point at least 10 feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the roadway where the driver can observe the student. The student must wait for the hand signal from the bus driver before crossing in front of the bus.
 - Do not ask the bus driver to stop at places other than the regular bus stop; he/she is not permitted to do this except by proper authorization from a school official.
10. DO NOT linger around bus loading or unloading zones.
11. DO NOT leave the seat while the bus is in motion.
12. Be alert to a danger signal from the bus driver.
13. Remain in the bus in the event of a road emergency until the bus driver gives instructions.
14. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
15. Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
16. Remember that loud talking, laughing, and active play, or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
17. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad-crossing stop.
18. Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture at home. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Any damage to the bus should be reported to the driver immediately.
19. Students have a responsibility to keep the bus clean and do their part to keep the floor clear of waste paper and dirt and to keep the upholstering interior finish of the bus in excellent condition.
20. No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus.

21. No animals, birds, fish, etc., skateboards, in-line skates, weapons, toys, (cap guns, water pistols, baseball bats, etc.), glass objects or anything that could cause a potential danger can be transported on the school bus.
22. Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles.
23. Leave no lunches, books, or other articles on the bus.
24. Be courteous to fellow passengers and the bus driver.
25. Help look after the safety and comfort of younger students.
26. Fighting, the use of smoking materials and/or smoking on the bus, possession and/or consumption of alcohol, vandalism (destruction of property), use of profanity which is directed at fellow students and/or the bus driver. Direct insubordination to the bus driver's directions will not be tolerated.
27. Observe the same rules and regulations on other trips under school sponsorship as you observe at home and school. On such trips, students are directly responsible to the chaperone and teachers appointed by the school.

BICYCLES/WALKERS

Riding a bike to Sycamore Middle School is a privilege. Students must:

1. Walk the bike on school grounds.
2. Use sidewalks, not driveways.
3. Lock the bike in the bike rack. (SMS is not responsible for stolen bikes, especially if left unlocked.)
4. Do not lock bikes to other bikes without permission from the other bike owner.

Bicycle parking is provided at the northwest and east side of the school. All bikes are left in the racks during the day. Board of Education policy prohibits students from bringing or using on school grounds the following: roller skates, roller blades, skateboards, sleds, scooters, motorized scooters, motor bikes, go-carts, or snowmobiles. Walkers should leave the grounds immediately after dismissal. Not following these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, which may include loss of privilege to ride a bike to school.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Although normal school rules and courtesies to fellow students (and guests) are expected to be respected anytime a student is on the school grounds, some special expectations or rules are necessary prior to 8:05 A.M. This is due to the arrival of large groups of students and the number using the Commons area. The rules that are particularly important for this before school time are based on respect for others as well as respect for personal and school property. All students will enter the building through the main entrance except when special arrangements have been made. This door will be opened at 7:50 A.M. and all students are to report to the Commons or gymnasium as assigned if arriving between 7:50 A.M. and 8:05 A.M.

The rules for waiting in the commons are:

- Students may not leave the Commons without a pass.
- Students need to remain seated and may not move chairs from one table to another.
- Students should not congregate in the entrances or aisles.

After 8:05 A.M., students go to their lockers, and report immediately to their 1st hour class.

Students who need to leave the classroom, even before the first bell rings, must have their assignment notebook pass signed before leaving. First hour class begins at 8:20 A.M.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students who will need to leave early or within the day for an appointment will need to notify the office of the early dismissal, either by phone or in writing. The child will be given an early dismissal pass. When the parent arrives to pick up the child, he/she will need to come into the school to sign the child out. If the parent sends someone else to pick up the child, the receptionist will check photo identification of the person picking him/her up, and the designee will need to sign the child out before leaving.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

After school all students must be on their way home by 3:10 P.M. unless they are participating in a school activity, being detained by a teacher, or getting help from a teacher. Students are to use north, south or bike rack exits to leave the building, depending on how they are getting home. Walkers should leave the grounds immediately after dismissal.

Students involved in an activity or after-school sports in the gym should take belongings needed from their hallway locker. All buses board in front of the school.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

BACKPACKS

Backpacks may be used to carry school materials to and from school but may not be carried from class to class unless special arrangements have been made with staff to accommodate a student's needs. In addition, students will not be allowed to use drawstring backsacks in the hallways, either.

CORRIDOR POLICIES

- Students should walk in the hallways.
- Students should keep to the right in hallways as much as possible to allow smooth movement of students between classes.
- Pushing, excessive loudness, and congregating of large groups in the corridors is not permitted.
- **THERE IS NO HUGGING PERMITTED AT SYCAMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL, due to hallway congestion.**
- Students who are passing while classes are in session are to be quiet and considerate in halls outside classrooms and offices.
- Students should go directly to class and should not wander the halls to socialize.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

The school grounds and building should be kept free of all litter. A container is provided at the north entrance of the building for this purpose. Waste containers are in the hallways for your convenience.

Please walk on the sidewalks, not the grass. Sidewalks have been appropriately placed for convenience to those using the building. Your cooperation is important in keeping our building and grounds beautiful, clean, and safe.

DRESS CODE

People are judged by appearance. Students should take pride in their appearance. School dress should be in good taste with emphasis on cleanliness, good health and safety, and so as to avoid disruption to instruction. As a general guideline a student's clothing should cover the student's shoulder to mid-thigh. **Dress code applies to extra-curricular activities, as well.**

The following items are not considered appropriate dress for Sycamore Middle School:

- Jackets and jacket-type coats
- Wallet chains or any other type of chains
- Caps, hats or bandanas
- Pajama pants
- PE uniform, (except during PE, or when approved in an emergency by administration.)
- Boys' pants must be worn so that no undergarments show, preferably at the waist. When girls are sitting, standing, or with arms raised, midriff skin should not be visible.
- Girls' bra straps should not be visible **and spaghetti strap tops are not permitted.**
- School-appropriate shoes for safety, to include a heel height limit of two inches.
- Distraction type clothing such as bare midriff or see-through materials
- Students' bodies, clothing, and shoes should be free of marker, pen, or other student-generated writing.
- Clothing containing wording or drawings that could be construed as offensive or advertising alcohol, drinking, gambling, tattoo, piercing, scarification, and branding establishments, tobacco, or drugs
- Administrative discretion will determine the appropriateness of a student's attire.

Wearing of any of the above example style dress will result in the student calling home for different clothing or wearing something over the inappropriate clothing. Inappropriate shirts may be worn inside-out for the day.

EIGHTH GRADE PARTY

The 8th Grade Party is a casual dress party to celebrate the end of middle school and entrance to high school. Eligibility requirements during 4th quarter are:

- If a child is enrolled at the beginning of 4th quarter, a student must increase his/her points by the required

- number of points in order to attend. (at least 5, but determined by 8th grade staff 3rd quarter)
- Team discretion may be used to determine eligibility.
- Earn no Out of School Suspensions.
- No full day of ISS (or partial days that add up to a full day)
- Partial days in ISS and detentions are subject to review by 8th grade staff and could result in a student being ineligible for the party.
- **Bus conduct reports will be reviewed and infractions have potential to exclude a student from the party.**
- Point balance above -30

DANCE GUIDELINES

We would like to remind everyone about the requirements and procedures for a PTO dance. Not everyone knows the challenges in putting on a safe, fun activity for middle schoolers, but because of those challenges, there are rules we follow without exception.

Students must have a CURRENT I.D. to get in. If a student has lost his/her I.D., a new one is available in the office for \$5. I.D.s must be picked up by noon on Friday. Students must be here by 7:30 p.m. (**NO EXCEPTIONS.**) Doors are locked at 7:30 p.m.

There is no gum allowed at dances. (All gum brought to the dance will be confiscated!) Students at -30 or below will not be admitted. Students who have been in ISS for ANY portion of the dance day will not be admitted.

The dance rules are as follows:

1. Chaperones and their child(ren) may enter early for free, but others that ride with them will need to pay and wait outside for appropriate entrance time.
2. All rules enforced during a Sycamore Middle School class day will be enforced during dances.
3. Arrive before 7:30 and stay until dismissed.
4. Current I.D.'s are required. Temporary I.D.s will only be allowed when authorized by the principal or assistant principal.
5. Appropriate dress is required.
6. Gum should be left at home.
7. Cell phones are only permitted at the end of the dance to arrange transportation.
8. MP3 players and I pods should be left at home.
9. Food and beverages must be consumed in the Commons.
10. Extra tickets bought for food will not be exchanged for cash. Buy only what you need.
11. Show respect in the Commons with all food and water.
12. Appropriate space should be maintained between dancers.
13. Walk at all times.
14. Fighting will result in immediate expulsion for the rest of the dance.
15. Inappropriate behavior may result in loss of privileges to attend future dances.
16. Appropriate behavior is required in the basketball gym:
 - Don't sit or stand on the wrestling mats.
 - Use the ball safely for the number of people in the gym. Long shots are not allowed.
 - Play appropriately.
 - Treat backboards and rims appropriately.
 - Be respectful of other people's games.
 - Please place basketballs on rack when you leave.

STUDENT ID CARDS

Students are required to have their current ID with them at all times. They are required for library check out, buying lunch, and school activities, including dances. Students may not use ID cards from previous school years for any school-related purpose. If students attempt to use expired ID cards for any school-related purposes, the cards will be confiscated and disciplinary consequences may result.

LOCKER INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Each student is assigned an individual locker for his coat, books, etc. Unauthorized sharing of lockers is not necessary and will not be permitted. A combination lock is provided for each locker and only the office, the homeroom teacher, and the pupil who is assigned that locker should know how to open it.

To maintain order and security in the schools, school authorities may inspect and search places and areas such as lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school as well as personal effects left in those places and areas by students without notice or consent of the student and without a search warrant. As a matter of public policy, federal law finds that students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places and areas and in their personal effects left in these places and areas. School authorities may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs. If a search conducted in accordance with this section produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law, local ordinance, or the school's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized by school authorities, and disciplinary actions may be taken. School authorities may also turn over such evidence to law enforcement authorities. The provisions of this sub section apply in all school districts.

Advice About Lockers

1. Be accurate when working the combination.
2. Be a good housekeeper -- books, coats, etc. may push against the door to keep it from opening.
3. Be a good citizen! Don't be a locker snooper. Don't kick or bang locker doors.
4. Students may go to their lockers between periods if they choose, but each will be expected to arrive at the next class on time.
5. Locker problems should be reported to the office.
6. Students should only use their assigned locker.
7. Locker combinations should never be shared.
8. Because lockers are the property of the school and may be opened by school personnel, nothing should ever be put anything in a locker that might be embarrassing.
9. Locker decorations will not be allowed.
10. Locker inspection will take place during the last week of each nine-week period .

LUNCHROOM INSTRUCTIONS AND RULES

Students are encouraged to eat the school-provided lunch or a sack lunch brought from home. Deviation from this procedure must be pre-approved by the office. Students are not to order out for food and have it delivered to the building, nor are PARENTS to bring food to the school for any students other than their own child.

In the Lunchroom, students are to:

- Arrive at the lunchroom immediately after class dismissal.
- Enter lunchroom in an orderly manner - walk!
- Students **MUST** have a **current** ID in order to purchase lunch or anything at the snack shack. Giving an ID number is not ok. Replacement IDs are available in the office for \$5.
- Students without an ID may receive the makings for a PB & J sandwich.
- Use established route to pick up food and milk.
- Remain in their seats until finished eating and drinking.
- Push the chair under the table and take all food and paper goods to containers provided.
- Get permission to leave the Commons by a supervisor.
- Help keep the noise level down.
- Take restroom breaks prior to entering the Commons or upon dismissal by supervisor after lunchtime.
- Help keep the area picked up and clean.
- Use unbreakable containers.
- Keep all food in the lunchroom.

The following types of behavior are not permissible:

- Running or horseplay
- Removing chairs from tables
- Leaning back on chairs
- Throwing food
- Going to others' tables to socialize

- Creating a mess
- Disrespect for supervisors
- Disruptive behavior

Students who choose to display inappropriate behavior will be denied the privilege of eating in the cafeteria.

Students Leaving for Lunch

Due to the limited amount of time for lunch, parents are discouraged from removing students from the building during this time. In cases when students do leave the building for lunch, students are required to return to school on time for their next class period. Students who do not return on time will be considered unexcused and will receive the appropriate consequences. All other students are to remain in the Commons area during their lunch period.

OFFICE

Students may use the hallway near the office to take care of office business between 7:50 A.M. and 8:05 A.M. Students are to go to the office before entering the Commons or going to their classroom.

PASSES

Students are required to use their assignment notebook passes whenever traveling in the hallways for any reason.

TELEPHONE

The telephone in the office is not for student use. There is a student phone on the wall opposite the Abe Lincoln statue. A student may possess a cell phone if left in his/her locker, if turned off when not in use, and if restricted to arranging for a ride home from school events. (See cell phones.)

STUDENT MESSAGES AND MATERIALS

To keep interruptions to the classroom at a minimum, parents should not to ask the office staff to get messages or materials to their children unless absolutely necessary. Office staff will not get messages or materials to a student until the end of a class period unless an emergency situation exists.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED AT SCHOOL

The following items are not allowed at school:

- Electronic games
- Music with explicit lyrics
- portable TV sets
- laser pens
- playing cards, unless used with consent of SMS or Spartan Reach staff
- skateboards, scooters, roller blades
- Other items per administrative discretion that interrupt the educational process

Not only do they disturb classes, but these items can be lost or stolen. Anything that interferes with the instructional process will be confiscated by the teacher and turned over to the office. Any of the above items to be used for class projects or use on bus trips must have prior approval and must be checked in at the office or kept in your locker.

- Ipods or MP-3s may be used in Commons before school and at lunch, but must be left in lockers during the day. Cell phone MP3 players are not allowed. (See cell phone rules.)
- **Per District policy: Using or possessing an electronic paging device:** Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat or otherwise violate student conduct rules is not allowed. Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP); or (c) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff or other individuals."

- **Cell phones** are permitted if left in the locker, if turned off, and if their use is restricted to arranging a ride home from school events. Cell phone usage is only allowed before and after school. The only location their use is permitted is in the Commons or outside. They are not permitted in athletic events or dances. Students who violate this rule will have their phone confiscated and it will need to be picked up at the end of the day. The second offense will require the parent to pick up the phone. **Cell phones taken from a student will be locked up in the office.** The third offense will result in loss of all cell phone privileges at school for the rest of the school year.

GUM CHEWING/CANDY

Gum may be chewed at Sycamore Middle School if the following three rules are followed: SMS staff do not want to:

1. See it.
2. Hear it.
3. Find it.

A student who is asked by a staff member to dispose of his/her gum needs to do so willingly and properly, and he/she is not to put any more gum in his/her mouth during that class period. Negative points may still be assigned for gum misuse. SMS staff and administration reserve the right to restrict a student's gum chewing on a more permanent basis if the student's choices with gum regularly show irresponsibility and disrespect of the rules.

Candy may be eaten only during the student's own lunchtime in the cafeteria area or in a classroom when distributed by a teacher as a treat or reward.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Our staff feels that public display of affection is considered inappropriate for middle school students, and any demonstration of this will be addressed by staff and administration with those involved. There is no hugging permitted at Sycamore Middle School. Parents may be notified.

GIFTS DELIVERED TO SCHOOL

We strongly discourage delivery of flowers, gifts, or balloons. Any such delivery for students will be kept in the office until the end of the school day.

SELLING ITEMS IN SCHOOL

Students are not to sell any items at school without authorization from the principal or assistant principal.

SNOWBALLING

There is to be no snowballing on or near the school grounds or on the way to and from school. Throwing at vehicles is prohibited by law.

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS

By state statute, no person is allowed to use any form of tobacco in the school building or on the school grounds.

VOLATILE SUBSTANCES

Items such as permanent markers, liquid paper, modeling glue, rubber cement, etc. are not to be brought to school. Students found in possession of these items will have them confiscate, and could be considered to be in violation of the middle school's substance abuse policy.

ACTIVITIES

ATHLETICS

Aim and Philosophy of Interscholastic Programs for Sycamore School District No. 427

The aim of the interscholastic program of Sycamore Middle School is to provide participation for boys and girls to promote friendly rivalry, improve playing skills, and build good sportsmanship. The philosophy of our athletic program is stated in terms of the player, school and community.

- For the player, athletic competition offers opportunities for improving and displaying athletic skills, good sportsmanship, and the development of physical vigor.
- For the student body, the athletic program provides for developing good school morale, sportsmanship, and for improving qualities of fair play and courtesy.
- For the community, the athletic program affords opportunities for good school-community relationships.

The athletic program at Sycamore Middle School is part of the educational process based on policies set forth by the Board of Education.

These programs will be available for all students who wish to participate, providing they are safely staffed with coaches. Notice will be given to the student body in advance of each season so they can enroll. Adequate interscholastic competition will be available in each sport to create interest and to gain playing skills. Games and meets are scheduled giving consideration to numbers and distance traveled.

Athletic Opportunities at Sycamore Middle School				
Intramurals (6th Grade & up)	7th Grade Interscholastic Sports		8th Grade Interscholastic Sports	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Flag football	Volleyball	Football	Volleyball	Football
Basketball	Basketball	Basketball	Basketball	Basketball
Volleyball	Pom Poms	Wrestling	Pom Poms	Wrestling
Track	Cheerleading	Track	Cheerleading	Track
*Scholastic Bowl	Track	Cross Country	Track	Cross Country
*Wrestling	Cross Country	Scholastic Bowl	Cross Country	Scholastic Bowl
*Cross Country	Scholastic Bowl		Scholastic Bowl	
(*Interscholastic participation at 6 th)				

The purpose of our athletic program is to provide additional opportunities for students to develop good sportsmanship and team play in a supervised setting, to increase basic skills in the respective sports, and to simply enjoy being able to participate.

Athletic Fee

A participation fee will be charged to boys and girls who are out for athletics. There is a maximum fee per student at the middle school and a district family cap. Costs are reviewed annually, and coaches will inform the athletes of required fees. The fee is payable prior to participation in each sport in which the student is involved. This fee is not refundable after participation in the first contest.

Dissemination of Athletic Rules

This policy shall be incorporated in the Athletic Handbook and shall be disseminated to all athletes at the beginning of each sport.

Eligibility

Any student at Sycamore Middle School involved in an extra curricular athletic activity is expected to be passing all subjects (no F's) at the time of the activity.

If an athlete is failing a class, as reported to the middle school Athletic Director by the student's teacher, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in games until the grade is restored to passing. Eligibility will be checked on a weekly basis. Parents of a student ruled academically ineligible will be notified. A student is considered passing on the first day that a subject begins.

Insurance

All students are covered by school insurance, if all school fees are paid. A student must have insurance or have a signed waiver indicating the family has insurance coverage to participate in athletics.

Physical Exams

Each student-athlete must take, pass, and file with the athletic office a physical examination each year. This exam must be completed and turned into the athletic office before an athlete can start interscholastic practice. Physical examinations are good for one calendar year.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Social growth is important to the growth of all middle school students. Much growth can take place during the regular school day and the opportunities that are available to students through this channel. In addition, the staff will assist students in planning social activities that occur outside of the regular school program.

Some activities will be tied to the school discipline plan. **Students who have been suspended out of school, assigned ISS for any portion of that day, or have accumulated 30 negative points on the discipline system point will not allowed to attend the activity. Social activities at Sycamore Middle School are open only to students who are enrolled in the middle school at the time of the activity.** To enter the activity a student will be required to possess a current, valid school ID.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Sycamore Middle School Student Council is a student government service organization whose purpose is to promote good citizenship, foster ideals of democratic participation, promote wholesome school spirit, foster and encourage favorable student-faculty relationships, and promote the general welfare of Sycamore Middle School. All student council members and officers are required to maintain at least a "C" average in the academic subjects and a positive point balance on the discipline system.

FEES

Instructional Materials

An instructional materials fee is to be paid at the beginning of the school year. This charge includes textbook rental, technology fee, and student assignment notebook, and other class materials fees. **Students are to maintain their assignment notebook in good condition, or they will be charged a replacement fee of \$10.**

Textbook Damage and Replacement Fees

Students who damage or lose a textbook will be required to pay fees for damage incurred or full replacement, depending on the damage assessed. The Department chairperson has replacement guidelines. These fees may be charged at the time the unit ends or at the end of the year. If a parent is required to pay full replacement cost of a damaged book, he/she is allowed to keep the book.

Textbook and Other Fee Waiver Policy

The Sycamore Community Unit School District #427 will waive all fees assessed by the district on children whose parents are unable to afford them, including but not limited to children eligible for free lunch. Extenuating circumstances such as very significant loss of income due to severe illness or injury in the family, unusual expenses as fire, flood, or storm damage, or similar emergency situations that the district determines to include this policy may also entitle a family to a fee waiver. Fee waivers should be requested from the principal's secretary.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Sycamore Middle School has a PTO. All parents are considered members and are encouraged to attend meetings. Meetings are held monthly in the evenings and times are announced in the newsletters.

INSURANCE

Sycamore CUSD #427 is participating in a Student Accident Insurance program that covers students for injuries incurred while participating in school sponsored and supervised activities, including all sports. This program pays benefits with no deductible.

Because accidents also occur away from school, Sycamore School District has approved the following optional plans that you may purchase separately:

24 Hour Coverage

Around the clock accident coverage for students anywhere in the world; protection during vacation, weekends, and school days, as well as all travel.

24 Hour Unlimited Dental Accident Coverage

Brochures, claim forms, and applications for these plans are available in the middle school office or by contacting the Business Office.

These plans provide secondary coverage and will pay benefits after parent/guardian's primary health insurance has concluded participation in the claim.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Signals for:

- **Complete evacuation of the building** - Notification is made using the P.A. system.
- **Take cover in buildings from blasts or tornado** – Notification is made using the P.A. system.

Procedure for:

- **Complete evacuation** - students are to go quietly to their lockers, if necessary. You are to use same exit procedures as for fire drills and remain outside until an all-clear signal is given.
- **Take cover in building from blasts or tornado** students are to be brought to the designated places for the greatest protection and await further directions. (Locations will be given to the student body early in the year.)

SNOW DAYS

It is sometimes necessary to close school due to heavy snow. If parents are in doubt as to whether there will be school, check the district's website at www.syc427.org or tune in your radio to **WLBK, DeKalb 1360AM, WSQR, Sycamore 1560AM, WNIU 89.5FM, or WDKB (B95) 94.9FM** on your radio dial during the early morning hours. **Please do not call.**

CRISIS PLANS

Posted in each classroom is the crisis plan. There are procedures to clear the hallways, for lockdown, and for evacuation. During a clear hallway plan, we clear the halls, doors are closed, and instruction continues. This would be used when the building needed to be secured because of an emergency medical situation or a situation when the hallways needed to be clear. A lockdown requires the hallways cleared, doors locked, and students secured out of sight. Evacuation is used for fire, fire drill, mechanical emergency, or bomb threat.

FIRE DRILLS

Every room has instruction information telling the pupils in that room what route to take in case of a fire. Fire drills are held at numerous times throughout the school year. All students should know how to make the proper exit from our building and know alternate routes in case the main exit is blocked. All pupils should walk quickly and quietly in the halls and be ready for signals or commands from their teachers.

At the sound of the fire alarm, everyone is to leave the building in a speedy and orderly manner. Students assemble in the designated area with their teacher for roll call. Students should NOT go to lockers for overcoats or books. Double lines of pupils should form fifty (50) feet or more from the building until an all-clear signal sounds. Re-enter the building in a speedy and orderly manner at the sound of a class bell. **In the case of an emergency during lunch, passing period, arrival or dismissal, students should meet teachers behind the school:**

6th Grade meets at the backstop.

7th Grade meets at the north goalpost.

8th Grade meets at the south goalpost.

VISITORS

All visitors must report to the receptionist, sign in, and receive a visitor pass. When leaving, please sign out and return the badge. Unauthorized persons are not allowed in the school building or on the school grounds.

Parents

Parents are always welcome to visit their child's class. In order to provide parents with the best opportunity to view student activities, we ask that parents call the office at least 24 hours prior to such visits.

Out-of-Town Students

Student visitors are not allowed to attend a child's class during school hours. Past experiences have shown this not to be beneficial for either the visitor or the student.

Sycamore High School Students

High school age students and ex-students who come to visit may visit after 3:00. They will be required to check in at the office and present their ID in exchange for a Sycamore Middle School Visitor's badge before being allowed to tour the building. Those who do not follow this procedure will be asked to leave. High school visitors must leave by 4 pm.

CONCLUSION

During the school year, it may become necessary to change or add to these guidelines. The school administration reserves the right to make such changes. When changes are made, students will be notified by announcements in class, announcements on the intercom, and/or in the school newspaper or newsletter.