

Elementary
Student/Parent
Handbook



2010-2011
Portage Township Schools

Welcome to the Portage Township Schools

Dear Parents of Elementary School Age Children:

The following elementary handbook has been compiled to assist you in knowing as much as possible about the Portage Township Schools, either as a newcomer or as a parent of a returning child.

We anticipate that the school and its corresponding programs and activities for this school year will be talked about daily in your home. We therefore suggest that you place this handbook in a visible and handy place so that you may refer to it throughout the school year.

Parents are always welcome in the buildings. We encourage your involvement and look forward to parents, families and the Portage community being an integral part of our school year.

Sincerely,

Portage Elementary Principals

From The Desk Of

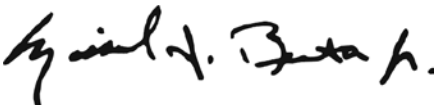
Michael J. Berta Jr.
Superintendent

Dear Parents and Students,

As our Mission Statement indicates, the Portage Township Schools is dedicated to providing quality instructional experiences to students to help prepare them for a fulfilling and productive life. In developing this handbook, it is our intent to provide parents, students, and school patrons with a description of services provided by the schools as well as with information regarding policies and rules necessary for the safe and effective functioning of the school. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully and keep it handy in your home as a reference throughout the year. It is designed to assist you in your interactions with us.

If a question or situation ever arises and we can assist you, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our first priority is the welfare of the children we serve.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Berta Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'J'.

Michael J. Berta Jr.

Our Mission:

**To provide all students
with a quality education
in a positive learning environment
supported by
cooperative efforts of the school, family and
community
that meets the students' needs and aspirations
while preparing them to become
respectful, productive citizens
who view learning as a lifelong process.**

Portage Township Schools: Together We Succeed

All students who enter PTS in grade K will achieve or exceed grade level proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of grade 2.

All students will achieve or exceed grade level proficiency in language arts and mathematics in grades 3-12.

DISTRICT GOALS

Portage Township Schools: Together We Succeed

We will eliminate the achievement gap among all student groups in language arts and mathematics in grades K-12.

All parents will actively support their children's learning and development in school.

We will provide a safe, secure, and healthy learning environment.

CORE VALUES

We believe that all **children can learn**, we can teach all students, and there are no exceptions.

We recognize, respect, and **value diversity** as a positive learning influence.

We create an environment in which **continuous improvement** is embedded in our culture.

We believe in an environment where all stakeholders are given the opportunity for on-going, open, two-way (listening/talking) **communication**.

We believe in consistent identification, learning, and implementation of **best policies, practices and procedures**.

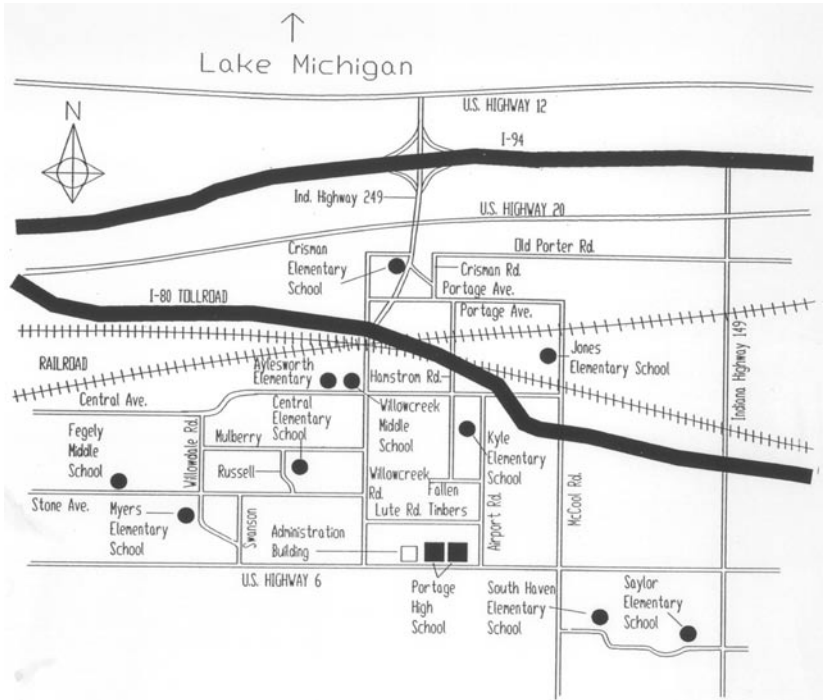
We believe that every employee and parent understands their role to **actively support student learning** and other district goals.

We believe that **decisions** based on facts, data and parent/teacher input are in the best interest of the student.

We believe that a safe, clean and healthy **environment** is necessary for learning.

Portage Township Schools: *Together We Succeed*





Directory of Portage Township Schools

Administration Center, 6240 U.S. Highway 6, 762-6511
 Aylesworth Elementary, 5910 Central Avenue, 763-8010
 Central Elementary, 2825 Russell, 763-8015
 Crisman Elementary, 6161 Old Porter Road, 763-8020
 Fegely Middle School, 5384 Stone Avenue, 763-8150
 Jones Elementary, 2374 McCool Road, 763-8025
 Kyle Elementary, 2701 Hamstrom Road, 763-8030
 Myers Elementary, 3100 Willowdale Road, 763-8035
 Portage High School - East, 6450 U.S. Highway 6, 763-8100
 Portage High School - West, 6400 U.S. Highway 6, 763-8060
 Saylor Elementary, 331 Midway (Valparaiso), South Haven, 763-8040
 South Haven Elementary, 395 Midway (Valparaiso), South Haven 763-8045

Portage Township Schools
6240 U.S. Highway 6
Portage, IN 46368

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

**SECTION 504 AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
COMPLIANCE**

It is the policy of Portage Township Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in the educational programs or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act (I.C. 22-9-1, I.C. 20-8.1-2, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Education Amendments), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, persons with disabilities are eligible for accommodations. Any inquiries regarding eligibility and/or compliance with this policy should be directed to:

Portage Township Schools
Section 504 Compliance Officer
Thomas L. Taylor, Assistant Superintendent
6240 U.S. Highway 6
Portage, IN 46368

Or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of
Education, Washington, D.C.

THIS NOTICE MAY BE:

- 1. PUBLISHED IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER**
- 2. PUT IN THE STUDENT/EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND**
- 3. ACKNOWLEDGED AT A SCHOOL BOARD MEETING.**

Portage Township Schools do not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap, nor does it deny services to any of its students for such a reason.

MULTI-CULTURAL TASK FORCE VISION STATEMENT

The students and faculty of Portage Township Schools accept all persons as equals. We are proud of our identities and respect the variety of individuals and cultures that constitute our society. Educating the youth of today to become more open, tolerant, accepting, and less prejudicial, condemning, and fearful will eliminate the barriers of race and cultures. By creating and maintaining this vision, the lessons learned here will make the world a better place.

Homeless Students

Homeless students will be provided with a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as other students served by Portage Township Schools. Homeless students are eligible to receive transportation services, participate in education programs for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, participate in high ability programs, and receive meals under school nutrition programs. Homeless students will not be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency. For additional information contact Dr. E. Ric Frataccia at 219-764-6006.

INDIAN MASCOT

Portage High School has been proud to have as their mascot the “Indian”. It represents history, tradition, bravery and heritage. Two Indian Tribes were primary inhabitants of the land within our school district; they were the Miami and the Potawatomi tribes.

The tribe bearing the name Miami lived in the southern Great Lakes country, especially the area south of Lake Michigan. The Miami used bark or mats of woven plant materials to cover their houses of various shapes. They also made dugout boats from single trees, usually butternuts. They hunted buffalo on the open prairie. Native Americans did not have horses until the white man came, so the early hunters usually trapped the animals in a ring of fire, then picked them off with arrows. Most of the village would participate on these buffalo hunts with each having designated responsibilities. It is interesting that many cultural traits evolved from the Prairie Indians. For example, the calumet, or peace pipe, originally evolved from the forest/prairie tribes. The stone used in making the bowl of the pipe comes from the Great Lakes country. It was carved and fitted onto a long reed, then decorated with feathers, white in times of peace, red during war. Therefore, so-called peace pipes were sometimes war pipes.

The Potawatomi are also known as the Fire Nation because their name means “people of the place of fire”. The original homeland of the Potawatomi is usually given as the lower peninsula of Michigan. It is reported that they lived between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan just before the arrival of French explorers. The Potawatomi were military allies and trading partners of the French until the English defeated the French in 1763 to end the French and Indian War. In 1769, the Potawatomi joined an alliance of other Algonquian to fight the Illinois and push them southward. At the time, the Potawatomi expanded their territory around the southern end of Lake Michigan back toward their original homeland. The history of this tribe’s migration is very complex. Their

many moves resulted from poverty and hardship. The migration from Indiana that began in 1838 is called the Trail of Death because of the many lives lost to disease and hunger. The Potawatomi hunted in the forests, fished and gathered wild rice on the lakes, and grew corn and other crops in the fields. They also hunted buffalo on the prairies.

As for their religious customs, the Potawatomi smoked tobacco in calumets (sacred pipes) and participated in the Grand Medicine Society, an exclusive club with elaborate rituals and important in religious and tribal matters. In the 1880's, long after their displacement by the incoming settlers, the Potawatomi also helped develop the Dream Dance, which some Native Americans still practice today. This was not a war dance, but one of good will, even toward Europeans.

Grades

Portage Township Schools has a grading procedure indicating levels of mastery in learning for core subjects and state standards. The purpose of the grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon tests and quizzes, homework, projects, and classwork. Portage Township Elementary Schools have placed a “weighted” emphasis on these areas making up an overall grade. The categories and weights assigned to each are as follows:

	Class Work	Indicators	Tests	Quizzes	Homework
K	NONE	45%	50%	NONE	5%
1	10%	25%	45%	15%	5%
2	10%	25%	45%	15%	5%
3	20%	25%	30%	20%	5%
4	20%	25%	30%	20%	5%
5	20%	25%	30%	20%	5%

Based on the grades and scores taken for these categories an overall grade is calculated. Portage Township

Elementary Schools use the following grading system:

Letter Grade Values Grades 2-5		Letter Grade Values	
Grades K-1			
A	95% to 100%	A	95% to 100%
A-	90% to 94%	A-	90% to 94%
B+	89%	B+	89%
B	85% to 88%	B	85% to 88%
B-	80% to 84%	B-	80% to 84%
C+	79%	C+	79%
C	75% to 78%	C	75% to 78%
C-	70% to 74%	C-	70% to 74%
D+	69%	E	0% to 69% Emerging
D	65% to 68%		
D-	60% to 64%		
F	59% and below		

Letter Grade Summary

- A = The child produced work of a high caliber that shows successful attainment of concepts and processes.
- B = The child produces work that is above average and shows an understanding of concepts.
- C = The child produces satisfactory work that shows a basic understanding of concepts.
- D = The child produces work that reflects some degree of understanding of concepts and a need for reinforcement of processes and skills.
- F = The child produces work that indicates lack of understanding and difficulty in achieving.

On the Elementary Report Card, the following symbols are used to indicate level of mastery on specific skills in each subject:

Other Marks and Values Grades K-5

EX	Exemplary	96% and above
M+	Mastery Plus	90% to 95%
M	Mastery	80% to 89%
NY	Not Yet	Not Yet Mastered 79% and below
N/A		Not Assessed at this Time

Student Assessment

To measure student progress, students will be tested in accordance with State standards and Corporation policy.

Unless exempted, each student will be expected to pass the ISTEP Test. Make-up dates are scheduled, but unnecessary absences should be avoided.

Additional group tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

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

Homework Guideline

Homework in the Portage Township School Corporation is defined as the practice of “Old” Learning that information, which the student has been previously taught, has previously learned and would benefit from continued practice to strengthen previous learning. New Learning that is assigned as homework will take the form of reading and/or research.

Students should be able to successfully complete the assigned homework with little or no assistance. Multiplying a student’s grade level by ten (10) provides an approximation of the total amount of time that it should take for a student to complete the assigned homework with the understanding that a student may not have homework every night in each subject.

For example, a third grade student should have no more than a total of about (30) minutes of homework (grade (3)

times (10) = 30 minutes). Homework for a ninth (9) grade student should not exceed 90 minutes to successfully complete (grade (9) times (10) = 90 minutes).

Homework that is assigned in accordance with these criteria assists students not only to strengthen previously learned material but also assists them to develop a strong work ethic and sense of responsibility.

Finally, homework should comprise no more than five (5) percent of a student's report card for grades K-5 and no more than ten (10) percent of a student's report card for grades 6-12.

Supplemental Progress Reports

Approximately midway through each trimester, students in grades 1-5, will receive a supplemental progress report. The purpose of this report is to inform parents of their child's progress. Reports are to be signed by parents and returned to school.

Promoted / Assigned / Retained

At the end of the school year a student will receive one of the following placements for the next school year:

- Promoted** The student has successfully completed the expectations for the grade level and will advance to the next grade level.
- Placed** The student has not met all grade level expectations. However, if it has been determined that retention is not in the best interest of the student the student will be placed in the next grade level.
- Retained** The student has not successfully completed the expectations for the grade level and will not advance to the next grade.

All final decisions regarding promotion, assignment, and retention rest with the building principal.

Testing Program

Currently, the Portage Township Schools administer state required standardized tests annually. In addition, other grade levels may be administered standardized tests to assist in student program development. Parents receive notification of the test scores. Parents who wish to discuss test results or have scores interpreted should make an appointment for this purpose with the classroom teacher and/or the school principal.

Standardized test results permit the comparison of a pupil's performance with that of a state sample of children of like age and grade level. For some tests, local norms permit direct comparison with other pupils of the same age and grade in Portage.

Capping

In the Portage Township Schools, no student will be moved into a basal reading book, which is above their grade level. This is called "capping" and is done to provide time for children to read outside the reading book. This does not mean that a child will not be reading materials at an appropriate level. By capping, we are able to provide more time for the child to read a variety of materials, both fiction and nonfiction suited to each student's interests and reading ability.

Our primary goal is to make reading an enjoyable and rewarding experience for our students so that when they graduate, they will be literate citizens who read for both pleasure and information.

Accelerated Reading Program

All Students will be expected to participate in the Accelerated Reading Program. Teachers and students will set individual goals based on grade level expectations and Star Reader Assessments.

School Visitations

The instructional day is important to the education of your children; therefore, interruptions should be kept to a minimum. Parents are always welcome at the school for visitations, observations, and/or conferences. Please schedule these in advance in order that we may maximize this opportunity effectively.

Achievement Recognition

All elementary students can earn recognition for achievement.

1. Students earn ongoing recognition in the areas of academic achievement, citizenship, conduct, and work habits. This recognition is given through various means including, but not limited to, certificates and bulletin board displays.
2. Students with perfect attendance and no tardies during the year receive a certificate of attendance award.

Parent - Teacher Organizations

Parent-Teacher organizations whether PTA or PTO, bring home and schools closer together. Parents are encouraged to become members, attend meetings, and participate in the projects sponsored by these organizations.

Parent - Teacher organizations are nonpolitical, non-commercial, and nonsectarian. They unite us for a common cause - *the welfare of children*.

Change of Address, Phone Number, Place of Employment, or Name

Parents are required to notify the school office, in writing, of a change of address, phone number, or place of employment. When a child's last name or guardianship has been changed, legal documentation of such is required.

Bookstore

A bookstore is open daily in each school before the start of the school day. Students may purchase basic school supplies such as paper, pencils, pens, and other related items.

ENROLLMENT

Indiana law requires an up-to-date record of immunizations prior to entrance into school. *Children will **NOT** be allowed to start Kindergarten until the following immunization requirements are met: 5 DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) 4 Trivalent Oral Polio or Injectable Polio 2 Measles, 1 Rubella and 1 Mumps and the Hepatitis B series. The measles, rubella and mumps immunization must be on or after their first birthday.*

Admission

A child entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before the following date to be eligible for enrollment in the Portage Township Schools Kindergarten program unless a waiver of the age requirement is approved for enrollment. This date is in accordance with I.C. 20-8.1-3-17: **August 1st of the 2006 school year or any subsequent year.**

Prior to enrollment in the Portage Township Schools, parents/guardians shall present the following:

1. A legal birth certificate to provide evidence of age;
2. Written verification of compliance with state immunization regulations; and
3. Prior school records as requested by school personnel.
4. Verification of Residency.

Written **requests for waiver** of the above kindergarten entrance date must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee by August 2nd.

To **request a waiver** of the above kindergarten entrance date, the following procedure will be followed:

- A) The child shall be five (5) years old before September 1
- B) A written request for a waiver must be submitted by the parent/guardian to the Assistant Superintendent. The written request must be submitted by August 02, and should include specific reasons for requesting the waiver. Waiver forms are available at each elementary school office.
- C) When the number of Kindergarten students in a classroom reaches 18, no Early Entrance requests will be approved. Parents choosing to seek early entrance at a school other than their home school must provide their own transportation
- D) If there are more applicants (*children turning age 5 on or before September 1*) than the number of spaces available and it is determined that an excess number of applicants qualify for early entrance than there is space available, the determining factor for acceptance shall be the birth date of the child. Children with a birth date closest to August 1st will be considered first for admission to the Kindergarten program.
- E) The early admission of a child to school will be subject to a staff review, following the first nine weeks of school.

Continuation in the kindergarten program will be determined by the teacher and building principal following consultation with the parents.

Children who will be entering kindergarten are pre-registered in April each year. Registration dates are announced in school bulletins and in local newspapers. Pre-registration enables the school to plan in advance for a specific number of students, to provide essential information for parents, and in general, to work with parents for a successful school experience.

Parents are encouraged to pre-register new students prior to the first day of school.

Grade Level Placement

The appropriate grade level placement of a student who transfers into the Portage Township Schools shall be determined by the Administration. Appropriate placement at a grade level will be made after evaluating the student's transcripts, report cards, age, and other criteria necessary for a proper assignment.

Book Rental

All basic texts are rented to students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. It is important that the student's name, grade and school are written in the book in case it is misplaced. Book damages and/or loss will result in a fine being assessed.

Book rental is expected to be paid during the July registration period.

Certain families may qualify for state textbook assistance provided the family meets income guidelines for free lunch. Applications for families who believe they qualify for this assistance are available in each school office. Qualifying families are responsible for any balance of book rental not paid by the state.

Language Minority

All parents are required to complete a family language survey when students are registered for school. Any students who are identified as Limited English Proficient are given additional assistance as needed. This assistance is coordinated with the reading resource teacher, the classroom teacher and the instructional assistant

BUILDING OPERATING PROCEDURES

School Day

The elementary school day is:

Grades 1-5 8:50 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.

A.M. Kindergarten 8:50 to 11:25 a.m.

P.M. Kindergarten 12:40 to 3:10 p.m.

Elementary School Office Hours 7:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Students are not supervised before school and should not arrive at school prior to 8:40 a.m.

Staying After School

As a general rule, students are not detained after regular school hours for disciplinary reasons. Should a need arise, principals or teachers will contact parents prior to the child's remaining after hours.

Should a student not arrive at home as expected after dismissal, the parent should notify the school office immediately. No child should return to any school building unless accompanied by a parent.

Students Leaving the Building

A parent who wishes to remove his/her child from school during school hours will report to the school office. The parent will be asked to sign a log, which is kept in the school office.

Non-School Sponsored Clubs and Activities

Non-School sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The application for permission can be obtained from the Principal. The application must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, attendance is voluntary, that no school staff

person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that nonschool persons do not play a regular role in the event. School rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

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

No noncorporation-sponsored organization may use the name of the School or School mascot.

Withdrawal Procedures

If a child is to be withdrawn from school because the family is moving, a note must be sent before the last day the pupil will be attending so records may be updated. The final day of attendance should be stated. All text and library books must be returned and outstanding charges paid before the student leaves. A transfer card will be issued and records will be forwarded to the new school upon written request.

Y-Care and Kid Stop

The Portage YMCA's before and after school child care program is available to interested parents. The South Haven Boys and Girls Club also offers the "Kid Stop" childcare program for Saylor and South Haven students. Call the Portage YMCA or the South Haven Boys and Girls Club for details.

School Parties

Parties can be a vital part of the elementary school social program if used judiciously. Parties will be held at various times throughout the year. Parties should be kept simple and classes should not attempt to out do one another. All parties will be confined to no more than one hour of he day. Students should assist in cleaning up after the party.

Attendance *Philosophy*

The Portage Township Schools Attendance Policy is developed with the understanding that academic learning cannot take place when students are not in school. Attendance is essential to the success of the children in their educational endeavors. Our attendance regulations are developed to encourage attendance and an “on the job” attitude for students to follow and maintain throughout life. We would encourage parents to make as many appointments (dental, medical, etc.) as possible outside of school hours. The responsibility for assuring regular attendance rests cooperatively with the students, parents, and schools. **It should be noted that since some learning experiences cannot be made up, even excused absences might adversely affect a student’s grade and future grade placement.**

The following rules and procedures are listed to insure that the school fully accepts its share of the responsibility and provides ample support for both student and parent in accepting their responsibility.

Please read the following procedures and expectations carefully.

- I. **Student Arrival:**
 - Students should arrive no earlier than 8:30 if they eat breakfast. All other students must arrive at 8:40 a.m.
 - Afternoon kindergarten should arrive no earlier than 12:30 PM.

- II. **Tardy:**
 - The official start of the school day is 8:55 a.m.
 - Students who arrive **after** 8:55 will be marked tardy.
 - A.M. tardy is any arrival to school **after** 8:55 a.m.

- P.M. tardy is any departure from school **prior** to the end of the day.

III. **Vacations:**

- Vacations are discouraged, however, students can take vacation(s) that total no more than 5 school days per school year and they will be marked EXCUSED.
- Vacations exceeding 5 days will require 1 hour of make-up time for each additional vacation day.
- A vacation form must be completed two weeks prior to the vacation and permission must be obtained from the building principal
- The student will be expected to make up all the work missed during the vacation. Discussion and activities in the classroom are vital to the learning experience, thus your student's grade may suffer due to lack of classroom participation during the vacation
- Classroom teachers will do their best to prepare work prior to the vacation, but additional assignments and activities may be required for the student to make up upon return from the vacation.

IV. **Absent Full Day Guidelines:**

- Students who are checked out before 12:00 PM will be marked ABSENT.

V. **Excused Absences: Documentation is required, (within 48 hours), to verify an Absence and this is to include:**

1. A doctor's note signed by the physician
2. A family emergency illness with written documentation from the physician and/or hospital
3. Illness at school excused by the school nurse
4. Deaths and funerals for immediate family and close friends with documentation provided by

the funeral home

5. Religious observances that cannot be observed outside of school hours with documentation
6. Court appointments and/or hearings with documentation

Without appropriate documentation, excused absences exceeding four days per trimester, may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- a. 1 hour of make-up time before and/or after regular school hours
- b. Consideration for summer school
- c. Possible grade retention
- d. Referral to law enforcement and the legal system

VI. Excessive Absences and Excessive Tardies:

- Unexcused absences exceeding 4 days in a trimester will require 1 hour of make-up time for each additional unexcused absence. Make-up time will be done before and/or after school hours, and a letter will be sent home. (ie: 5th absence = 1 hour of make-up time, 6th absence = 1 hour of make-up time)
- Excused absences exceeding 4 days in a trimester will require 1 hour of make-up time for each additional unexcused absence. Make-up time will be done before and/or after school hours, and a letter will be sent home.
- (ie: 5th absence = 1 hour of make-up time, 6th absence = 1 hour of make-up time)
- Tardies exceeding 4 in a trimester will require 30 minutes of make up time for each additional tardy. (ie: Tardy 5 = 30 minutes, Tardy 6 = 30 minutes)
- This time can be made up before, during, or after regular school hours.

- At the beginning of each trimester, a student's absences and tardies will return to zero.
- On the 10th, unexcused or excused absence and/or tardy during the year, a student will be considered habitually truant and the student will be referred to the Police Department for investigation and possible fine, and a letter will be forthcoming advising parents of action taken by the school.

VII Long term or chronic illness that results in absences will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the building principal.

Attendance is critical to student achievement and success.

A child that is not present cannot learn

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Well-Being

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

All students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School Office.

Students with specific health care needs should submit

those needs, in writing and with proper documentation by a physician, to the School Clinic.

Student Rights of Expression

The School recognizes the right of student to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, nonsponsored, noncommercial written material, buttons, badges, or other insignia; and the like. All items must meet School guidelines.

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

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

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

Student Suggestions and Complaints

The School is here to educate and benefit the students. The staff is here to assist a student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could

improve the School, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the Principal or to the student government.

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

If the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard, the student may file a grievance with the Building Principal. That grievance will be promptly investigated and findings will be shared with the student. A student may not use the grievance procedure to change a grade.

Grades K through 5

- A. Students are responsible for organizing their materials so they are prepared to leave for school on time. Children should develop good habits of organization and preparation.
- B. Students are responsible for going directly to and from bus stops or for walking directly to and from school.
- C. If a student misses a bus, the student is responsible for notifying a "contact person" (if not the parent, a relative or neighbor) who will get the child to school. This arrangement should be made in advance by the parent and the child so the student knows what to do in an emergency.

Students Staying Indoors

At times throughout the year almost every teacher will receive requests from parents for their child to remain indoors rather than to go outside during recess. A similar request is sometimes made that pupils not participate in physical education activities because of recent illness or other causes. Requests of this nature are to be in writing from the parents.

If the teacher feels that the request is not a valid one, the matter shall be referred to the principal, but the child shall not go outside or participate in physical education activities.

If the principal feels that an investigation of the case is advisable, it shall be the principal's duty to see that the parent is contacted. It shall also be the principal's responsibility to say where the child shall be assigned during the time when the child's classmates are outdoors or in physical education.

There are many times when children are able to come to school, but are not well enough to go outside to play or participate in physical education activities. Missing these activities for a prolonged time requires a doctor's excuse.

Student Dress and Appearance

The type of clothing worn to school has a definite effect upon the conduct, work, and habits of the child. Any clothing, which draws unusual attention to the child, is inappropriate. Clothing shall not cause or have the potential to cause injury to the student or to other students in the school environment.

Students are expected to be well groomed and neatly dressed at all times. Any form of dress/hair style which is considered contrary to good hygiene or which is distractive or disruptive will not be permitted. For example, shirts with obscene or questionable printing on them, including references to alcoholic beverages and drugs, are considered inappropriate.

School personnel anticipate that parents will provide the appropriate clothing as the season/activity dictates.

Label Clothing

Please put your child's name on all outdoor clothing, boots, backpack, lunch bag, etc. This will help each school return

lost items to the proper owner. **Each school has a "Lost and Found" area.**

Recess

All students' benefit from a short break from their academic work. However, during inclement weather, students will be kept indoors when it is raining, when a snowfall is particularly wet, or if the wind-chill is 10 degrees or lower.

Playground Rules

Each elementary building has established playground rules and regulations, which are explained to the students. A copy will be provided at the beginning of each school year to the students. Additional copies will be available in the school office upon request.

PROBLEM SOLVING TECHNIQUES

Conflict Strategies

In the Portage Township Schools we use "Conflict Strategies" to help students develop problem solving skills and self-reliance. These strategies will allow most children to learn alternative ways to reach positive closure on misunderstandings thereby growing in their responsibility to themselves and others.

- ✓ Talk it over - listen
- ✓ Walk away
- ✓ Say - "I'm sorry"
- ✓ Do something else (i.e. play in another area)
- ✓ Take turns
- ✓ Share
- ✓ Ignore it
- ✓ If these strategies do not work, ask an adult for help

Playground Guidelines

- ✓ Be respectful to all adults and children.
- ✓ Follow Life Skills
- ✓ Students will follow directions of all school adults, the first time given with no argument.
- ✓ Students are to “Stop, Look and Listen” if they hear the whistle from a school adult. Immediately obey any direction given after the whistle.
- ✓ No hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting or fighting. (This includes play fighting).
- ✓ The throwing of rocks, sticks, sand, pea gravel, snowballs, or other inappropriate objects is prohibited.
- ✓ Hard balls or bats are not allowed on the playground.
- ✓ Skates and Skateboards or bikes are not allowed on the playground.
- ✓ Students must stay on the playground where they can be seen by staff.
- ✓ Errant balls will be retrieved from the street ONLY by staff.
- ✓ Students are to follow the safety guidelines concerning playground structures.
- ✓ Students should not walk through a game in progress or disrupt games.
- ✓ Take turns with all equipment.
- ✓ All food should be consumed in the cafeteria and not on the playground.
- ✓ The use of inappropriate language is strictly prohibited.
- ✓ Equipment is to be used for intended purpose.
- ✓ No tackle football.
- ✓ Good sportsmanship is expected from students at all times during games played at recess. Look where you are running.
- ✓ On slides, children must go down one at a time, feet first.
- ✓ On swings, standing or jumping off is not allowed.

Gym Shoes

Students will be permitted to participate in indoor gym activities only if they are wearing gym shoes. There is too much danger of children slipping wearing socks only. Shoes also protect feet and provide support in these formative years of growth. Gym shoes with soles that mark the gym surface are not acceptable and will not be permitted to be worn while on the gym floors.

Use of Telephone

School telephones are used for essential school business, and students should expect to use the office phone only in cases of real necessity - and with permission of the teacher and office personnel.

Cell Phone

In accordance with Board Policy 5136, a student may possess a cellular telephone or other electronic communication devices (ECD) (e.g., paging devices/beepers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and other devices designed to receive and send an electronic signal) in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours and on school vehicles the cellular telephone or other ECD remains off. Students may not use cellular telephones or ECDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to gain access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.

Also, during school activities when directed by the administrator or sponsor, cellular telephones and other ECDs shall be turned off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight.

Failure to comply with building expectations may result in the cellular device being taken from the student. Parents

are then expected to pick up the device from the school office.

Cell Phone Use and Sexting

Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails, or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including contents of a cell phone or another electronic device will be considered as a reason for suspension and/or expulsion.

Gum Chewing

While at school, gum chewing is not allowed.

Lost and Found

Personal items such as books, lunch boxes and bags, coats, boots, school bags, etc., should be marked clearly with the student's name and grade. All such articles, when found in or near the school, should be turned in to the school office. Articles in the Lost and Found will be kept for a reasonable time for owners to claim.

Riding Bicycles

Students **who live in the walking districts** will be permitted to ride bicycles to school only if the parent signs a permission form. If a student is given permission to ride a bicycle to school the student should be aware of all safe riding practices.

Personal Property

There is an ongoing temptation for any student to bring their personal possessions to school. Toys, dolls, electronic games, radios, keyboards and similar items serve no educational purpose and frequently lead to problems. The school assumes no responsibility for such items. If a student or parent feels such an item has a unique interest or value to the class, advance permission from the classroom

teacher should be obtained before the item is brought to school.

Pets

Pets should be brought to school only with the permission of the teacher and the principal. Pets without rabies shots are not permitted in school. If permission is given to bring a pet to school, the parent should transport the pet, show it and take it home immediately. The pet must be under the constant supervision of an adult and must be housed in an appropriate cage or container.

ACADEMIC RELATED ACTIVITIES

Study Trips

Properly planned, well-conducted, and carefully supervised field trips are a vital part of the classroom curriculum. Parents are advised when field trips are scheduled, and parental permission slips are required for participating in this type of activity. The cost of the study trip is assessed equally to attending students.

Parents can help by emphasizing to their children the importance of proper behavior. In some instances, parents are invited to accompany the class on the trip to assist with supervision.

Field trips within the school district for special programs (e.g., Grade 5 orchestra demonstration at Portage H.S.-East) require parental permission slips.

Convocations

Each year, convocation programs may be held for educational purposes and the enjoyment of our student body. Courtesy to those who appear in the program is required. Attendance is a privilege, which can be withdrawn due to misbehavior.

RECORDS

Student Records

FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974), as amended (1975), protects a student's records. Only people who have a legitimate educational reason to inspect records can have access to them. Parents and students over the age of 18 can inspect individual school cumulative records if they wish. The principal must be contacted for an appointment to do so. Records sent to employers, professionals, or other schools may be sent only with the written permission of the parents or, if over 18, the student.

Parents wishing to see the student's records may copy them, but the school may charge a fee for the copies. The school must provide the records within forty-five (45) days of a parent's request.

Notice of Designation of Directory Information

The Portage Township Schools has designated the following information contained in the education records of its students as directory information: student's name, address, telephone number, birth date, place of birth, major field of study, participation in school activities, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received, previous school attended, student's photograph, or other information from the student's educational record ***that would not jeopardize the student's right to privacy. This is the type of information normally used in yearbooks, athletic, musical and dramatic publications, student honor rolls, public relations publications, and other similar publications.***

The school may disclose directory information without the

consent of the parent of a student under 18 years of age or the student who is 18 years of age or older. If you, as a parent of a student who is under 18 years of age, or as the student who is 18 years of age or older, wish to prevent the school from releasing this information except with your written consent and authorization, you must file a form with the principal of the school where your child attends prior to the first day of school in any school year. Forms for this purpose are available at the school.

If you do not file such a form, the school assumes that you do not object to the release of the designated directory information.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Art

Each student in grades 1 through 5 has an art class for 50 minutes each week. At each grade level, students work with different media, materials and techniques to produce work that is satisfying to them and extends their skills.

Music

Children in grades 1 through 5 have music twice a week for 25 minutes per session. Music is treated as a language art, similar in scope and function to learning our English language; i.e., children learn to enjoy, read, write, and understand what they hear through their singing voices just as English skills are learned through their speaking voices. Emphasis is on educative growth: memory development, thinking and reasoning ability, and reasoning coordination.

Physical Education

Students in grades 1 through 5 have physical education for 25 minutes periods twice per week. In these classes, teachers stress individual skill development and provide exercises and activities for progressive development of motor skills.

Media Services

Children in grades K through 5 have library a minimum of once a week for a one-half hour session for the entire school year. Children are responsible for the books they check out of the library. Damage or loss will result in payment or replacement value by the parent(s).

The goal of the Library Media Department program is to provide a totality of services focused on the best utilization of library media to facilitate, improve, and support the learning process.

The objectives are:

- to assist children in the development of listening, viewing, and reading skills; and to guide students to develop desirable reading, viewing, and listening patterns, attitudes, and appreciation.
- to provide equipment and a program of effective equipment maintenance.
- to coordinate the library media center more closely with the school curriculum by meeting with departmental, grade level, and/or individual teachers to develop learning resources and bibliographies.
- to sponsor workshops or individual sessions with teachers on the utilization of library media and effective operation of equipment.
- to serve teachers by disseminating materials from professional journals, distributing lists of new acquisitions, and having a special place where a teacher can work and peruse new materials.

Library Media Centers have been established in each of the Portage Township Schools buildings. The Library Media Centers concept is a unified program of traditional library

and audiovisual materials (library books, audiovisual materials and equipment, computers and professional materials) and services.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Reading Resource Teachers

At each elementary building, a reading resource teacher serves a variety of functions. As well as working with youngsters needing special help in reading, the reading resource teachers keep other teachers informed as to current trends and research in reading and other language arts, locate materials requested by classroom teachers, and assist in promoting reading and writing. They are also responsible for testing students for the High Ability program, for Title I, and when requested by teachers or parents. In addition, in those schools, which qualify for Title I services, the reading teacher coordinates the program.

After School Activities

Students who have parental permission to remain in the school building for after school activities are to report immediately to the activity site at the close of the day. Failure to do so may result in the student's exclusion from the activity. Children are not to roam through the building.

Home School Advisor/Social Worker

The Home School Advisor/Social Worker is part of our support staff that is available to help students, parents and staff with issues that interfere with a student's functioning in the classroom. Children are helped through individual sessions, group sessions and classroom presentations to see themselves and their work as a place where they can become all that they can be. Parenting classes and workshops are held to give parents additional insight into the difficult job of parenting. Home visits and parent consultations are often part of the service offered to children and parents in the Portage Township Schools. Home

School Advisors/Social Workers are part of the team with teachers and parents who, when working together, can facilitate the maximum learning for the child.

Title I

The federally funded Title I program provides funding for additional instruction in reading/language arts in targeted schools. Title I teachers and trained assistants work with small groups of students to provide remediation opportunities. Students in primary grades are selected based upon teacher observation, test scores, and report card grades when appropriate. Instructional activities are correlated with classroom instruction and are planned cooperatively by the reading teacher and classroom teachers. Family involvement activities such as reading at home, parent/child workshops, and vacation packets are sponsored by the Title I office.

Aylesworth, Central, Crisman, Myers, Saylor and South Haven will have Title 1 programming for the 10-11 school year.

Prime Time

The state funded Prime Time program provides instructional assistants. Assistants work under the direction of the classroom teachers in both instructional and clerical tasks. They assist individual children and both small and large groups in varied curriculum areas as needed. Half-time assistants will be assigned in grades K & 1, when class size reaches 21 and Full-time when class size reaches 25. Half-time assistants will be assigned in grades 2 & 3, when class size reaches 23 and Full-time when class size reaches 28.

High Ability Program

The High Ability program is designed to meet the needs of elementary students who are identified as possessing and or demonstrating high ability. The curriculum is accelerated

and enriched for the students' through differentiated instruction. Students are placed in cluster-groups. Cluster grouping of students for instructional purposes is the intentional placement of a group of high achieving students in an otherwise heterogeneous classroom with a teacher who has both the background and willingness to provide appropriate challenges for these students (McInerney, 1983)

In Portage, formal identification takes place in grades K, 2, and 5 with informal evaluations occurring in grades 1.3. and 4. Identification of students is completed through a multi-faceted assessment process which has been approved by the state and which adheres to guidelines established by the Office of Exceptional Learners.

New enrollees in the Portage Township Schools may be considered on an individual basis.

Computer Instruction

Each elementary school has a computer lab staffed with a computer lab coordinator. Thinking skills, process writing, creative writing, and word processing activities are the focus of instruction in the computer lab. Students attend scheduled sessions in the computer lab by class. Computer labs are designed to be an extension of the classroom with instruction developed by the classroom teacher and the lab coordinator. Portage staffs are involved in the ongoing study of technology and the impact technology has for the improvement of instruction and learning.

Extended Learning Program

A program is offered for students to strengthen, maintain, or acquire essential learning skills during the summer months. Transportation is provided. Detailed information on The Extended Learning Program is provided each spring. Parents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity for children.

Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction is available for a student who will be unable to attend school for at least four (4) weeks. This special service is provided when the parent submits a written request and a physician's statement describing the illness or disability and indicating the probable duration of this condition. Parents should contact the school principal regarding the exact procedure to apply for homebound instruction.

The homebound teacher spends two or more hours per week, not to exceed five hours, with a student on a schedule agreed upon by the teacher and parents.

Homebound instruction may be provided for an extended absence of less than four weeks when this occurs at the end of the school year, and the homebound instruction is necessary in order for the student to complete the school year successfully.

Special Education

In every school system, there are exceptional children - children who have physical, mental, or social/emotional needs to the degree that their educational programs must be supported by special education services.

We believe that every individual in our society is entitled to equal opportunity. We also believe that every individual should be allowed to develop his/her potential. As educators, professional workers, and citizens, we assume the responsibility of programming for exceptional children. These programs are individualized to the student's needs, provided in the least restrictive environment, and consistent with the student's capacity to learn by providing opportunities to adjust to the disability and gain necessary skills to meet life situations.

Special education services are an integrated and integral part of Portage Township Schools via an agreement

between the School Corporation and Porter County Special Education, which is located in Valparaiso.

Substance Abuse Programs

Portage Township Schools has taken a strong stance against substance usage. To support this stance we believe in providing students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to avoid substance usage and to promote positive alternatives to negative situations. Our programs and curriculum are based on the premise that the time to address the problems over which people typically turn to alcohol and other drugs is before the problems start, during the formative years.

Drug Free Clubs

There is a club in every elementary school in the district. The usual age for membership is 8, 9 and 10. This may vary by school and sponsor. The clubs provide a positive alternative message, involve youth in fighting the war on drugs on their level by pledging to lead a drug-free lifestyle, and promote activities surrounding this choice.

HEALTH SERVICES

Confidential Information

Information regarding student health care issues is marked confidential and is treated as such. However, in order to provide for the safety of our students, it is our practice to inform appropriate school personnel and, when necessary, community based emergency response personnel of student health conditions which may be life threatening or which may require first aid during the school day.

Health Records

Health records will be maintained for each student enrolled

in the Portage Township Schools. These records will list immunizations, hearing, vision, and scoliosis screening results along with pertinent health information.

All children entering one of our schools must meet the immunization requirements as outlined by the Indiana State Board of Health. Children entering kindergarten must have the following immunizations: 5-DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus), 4- trivalent oral polio or injectable polio, 2- measles, 1 rubella and 1 mumps and the Hepatitis B series, One dose of varicella (chicken pox) on or after the 1st birthday or provide a record of having had the disease. Before entering the 6th grade, a second measles (Rubeola) shot is required if it was not administered prior to entering kindergarten. If your child has a medical condition, please notify the health assistant or nurse so that this information is available should your child become ill at school. Meetings with a registered nurse can be arranged at any time the parent or nurse feels it is advisable.

Health Clinic

The health clinic is an area established to help students when they are ill or injured. The elementary clinics are staffed by health assistants, certified in CPR and first aid. Each health assistant works under the guidelines and supervision of a registered nurse. If your child visits the clinic because of illness or injury, and it is determined that the illness or injury is serious enough to be brought to your attention, you will be notified by phone or by a note. If the health assistant, nurse or principal determines that your child is unable to remain in school, they will contact the parent, guardian or emergency phone number (provided by the parents) for transportation from school. Some of the things children will not be allowed to remain in school with are vomiting, an undiagnosed rash, undiagnosed eye inflammation, an elevated temperature, an injury that requires medical attention, head lice, etc.

Screenings

Vision (all grades) and hearing (kindergarten, first and fourth grades) screenings will take place yearly. You will receive a physician referral notice if your child has an abnormal result.

Head Lice

Head lice checks will be done periodically. In order to prevent the spread of lice, any child found to be infested will require treatment. Parents will be notified of the problem and will be requested to provide transportation home from school. If we are unable to contact a parent or someone at the emergency number, we will keep the student in the clinic for the remainder of the day. The child will be asked to sit in the front seat of the bus and will be taken home in the usual manner. A note will be sent home with the child requesting that treatment for head lice be completed before the child may return to school. The parents must accompany the child to school the next day and have the student checked by the health assistant before the child can be left in school (the child must be nit free).

DO NOT SEND THE CHILD TO SCHOOL ON THE BUS.

Injury and Illness

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

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

Control of Casual-Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is a risk. The School's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice. Specific diseases include diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will be limited to the contagious period as specified in the School's administrative guidelines

Control of Noncasual-Contact Communicable Diseases

The Corporation has an obligation to protect staff and students from noncasual-contact communicable diseases.

When a noncasual-contact communicable disease is suspected, the staff or student's health will be reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department. The School will protect the privacy of the person affected and those in contact with the affected person. Students and staff will be permitted to remain in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Noncasual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV, Hepatitis B, and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

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

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES REGARDING MEDICATION

Medication In School

During the school year we have requests from parents to administer prescription and nonprescription medication to their children. In order to comply with Indiana state law and Portage Township Schools' policy, we ask you to please follow these instructions:

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION will be given to students provided the following is on file at the student's school:

1. Authorization signed by a parent or guardian; and
2. Written instructions from student's physician or
3. typed instructions on the prescription bottle which states
 - a. NAME OF STUDENT
 - b. NAME & DOSEAGE OF MEDICATION
 - c. TIME OF ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION
 - d. NAME OF PHYSICIAN

DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD. *All medications for students below ninth (9th) grade must be brought to school and picked up from school by parents/guardians. Students in ninth (9th) grade and above must have a note from their parents to take medication to and from school. All medications must remain in the school clinic unless otherwise specified by the student's physician and parent and approved by a Portage Township Schools Registered Nurse.*

NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS must be sent in the original container and **must** be accompanied by a note from the parent; and

1. include a note explaining the dosage of the medication and time of administration. If dosage exceeds the manufacturer's recommended

- dosage, a physician's note must verify the dosage;
2. any exceptions to the above must be cleared through the Health Services Director;
 3. all medications must be age appropriate.

For your child's safety, medication will be given only if it is sent with a note and is properly labeled. Aspirin or other non-prescription drugs will be given only if furnished by the parent and accompanied by a note from the parent.

Medications stored at school are **prohibited** from being sent home with any student **below grade 9**.

Exceptions must be cleared through the Health Services Director (764-6054).

Information on the disease AIDS

The Portage Township Schools is committed to instructing our children on the facts, transmission, and prevention of the disease AIDS. Formal instruction begins at grade four and continues in grade five through the secondary grade levels. Each elementary media center has material available for grade four and five students to check out and study. It is our hope that parents will utilize this material and share time with their child to educate them about this disease.

This AIDS material is factual and addresses many aspects of the disease. Grades four and five students will have access to this literature as they do to all other media materials. Parents who do not wish their children to read the AIDS literature are to instruct them not to do so.

Portage Township Schools Wellness Policy

With the increased emphasis on nutrition and wellness, and in compliance with federal regulations, every school system must institute a wellness policy.

Therefore, PTS has incorporated changes across the district that will serve to raise awareness, as well as promote health and fitness. The changes that have been set in place since the 2006-07 school year will include Nutrition Education and Standards, school based activities, and physical activity goals.

Board policy 646 outlines the policy in full detail and the specifics of the policy are available at each school for parents to read and access. However, please note that no longer will concessions offer foods that do not meet the approved nutritional guidelines. Also, of note, is that the policy specifically states that foods that are not on the approved list will be banned from the school.

Parents should note that fast food should no longer be sent to school with their son/daughter as a lunch choice. Also, all classroom parties and/or other school activities will offer only items that are either non-food items or those items, individually packaged, that meet the PTS criterion of nutritional standards. An approved snack list is available at every school. However, classroom parties, birthday celebrations, etc., may no longer consist of treats such as candy, cupcakes, pop, or any item that is high in fat or sugar content.

School-wide parties are to include only items that are prepared by the food service department and that meet the Nutritional Standards as adopted by PTS. Should there be questions regarding acceptable items for consumption, parents must contact the individual schools prior to the purchase or distribution of food items at the respective buildings.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

The Portage Township Schools lunch program provides high quality, nutritious lunches at an affordable cost. Eligible students may apply to receive meals free or at a reduced price.

The lunch program is governed by Federal (U.S.

Department of Agriculture) and State (Indiana Department of Education) regulations. Menus are planned to meet meal pattern requirements, and provide, on average, one-third of the daily Recommended Dietary Allowances for key nutrients and calories. Thus, the school lunch provides a nutritionally balanced meal for growing students, at a price that is lower than what others pay to pack a lunch of the same quality. Lunch is served at all schools and breakfast is also available. It's cool to eat at school and it's a great deal!

HOW DO I PAY FOR MY CHILD'S LUNCH AND BREAKFAST?

Portage Township Schools have point of sale computers at each school to handle our lunch accounts. All enrolled children have their own debit account, which is accessible by a personal pin number. Your child will be given their pin number at the start of school each fall. To speed up the lunch lines we strongly encourage parents to pay into their child's account in advance. When a child eats lunch with us, they enter their pin number and the cost of the meal is debited from their account balance. Please be assured that there are security checkpoints to ensure that students do not use each other's pin numbers. Free or reduced students are not identified any differently than any other students. All accounts are accessible for breakfast as well as lunch, and in some instances ala-carte purchases. We do accept cash on a daily basis for lunch purchases but we do not encourage it.

All checks should be made out to Portage Schools Food Service Department and paid at your child's school. One check may be written for more than one child, but we must know how you want the money divided to deposit it in the correct accounts. We recommend writing on the memo line how the money is to be divided. Because each student has their own individual account, siblings cannot access or use each other's accounts. Funds will remain in the student's account during the summer months for start up in the fall. Refunds will only be given when a student leaves the

Portage School system.

When any full pay or reduced student reaches \$5.00 or more of debt, a replacement Lunch or Breakfast will be given to the student in place of a regular lunch or breakfast.

The replacement breakfast consists of toast and milk and a charge of 50% of the regular breakfast price will be charged to the student's account. The replacement lunch consists of a cheese or jelly sandwich, fruit and milk and a charge of 50% of the regular lunch price will be charged to the student's account.

*The parent will be notified by letter (which the child will carry home) that a replacement meal will be served the next day if the debt is not **PAID IN FULL**. The student will continue to receive a supplemental meal until the debt is **PAID IN FULL**. All money sent with the child will be posted against the debt and a regular breakfast or lunch **will not be available until the entire debt is PAID IN FULL** (including the charges for the replacement meals). No charging is allowed except for full meals, milk and ala-carte purchases may not be charged.*

Limited charging is available at the beginning of each school year for our Middle Schools. No meal charging is available for our High School. Students must have cash or money in their account to make purchases. Replacement meals are not available for Middle or High School Students.

Individual/family debts that reach excessive amounts may be turned over to the Portage Township Schools' Attorney for collection.

If you have questions regarding your child's account, the cafeteria manager will be happy to run a participation report so you can see your child's eating history.

In an effort to control debts to the food service program, **all debts must be PAID IN FULL before the end of the school year, and there will be no charging allowed during the last two weeks of the school year.**

WE REMIND EACH HOUSEHOLD THAT FREE AND REDUCED APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO QUALIFYING FAMILIES AT ALL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR.

If you have further questions, please contact the Food Service Office at 763-8008.

SAFETY - PRECAUTIONARY PROCEDURES

Safety is a major concern of the school, and the school and home should both work together to help children establish these good safety habits.

1. Start from home in order to arrive at school not more than ten (10) minutes before the tardy bell.
2. Walk on the sidewalk where sidewalks exist or on the edge of the street facing traffic.
3. Cross at intersections where protection of adult guards is provided.
4. Refuse to talk to strangers or to approach or enter strange automobiles. Report to the home/school if you are approached.
5. Be considerate of and helpful to younger children.
6. Refrain from snowballing or rough play on the way to and from school.

Fire Drills

The purpose of the fire drill is to accustom the staff and pupils to a swift and efficient method of exit from the building in case of a sudden emergency. The State Fire Marshal prescribes monthly fire drills.

Tornado Drills

Tornado drills, at least two in the Fall and two in the Spring, are conducted to help children know how to take appropriate precautions during tornado warnings.

When a tornado watch is announced by the National Weather Service in Chicago, schools are notified by the Weather Alert System so that appropriate precautions may be taken for student safety.

Student Insurance

Student accident insurance, at group rates, is offered at the beginning of each school year on registration day. Purchase of this insurance is recommended for any student not fully covered by other parent insurance.

School Closing

In case the Portage Township Schools should have to delay opening, close early, or not open due to bad weather or any other emergency, the following radio and TV stations will broadcast the information:

WLJE	Valparaiso	105.5 FM
WBBM	Chicago	780 AM
WEFM	Michigan City	95.9 FM
WLS	Chicago	890 AM
WZVN	Lowell	106.9 FM
WMAQ	Chicago	670 AM
WGN	Chicago	720 AM
Chicago	TV Channels 5, 9 and 32	

PROCEDURES FOR DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING, CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL, AND EMERGENCY SCHOOL DISMISSAL

Delayed School Opening or Cancellation

Severe weather situations or other emergencies may cause a delay in school opening or school cancellation.

In the event of a school delay or cancellation, every attempt will be made to make a public announcement via local radio

and television by 6 a.m. regarding the delay or closing. Refer to the Portage Township School's web page (www.portage.k12.in.us) or your student handbook for media information.

If a school delay is announced, the delay will be for **ALL Portage Township Schools K-12** and the length of the declared delay will be two (2) hours. AM Kindergarten classes are cancelled when a delay is in effect.

The two (2) hour delay plan will result in the following school start times:

Portage High School	9:30 AM
Willowcreek Middle School	9:30 AM
Fegely Middle School	10:00 AM
<u>All Elementary Schools</u>	<u>10:55 AM</u>

Parochial school (Portage Christian & Nativity) transportation will follow the high school and Willowcreek schedule.

On school days with a delayed starting time the lunch menu may vary from the posted selections.

If a delay is declared and weather conditions do not improve, a school cancellation notice will be announced.

Parents are expected to have a plan for their children to follow in the event the school is closed for a delay or canceled after the school day has started. The plan should include:

- School Delay
 - How your child will be cared for during the two hour delay
- School Cancellation
 - If school were cancelled DURING the school day, a plan is in place for your child should you not be home when they arrive from school

- If school were cancelled DURING the school day, plans are in place for your child to travel to a designated location other than home

Always contact the school immediately when there is a change in your contact information or any of your emergency contacts.

Please don't wait until there is problem or an emergency.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation - Walking Boundaries

The Portage Township Schools will transport all students who reside in the district and who live outside the established walking boundaries.

Students will be expected to walk a reasonable distance to the school in which they are enrolled. The maximum walking distance shall not exceed one (1) mile for students in grades K-8 and one and one-half (1-1/2) miles for students in grades 9-12. The walking distance shall be considered as the shortest, most reasonable and safest route to walk to school.

Students who are transported may be required to walk a reasonable distance to established collection points. For each bus route, the established collection point(s) shall be determined by the Superintendent of Schools or a designee.

The distance a student may be required to walk to a collection point shall not exceed one (1) mile for students in grades K-8 and one and one-half (1-1/2) miles for students in grades 9-12.

Using the above guidelines, Kindergarten students assigned to morning classes will walk or be transported to school by the Portage Township Schools. Morning kindergarten students will either walk or be provided transportation home

at dismissal. Kindergarten students assigned to afternoon classes will either walk or be provided transportation to school. At dismissal, afternoon kindergarten students will walk or be transported home according to the above guidelines.

All Kindergarten students will have only one drop off and one pick up point for the school year.

Mid-day Kindergarten students must be met at the bus stop by a parent or guardian. Any kindergarten student not met at their stop will be returned to school. On afternoon routes kindergarten students may walk home with older siblings.

School bus drivers are charged with the responsibility to safely transport students to and from school each day. They must maintain order and discipline and see that no student is mistreated. They must use every precaution for the safety of the children under their care. They must maintain a schedule and advise the school of any way to improve the student transportation operation. These drivers are highly trained in classroom and road experience, carrying a Commercial Driver License (CDL) and State Certification.

Parent and Student Responsibility

The following information will assure a safe ride for your children:

Only enrolled students will be transported to and from school at their designated bus stops.

Students are to ride the school bus as assigned to them by the Transportation Department, according to their home address.

Students needing to go to another address after school must have a note of parent permission approved by the building principal and given to the school bus driver.

Students without notes will not be allowed to ride and approval will be based on available seats.

Parents must provide the driver with an address and phone number to drop students at in case of early dismissal or emergency. Students should know this information as well.

Parents are requested to inform the school office of any serious medical problems so the driver may be alerted to any special medical needs. Examples of these are allergies, asthma, seizures, diabetes or low blood sugar. (See "Medication" in Health Services section of this handbook.)

Except in the case of an emergency or an evacuation drill, students shall enter or exit the bus by the front door only.

All students will be instructed on emergency evacuation procedures by their drivers. All students will take part in the six (6) required evacuation drills per year.

Changing End of Day Transportation Plans

In order to maintain our student's safety, we will not accept daily phone calls changing the end of the day transportation plans. We want to make sure every child gets home safely, and it is difficult to monitor that the children get to the correct destination if the destination changes frequently.

Therefore, in the event that you need your child to go home any other way than his/her customary route, you will need to submit a note to the child's teacher, which must be approved by the building principal. This way, we have a record of this and are certain that your child is arriving to their destination safely. We appreciate your attention to this safety matter.

Bus Safety

- School bus conduct and safety rules for pupils are as follows:

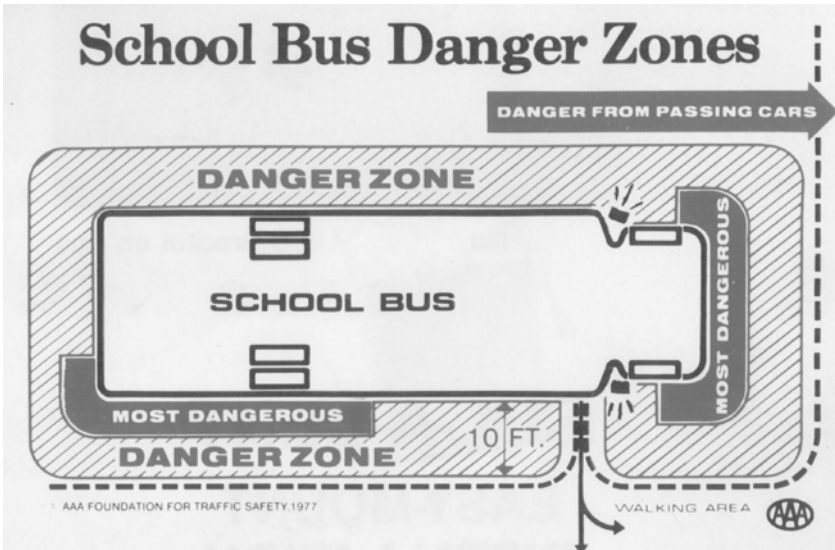
- Only the driver, students, and authorized personnel are allowed to ride a bus.
- The bus driver has the same relationship to the child as does the school teacher. It is his/her duty to maintain order on the bus at all times.
- Upon recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities can deny the privilege of riding the bus to any pupil who refuses to follow the rules listed below:
 - The student will:
 - obey the driver promptly and respectfully. He/she is working for your safety; you must realize that the driver has a big responsibility and that it is your job to help.
 - be careful in approaching bus stops, walk on left facing on-coming traffic if there are no sidewalks along the road-side. On leaving the bus, if student is to cross the street, walk 10 steps ahead of the bus and wait for the driver to signal student to cross; never cross behind the bus.
 - avoid standing or playing on the road while waiting for the bus.
 - not destroy or damage surrounding property in any way while waiting for the bus. (Such damage results in discontinuance of bus “stops”).
 - help keep the bus on schedule. Be at your stop five (5) minutes before scheduled stop time.
 - Do not enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the door has been opened by the driver.
 - take his/her turn and avoid pushing when entering or leaving the bus.
 - be seated promptly and be careful not to block the aisles. No one is permitted to save seats. Remain seated until the bus stops. The driver has the authority to assign

- seats as he/she feels it is necessary.
- remember that loud talking or laughing or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident. Classroom conduct is expected except for conversation in normal tones. There must be absolute quiet at railroads and major intersections.
- not use profane language and will not show indecent conduct.
- not be allowed to tease, scuffle, or handle each other.
- not be permitted to open or close windows or doors except by permission of the driver.
- treat bus equipment as valuable furniture in the home. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary and orderly. Deposit refuse in container at the front of the bus. No food or drink shall be consumed on the bus. Those who damage the bus will be expected to pay the damages.
- not smoke on the bus
- not use cell phones on the bus.

Every parent and student will be expected to sign a contract of agreement for behavioral expectations and consequences for bus riders.

NEVER, NEVER CROSS IN BACK OF THE BUS!

Parents and students are requested to know the importance of the "DANGER ZONE" illustrated in the diagram below. This is the area around the school bus where it is extremely difficult for a driver to see a child.



The Portage Township Schools Transportation Department encourages your advice on ways to improve the student transportation operation. Do not hesitate to contact the Transportation Department office if they can be of assistance to you.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The purpose of this section is to inform Portage students and parents of various policies, regulations and procedures, which are necessary to insure the efficient functioning of the schools. Ignorance of a rule has never been a defensible position, so please read this information that has been prepared for you. Be informed! The Portage schools are your schools and their success depends largely upon you. The responsibility for self-discipline lies on the shoulders of the students; and should a student fail to accept this responsibility, it then becomes the task of staff, administration and the school board to take the action necessary to insure proper cooperation of the best educational environment.

The Board of School Trustees recognizes that as teachers and students are brought together so that learning can take place, an environment, which permits an orderly and efficient operation of the schools, must be provided. Furthermore, the Board realizes that students in school sometimes conduct themselves in such a way that it becomes difficult to preserve the safety, health, and general well-being of other students and faculty members and/or to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Students are reminded that they are under supervision and regulations of the school at the following times and places:

- On the school grounds during and immediately after school hours.
- On school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group.
- Off school grounds at any educational function or school sponsored event.
- Traveling to and from school by any means of transportation, and at the bus stop before and after school.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A meeting will be held prior to the suspension of any student. At this meeting the student will be entitled to:
 - a. A written or oral statement of the charges;
 - b. if the student denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against the student will be presented; and
 - c. the student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct.
2. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of suspension.
3. Following the suspension, the parents or guardians of suspended students will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension, describe the student's misconduct, and the action taken by the principal.

In-School Suspension:

The school administration, in lieu of sending a student home, may keep a student at school, but not allow them to attend their regular class schedule.

Out-of School Suspension:

A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to ten (10) school days. School work missed during a suspension will be completed **without credit**.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) recommends to the Superintendent (or designee) that a student be expelled from school, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The Superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following persons to conduct the expulsion meeting:
 - a. Legal counsel
 - b. A member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student during the current school year and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.
2. An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parent are given notice of their right to appear at an expulsion meeting conducted by the superintendent or the person designated above. Failure by a student or a student's parent to request and to appear at this meeting will be deemed a waiver of rights administratively to contest the expulsion or to appeal it to the school board.
3. The notice of the right to an expulsion meeting will be in writing, delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and the procedure for requesting the meeting.

4. At the expulsion meeting, the principal (or designee), will present evidence to support the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student, and to present evidence to support the student's position
5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent.
6. The student or parent has the right to appeal the decision of the person conducting the expulsion meeting to the school board within ten (10) days of the receipt of notice of the action taken. The student or parent appeal to the school board must be in writing. If an appeal is properly made, the board must consider the appeal unless the board votes not to hear the appeal. If the board hears the appeal, it will consider the written summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of the school administration and the student and/or the student's parent. The board will then take any action deemed appropriate.

Expulsion

In accordance with due process, the principal may recommend a student be expelled from school for a period of one to four terms, except violation of Board Policy, Rule 2.1.12.

I. Types of Action

Recognizing that the behavior of some students may be so disruptive that it interferes with school purposes or

educational functions of the school corporation, school officials may find it necessary to remove a student from the school. In this event and in accordance with the provisions of IC 20-8.1-5.1, the Board of School Trustees authorizes administrators and staff members to take the following actions:

1. REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR ACTIVITY -
TEACHER:

- a) A middle school, junior high, or high school teacher will have the right to remove a student from his/her class or activity for a period of up to one (1) school day if the student is assigned regular or additional school work to be completed in another school setting.
- b) An elementary teacher will have the right to remove a student from his/her classroom or activity for a period of up to one (1) school day if the student is assigned regular or additional work to be completed in another school setting.

2. SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL -
PRINCIPAL:

A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to ten (10) school days.

3. EXPULSION: In accordance with the due process procedures defined in this policy, a student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester, with the exception of a violation of rule 13 listed under the grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy.

GROUND FORS SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are: student misconduct or substantial disobedience. Student misconduct and substantial disobedience include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is illustrative of the type of conduct prohibited by this subdivision:
 - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
 - b. Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
 - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
 - d. Possessing, firing, displaying, or threatening the use of firearms, explosives or other weapons on school premises.
 - e. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or education function, or of any meeting or assembly on school property.
 - f. Continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere seriously with the ability of

- any teacher or any of the other school personnel to conduct the education function under his supervision.
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property.
 3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing or attempting to steal private property.
 4. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person does not, however, constitute a violation of this provision.
 5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from the student.
 6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon.
 7. Knowingly possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Use of drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this subdivision.
 8. Engaging in the unlawful selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
 9. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their

- supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
 11. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function and are validly adopted in accordance with Indiana law, including, but not limited to:
 - a. engaging in sexual behavior on school property;
 - b. disobedience of administrative authority;
 - c. willful absence or tardiness of students;
 - d. knowingly possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind;
 - e. possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of caffeine-based substances, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), or stimulants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription.
 12. Knowingly possessing or using on school grounds during school hours an electronic paging device or a handheld portable telephone in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
 13. POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

- a. No student shall possess, handle or transmit any firearm on school property.
- b. The following devices are considered to be a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code:
 - any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
 - the frame or receiver of any weapon described above
 - any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
 - any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or any similar device
 - any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
 - any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
- c. A student who is identified as bringing a firearm to school, or onto school

property or to a school function, or is in possession of a firearm on school property shall be expelled for a period of not less than one calendar year. The length of the expulsion may be reduced by the superintendent if the circumstances warrant such reduction.

- d. The superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

- 14. Loitering on school grounds when school is not in session.
- 15. Loitering on school grounds without permission or not being part of an authorized group at school.
- 16. Causing trouble at any educational function or school sponsored event.
- 17. Causing problems while traveling to and from school.
- 18. Repeated unexcused absences from school, individual classes or conferences (truancy).
- 19. Repeated tardiness to school or individual classes.
- 20. Repeated minor offenses.
- 21. The use of tobacco products on school property. Possession of a lighted tobacco product is considered use.
- 22. Refusal to obey school rules and standards or school authorities or advocating that others do the same.
- 23. Use of abusive and/or vulgar, indecent language or gestures.
- 24. Theft.
- 25. Extortion.
- 26. Gambling.
- 27. Throwing or propelling any object. Permitted athletic activities shall not constitute a violation of this provision.

28. Harassment (hazing, bullying, harmful pranks, sexual harassment, racial harassment, harassment threats, or intimidation).
29. Indecent exposure.
30. Leaving the school, class or class assignment without permission from authorized school authority (truancy).
31. Setting off false fire alarms.
32. Disrespect for teachers or other school authorities.
33. Conduct constituting an interference with school purposes.
34. Petting, necking, or other inappropriate physical contact between the sexes.
35. Making excessive noise or behaving in any manner that disrupts the educational process.
36. Endangering the safety of others by fighting, pushing, shoving, tripping, and/or throwing missiles.
37. Soliciting of funds for any purpose without approval from the principal.
38. Cheating on a test.
39. Mutilating, littering, defacing, or destruction of school property at any time.
40. Setting any fire in or on school property at any time
41. Refusing to give identity, or giving false identification to any Board employee and/or failing to justify his presence, that is, by giving evidence that he has permission from a Board employee to be at said location.
42. Possession of a forged or altered doctor's note.
43. Corruption of school communications, which include stand alone computers and online computers.
44. Unauthorized use of or tampering with school computers or data processing networks.
45. Knowingly possess, handling or transmitting

- any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or is represented to be a weapon.
46. Inappropriate use of/ or forging hall passes.
 47. Excessive study halls due to disciplinary reasons.
 48. Failure to attend Saturday Class or excessive Saturday Class assignments.
 49. Careless, unsafe, or reckless driving on school property or going to and from school.
 50. Possession of or taking any substance that is not in compliance with the medication policy.
 51. Displaying of gang paraphernalia (symbols, types of clothing, signs, colors, etc.)
 52. Interfering with the normal operations of the school. This includes firing, displaying, or threatening use of firearms, explosives, or other weapons.
 54. Intentional actions that could or have caused physical injury to a school employee. Intentionally doing serious bodily harm to a student.
 55. Illegally obtaining money or any item of value from any student.
 56. Knowingly possessing any object, which can be considered a weapon or firearm.

II. Drug Policy

Portage Township Schools takes a strong position on any involvement with drugs. Students who have in their possession, are involved with the use of drugs in any form while on school property, or are involved in the sale of drugs, or any substance alleged to be drugs, will be recommended for expulsion from Portage Township Schools. This policy is in effect during the school day and at all extra-curricular events.

Substances and Paraphernalia

The following types of student conduct shall constitute grounds for expulsion:

Possessing, providing to another person, being under the influence of any substance which is or contains tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, a stimulant, an intoxicant, a narcotic, a depressant, or a hallucinogen, whether by prescription or sold over the counter. Inhaling of glues, thinners, or other like substances also falls under this policy. This would include any substance represented by the provider to be of any of the aforementioned substances on school grounds at any time, or at any school-sponsored activity at any location, including the school bus. Use of medication by a student presented by a medical doctor, a dentist, or other health care provider does not violate this rule. There must be a note on file in the nurse's office explaining this medication.

Possess or provide to any person anything used or designated to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery, or consumption of marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants, or hallucinogens on school premises at any time or at any school-sponsored activity at any location, including the school bus. Examples of such things include, but are not limited to, devices such as pipes, roach clips, and rolling papers.

The drug policy applies to students traveling to and from school by means of any transportation, as well as the bus stop before or after school.

Any grounds for expulsion added to those presently set forth in the Portage High School Student Handbook shall be incorporated herein by reference as if it were fully set out herein.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed above apply when a student is:

- a. On school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- b. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event, or
- c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

In addition to the grounds listed above, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria, which takes place during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

III. Bullying

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying means overt, repeated acts or gestures including:

- 1) verbal or written communications transmitted;
- 2) physical acts committed; or
- 3) any other behaviors committed; by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student. (IC 20-33-8-0.2)

Behaviors associated with Bullying:

Intimidating type of behaviors such as:

- Offensive name calling - verbal and written
- aggressive personal contact
- Threats - verbal and written Intimidating body language

- Damage, destruction, and theft of property
- Invading personal space
- Intentional/continual noise making
- Intentional exclusion

The test conditions for harmful bullying:

- An intent to harm by the perpetrator
- Intensity and duration
- Abuse of power
- Vulnerability of the victim
- Isolation and lack of support for the victim
- Consequences and behavior change for the victim

(From: *Bullies & Victims* by Suellen Fried/Paula Fried)

Consequences of Bullying:

- 1) Warning - Written form signed by student and parents identifying the occurrence
- 2) and the formal warning - one to the office, teacher, and parent
- 3) Day of ISS - This will be accompanied by a conference with the student, teacher, parent, and administrator
- 4) Three days of Out of School Suspension - followed with a conference with student, parent, teacher, and administrator
- 5) Long term suspension

Harassment

Physical, verbal, or sexual harassment, retaliation, intimidation, discrimination, hazing, threatening, bullying or initiation is prohibited and may result in suspension.

Anyone who believes they are being harassed should let the offender know immediately and firmly that the behavior is offensive and not acceptable, and reports the incident to the administration as soon as possible. All information and complaints will be investigated in a manner that preserves confidentiality to the maximum practical extent possible

without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation. Violations may result in suspension, notification of authorities, and/or recommendation for expulsion.

IV. Prohibiting Gang Activities

The Board finds that the presence of gangs and gang activities can cause a substantial disruption of or material interference with school and school activities. By this policy, the Board acts to prevent disruption and to prohibit gang activities by restricting the actions that foster such activities.

Therefore, no student on or about school property or at any school activity:

- A. Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, or other such paraphernalia, identified and associated with gang membership or affiliation;
- B. Shall use hand signals, graffiti gestures or any other communications displaying membership or affiliation in a gang.
- C. Shall use or have in their possession any cellular communication devices, pocket pagers or similar electronic paging devices.
- D. Shall use any speech or commit any act in furtherance of gang interests or activities including but limited to:
 - 1. soliciting others for membership in any gang;
 - 2. threatening or intimidating others;
 - 3. inciting others to commit physical violence or property damage.

Students who violate the provisions of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, which could include suspension or expulsion from school in accordance with statutory due process procedures

V. Search and Seizure

The search of a student's person or property shall be based on a reasonable suspicion that the student has in their possession any item of an illicit or illegal nature, stolen property, or other such contraband that they are forbidden to possess, or materials which may have been used to cause disruption to the educational process, or which may endanger students or school personnel. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, but not limited to, student tips, faculty referrals, parent phone calls, or suspicious behavior on the part of a student. Any information received will be examined as to its validity and credibility prior to any action being taken. Building administrators and security personnel shall have the authority to examine, or cause to be examined, a student's person or property. The search may include the following:

1. the pockets of the student;
2. a "patdown" of the exterior of the student's clothing;
3. any item in the possession of the student such as a purse or gym bag; and/or,
4. object such as a locker or desk.

Searches of the person of a student as provided above shall be conducted by an administrator or designee in a private room by a person of the same sex as the student being searched. A witness shall be present during the search. If incriminating evidence is found, a determination shall be made whether or not to involve the police authority having jurisdiction over the area.

Anything found in the course of a search, which is evidence of a violation of the student conduct standards, may be:

1. seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or expulsion proceeding;
2. returned to the parent or guardian of the student;
3. destroyed if it has no significant value; or,
4. turned over to the police authority having jurisdiction.

The parent or guardian of any student searched shall be notified as soon as it is reasonably possible. Refusal by a student to have their person or property searched shall subject said student to suspension and/or expulsion.

School officials shall exercise professional judgment and discretion in the search of a student's person and property.

If incriminating evidence is found or a more thorough search or investigation is required, then the administrator in charge shall make a determination whether or not to involve the police authority having jurisdiction over the area.

V. Student Lockers or Desks

Building principals shall possess the authority to examine, or cause to be examined, the contents of any locker or desk located on school premises when they have reason to believe that the contents of the locker or desk may include elements which:

1. present an immediate threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the student body;
2. are illegal to possess;
3. would contribute to the disruption of the normal educational program;
4. have been reported lost or stolen.

The building principal may also conduct, or authorize to be conducted, periodic locker inspections to determine if the lockers are being maintained in a clean and orderly manner.

The student, or students, to whom the locker has been assigned, shall be held responsible for the contents and condition of the locker.

VI. Student Grievance Procedure

When a student or a student's parents believe that the student is being improperly denied participation in any educational function of the school system or is being

subjected to an illegal rule or standard, as provided by the statutes of the State of Indiana or of the United States, or by the Constitutions of the State of Indiana or of the United States, they shall, if unable to work out their problems with members of the administrative staff, be entitled to initiate a hearing by filing a charge with the Superintendent of Schools in the same manner as a charge is initiated by a principal under Public Law 162, Sections 6-12.

The ruling of the hearing examiner and determination of the Superintendent of Schools shall, with respect to participating in an educational function, be denied, granted in whole, or granted subject to limitations, and with respect to the validity of a rule or standard or its application, be subject to a recommendation that it be changed.

An appeal from such decisions and determination may be made to the Board of School Trustees either by the student or by the Superintendent of Schools, such appeal to be undertaken within thirty (30) days.

In any case involving the validity of a rule or standard, or its application, the matter shall be automatically appealed to the governing body, which shall make the final administrative determination. Nothing shall limit the power of the Board of School Trustees from hearing petitions of students, parents, teachers, taxpayers, or other interested persons to change any rule or limit the power of the Board of School Trustees to make or to change any rule or standard on its own motion, all subject to such rules relating to administrative procedure as the Board of School Trustees shall adopt in connection therewith. In the event the Board of School Trustees changes a rule or standard, or its application, it shall not be limited to the record.

The grievance procedure does not entitle a student or a parent a hearing involving a grade or grades given the student for courses taken in the Portage Township Schools.

VII. Parent/Student Rights in Identification, Evaluation and Placement-Section 504

In compliance with the procedural requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the following notice of parent/student rights in identification, evaluation, and placement shall be utilized by the Portage Township Schools.

The following is a description of the rights granted by Federal Law to students with disabilities. The intent of this notice is to keep you fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions.

You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disabling condition;
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law;
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate education in academics, non-academics, and extracurricular activities. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. The provision of an appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual needs of handicapped persons as adequately as the needs of non-handicapped persons are met and are based upon adherence to procedures that satisfy the requirements of, and implementation of an individualized education program developed in accordance with the Education of the Handicapped Act;
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided non-

- disabled students;
6. Have your child receive special education and related services that he/she is found to be eligible for under the Education of the Handicapped Act (PL 94-142) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
 7. Have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources, and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options;
 8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district;
 9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district;
 10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions made regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement;
 11. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;
 12. A response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's record;
 13. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is a reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing;
 14. Request mediation and/or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and be represented by counsel. All hearing requests should be made to the appropriate Central Office Administrator listed below.

STUDENT SUBMISSION TO REQUIRED SURVEYS, ANALYSIS, OR EVALUATIONS OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a school within the Portage Township School Corporation shall be entitled to inspect those instructional materials, which will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any school program or curriculum.

No student shall be required without prior written consent of the student's parent or guardian, as part of any school program or curriculum which receives funds from the United States Department of Education, to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation which reveals information concerning:

- 1) political affiliations;
- 2) mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his/her family;
- 3) sex behavior and attitudes;
- 4) illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
- 5) critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- 6) legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; or
- 7) income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

INTERAGENCY INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT

The Portage Township Schools are members of a student services interagency agreement which allows for information to be shared with other agencies to improve the system's response to troubled, problem, and delinquent youth as a means of providing a safer community and preventing delinquency.

These agencies include police, probation, juvenile court and many other community agencies working with the youth of Porter County.

This sharing was made possible through a court order by the Honorable Judge of the Porter County Circuit Court on behalf of the Portage Township Schools.



Non-Discrimination Statement

The Portage Township Schools does not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap, nor does it deny services to any of its students for such a reason.



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