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BLANCHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL
955 CHERRY STREET
BLANCHESTER, OHIO 45107
Office: (937) 783-3642
Fax: (937) 783-3477
URL: www.blan.org

MIDDLE SCHOOL HOURS
Student School Day 7:45 a.m. to 2:38 p.m.
Office Hours 7:10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



HOME OF THE WILDCATS

Important Information to Remember

Passwords, locker combinations, and other information contained in this agenda are strictly confidential and should not be shared with other students. This is a place in which you may record the information if you are unable to remember it. Please be advised that anyone who has access to this agenda will have your information. Write information at your own risk.

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Locker #: _____ Locker Combination: _____-_____-_____

Bus#(AM)_____ Bus#(PM)_____ Student ID#: _____

About This Agenda Book

Each student has been issued a student agenda book. This handbook was purchased with school funds and is the property of the school and may be searched at any time. It is mandatory that each student carries his/her own book at all times and maintains it in good condition. Students who lose their book, or have it damaged or stolen, will be required to pay a replacement fee of \$2 and may have to wait to receive their replacement.

BLANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION GUIDING PRINCIPLE

As a Board, we will work as a team with professionalism, honesty, integrity, and respect for one another, staff, and community to achieve our goals and promote policies/practices that contribute to the educational welfare of all students.

BLANCHESTER LOCAL SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Blanchester Local School District to provide a safe, student-centered, stimulating environment where each student has the support and opportunity to achieve and exceed high standards and expectations.

BLANCHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL GOALS

We pledge to do our best to meet the student's educational, social, and emotional needs while at school. Our goal is to provide the student with the best educational program possible in a safe environment.

Family involvement in our school is critical to the continued success of your child and our school district. We invite you to visit the school and attend extracurricular activities. We encourage you to talk with our staff and work with us as a team to improve our services. We will make every effort to keep you informed of your child's progress, but if you have concerns or questions, do not hesitate to share them with us. The staff at Blanchester Middle School will be happy to work with you, but remember, as a parent, you are the most important person in your child's life.

BUILDING-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will have their planner with them and signed by a teacher when leaving the classroom
 - a. Emergencies will be handled at the teachers discretion
 - b. Students may use 2 passes per day. Students may not share their agenda.
2. Students will show respect to one another by: Keeping their hands and feet to themselves
 - a. Using positive language
 - b. Following hallway, cafeteria, restroom, and grade level expectations
3. Students will be prepared for each class with required materials
 - a. Students may use lockers before homeroom, before and after lunch, and the end of the day
4. Students will keep all electronic devices (phones, iPods, etc...) turned off and in the locker during school hours.
5. Students will keep a lock on their locker at all times and not share their combinations with other students.

GRADE LEVEL BUILDING EXPECTATIONS

- 6th grade:**
1. Students will raise their hand to leave their seat.
 2. Students will keep their hands and objects to themselves.
 3. Students will use respectful language towards their peers and building staff.
 4. Students will enter the classroom and sit down in their assigned seat.
 5. Students will come to class with all needed supplies.
- 7th grade:**
1. Students will remain in their seats unless permission is given by the teacher to get up.
 2. Students will raise their hand to contribute to classroom conversation or ask a question.
 3. Students will work on and complete classroom and homework assignments as instructed by teacher.
 4. Students will keep their hands to themselves at all times.
 5. Students will sit down when they come in the classroom and be prepared for class (pencils,paper,books,etc)
- 8th grade:**
1. Students will be in class before the bell rings
 2. Students will not have phones in class.
 3. Students will not have fidget toys in class.
 4. Students will be prepared for class daily. This includes pencils, paper, notebook/binder.

DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS

MINOR INFRACTIONS:

Verbal warning
Lunch detention
Office referral after three lunch detentions issued.

MAJOR INFRACTIONS:

Teacher will call home. Student referred to the office where progressive discipline is issued.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All students have a right to an education. That right carries with it responsibilities, primarily to respect the rights of others. The staff expects students to arrive at school prepared to learn. It is the student's responsibility to arrive on time and be prepared to participate in the educational program.

One of the goals of our school is to provide a safe and orderly environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with the words "safe" and "orderly." The code of conduct within this handbook was adopted by the Blanchester Board of Education. It describes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary actions.

By law, Blanchester's administrators and staff are granted the responsibility of "in loco parentis." Blanchester's administrators and staff have the right to expect respect, cooperation and consideration of their students at all times. Students are considered under the jurisdiction of the school while on school property, on buses, or at any school sponsored activities, away sporting events, contest, trips, etc.

Freedom carries not only rights but also responsibilities for all concerned. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, he/she must notify any staff person immediately. The building is equipped with security cameras that record voice and video twenty-four hours a day. This video can be used for disciplinary action.

(Ohio Revised Code 5104.38; Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JF, JFC & JFG-R).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Code of Conduct. The code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action.

The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms that set forth expectations prohibiting certain types of student conduct either:

1. On the school ground, during, before, or after school.
2. On the school grounds at any time when the school is being used by a group or organization.
3. Off the school grounds, if on a school bus or at a school activity, function, or event.

A student found to be in violation of any of these rules may be suspended for a period up to ten (10) days and/or be expelled for duration of up to eighty (80) days. It shall be the decision of the proper school administrator, after carefully weighing the facts and the circumstances pertaining to an incident of misconduct, to use corrective measures that are most appropriate.

Disciplinary action will generally be progressive in nature; if an infraction or similar infraction reoccurs, a more severe penalty will be enforced. The administration may repeat and/or omit steps in the process as it relates to specific circumstances as determined by their professional opinion, as to what is fair, consistent and will result in changed behavior or removal.

(Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JFC).

1. Disruption of School - A student shall not by his/her actions, dress, or appearance disrupt the normal operation of the school. The student shall not engage in any act that may be harmful to the health, welfare and safety of him/her and others.

2. Electronic Devices – Cellular phones, cameras, camera phones, electronic games, and/or other small electronic devices must be stored in students' lockers (which are to be locked) during the school day. They may not be carried to class in a pocket, purse, and/or

other carrying apparatus. Items not properly stored will be confiscated and disciplinary action will be taken. Confiscated items must be picked up by a parent/guardian. These items can be confiscated for the amount of time the administrator deems appropriate, which may be until the end of the school year. At the end of the school year items not picked up will be discarded. **Students are encouraged to leave these items at home, however if a student feels he/she needs these items before or after school, they must be properly stored as indicated above. Blanchester Middle School is not responsible for students' personal items that are lost, misplaced, and/or stolen.*

3. Vandalism and/or Destruction - At no time shall students cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or to private property on school grounds. This includes any student(s) that knowingly change the normal operation of his/her locker and/or other school equipment.

4. Physical Violence – No student shall fight, cause harm or threaten to cause harm to another person. Physical violence, threats of physical violence, and/or the provocation of physical violence cannot and will not be tolerated. Even if it is the first offense it will receive severe disciplinary action. Differences and disagreements should be worked out through mediation services available. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or cause for civil action.

5. Hazing, Bullying & Harassment – In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

***An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even in they involve the same people.

***Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumor, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. **Stopbullying.gov** students who have experienced such actions against them need to report the incident on a “Peer Mistreatment Form” in the office.

6. Dangerous Objects - No student shall bring, have, give, throw, or hide any dangerous objects, capable of injuring himself/herself or others. Knives, guns, matches, lighters, firecrackers, stones, snowballs and other similar items are included. A weapon includes conventional objects like guns, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon or an object converted from its original use to an object used to threaten or injure another. This includes, but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, chairs, jewelry, and so on. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation.

7. Tobacco - No student shall have in his/her possession or use tobacco on school property. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, and use of any form of tobacco during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. This includes but is not limited to paraphernalia, papers, lighters, and other material associated with tobacco.

8. Drugs, Alcohol, Narcotics & Other Illegal Substances - Students shall not have, use or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, narcotics and drug paraphernalia on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity. This also includes “look-alike”, counterfeit drugs and/or paraphernalia, which includes but is not limited to papers, lighters, and other material associated with drugs, alcohol, narcotics and other illegal substances. If caught, the student could be suspended and recommended for expulsion. Law enforcement officials may be contacted. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies.

9. School Buses/Transportation - A student shall not violate the rules and regulations for student conduct on the school buses.

**See Bus Transportation to School section on page 7 for detailed information.*

10. Profanity - No student shall swear, use profane or vulgar language, gestures and/or written forms of profanity. This includes but is not limited to inappropriate notes, drawings, and or pictures.

11. Insubordination - No student shall refuse to comply with a reasonable request or follow directions of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, principal, assistant principal, or other authorized personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under the authority of school personnel.

12. School Sponsored Activities – No student shall violate the Blanchester Local Schools Code of Conduct while participating in any school sponsored activity, whether on and/or off school grounds. This includes: athletics, band, choir, student council, field trips, and other similar activities.

13. Disrespect - No student shall insult or in any manner abuse verbally, physically or in writing any member of the school staff or student body.

14. Theft - No student shall take or acquire the property of others without consent. When a student is caught stealing the school's property or someone else's property, he/she will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials.

Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value that is not needed for learning to school without prior authorization from the principal. The school is not responsible for personal property.

15. False Alarms - No student shall give a false alarm of fire, bomb, or other emergency. A false emergency alarm or report endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community and the persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt and is against the law.

16. Repeated Tardiness - No students shall be repeatedly tardy to school. It is also to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world of work. A warning will be given after three tardies and five tardies will result in an after school detention in each quarter.

**See Attendance Policy on pages 8-10 for detailed information.*

17. Extortion - No student shall request money or other articles of value with a threat of force. Extortion is against the law.

18. Unauthorized Presence in Hall, Restrooms, & Leaving School Property - Students shall not be in the halls or restrooms during classes without a hall pass, leave a classroom before dismissal or in any location other than to which assigned. No student shall leave school during the school day for any reason without permission from the school office.

19. Arson - No student shall be involved in the unauthorized setting of a fire while on Board of Education property. Arson is a felony.

20. Dress and Grooming - School dress should enhance a positive image of the students and the District and not threaten the health, welfare and safety of the members of the student body. Any form of dress or grooming which attracts undue attention, prompting a disruption of the learning environment or violating the previous statement, is unacceptable.

**See Dress Code Section on pages 6 and 7 for detailed information.*

21. Complicity - No student shall encourage others to violate the Blanchester Local Schools Code of Conduct.

22. Excessive and/or Repeated Display of Affection - No student shall engage in excessive and/or repeated displays of affection in any Blanchester School District building or school sponsored activity. Students demonstrating affection between each other is not meant for public display. This includes: Hanging on to each other, kissing, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature.

23. Repeated Violations - A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with any of the items stated in the disciplinary code.

24. Cheating - Cheating is defined as giving or receiving any information or work meant for individual completion or preparation regardless of the time or place of exchange of information. Violations may result in lowering of one's grades and/or disciplinary action.

25. Falsification or Misstatement of Facts or Other Information - Students shall not forge the writing of another or falsely use the name of another person or falsify times, dates, addresses, or other data on school forms or school-related correspondence.

TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

The Blanchester Board of Education has established the following penalties in accordance with Ohio Law in regard to infractions of the Student Conduct Code:

Verbal Warning	Emergency Removal
Detention	Expulsion
Revocation of Privileges	Permanent Exclusion
Friday Night School	Legal Action
In-School Restriction	Alternate Placement
Suspension	

****If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it cannot be appealed. Should students or parents have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the building administrator.***

HAZING AND BULLYING

(Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

Throughout this policy the term bullying is used in place of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This

behavior is prohibited on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended.

(Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JFCF).

Please refer to student code of conduct #5.

DRESS AND GROOMING

Part of the total education of the students is learning to dress appropriately and behave responsibly in a variety of situations. Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to the school environment and which does not cause disruption to the academic process. Research has shown a correlation between appearance and behavior, especially in the school setting. These regulations will assist parents, students, faculty and administrators in determining appropriate student standards for dress while at school or school-sponsored activities.

1. Parents and students maintain responsibility for students' dress and personal appearance.
2. When dress or grooming interferes with the cleanliness, health, welfare or safety of students, or when dress or grooming disrupts the educational process by being distracting, indecent or inappropriate to the educational process, it is prohibited.
3. Sponsors and teachers of elective programs (such as vocational classes) or elective activities (such as sports and music) may require more strict standards regarding dress and appearance for participants in their program or activity.
4. The principal, with the assistance of the faculty, has the responsibility to uniformly administer the dress code. The decision of the principal is final.
5. As new trends in fashion or dress emerge or become out of date, the District reviews and revises the dress code to reflect the standards of the community. Students shall observe general guidelines for dress and appearance including
 1. no shorts or miniskirts that end above mid-thigh;
 2. no shirts and blouses that expose the midriff;
 3. no tank tops, muscle shirts or halters - boys must wear shirts with sleeves;
 4. hats, coats, bandannas and sunglasses are not to be carried to, or worn in, class;
 5. no clothing or accessories that could be interpreted as promoting hate or communicating a negative, profane or vulgar message;
 6. no clothing or accessories which advertise or are in any way related to alcohol, tobacco, drugs or weapons;
 7. no clothing or accessories with sexual messages – explicit or implied;
 8. no transparent garments, open mesh garments or garments with large open sides may be worn without an undergarment;
 9. shoes must be worn and must not present a safety hazard;
 10. no biking pants or spandex;
 11. hair must be clean and groomed at all times; no extreme or distracting hair color or makeup;
 12. body-piercing adornments are to be worn in the ears only and are not to be extreme or distracting;
 13. lower garments are to be worn at waist level; if a belt is worn, it must be of proper length; undergarments are not to be exposed;
 14. no "dog collars," spiked bracelets or chains that could be dangerous to persons or destructive to school property;
 15. no gang- or cult-related items of any kind;
 16. no cutoffs, tattered clothing or clothing with holes and
 17. no sleepwear/pajamas.

Violation of the dress code can result in removal from class (until the violation can be resolved) and/or disciplinary action.

(Ohio Revised Code 3313.20&3313.665; Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JFCA & JFCA-R).

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

The Board furnishes transportation in compliance with State law. This fact does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the student boards the bus and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Students on a bus are under the authority of, and directly responsible to, the bus driver. The driver has the authority to enforce the established regulations for bus conduct. Disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver is sufficient reason for refusing transportation services or suspending transportation services to any student once proper procedures are followed.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Board furnishes transportation in compliance with state laws. This fact does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the student boards the bus and after the student leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Students on the bus are under the authority of and directly responsible to the bus driver. The driver has the authority to enforce the established regulations for bus conduct. Disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver is sufficient reason for refusing transportation service or suspending transportation services to any student once proper procedures are followed.

The following regulations pertain to school bus conduct are intended to ensure the safety and welfare of the students, the bus driver and the drivers on the road and to ensure safety and proper maintenance of school buses. This applies to transportation to and from school as well as to and from athletic and student activities.

- (1) Pupils shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- (2) Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic their assigned (place of safety).
- (3) Pupils must make eye contact with driver and wait for hand signal.
- (4) Behavior at the school bus stop must not threaten life, limb or property of any individual.
- (5) Pupils must go directly to an available or assigned seat so the bus may safely resume motion.
- (6) Pupils must remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear.
- (7) Pupils must observe classroom conduct and obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
- (8) Pupils must not use profane language.
- (9) Pupils must refrain from eating and drinking on the bus except as required for medical reasons.
- (10) Pupils must not use tobacco on the bus.
- (11) Pupils must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus except for prescription medication required for a student.
- (12) Pupils must not have firearms, ammunition, weapons, explosives or other dangerous materials or objects
- (13) Pupils must not have animals on bus with the exception of those intended for special needs assistance
- (14) Pupils must not throw or pass objects on, from or into the bus.
- (15) Pupils shall remain silent at all railroad crossings.
- (16) Pupils must put away headsets, iPods, cell phones when getting on and off the bus. Cell phones are not permitted to make calls or take pictures when on bus.
- (17) Pupils may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps.
- (18) Pupils must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have parental and Administrative authorization to do otherwise per routes notes signed by office.
- (19) Pupils must not put head or arms out of the bus windows.
- (20) Guidelines will be formulated for the use and storage of equipment and other means of assistance required by preschool and special needs children.
- (21) Drivers and bus aides must have access to appropriate information about the child to the degree that such information might affect safe transportation and medical well-being. This information must be available in the vehicle or readily accessible in the Transportation office. All such information is strictly confidential.

Failure of a student to follow these regulations may result in his/her forfeiting the right of transportation by school bus.

Discipline

- (1) The superintendent or superintendent designees, or principals are authorized to suspend or remove pupils from school bus riding privileges only for a period of up to one school year. The only due process required is notice to the student of an intended bus riding suspension and an opportunity to appear before the administrator considering the suspension before it happens. The administrator's decision is final.
- (2) Suspension or immediate removal of preschool and special needs children may require a modification of the above procedures and shall be accomplished in accordance with the law.

When discipline problems with individual students arise, use the following guideline.

- (1) If possible, the driver should resolve the problem.
- (2) When the driver is unable to resolve the problem, he/she should report it to the transportation supervisor. The Transportation supervisor and driver, if necessary, confer with the principal. Any discipline is imposed by the Principal of the school.

(3) Problems which cannot be resolved by measures specified above are referred to the Superintendent.

(Blanchester local Schools Board of Education Policy JFCC,JFCC-R,EEACC).Re-approval date: October 15,2012
Pupil Transportation Operation and Safety Rules – July 2013 : 3301-83- 08,12,13,20

*Note : Transportation Supervisor - Barb Prater (937)783-3714

Place of safety 3301-83- 13

Each pupil shall be assigned a designated place of safety on the residence side of the roadway on which the vehicle is scheduled to stop. Driver must account for each pupil at designated place of safety before leaving. Pupils are not to proceed to their residence until the school bus has departed.

The purpose of the place of safety is to reduce as much as possible the potential of a student being hit by a school bus while they are in the process of being picked up or dropped off.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular attendance by all students is very important. In many cases, irregular attendance is the major reason for poor school work; therefore, all students are urged to make appointments, do personal errands, etc., outside of school hours.

Reasons for which students may be excused include, but are not limited to:

1. personal illness of the student;
2. illness in the student's family;
3. needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians (applies to students over 14 years of age only);
4. death in the family;
5. quarantine for contagious disease;
6. religious reasons;
7. traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to four days) or
8. as determined by the Superintendent.

Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to make up work missed. Students who are absent from school for reasons not permitted by State law may, or may not, be permitted to make up work. Each case is considered on its merits by the principal and the respective teacher(s). Students are requested to bring a note to school after each absence explaining the reason for the absence or tardiness.

The Board does not believe that students should be excused from school for vacations or other nonemergency trips. The responsibility for such absences resides with the parent(s), and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be retaught by the teacher. If the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts are made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish a hearing and notification procedure for the purpose of denying a student's driving privileges if that student of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse for more than 10 consecutive days or a total of at least 15 days during a semester or term.

The goal of the District is that no student should miss any days of school without legitimate excuse. A significant correlation exists between school attendance and academic lifelong success.

Attendance Guidelines

1. The attendance policy will cover each semester that the student is enrolled.
2. Each student will be permitted a maximum of 60 hours of absence per school year without independent verification; i.e., doctor excuse, etc.
3. Every five instances of tardiness will count as an unexcused absence. Absences of less than one hour are considered tardy.
4. Every two instances of half-day absence will count as an unexcused absence; a half-day absence is considered as missing one or more hours in one school day without legitimate excuse.

5. Until a child accumulates 60 hours of absence in a school year, a note or a phone call from the parent or guardian will excuse the absence for one of the reasons listed below. If a note or phone call is not provided to the school by the parent or guardian within 48 hours of the child's return to school, the absence will be unexcused.

Legitimate Excusable Absences

After a student has accumulated 60 hours (excused or unexcused) in a school year, absences will only be excused under the following circumstances:

1. Short-Term Personal Illness:

For a child who has been absent for 60 hours in a school year, any further absence for personal illness will require a doctor's excuse. The doctor's excuse must be signed by the doctor and indicate that the student was seen by the doctor personally and state the reason for the student's inability to attend school. Any absence greater than 60 hours in a school year not accompanied by a doctor's excuse as described above will be unexcused. A doctor's excuse must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the child's return to school or the absence will be unexcused. If an excuse is not accepted by the school, the original will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., excuse not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, excuse not written by a doctor, etc. A copy of the refused excuse will be maintained in the student's file.

2. Long-Term Personal Illness:

If the child suffers a long-term illness requiring extended absence from school, a doctor's excuse must be provided to the school every 92 hours. The doctor's excuse must indicate that the child was seen personally by the doctor, the reason for the child's continued inability to attend school and provided to the school dates which are to be excused. A doctor's excuse must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the child's return to school or the absence will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., excuse not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, excuse not written by a doctor, etc. A copy of the refused excuse will be maintained in the student's file.

3. Illness or Injury in the Family:

Independent verification by a physician explaining the nature or severity of the illness or injury to the family member requiring the student to be absent will be required within 48 hours of the student's return to school. If verification is not accepted by the school, a copy of the document(s) and the original(s) will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., verification not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, verification not from a physician, etc. A copy of the refused document(s) will be maintained in the student's file.

4. Quarantine of the Home:

Absences will only be excused for the length of quarantine as fixed by health officials. Verification from relevant health officials explaining the nature and length of the quarantine must be submitted within 48 hours of the student's return to school. If verification is not accepted by the school, a copy of the document(s) and the original(s) will be returned to the student with a notation as to why it was refused, e.g., verification not provided within 48 hours of the student's return to school, verification not from appropriate health officials, etc. A copy of the refused document(s) will be maintained in the student's file.

5. Death in the Family:

Three days absence will be permitted, unless a parent or guardian offers a reasonable explanation that more school absences are necessary. The parent or guardian may provide a note to the school to advise the school of the absence; however, under certain circumstances, the school may require additional documentation to confirm the student's absence was legitimate.

6. Observance of Religious Holidays:

Any child shall be excused if his/her absence was for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her truly held beliefs, and the parent or guardian has notified the school in writing at least 48 hours prior to the absence.

7. College Visits, Job Interviews, Job Shadowing, Armed Services Test, Professional Appointments:

The total of these absences may not exceed three days without the specific approval of the principal or the Superintendent. Students with excessive absences (five or more days in a quarter) may have such absences denied. The absence must receive prior approval by the school and verification of the student's attendance at the activity must be provided to the school within 48 hours of the student's return to be excused.

8. Other:

The Superintendent or the principal MUST grant approval and all requests should be submitted in writing at least 48 hours in advance.

Unexcused Absences – Definitions

Any absence other than those described above.

1. No parent or guardian contact upon the child's return to school.
2. School suspension, expulsion.
3. Failure to provide documentation of any excusable absence listed above.
4. Five instances of tardiness will count as an unexcused absence.
5. Two instances of half-day will count as an unexcused absence.

Absence Notification Procedures

1. Immediate Notification: As a result of the Missing Child Act, a student's parent/guardian is required to contact the school office between 8:00 and 11:00 on the day of the absence.
2. If the school does not hear from the parent/guardian, school officials are obligated to attempt to make contact with parent/guardian to verify the absence. We will attempt to contact you by phone.
3. A reported absence may still be determined to be unexcused according to the absence policy as outlined above.
4. Ways of Reporting Absences: Absences will be considered reported if either:
 - A. a parent or guardian calls the school the day of the absence and provides the reason for the absence;
 - B. a parent or guardian writes a note or provides other required documentation to the school, listing the day(s) missed and the reason for the absence(s) or
 - C. school officials make contact with a parent or guardian and receive satisfactory explanation for the absence(s).

TRUANCY

It is important for every student in Ohio to attend school every day. Missing too much school has long-term, negative effects on students, such as lower achievement and graduation rates. There are many reasons students miss school, but districts often can directly impact their students' attendance. By using data to identify and support students who may need extra support and services, districts can target supports to get students to school every day.

In December 2016, the Ohio General Assembly passed [House Bill 410](#) to encourage and support a preventative approach to excessive absences and truancy. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, several changes take effect. Schools cannot suspend or expel students for missing too much school. Districts will amend or adopt policies that outline their interventions and plans for students who miss too much school.

Regular school attendance is an important ingredient in students' academic success. Excessive absences interfere with students' progress in mastering knowledge and skills necessary to graduate from high school prepared for higher education and the workforce. To support academic success for all students, the district will partner with students and their families to identify and reduce barriers to regular school attendance. The district will utilize a continuum of strategies to reduce student absence including, but not limited to:

- Notification of student absence to the parent or guardian;
- Development and implementation of an absence intervention plan, which may include supportive services for students and families;
- Counseling;
- Parent education and parenting programs;
- Mediation
- Intervention programs available through juvenile authorities; and
- Referral for truancy, if applicable.

Updated district policies and procedures should reflect the following changes.

DEFINITION OF TRUANCY AND EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

1. 'Chronic truant' is removed from the law;
2. Definition of 'habitual truant' changed from days to hours. The new definition is:
 - a. Absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse;
 - b. Absent 42 or more hours in one school month without a legitimate excuse;
 - c. Absent 72 or more hours in one school year without a legitimate excuse.
3. Includes 'excessive absences':
 - a. Absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse;

b. Absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse.

Regarding "chronic truants," if the parent fails to get the child to attend school and the child is considered a "chronic truant," the Board must file a complaint in the juvenile court jointly against the child and the parent. The complaint must state that the child is a "delinquent child" by virtue of being a "chronic truant" and that the parent has violated the School Attendance Law.

The Board directs the administration to develop intervention strategies that may include the following:

1. providing a truancy intervention program for a habitual truant;
2. providing counseling for a habitual truant;
3. requesting or requiring a parent having control of a habitual truant to attend parental involvement programs;
4. requesting or requiring a parent of a habitual truant to attend truancy prevention mediation programs;
5. notification to the registrar of motor vehicles or
6. taking appropriate legal action.

(Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JED; JED-R-2; JEDA)

General Information

MAKE UP WORK

All assignments and class work missed due to an excused and or unexcused absence must be completed within one day longer than the time the student is out of school. An unexcused absence as a result of suspension will result in a grade of 'F'. 'F' in grades 6-8 is 64% or the attained grade if below 64%. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher for make up work. Work not made up will result in a grade of "0".

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the District to maintain extensive educational and personal information. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to student's parent(s) or the student in compliance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

(Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JO)

MEDICATION

Dispensing of medication to students by school personnel is discouraged, however if it is absolutely necessary for medication to be given during school hours please contact the school nurse, Mrs. Linda Falgner (937) 783-2461 ext. 4118 to get paperwork that must be completed by a physician before any medication can be dispensed by school personnel.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedure.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should *request permission from the teacher to go to the office*. The office may call the parent to help determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission. Only contact information and directions provided on the Emergency Medical form will be followed.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

The Blanchester Middle School and local Board of Education encourage parents and other citizens of the district to visit and observe the work of the schools and to learn what the schools are doing.

To assure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings, all visitors to school will report to the school office when entering to receive authorization before visiting elsewhere in the building. To speak to a particular teacher, please call in advance so that the appointment can be made at a time when the teacher is not in class. Identification in the form of driver's license or State ID is required when picking up a student from school.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Severe weather conditions, mechanical failure or other emergency conditions may at times make it necessary for the superintendent to close school. Our school uses the OneCallNow Notification system. You can register on the middle school website at the family profile section or contact the middle school office. In addition the following station should have information for school closing and/or delay announcements: **T.V.- 5, 9, 12 & 19;** **Radio Stations- WUBE (105.1 FM) & WLW (700 AM)**

STUDENT LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned a locker. One combination lock will be issued for each locker in the middle school. A \$5.00 lock deposit will be required of all students. The \$5.00 will be returned when the lock is returned. Students are not to use any locker other than the one assigned to them. Students are responsible for all items stored in the locker assigned. Make sure all items stored within lockers do not violate the school rules.

Blanchester Middle School cannot accept responsibility for personal items that are misplaced or stolen. Students are expected to keep their locker in a clean and sanitary manner. Locker upkeep is the responsibility of the student, and the student may be fined for any damage done to lockers. All locker problems are to be reported to the office. Any student that knowingly changes the normal operation of his/her locker will have disciplinary action taken against them. Student's hall locker and gym/athletic locker should be cleared of all items at the end of the school year. Summer maintenance starts immediately after school is over, and your items may be disposed of at that time.

Lockers are the property of Blanchester Local Schools and are subject to search at anytime (*Ohio Revised Code 3313.20; Blanchester Local Schools Board of Education Policy JFG & JFG-R*).

GRADES

Blanchester Middle School has a standard grading procedure, as well as additional notations that may indicate work in progress or incomplete work. The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, homework, projects and class participation. Each teacher may place a different emphasis on these areas in determining a grade and will so inform the students at the beginning of the course. If a student is not sure how his/her grade will be determined, he/she should ask the teacher.

The school uses the following grading system: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59; I=Incomplete.

HONOR ROLLS

There are two honor rolls:

1. Star Honor Roll – The student has earned all A's.
2. Honor Roll – The student has earned all A's & B's.

**The middle school does NOT use GPA calculations for determining Honor Rolls.*

SCHOOL COLORS

NAVY BLUE & WHITE

ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

SOUTHERN BUCKEYE ATHLETIC/ACADEMIC CONFERENCE(S.B.A.A.C.)

TEAM NAME

WILDCATS

ALMA MATER

For the love of old Blanchester
Seen now shining in mine eyes
Where in she will stay forever
All our memories crystallized

Happy days within thy shadow
Friends and comrades we have won
Still thy sons and daughters love thee
For all things that you have done

SCHOOL SONG

On Blanchester,
On Blanchester,
Plunge into this game.
Run the ball, clear down the field for a
touchdown to our name.
Rah, Rah, Rah.
On Blanchester,
On Blanchester,
Fight for our new fame - Fight fellows
fight and we will win this game!