

**W-A-Y Forward Program**  
**Widening Advancements for Youth**  
**Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>**

**RESEARCHER HANDBOOK**  
**2018-2019**

WESTSIDE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
ROOM 200  
111 SPRUCE STREET  
NILES, MICHIGAN

Phone: (269) 684-1532  
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**Niles Community Schools Vision Statement:**

Niles Community Schools

\*Dynamic Learners

\*Diverse Opportunities\*

\*Driven to Succeed\*

**W-A-Y Program Mission:**

Changing lives by creating engaging and encouraging educational opportunities for all young people.

**W-A-Y Program Vision:**

W-A-Y offers a personalized approach to education; one that encourages self-esteem, independence, and the development of 21st century global and career skills. We aim to make every young person a hero.

Welcome Researchers and Parents/Guardians!

We are excited to welcome you into W-A-Y Niles as you pursue your education, and we look forward to supporting you as you are challenged and grow. W-A-Y (Widening Advancements for Youth) Forward Program combines face-to-face teacher interaction with personalized, project based, online learning. It is designed to help middle school aged students rediscover the joy of learning, to build relationships with teachers who know their unique learning needs, and prepare them for success in high school and beyond.

This handbook is designed to inform you about important school policies and procedures. We encourage you to read through the handbook carefully, and refer to it as needed through the year. If you have further questions about these policies, please contact us at 269-684-1532.

We wish you a successful 2018-2019 school year.

*W-A-Y Forward Team Leader*  
Megan Klann

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A W-A-Y Forward researcher will abide by the W-A-Y Forward Program rules and Niles Community Schools policies set forth in the W-A-Y contract and this handbook.

### **RESEARCHER HANDBOOK:**

Researchers are responsible for understanding the content of this handbook. Parents are asked to review it with their child and sign and return the consent form the first week of lab.

### **AGE RESTRICTIONS:**

A researcher turning 16 during their 8th grade year will not be allowed to participate in the W-A-Y Forward Program.

### **GRADES:**

Each program has a standard grading procedure; your teacher will provide you with detailed descriptions of your child's measure of their achievement. Parents and students are encouraged to check academic progress through PowerSchool. This is a service to parents, which allows them to monitor how their child is doing. Log in information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. If you have not received your log in information, please contact your child's school's office.

### **COMPLAINT PROCESSES:**

If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after consulting with the teacher you should schedule an appointment with the principal. Call the office and leave a message with the secretary *"that you would like to speak with or schedule an appointment with the principal."* If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after your appointment with the principal, you can call the superintendent's office and your complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate official. If your complaint is still unresolved after working with the appropriate official, you have the right to request a Board hearing.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

All researchers are required to be at lab every day as lab participation is critical to success in the W-A-Y Forward Program. Researchers will participate in their assigned lab session either in the morning or afternoon five days per week unless otherwise determined by an agreement between the Team Leader and parent.

## **BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS** (see NCS board policy 5517.01 ([www.neola.com/niles-mi](http://www.neola.com/niles-mi)))

See Appendix B

### **BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT**

The District shall provide, and all administrators, school employees, contracted employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students will undertake annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and other aggressive behavior.

Bullying is intentional behavior initiated by one or more students directed toward other students(s). Bullying exists when a student with more social and/or physical power deliberately dominates and harasses another with less power. Bullying is unjustified and typically repeated. Bullying/Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. Any student that believes she/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or assistant principal, or may report it directly to the Assistant Superintendent at 269-683-0736. All reports of bullying will be investigated. Consequences for bullying will range from a warning to expulsion, depending on the severity and number of previous offenses.

### **DRESS CODE:**

To minimize disturbances to the educational environment and to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following guidelines will be used by building principals to determine what action will be taken relative to student dress:

1. Clothing, patches, buttons, jewelry, bags and any other personal items should be appropriate, neat and clean. **Any item containing or depicting** obscenity, profanity, **weapons, offensive messages of race and religion**, ads for illegal substances or symbols found to be disruptive to the educational environment are not acceptable.
2. Jewelry or body adornments determined to be disruptive or dangerous, are not allowed. **Any accessories such as chains, spikes or jewelry that could be detrimental to the safety and/or welfare of other persons will not be permitted.**
3. Revealing, sheer, and/ or low-cut clothing will not be allowed. All shirts, tank tops, and/or blouses must cover a minimum of half of each shoulder and the entire torso. Shirts such as tank tops, camis, undershirts, and mesh shirts cannot expose the bare midriff.
4. Hats, sunglasses, hoods, **winter** scarves, bandanas, headbands and other headgear may not be worn inside the building.

5. Shorts and skirts must extend past the student's fingertips when the student's arms are extended by his/her legs.
6. Significantly torn or altered clothes (**with primary focus on holes or tears above the knees**) are not allowed if skin is exposed at or above a similar level as stated in #5 or as described in #3.
7. Yoga pants or leggings may only be worn when covered by a shirt, blouse, sweater, skirt, etc., but must extend to a similar level as shorts and skirts (see#7). Sagging pants riding below the waist that may expose skin or any garment worn under the pants are not allowed. Pants made with flannel or fleece that are considered "pajama bottoms" are not permitted.
8. Coats or lined jackets are to be left in lockers, not worn to class.
9. Book bags, backpacks, purses and duffels are to be left in lockers.
10. **Excessive makeup, costumes, or accessories that are distracting to instruction are not allowed.**
11. Any other item or **appearance** deemed inappropriate by administration.
12. Blankets are not to be brought to school.

When appropriate, students violating the dress code will be allowed to call home to request suitable clothing. Staff may also be able to offer temporary garments. Any student refusing to comply with the dress code may be suspended. For further information on this topic, please see our website at [www.nilesschools.org](http://www.nilesschools.org). Click on the INFO tab and click on the HANDBOOK link.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT:**

The code has as its purpose the defining of categories of misconduct and potential consequences as sanctioned by the Niles Community Schools Board of Education.

All behaviors have consequences whether or not they are the result of carefully thought out decisions. It is each researcher's responsibility to read and understand the code. The W-A-Y Forward staff is charged with implementing consequences for misbehavior which will help change a researcher's behavior and provide a safe and secure learning environment for everyone. The consequences listed in the code are general guidelines. Based upon knowledge of the facts and concepts of effective, progressive discipline, administrators have the authority to implement consequences which, in their opinion, are most appropriate. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, suspension, behavior contracts, inability to participate in the W-A-Y Forward lab environment, expulsions, etc.

**The complete text of the Niles Community Schools Code of Conduct is as follows:**

The primary objective of requiring appropriate researcher behavior and self-discipline is to produce a positive and safe learning atmosphere in which there will be no interruption of the teaching-learning environment. All researchers will assume personal responsibility for their behavior and actions, develop appropriate self-control, exhibit self-discipline, and accept the responsibility and consequences for any inappropriate behavior. To accomplish this objective requires a cooperative effort from researchers, staff and parents.

**All researchers shall...**

1. Respect the educational process through the display of appropriate language, attitude, and physical behavior.
2. Respect and honor the rights of other researchers to learn in an environment free of intimidation or harassment.
3. Maintain satisfactory attendance.
4. Comply with the dress code.

Consequences for noncompliance for the above expectations shall include, but not be limited to, the list below. The severity or the repetitive nature of a researcher's behavior will be given consideration when determining appropriate consequences.

- Community or school service
- Detention
- Denial of participating in school activities
- Denial of privileges
- Intervention by professional school staff
- Parent contact or conference
- Referral to an administrative panel
- Referral to appropriate law enforcement or other governmental agency
- School probation
- Warnings

The following behaviors will be considered unacceptable by Niles Community Schools and will result in suspension and an administrative hearing. The administrative hearing panel will be composed of three district administrators. The researcher and his/her parents will be informed of the time, place, and purpose of the hearing. At the hearing, all parties will present information pertinent to the case. School officials and the researcher may invite other individuals to participate in the hearing. After the panel has heard all the parties, they will excuse the researcher and parents to determine the appropriate disciplinary action. If expulsion is recommended, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Education. The panel will also recommend conditions for re-

admittance to the Niles Community Schools. The behaviors listed below apply to actions on school property and school sponsored activities.

1. Any purposeful action toward another researcher that results in serious and observable injury requiring medical attention.
2. Use or possession of a weapon, explosive, look-alike weapon, or anything that is used as a weapon.
3. Possession of any drug or look-alike drug (includes alcohol and tobacco).
4. Use, or being under the influence, of drugs or alcohol.
5. Intentionally causing, or attempting to cause, physical harm to any school staff or school representative through force or violence.
6. Verbal assault against any school staff or school representative. (Any intentional threat or offer to do bodily injury to another by force, under circumstances which create a well-founded fear of actual harm, coupled with the apparent ability to carry out the act if not prevented).
7. Acts of arson, bomb threats, false fire alarms, or any serious threat to school property or activities.
8. Willful destruction of school property (in excess of \$200).
9. Acts of stalking (repeated or continuing harassment of another individual that cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested).

The district Code of Conduct can be found, in its entirety, in Board Policy 5500.

#### **DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION:**

Intimate public displays of affection are not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, kissing, prolonged hugging, caressing, and hand holding or inappropriate touching.

#### **DUE PROCESS:**

A researcher must be given the opportunity for a due process hearing with the appropriate school administrator if the researcher or parent requests such a meeting. The hearing shall be held to allow the researcher and the parent to contest the facts which may have led to disciplinary action, or to contest the appropriateness of the sanction imposed by the administrator.

#### **EDUCATIONAL RECORDS:**

The privacy of researcher records is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Congress enacted this law in 1974 to protect the researcher and family privacy in connection with educational records. Four basic rights are included; the right to access researcher records, the right to a hearing to challenge the content of records which are

alleged to be inaccurate or misleading, the right to be informed of these rights, and the right to prohibit the release of information contained in researcher records. Such requests should be placed in writing and forwarded to the team leader no later than September 20.

## **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Students may use personal communication devices (PCDs) before and after school and between classes as long as they do not create a distraction, disruption or otherwise interfere with the educational environment, during afterschool activities (e.g., extra-curricular activities) and/or at school-related functions. Use of PCDs, at any other time is prohibited and they must be powered completely off (i.e., not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight. If PCD use is indicated within a teacher's curriculum the teacher may give the students permission to use their PCDs in the classroom at the appropriate time.

For purposes of this policy, "personal communication device" includes computers, tablets (e.g., iPads and similar devices), electronic readers ("e-readers"; e.g., Kindles and similar devices), cell phones (e.g., mobile/cellular telephones, smartphones (e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Android devices, Windows Mobile devices, etc.), telephone paging devices (e.g., beepers or pagers), and/or other web-enabled devices of any type. Students may not use PCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.

Except as authorized by a teacher, administrator or IEP team, students are prohibited from using PCDs during the school day, including while off-campus on a field trip, to capture, record and/or transmit the words or sounds (i.e., audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property.

Students may not use PCDs in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.

**Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD.** The building principal will also refer the matter to law enforcement or child services if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g., child pornography, sexting). Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the PCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian

after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed, unless the violation involves potentially illegal activity in which case the PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement. A confiscated device will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the building's central office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian or turned-over to law enforcement. (See Appendix C)

### **ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION:**

To be enrolled in the W-A-Y Forward Program, the following documents must be provided to the Team Leader for verification:

- Parent or guardian driver's license or photo ID
- Researcher birth certificate
- Most recent researcher immunization records
- Proof of address (postmarked envelope addressed to researcher or parent, water or electric bill)

### **EXPULSION:**

A researcher wanting to enroll in the W-A-Y Forward Program with an expelled status through a school district other than Niles Community Schools will have their expulsion documents reviewed by an expulsion panel. If the panel recommends the researcher, reinstatement qualifications will be decided by the panel for enrollment as a Niles Community Schools researcher.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

W-A-Y Forward researchers have the opportunity to participate in approved extracurricular activities if academically and behaviorally eligible by the W-A-Y Forward team leader. This will be determined on an individual basis and participation must be approved by the team leader before attendance at the activity. All program and Niles Community School rules apply to all such activities.

### **FOOD:**

Researchers may bring food and drink (with a cap/lid that closes) into lab. Food and drink are not to be consumed near the computer equipment. Drinks including, but not limited to, energy drinks or pop with high caffeine content, will **NOT** be permitted in lab. If food and/or drink causes a distraction to the researcher and/or other researchers, it may be limited or not permitted at the discretion of the team leader or lab mentor.

### **LEAVING LAB WITHOUT PERMISSION:**

Leaving the lab environment without permission from a lab mentor or team leader will be considered insubordination and may result in a suspension from the lab environment. If a researcher leaves the Westside property during the duration of a lab session, they will not be allowed back into the lab environment for the rest of the day. Parent contact will be made.

### **MEDICATION:**

When a researcher's health care provider and parent/guardian believe that medication must be taken during a lab session duration, the parent/guardian must request that the team leader dispense the medication to the child by completing a "Researcher Medical Authorization Form." All medication must be brought to school by parents in the original container with dosage instructions present. With the exception of inhalers, researchers may not carry medication with them.

### **OFF CAMPUS EVENTS:**

Researchers at school-sponsored, off campus events, will be governed by school district rules and regulations and are subject to the authority of school district officials. Researchers may be restricted from attending these events and may be suspended from lab for violations of school district rules and regulations.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS:**

During inclement weather, please listen to your radio or TV for school closings or shortened days. The following stations will be notified and some or all of them will broadcast the information, depending on the time school officials make the decision:

WNDU AM/FM WSBT AM/FM

All emergency information relative to early dismissals, delays, or closure will be posted on building and/or district websites. In the event of an early dismissal based upon weather, building issues, power outage, etc. parents are notified and procedures are followed according to the information from the Child Emergency Closing Form. Changes in information on this form (and school emergency cards) are the responsibility of the parent.

### **EMERGENCIES IN BUILDINGS WHEN FIRST RESPONDERS ARE INVOLVED:**

Unfortunately, emergencies do occur from time-to-time in our schools

and in the community that could result in a lockdown or other action. During such matters, the safety and well-being of our students, employees and staff is our primary concern. While we value informing parents of any emergency as soon as possible, our first responders strongly request that we not release any public statement until there is an all clear. This serves two primary purposes:

1. It allows all of our people to work with the first responders to ensure the safety of our students and employees and
2. In the early stages of the emergency we may not have all of the necessary facts to share with you and we do not want to release misinformation.

In this day of social media and cell phones, we realize you may hear about an event before you hear from us. Unfortunately, we can't control the dissemination of all information. However, we have extensive plans in place, work very closely with our first responders, and always put safety first.

### **SEARCHING RESEARCHERS:**

If a researcher is suspected of concealing contraband, they will be brought to the office and questioned. If the situation warrants, the researcher may be searched. The search will be conducted by an administrator with another staff member present (one of which will be of the same gender). They may require the researcher to empty their pockets, take off their shoes, and remove outer clothing (jackets, sweatshirts, etc.).

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT:**

Using words, actions, or gestures of a sexual nature that annoy, alarm, or abuse another person may result in disciplinary action.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING:**

Researchers enrolled in the W-A-Y Forward Program are required to participate in all standardized testing determined by the Niles Community School district. This includes, but is not limited to, NWEA testing and testing required by the State of Michigan.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY:**

See Appendix A

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

The school system provides bus transportation for many researchers. Bus drivers have the delegated authority to control researchers on

buses. Riding the bus is a privilege that may be withdrawn if a researcher's behavior warrants. All school rules and regulations apply to researchers while riding to and from school. Researchers who abuse this privilege will be subject to disciplinary action. Glass and large objects (projects, etc.) cannot be transported on the school bus. Suspension from school due to bus misconduct will result in a loss of transportation privileges during the suspension. At dismissal time buses leave the school grounds promptly at 10:45 AM for the morning session and 2:15 PM for the afternoon session. Buses will not be delayed waiting for tardy researchers.

## Transportation

### Bus Procedures

#### First Student

Together First Student and the Niles Community Schools have developed standards of student conduct that we believe will assure each child a safe bus ride each day. The following provides guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behavior and possible disciplinary actions:

#### School Bus Rules and Regulations

1. Students must listen to the driver and follow the driver's directions. The driver has the authority of a classroom teacher.
2. Students are to conduct themselves on the bus in such a way that will not distract the driver. Distracting the driver puts everyone on the bus at risk.
3. If crossing the street to board the bus, students MUST look both left and right for cars, make sure the RED lights are flashing, and wait for the driver's *signal to cross*. Always cross the street in *FRONT* of the bus.
4. Before boarding and after exiting the bus, students must keep a safe distance from the bus. Keep at least 10 FEET away from the bus.
5. Students are to enter the bus promptly, immediately take their seats, and remain in their assigned seat whenever the bus is moving.
6. Students must *remain properly* seated at all times. (Back to Back: Bottom to Bottom: Book bag on the lap)
7. Outside of ordinary conversation in a normal tone, classroom conduct is to be observed when on the bus. The driver has authority to prohibit any conversation.
8. Students are not to touch the emergency equipment on the bus (emergency doors, windows, roof hatches, body fluid/first aid kits, 2-way radios, etc.) except as directed by the driver or during an

actual emergency.

9. The bus windows should not be opened without permission from the driver.
10. Students are to keep all body parts inside the bus. (Hands, arms, head, hair, etc.)
11. Students are to keep *their hands and feet* to themselves. (No fighting: horseplay, poking or pinching.)
12. Students are not to eat or drink while on the bus.
13. No spraying of colognes, perfume or body sprays while on the bus.
14. Students are not to throw objects of *any kind* either inside the bus, out of the bus, or around the bus.
15. Students should help keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly. They must not damage or abuse bus seats or equipment.
16. Students are *not* to use abusive language or profanity, obscene or rude gestures, or spit while on the bus.
17. Students may *not* bring large musical instruments, any animals, balloons, glass containers or objects, or large school projects onto the bus unless this has been prearranged.
18. Students are not to leave the bus without the driver's permission, except on arrival at their assigned bus stop or at their assigned school.
19. No parents, grandparents or guardians are allowed on buses, without permission or prior approval has been received by Niles Community Schools and First Student.
20. Students are prohibited from using WCD's to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and or images (i.e. picture/videos) of any student, staff members or bus driver/aide.
21. By riding the bus, it is implied that all students and parents understand these rules and will abide by them. Stating that they did not know the rules does not excuse a student from misbehavior or infractions of the rules.

\*\*Following the Bus Safety Rules and Regulations will insure safety, prompt arrivals and departures of buses, and positive attitudes on the part of students. Violations of these rules may result in the suspension of bus privileges.\*\*

### **Conduct and Discipline**

Students are expected to behave in a respectful manner toward the driver and other students while waiting for and riding the bus. Fighting, bullying, bickering, horseplay and boisterous activities are not allowed. Drivers will try to prevent and resolve behavior problems as they arise by working directly with students. In cases of repeated misbehavior or serious misconduct the driver

may issue a misconduct report to be taken to the parent/guardian. The misconduct report will contain a brief description of the inappropriate behavior. Please take this opportunity to discuss the inappropriate behavior with your child. Please sign and return the misconduct report to the driver with your child. If you have questions or concerns about the misconduct report please contact either the Manager or Supervisor at the Transportation Office at 269-684-1420.

If you have questions regarding transportation, please contact:

First Student  
1740 Lake Street  
Niles, Michigan 49120  
269-684-1420

## **INAPPROPRIATE RESEARCHER BEHAVIOR**

Parent-researcher-teacher communications and/or conference(s) are **expected** to correct all misbehavior. Administration involvement in researcher behavior issues should only occur after parent-researcher-teacher communication and interventions.

**BULLYING/THREATENING BEHAVIOR/HARRASSMENT** (see NCS board policy 5517.01 ([www.neola.com/niles-mi](http://www.neola.com/niles-mi))) See Appendix B

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**CHEATING/PLAGARISM**— includes but is not limited to intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying from another student's work; representing material prepared by another as one's own work; allowing others to copy from or use work not their own.

**FIGHTING** is defined as physical contact in which two or more parties are active participants, which does or could cause bodily harm. Physical contact refers to but is not limited to hitting, shoving, pushing, tripping, pinching, or spitting. Spitting on another individual will result in Out-of-School Suspension.

**FORGERY OF SCHOOL DOCUMENTS** is defined as a student writing someone else's name without their permission and will be referred to the director.

**INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL** (behavior and/or conduct and/or incitement to action that results in disruption of the learning process and an orderly school environment or endangers the safety of the school, students, and/or personnel)

**INCITEMENT** (promoting or inciting a disagreement or conflict between others, which could result in a disruption of the school processes; this includes, but is not limited to, making accusations or threats, repeating or transmitting gossip or rumors or encouraging either physically, verbally or in writing a conflict which could result in a disruption.)

**INDECENT EXPOSURE**

**INSUBORDINATION/DISRESPECT** (refusal to comply with request of school authorities or disrespect to school personnel)

**PHYSICAL ASSAULT** (physical assault is different from fighting because it does not involve at least two active participants. Macing a person is viewed as an assault.)

**POSSESSION OR USE OF FIREWORKS, EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS OR NOXIOUS SUBSTANCES**

**PROFANITY** (use/accessed/distribution of obscene or profane language in oral or written form in pictures, caricatures, gestures, on clothing or through technological devices)

**SKIPPING/CLOSED CAMPUS VIOLATION** (Truancy, willful absence from school, improper check-in/check-out)

**ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE VIOLATION** (improper check in/check-out)

## **THEFT OR POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY**

**VANDALISM** (significant misuse/destruction/defacing school property and/or personal property caused by the result of inappropriate behavior)

(All consequences include full payment of labor and replacement costs of applicable restitution and possible police contact)

**POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES** (alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products-this includes but is not limited to being in possession of, using, or distributing these substances---"use of tobacco product" means any of the following: 1) the carrying by a person of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or other lighted smoking device 2) the inhaling or chewing of a tobacco product 3) the placing of a tobacco product within a person's mouth 4) the use of smoking of electric, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, or other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance)

**POSSESSION OF A WEAPON** ("weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.

This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.)

## **NILES W-A-Y FORWARD is a DRUG FREE ZONE**

### **SUMMARY**

The administration has the right to invoke the disciplinary measure necessary to ensure the positive operation of the school. Referrals to police and juvenile authorities will be made when appropriate, necessary, or required by law.

- Regulations covered in this handbook are in effect at school or at any school approved activity on or off school property
- Any researcher who is under suspension will not be allowed to attend or participate in any school activity. Any researcher who has excessive incidents of restriction may also not be allowed to attend or participate in any school activity.
- Administration may convene a Code of Conduct Hearing against a researcher whenever, in his/her judgment, the documented

behavior pattern of the individual or the seriousness of the offense is opposed to the process of formal education within the Niles Community Schools.

- Consequences assigned for one school year that are not served by the end of that school year may be addressed and transferred to the following school year.

For further information on this topic, please see our website at [www.nilesschools.org](http://www.nilesschools.org). Click on the INFO tab and click on the HANDBOOK link.

## APPENDIX A

### NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER USE POLICY

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

##### **Introduction**

Niles Community Schools (NCS, or Schools) strongly promotes the use of electronic information technologies in educational endeavors. Schools provide access to information resources in a variety of electronic formats, which allows learners to access resources, communicate in a technologically rich environment, make informed choices, and become self-directed, responsible, and accountable life-long learners.

##### **Definitions** (Information Resources)

**Network** includes, but are not limited to, all voice, video and data systems.

**Equipment** includes, but is not limited to, network infrastructure, computers, disk drives, keyboard & mice, multi-function photocopiers, printers, scanners, video and audio players/recorders, cameras, and telecommunications.

**Software** includes, but is not limited to, local applications (code, script, or service), network applications (code, script, or service), audio/video/media programs, and print/fax processing.

**Materials** include, but are not limited to, files, pictures/images (still or motion), sounds, and text or dialogue (in any language).

The **Internet** is a global network connecting millions of computers. More than 100 countries are linked together through the exchange of data, news and opinions.

The purpose of this document is to identify and communicate standards that will assist in ensuring researchers benefit from their use of the Schools' network and the Internet.

The Internet is a place for the exchange of information and ideas on a wide range of subject matter. An emphasis on **Digital Citizenship** is crucial to development of 21st Century Skills. With access to computers and people all over the world, there also comes the availability of materials that may not be considered an educational value in the context of the school setting.

While NCS implements Internet filtering, it is impossible to control all materials on a global network. As such, researchers may encounter materials that are personally considered obscene, abusive, or otherwise offensive. NCS firmly believes that information and the interaction available through the network outweighs the risk that researchers may access materials that are not consistent with the educational goals of NCS.

### **Use of the NCS Network**

Use is ultimately governed or supported by Board Policies:

- 7540- COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS
- 7540.03 - RESEARCHER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY
- 7542- ACCESS TO DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FROM PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES
- 5136- PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES
- 5500- CODE OF CONDUCT
- 5513- CARE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY
- 5517- ANTI-HARASSMENT
- 5517.01- BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD RESEARCHERS
- 5600- RESEARCHER DISCIPLINE

The use of the Schools' network is a privilege, not a right. Researchers who fail to comply with the Schools' policies and guidelines while using the network may lose the privilege to access the network. Researchers may also lose the privilege to use equipment provided by the School or to bring their own computerized devices to school. Additionally, researchers may be subject to other disciplinary action or financial liability as appropriate based upon the nature and severity of the violation.

All researchers who are granted access to Internet resources through the School, whether on or off of Schools' property, will have read, signed and accepted the Researcher Acceptable Use Policy agreement with the

School. This will typically occur as a function of the Researcher Handbook process. The School will revoke network and Internet access to any researcher who does not have a properly signed agreement on file with the School. In the case of researchers under the age of 18, parental consent and signatures will be required before access will be granted.

All account holders (“users”) of the NCS network will be granted access to select services the network offers based on grade-level and curriculum needs. The following persons may hold accounts:

- **Researchers:** Researchers who are currently enrolled in the district may be granted an individual network account or access to a shared account following agreement to the terms and conditions of this policy.

All accounts, software and materials created or stored on NCS equipment or within the NCS network are the property of Niles Community Schools. Users should have no expectation of privacy regarding documents, files, e-mail or other media created or stored using technology of Niles Community Schools, and understand that all items may be reviewed at any time without knowledge or consent of the user.

### **General Rules**

The scope of this agreement extends to all NCS network, equipment, software and materials whether being used on or off of Schools’ property. Furthermore, the user(s) of technology...

- Should have appropriate experience or instruction before using the technology.
- Are to use the network, software and materials during instructional time only for facilitating learning and enhancing educational information exchange consistent with the purposes of the School.
- Are responsible for the reasonable care of technology, including hardware and software while in their possession or while they are using it. Failure to maintain reasonable care may result in a financial liability to the researcher or researcher's parent/guardian.
- Will report any damage or problems with equipment, software or materials immediately upon discovery to the teacher or Team Leader.
- Are responsible for the security of their account. Passwords should be considered confidential and not shared with anyone else.

- Are discouraged from leaving their account logged in and unattended.
- Are expected to have all media (e.g. CD/DVD, USB drives) scanned for contamination, which might endanger the integrity of Schools' network, equipment or software before they are used.
- Shall adhere to specific rules established for the use of network, equipment and software in School Labs.

### **Acceptable Uses**

Technology may be used...

- To further instructional goals and mission of the district;
- In the creation of files, digital projects, videos, web pages and podcasts using network resources in support of education and research;
- To participate in video conferencing, weblogs, wikis, bulletin boards and groups with the creation of content for podcasts and webpages that support education and research or to enhance educational information exchange;
- With parental consent, for online publication of original educational material, curriculum related materials and researcher work.

### **Unacceptable Uses**

To attempt or ...

- Cheat, plagiarize, or in any way violate Schools' Code of Conduct;
- Violate copyright, or use another person's intellectual property without his/her prior approval or proper citations;
- Knowingly access, possess, share, upload, download or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials;
- Annoy, harass, discriminate, intimidate, or threaten any person or organization;
- Vandalize, deface, damage, or disable the property of another person, organization or School;
- Endanger the integrity of a computer on the Schools' network or the data stored on the network or Internet, including introduction of malicious software (e.g. viruses, worms, trojan horses, etc.);
- Circumvent the Schools' Internet security measures and/or filters;
- Log on to the network using another person or group's name and password or to otherwise misuse a name or password;
- Access or manipulate another person's network, equipment or materials, without the implied or direct permission of that person;
- Falsely represent oneself in any network communication;
- Transmit information that is false or defamatory or violates the privacy of another person;

- Transmit unsolicited emails (e.g., chain letter emails, spamming emails) to any of the Schools' distribution lists without permission of a teacher or Schools' administrator;
- Utilize peer-to-peer file-sharing applications or Internet social media without authorization of a teacher or Schools' administrator;
- Play, download or install games, entertainment software, or copyrighted material without permission of a teacher or Schools' administrator;
- Remove, disable or modify any Schools' installed software;
- Engage in commercial (private or for-profit) activity, product advertisement, or political lobbying;
- Interfere with the authorized investigation or lawful activities of any person, business, or organization in any manner;
- Violate any local, state or federal statute, or any rule, regulation, or policy of the School.

### **School District Responsibilities**

Niles Community Schools is responsible for the management of the network, equipment and software that the Schools' use to access information technologies for educational purposes. These responsibilities include:

1. Enforcing this Acceptable Use Policy;
2. Selecting resources that support the mission of the school district;
3. Selecting software that the network will support;
4. Defining the rights and responsibilities of technology users;
5. Creation or removal of user's accounts on the network(s);
6. Maintaining network and equipment;
7. Providing training opportunities on the use and application of information technology;
8. Filtering and/or restricting materials not intended within the purposes of the Schools and to maintain compliance with State and Federal Law.

In accordance with its obligations under the Children's Internet Protection Act, NCS has undertaken efforts to educate researchers about appropriate online behavior, including cyber bullying awareness and interactions with individuals on social networking websites.

During classroom activities, it is the responsibility of the classroom educator/teacher/facilitator to supervise researcher Internet use in a manner that is consistent with the educational objectives of the School and this policy.

### **Researcher Responsibilities**

Use of the Internet by researchers must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with the educational objectives of the corporation.

Network etiquette expects that the researcher abide by the following guidelines. These guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Researchers are expected to be courteous and respectful. The use of vulgar, obscene, lewd, and otherwise inappropriate language is prohibited. Researchers shall not engage in cyber bullying.
- While the Internet itself has virtually boundless resources, the availability of local communication and storage resources is limited. Since list servers and mail servers can generate a significant amount of data to be stored, researchers are expected to “clean up” their files or mailboxes at appropriate times so as to not create a storage problem on the host server.
- All communications and materials obtained via the network or the Internet should be assumed to be intellectual property subject to federal copyright law.
- Any attempt to compromise network security is prohibited. Any researcher identifying a possible breach in security must notify a school administrator, teacher or the district’s Technology Director.

If a researcher is uncomfortable or feels harassed, intimidated, or threatened by information or materials that s/he receives over the Internet, s/he should tell a teacher, Team Leader, or other school administrator immediately. Likewise, if a researcher is asked by another Internet user to stop emailing or contacting them, the researcher must stop all contact immediately.

If a researcher inadvertently identifies or is presented inappropriate materials on the Internet while doing legitimate research, the researcher is expected to notify the teacher, Team Leader, or other Schools' administrator.

Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media

### **Laptops and Personal Computing Devices**

Assignment of District-Owned technology [1-to-1] (Care of District Property):

Researchers or their parent/guardian are responsible for the proper care of technology equipment at all times, whether on or off Schools' property, including any costs associated with repairing or replacing the equipment if researcher is deemed negligent of reasonable care. Purchase of optional insurance is recommended.

Checkout of technology for non-classroom use must be in accordance with building and Board Policy (Lending of District-Owned Equipment):  
-Researchers or their parent/guardian are responsible for the proper care of technology equipment at all times, whether on or off Schools' property, including any costs associated with repairing or replacing the equipment if researcher is deemed negligent of reasonable care. Check with your home insurance carrier for applicable coverage.

Use of personal computing devices must be in accordance with Board Policy (Personal Communication Devices):

Additional Guidelines for Use:

- Personal computers and other personal communication devices in use on NCS network are subject to inspection by a teacher or administrator at any time.
- Researchers may only use personal laptops or other personal communication devices in accordance with Schools' Acceptable Use Policy and applicable Board Policy.

Restrictions and Disclaimers

- Schools accept no responsibility or financial liability for personal laptops or other personal communication devices that are brought to school by researchers.
- Personal computers or other personal communication devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged are the responsibility of the researcher and his/her parents/guardians, regardless of how the loss, theft, or damage occurs.
- Researchers are advised to take steps to guard against damage, loss, or theft, including the optional purchase of appropriate insurance.
- Schools' technology department will not provide technical support for any personal laptop or other personal communication device.
- Finally, researcher and his/her parents are responsible for compensating the Niles Community Schools for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school district for violations of Board Policies/Administrative Guidelines and school rules while the researcher is using Schools' technology network, equipment or software, including the cost of investigating such violations. The school district assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a researcher while using equipment or 3rd-party Computer Services. The researcher and his/her parents/guardians are similarly

responsible if the researcher takes any action with network, equipment or software that has the purpose or effect of voiding any warranty in effect covering such equipment or of providing researchers access to software that are available other than at the software source authorized for use by the school.

### **Consequences of Inappropriate Use of Technology, Computer(s) and the Network**

- The building administrator will determine inappropriate use based on this Acceptable Use Policy. Their decision is final. The building administrator may close an account at any time.
- Any person who does not comply with the Acceptability Use Policy may lose or have restricted privileges of use. Repeated or severe infractions of the policy may result in permanent termination of privileges.
- Users violating any of these rights and responsibilities may face additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate in keeping with policies as stated in the researcher code of conduct, researcher handbook or policies of The Board of Education.

For further information on this topic, please see our website at [www.nilesschools.org](http://www.nilesschools.org). Click on the INFO tab and click on the HANDBOOK link.

## APPENDIX B

### NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BULLYING DEFINITIONS AND NEOLA POLICY

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

**“Aggressive behavior”** is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student’s educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

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

**“Bullying”** is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying (i.e., any electronic communication, including, but not limited to electronically transmitted acts such as internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

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

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

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

**“Harassment”** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

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

**“Staff”** includes all school employees and Board members.

**“Third Parties”** include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:  
Harassment, see Policy 5517;  
Hazing, see Policy 5516.

For additional information, please refer to board policy 5517.

If you feel that you have been the victim of bullying, you have an avenue of protection. Please contact either a staff member or the Principal.

For further information on this topic, please see our website at [www.nilesschools.org](http://www.nilesschools.org). Click on the INFO tab and click on the HANDBOOK link.

## APPENDIX C

### NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES NEOLA POLICY

Students may use personal communication devices (PCDs) before and after school and between classes as long as they do not create a distraction, disruption or otherwise interfere with the educational environment, during after school activities (e.g., extra-curricular activities) and/or at school-related functions. Use of PCDs, except those approved by a teacher or administrator, at any other time is prohibited and they must be powered completely off (i.e., not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight.

For purposes of this policy, "personal communication device" includes computers, tablets (e.g., iPads and similar devices), electronic readers ("e-readers"; e.g., Kindles and similar devices), cell phones (e.g., mobile/cellular telephones, smartphones (e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Android devices, Windows Mobile devices, etc.)), telephone paging devices (e.g., beepers or pagers), and/or other web-enabled devices of any type. Students may not use PCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.

Students may use PCDs while riding to and from school on a school bus or other Board-provided vehicles or on a school bus or Board-provided vehicle during school-sponsored activities, at the discretion of the bus driver, classroom teacher and/or sponsor/advisor/coach. Distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated.

Also, during after school activities, PCDs shall be powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight when directed by the administrator or sponsor.

Under certain circumstances, a student may keep his/her PCD "On" with prior approval from the building principal.

Except as authorized by a teacher, administrator or IEP team, students are prohibited from using PCDs during the school day, including while off-campus on a field trip, to capture, record and/or transmit the words or sounds (i.e., audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person. Using a PCD to capture, record and/or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without proper consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted.

Students who violate this provision and/or use a PCD to violate the privacy rights of another person shall have their PCD confiscated and held until a parent/guardian picks it up, and may be directed to delete the

audio and/or picture/video file while the parent/guardian is present. If the violation involves potentially illegal activity the confiscated-PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement.

PCDs, including but not limited to those with cameras, may not be activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include, but are not limited to, classrooms, gymnasiums, locker rooms, shower facilities, rest/bathrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The Superintendent and building principals are authorized to determine other specific locations and situations where use of a PCD is absolutely prohibited.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property.

Students may not use a PCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. See Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior. In particular, students are prohibited from using PCDs to: (1) transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive, or sexually explicit or that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based upon their race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or political beliefs; and (2) engage in "sexting" - i.e., sending, receiving, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form. Violation of these prohibitions shall result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, such actions will be reported to local law enforcement and child services as required by law.

Students are also prohibited from using a PCD to capture, record, and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using PCDs to receive such information.

Possession of a PCD by a student at school during school hours is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise abuses this privilege.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD. The building principal will also refer the matter to law enforcement or child services if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g., child pornography, sexting). Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the

number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the PCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed, unless the violation involves potentially illegal activity in which case the PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement. A confiscated device will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the building's central office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian or turned-over to law enforcement. School officials will not search or otherwise tamper with PCDs in District custody unless they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of the law or other school rules. Any search will be conducted in accordance with Policy **5771** – Search and Seizure. If multiple offenses occur, a student may lose his/her privilege to bring a PCD to school for a designated length of time or on a permanent basis.

A person who discovers a student using a PCD in violation of this policy is required to report the violation to the building principal.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their PCDs. The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse or unauthorized use of, PCDs brought onto its property.

Parents/Guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.

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Revised 6/21/10

Revised 1/28/13

Revised 8/4/14

For further information on the topics listed below, please see our website at [www.nilesschools.org](http://www.nilesschools.org). Click on the INFO tab and click on the HANDBOOK link:

Attendance  
Bus Conduct  
Bus Transportation to School  
Code of Conduct  
Control of Casual-Contact Communicable Disease and Pests  
Control of Noncasual-Contact Communicable Diseases  
Discipline  
Due Process Rights  
Early Dismissal  
Emergency Closings and Delays  
Enrolling in the School  
Equal Education Opportunity  
Evacuation Drills  
Field Trips  
Fire, Lock Down and Tornado Drills  
Grades  
Graduation Requirements  
Homebound Instruction  
Immunizations  
Individuals with Disabilities  
Injury and Illness  
Limited English Proficiency  
Non-school-Sponsored Clubs and Activities  
Parent Involvement  
Penalties for Infractions  
Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards  
Review of Instructional Materials and Activities  
Scheduling and Assignment  
School-Sponsored Clubs and Activities  
Search and Seizure  
Researcher Assessment  
Researcher Discipline Code  
Researcher Records  
Researcher Rights of Expression  
Transfer Out of the District  
Unusual Situations  
Videotapes on School Buses  
Withdrawal from School