

# Columbus Middle School

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Parent/Student Handbook 2024-2025

415 N 3rd St  
Columbus, MT 59019  
406-322-5375

Website: [www.columbuscougars.com](http://www.columbuscougars.com)

*"BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME"*



**Welcome to Columbus Middle School**

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# Columbus School District

# **Columbus Middle School**

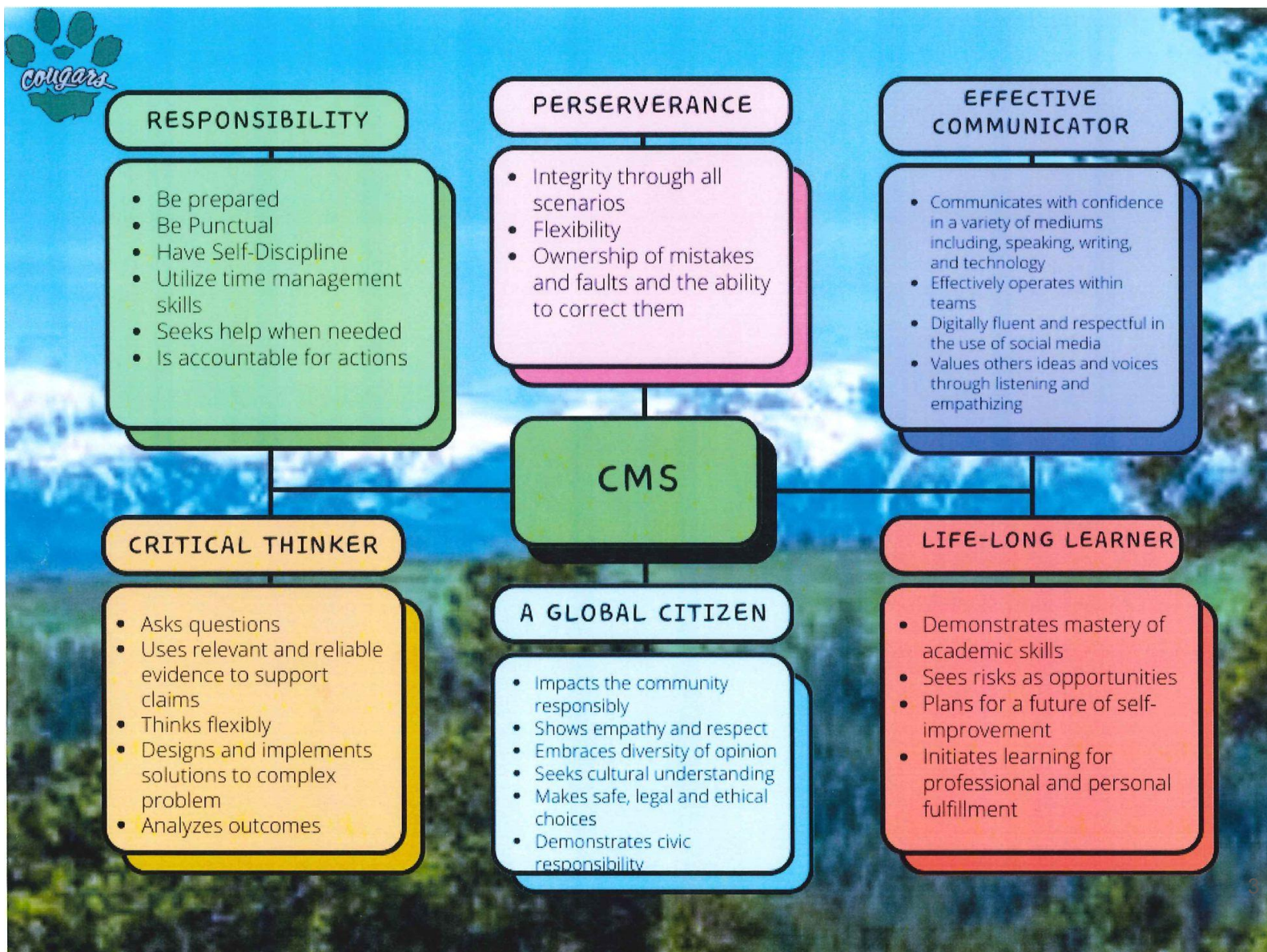
## Columbus Middle School Mission Statement

The mission of Columbus Middle School is to equip students with the skills to develop their talents and become productive, responsible citizens.

### Learner Outcomes

CMS will develop students who:

1. Communicate effectively
2. Gather, process and use information to creatively solve problems and make decisions
3. Show initiative while working cooperatively as well as independently
4. Appreciate our American culture and recognize the worth of other cultures
5. Demonstrate standards of responsible conduct
6. Utilize technology
7. Employ skills of self-directed learning
8. Incorporate knowledge into career and life planning





# Columbus Middle School Staff

2024-2025

## Administrative Staff

Casey Klasna  
Joseph Morse  
Brittney Blaylock

Superintendent  
Principal  
Secretary

## Teachers

Jill Buechler  
Lindsey Cross  
Kiley Frank  
Jaime Holbert  
Danen Johannes  
Anna Killebrew  
Christi Longin  
Lorie Martinez  
Shannon Meier  
Daniel Miller  
Beth Price  
Michael Robinson  
Cade Schultze  
Lakota Stahl  
Amanda Zachary

Science 7th/8th  
Math 7th/8th & MS Counselor  
Special Education  
ELA 8th/ Soc Stud 6th  
Soc Stud 8th/ P.E. 7th  
Art 6th  
ELA 7th/ Soc Stud 7th  
Family Consumer Science 7th  
ELA 6th/ Extension 6,7,8th  
Industrial Arts 8th  
Librarian/ Keyboarding/Spanish  
P.E. / Health  
6,7,8th Band  
Math 7th/ Algebra I  
Math & Science 6th/ Extension 7th

## Middle School Club Sponsors

Jaime Holbert  
Kelly Ault  
Danen Johannes  
Lindsey Cross

Honor Society  
Student Council  
Builders Club  
Math Counts & Academic Olympics

## PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF COLUMBUS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Attending Columbus Middle School is both an honor and a privilege made possible by the taxation of property in the community. Because parents and other people in the community pay these taxes, students are obligated to the people, as they are to themselves, to gain as much useful knowledge and experience as it is possible to obtain utilizing their talents and abilities. (Reference: SBP 2000)

The District shall provide an equal opportunity for all students to receive an education, which will enable each to fulfill their optimum role in society, commensurate with individual ability in compliance with legal requirements and reflecting the desires of the community.

The instructional programs, methods and resources shall meet the needs of each individual student, regardless of race, color, creed, sex or level of ability. The District recognizes that equal opportunity education does not imply uniformity and that each student's unique characteristics must be acknowledged.

The instructional programs, methods and materials shall not imply, teach or encourage any beliefs or practices reflecting bias or discrimination toward other individuals or groups and shall not deny others their basic human rights.

The District will strive to develop and implement programs that provide students with those skills, knowledge and attitudes that:

1. Are fundamental to present and future learning in all walks of life.
2. Help the student to solve problems and think more productively.
3. Help the student to relate with other people effectively.
4. Promote the student to attain and maintain physical and mental fitness.
5. Help the student to understand and appreciate other people, how they live and how their lifestyles may impact his/her present and future life.
6. Help the student become prepared for the world of work.
7. Assist the student to adapt to technological change and its impact on his/her present and future life.
8. Enable the student to use free time in a self-satisfying manner.
9. Assist the student to understand how beliefs and values guide one's actions.

## Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

### Notice for Directory Information

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Columbus School District #6, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Columbus School District #6 may disclose appropriately designed "directory information" without written consent unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Columbus School District #6 to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories names, addresses and telephone listings unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Columbus School District #6 receives assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). If you do not want Columbus School District #6 to disclose directory information to your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing.

Columbus School District #6 had designated the following information as directory information: [Note: The Columbus School District #6 may, but does not have to include all the information listed below.]

- Student's name
  - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
  - Address
  - Telephone listing
  - Weight and height of members of athletic teams
  - Electronic mail address
  - Photograph
  - Degrees, honors, and awards received
  - Date and place of birth
  - Major field of study
  - Dates of attendance
  - Grade level
  - The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Footnotes:

1.) These laws are: Section 9528 of the (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 7908) , as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.



## Columbus Middle School Course Offerings

Highlighted Courses are Core Classes for each year of Middle School

Grade Level	Course	Course Length
6-8	English Language Arts	Full Year
6-8	Math	Full Year
6-8	Science	Full Year
6-8	Social Studies	Full Year
6-8	Physical Education/Health	Full Year
6-8	Band	Full Year
6 & 8	Art	1 semester
6	Keyboarding	1 Semester
7	Foreign Language	1 Semester
7	Family Consumer Science	1 Semester
8	Vo. Ag	1 Semester
6-8	Exploratory Classes	1 Quarter
6-8	Study Skills *This class is open ONLY to those students currently on an IEP	Full Year

### COLUMBUS MIDDLE SCHOOL CREDIT SYSTEM

The educational foundation students build during the middle school years is the basis for their success in high school and life afterward. Every effort is made to encourage and assist students in their academic growth. The Columbus Middle School staff acknowledges students' attaining knowledge necessary to progress to the next grade level. A minimum of 16 credits is required to be promoted to High School. Each course must be passed in order to receive credit. Students not meeting credit requirements will be required to take summer school to recover credits.

#### Credit System for 3 Years at CMS (must pass these courses with 60% or higher)

- 3 ELA
- 3 Mathematics
- 3 Science
- 3 Social Studies
- 2 PE/Health
- 2 Vocational Electives - VoAg, FCS, Spanish, Art, Band



### BUILDING HOURS

Building hours are 8:00 - 4:00. Students are not to be in the building before 8:05 or after 3:48, unless scheduled to meet with a teacher. Students have access to the cafeteria for breakfast beginning at 7:45 each morning.

### CMS DAILY SCHEDULE

First Bell	8:05
Homeroom	8:10-8:23
1st Period	8:26-9:15
2nd Period	9:18-10:07
3rd Period	10:10-10:59
4th Period (Exploratory)	11:02-11:38
Lunch	11:40-12:15
5th Period	12:17-1:06
6th Period	1:09-1:58
7th Period	2:02-2:51
8th Period	2:55-3:44



## ATTENDANCE

In compliance with the *Missing Children Information Act*, the school must make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian by telephone of a student's absence as soon as the absence is noted or by 10:00 AM. In order to assist with this, please notify the school as early as possible (by 9:00 AM) on or before the date of absence.

### Absence Reporting Options

1. Call 406-322-5375
2. Columbus School District App



A letter will be sent home when a student has accumulated five absences, again at eight absences, and again at ten absences. Any student absent ten or more days per semester in any class will be required to attend a conference with his/her parent/guardian and the building principal. If the attendance problem continues, a written letter will be sent to the appropriate authorities notifying them that the child is not attending school on a regular basis.

Tardies are defined as a student arriving up to ten minutes late for school or class. If the student is more than ten minutes late, the tardy changes to an absence. The student is to report to the office to pick up an admit to class if arriving to school after 8:10. Three unexcused tardies in the same class will count the same as one day's absence in calculating class attendance.

The following absences will not count towards the student's 10 allowed absences:

- A. Participation in school activities
  1. Sign-out sheets will be provided - Homework portion needs to be completed per teacher instruction
- B. Family emergency
- C. Acts of God
- D. Students who receive a medical waiver from the administration for an extended or chronic illness
- E. Bereavement

Students who miss assignments due to illness will have two days per day missed to submit make-up work, with a maximum of five days. Tests and quizzes announced before the absence will be taken on the day the student returns to school. (*Reference: SBP 3122*)

## HOMEWORK

Each teacher will inform students of classroom procedures and expectations, curriculum, grading criteria, and homework. In combination of students, parents, and teachers efforts, we believe homework can be a valuable aid in helping students make the most of their experience in school. Homework is useful in reinforcing what has been learned in class, preparing students for upcoming lessons; extending and generalizing concepts, teaching responsibility and helping students develop positive study habits.

At CMS, homework for students who use their class time efficiently should not exceed fifteen minutes per class. Students having difficulty with the length of assignment should contact the classroom teacher.

All students are provided with a planner at the beginning of each school year, students struggling with homework are strongly encouraged to use their planners as an organizational tool.

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The promotion policy at Columbus Middle School states that all students meet the same standards in order to earn a promotion to the next grade level. Students in grades six through eight are either promoted or retained in grade level each year. Students who fail two or more core subjects for the year may be retained, unless they perform at proficient levels on district-administered standardized tests or show sufficient growth on the pre-post assessment. In some situations, special education students may be excluded from these standards. Special Education students are promoted on the basis of standards set forth in the students' Individualized Educational Program (I.E.P). The meeting of these standards will be the basis upon which promotion/retention decisions are to be made at Columbus Middle School.

### 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE RECOGNITION

Eighth Grade Recognition will be scheduled for the last Thursday of the school year, at 5:00 PM. Recognition does not signify the completion of the eighth grade year, and students are required by law to complete the remainder of the school term or credit recovery as assigned. Authority to deny any 8<sup>th</sup> grade student from participating in eighth grade recognition is vested in the principal. Denying a student's participation could be based on grades, attendance, and/or disciplinary actions taken within the school year.

### Missing/Late Work Policy

Turning work in on time is an important responsibility here at CMS. We value parent involvement and its importance in helping students learn positive habits for future success. Students and staff will contact and communicate with parents when missing and incomplete work begins to impact a student's performance and learning.

**Consequences shall include but are not limited to:**

1. At a teacher's discretion, each day that an assignment is missing the value can be reduced by 10% up to 50% and may be changed to a zero and no credit given after the predetermined time frame stated by each teacher has been passed, or the quarter has ended.
2. Detention - Lunch, before, or after school

The student is still responsible for the knowledge content of that assignment even though they will not receive credit.

### Learning Problems or Other Challenges:

Programs for students with disabilities are provided through the Services for Exceptional Children Department. Programs are offered for learning disabled, behavior disordered, speech impaired, hearing impaired, visually impaired, and physically disabled as well as intellectually disabled children. The curriculum offerings for students with disabilities are based on individual learning needs. Courses are selected from the regular curriculum of each school and are adapted according to the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Services for Exceptional Children works in conjunction with the local school to ensure those students with disabilities have an opportunity to develop to their full potential.

### 504 Accommodations

The 504 Committee, composed of parents, teachers, the counselor, other individuals working with the students, and possibly the student, determines whether or not the student is eligible for an accommodation plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a broad Civil Rights Law protecting the rights of children and adults with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

A student may have a disability that does not affect his or her ability to learn, yet requires accommodations from the school to participate in the learning environment. The disability can be mild to severe, temporary or lifelong, obvious or hidden.

The 504 Committee determines if a student is eligible under Section 504. If so, a written 504 Accommodation Plan is developed. It describes the accommodations that are required for the student because of his or her disability. The 504 Plan is reviewed at least annually to determine continued eligibility and to revise the accommodations as needed. 504 Plans do not include any direct instruction, but rather necessary accommodations (such as the use of an elevator after breaking a leg) that the student needs to access the learning environment.

### REPORT OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Reports of student progress (Report Cards) are issued after every nine weeks for all classes in which a student is enrolled. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held once each year. Mid-term progress reports will be sent out mid-quarter. *(Reference: SBP 2420)*

### GRADING SCALE

A+ - 98-100	A - 93-97	A- - 90-92
B+ - 88-89	B - 83-87	B- - 80-82
C+ - 78-79	C - 73-77	C- -70-72
D+ - 68-69	D - 63-67	D- - 60-62
	F - <59	

### INCOMPLETE GRADES

Students must make up incomplete grades by the end of the second week of the new quarter or semester. Failure to do so will result in that grade being recorded on the permanent transcript as a failing grade. *(Reference: SBP 2420)*

### HONOR ROLL

Honor Roll will be calculated quarterly by averaging the numerical value of grades received in all classes.

Honor Roll - 3.33-3.99 average

Principal's Honor Roll - 4.0 average

The values assigned to grades are listed below:

A+ = 4.00	A = 4.0	A- = 4.0
B+ = 3.67	B = 3.33	B- = 3.0
C+ = 2.67	C = 2.33	C- = 2.0
D+ = 1.67	D = 1.33	D- = 1.0

*(Reference: SBP 2112)*

### WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS

A student who is going to withdraw from school must first obtain a checkout form from the office. Teachers must sign this form to show that the student has checked out of that class, and that textbooks and other materials have been returned. The library must also indicate that all books have been returned. The lunchroom must indicate that a student does not owe for charged lunches. Unless all materials are returned and other obligations met for each designated area, the slip will not be signed and all transcripts and other records will remain in the possession of the school. *(Reference SBP 2413: 3110)*

## CLASSROOM, SCHOOL & SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES DISCIPLINE RATIONALE

Columbus Middle School, through the School Board of Trustees, has adopted discipline policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are established to provide a safe educational environment so that all students have an opportunity to learn. Every attempt will be made to implement these policies and procedures consistently; however, the administration reserves the right to alter policies and procedures under special circumstances.

In an effort to establish and maintain an orderly, cooperative and productive learning environment, students are expected to abide by reasonable procedural and behavioral guidelines.

### GENERAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES

Each student is expected to strive to take full advantage of his/her educational opportunities and to do his/her best in all areas of school life. Each student has the right to an education in an orderly, safe, and sanitary atmosphere and is expected to contribute to his/her environment. Compliance with these guidelines of conduct is mandatory. Failure of a student to comply with these responsibilities constitutes an infringement upon the rights of other students. An office referral will be made and a student will fall on the appropriate level of the discipline policy.

1. Respect and work cooperatively with his/her fellow students and school staff.
2. Respond positively and promptly to direction by faculty or staff members.
3. No fighting or other abusive behavior directed toward any student, faculty or staff member.
4. No use of profanity or vulgarity.
5. No possession or use of explosives, dangerous chemicals, or weapons on school property or at a school function.
6. Students will be held financially responsible for any theft, misuse, or damage of personal and school property.
7. No unauthorized entry into or misuse or damage of school property.
8. No use of tobacco on school premises and at school functions. Schools are a tobacco free environment
9. No possession, use, and/or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises, or as part of any school-sponsored activity are strictly prohibited.
10. Avoid disruption, on or off school property, of the educational process or other school functions.
11. No throwing of objects with the potential of causing harm.
12. Refrain from inappropriate displays of affection among students on school grounds or at school sponsored activities.
13. Be respectful of the school environment, neighbors, and town people by depositing trash appropriately in provided trash cans.

Compliance with these guidelines of conduct is mandatory. Failure of a student to comply with these responsibilities constitutes an infringement upon the rights of other students. An office referral will be made and a student will fall on the appropriate level of the discipline policy.

### CLASSROOM/SCHOOL DISCIPLINE LEVELS

Throughout the educational process and at all levels of the discipline process, school officials will make an attempt to keep parents/guardians informed and involved. School and home must work together to help students become responsible young people who know and understand the difference between right and wrong.

**Level I** - are minor infractions that affect the daily educational processes. Level 1 infractions alone cannot be grounds for expulsion. Individual teachers will determine the rules and guidelines for conduct in their own classrooms. These rules will be explained to students during their first day. The teacher will also explain the consequences if the rules are violated.

**Level II** - are deemed more serious in nature resulting in increasing disruption to the educational processes. Level 2 infractions alone or in combination with Level 1 cannot be grounds for expulsion, but may be subject to long-term suspension.

Level III - are those offenses that are more aggressive or threatening in nature and cause concern for the safety of self, students, and staff. After a hearing with the principal, consequences will be out-of-school suspension for not more than 5 days. When the student finishes his/her out-of-school suspension, his/her parents/guardians will be asked to bring the student back to school for a conference with the administrator and teacher in charge of the disciplinary action. The goal of this meeting is to provide the student and his/her parents with an opportunity to jointly develop a course of action to improve the student's behavior and educational experiences in Columbus Public Schools. A fourth infraction at Level 3 will result in long-term suspension and may result in a recommendation for expulsion to the school board.

Level IV - are those offenses that are malicious and defiant in nature where there is an immediate concern for the safety or welfare of self, students, staff and property. Level 4 offenses will result in out-of-school suspension not less than 5 days. When the student finishes his/her out-of-school suspension, his/her parents/guardians will be asked to bring the student back to school for a conference with the administrator and teacher in charge of the disciplinary action. The goal of this meeting is to provide the student and his/her parents with an explanation of the seriousness of the offense and an understanding that a second Level IV offense will result in long-term suspension and may result in a recommendation for expulsion to the school board.

Level V - are extreme and unacceptable offenses resulting in immediate suspension until an expulsion hearing before the school board. "Expulsion" is the exclusion of a student from school by action of the Board of Trustees for not less than the rest of the semester for which the student is presently enrolled. The Board of Trustees may expel a student permanently or for a specific amount of time.

Once the student has reached the maximum consequences at that level of the grid, all additional infractions will be dealt with at the maximum consequence.

If an offense is deemed serious enough by the administration, a recommendation for long-term suspension and/or expulsion may be made regardless of the cumulative points of a student if the offense(s) seriously endangers or threatens students, staff or others, or creates serious disruption to the orderly function of the school.

*In addition to all written policy, students attending Columbus Middle School are subject to and required to follow all State and Federal laws.*

### RECORD OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

To maintain an environment conducive to learning, all disciplinary actions reported to the office will be recorded and tracked with the following system. All students will be subject to the consequences as outlined in this policy. For each disciplinary action, the student will be assessed the appropriate level as indicated on the discipline grid.

1. At the discretion of the principal, Detention, In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) in some cases may be substituted for one or the other depending on the student and circumstances. In an effort to remain fair and consistent, the principal will adhere to the discipline grid in most instances.
  2. During the school year, the principal may review the length of time between offenses and/or level of offenses
  3. At the end of the school year all Level I & Level II discipline's will be dropped from a student's disciplinary record if the student has served all detentions, Saturday detentions, or in-school suspensions with a positive recommendation from supervising personnel. Level III and IV discipline will carry over to the next year. If after three (3) weeks of the following school year, the student remains discipline free, the previous year's disciplinary record will become inactive.
  4. Students entering Columbus Middle School from out of the district may have their discipline records considered and will be placed at the appropriate level for a period of three weeks following enrollment. Students re-entering Columbus Middle School from an expulsion will be placed at the appropriate level.
- Reference: SBP 3300-3330

## DISCIPLINE GRID

### Level I

# of Occurrences		Offense
1st	Detention	Persistent lack of Effort, preparation or participation*
2nd	Detention 1 Hour	
3rd	Half Day ISS	Classroom Disruption
		Inappropriate Behavior
4th	1 Day ISS	Inappropriate Dress
		Parking Lot Violations
5th	2 Days ISS	Rude, Inappropriate Language
6th	3 Days ISS	Inappropriate Materials

\*Teachers will assign after-school or lunchtime detention for the amount of time necessary for the student to complete work or missing assignments. Upon the fourth documented occurrence by the same teacher, the student will be considered a persistent offender and be assigned the appropriate Level I.

### Level II

# of Occurrences		Offense
1st	Detention or 1 Day ISS	Truant
		Disruption of an Assembly
2nd	1 Day ISS	Cheating
3rd	2 Days ISS	Damage to School Property or on School Grounds/Restitution Required
4th	3 Days OSS	Inappropriate Use of Technology
		Disrespect of Staff/Environment
5th	5 Days OSS May result in long-term OSS	Failure to Serve Detention
		Verbal or Physical Peer to Peer Conflict

### Level III

# of Occurrences		Offense
1st	1-3 Days OSS	Fighting
		Fireworks/Endangerment
2nd	3 Days OSS	Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying
		Flagrant, Vulgar, Deliberate Misbehavior
3rd	5 Days OSS	Gross Disrespect of Faculty/Staff
		Theft/Vandalism <\$300, Resolution Required
4th	Long-term OSS w/ Recommend Expulsion	Verbal Assault/ Insubordination

### Level IV

# of Occurrences		Offense
1st	5 Days OSS	Open & Persistent Defiance
2nd	Long-term OSS w/ Recommended Expulsion	False Alarm/Tampering with Fire Protection Systems
		Indecent Exposure
		Felony Theft/Vandalism <\$300/Restitution Required
		Threatening Behavior (Written, Verbal, or Physical)
		Use or Possession of Alcohol during School or Activities (In addition to training rules enforcement)
		Tobacco/Possession or Use (In addition to training rules enforcement)

### Level V

# of Occurrences		Offense
1st	Recommend Expulsion	Possession or Use of Firearms, Dangerous Weapons, or Explosives
		Possession or Use of Illicit or Illegal Drugs (In addition to training rules enforcement) Improper Use of Prescription Drugs
		Physical Assault



## DETENTION

1. Detention may be assigned to students for any violation of classroom and/or school rules.
2. Detention may be served for the purpose of students completing assignments, increasing participation in class activities, and to “catch-up” students who may have missed class for other reasons. The persistent offender will be given an office referral.
3. Detention will be served the day assigned unless other arrangements are made with the teacher or office. Bus students may not be kept after school the day of the infraction unless the parent/guardian has been contacted to arrange for a ride.
4. Failure to serve the detention will be reported to the office and the student will be placed on the appropriate level of the discipline grid.
5. Detention has priority over extracurricular activities.

Students are under the jurisdiction of all school personnel whenever they are on school property or are involved with school activities, including bus transportation to and from school.

## GUIDELINES FOR IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

1. The administrator will make every reasonable attempt to contact the parent or guardian when students are placed on in-school suspension.
2. The student will be strictly and closely supervised.
3. The student is to have no speaking privileges with fellow students.
4. Students placed on in-school suspension will not be counted absent from their regularly scheduled classes. They will be awarded credit for the assigned work they accomplish just as they would if they attended their regular classes provided work is submitted to the teacher that same day. Should their class work involve discussion, debate, or other group work that can be done only in the classroom, it is expected that the teacher will find alternative ways of awarding credit for work missed.

## AUTHORITY TO SUSPEND

The authority to suspend a pupil from school is vested in the principal, administrator or designee and superintendent only. All suspensions greater than five (5) days must be reported to the superintendent.

## SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

A short-term suspension may be imposed for any violation of a school rule. A short-term suspension shall not exceed ten (10) consecutive school days. As soon as possible following the infraction, the principal/administrator will give the student verbal or written notice of the infraction. If the student denies the infraction, the principal/administrator will explain the evidence and give the student an opportunity to present his/her position. The principal/administrator will make an attempt to contact the parent. If requested by the parent/guardian, a meeting with the parent will be scheduled.

## EMERGENCY SUSPENSION

A student may be immediately removed from school if the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or is an ongoing threat to disruption of the academic process.

## LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A long-term suspension is one that exceeds ten (10) consecutive school days in duration and may extend through the balance of the school year. A student with an IEP (Individual Education Plan) may be subject to long-term suspension following a CST/IEP meeting. There are two situations, which may lead to long-term suspension:

1. A series of problems with documented efforts by the school to solve these problems.
2. A situation where there is a single severe violation of student behavior.

The principal/administrator who made the decision to invoke the long-term suspension must notify parents in writing by certified return mail postmarked not later than three (3) school days following the day of the administrative decision to pursue long-term suspension. A copy must be delivered to the student whenever possible.

This notice shall contain a description of the misconduct, proposed length of suspension, names of possible witnesses, date, time, place of hearing, present a defense, cross-examine witnesses and be represented by another person. A statement that non-appearance of the student or his/her representative shall entitle the hearing to be conducted in his/her absence. The hearing may be waived and the proposed disciplinary action imposed if the student and parents furnish the administration with a signed statement to that effect.

A hearing officer will be appointed from the certified administrative staff (different from the one who made the decision to be long-term suspended.) The hearing officer shall ensure that evidence, notices, and due process procedures are followed according to district policies and procedures. Requests for a different hearing officer may be made in writing stating reasons for the objection.

The hearing officer will announce his/her decision and give notice of the decision by certified mail to the student and parent. The record of the long-term suspension hearing may be entered as evidence in an expulsion hearing.

Long-term suspension may be appealed to the Superintendent. This appeal must be made within five (5) days of notification of suspension. If the decision of the Superintendent is that the student did not commit the act(s) or due process was not followed, the student may be reinstated or given a new hearing. The decision of the Superintendent is not subject to appeal.

## APPEALING ACADEMIC & DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS (NON-EXPULSION OR LONG-TERM SUSPENSION)

Student's and/or parents/guardians may appeal disciplinary decisions using an Appeals Form obtained from the principal or superintendent. The process, procedures, and timelines will be strictly adhered to whenever possible. The student must indicate on the Appeals Form whether he/she is requesting a "stay" of disciplinary consequences pending the outcome of the appeals process or will serve consequences as prescribed by the disciplinary grid.

## EXPULSION

Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school for an indefinite period of time. The purpose of expulsion is to protect the educational atmosphere and to provide for the rights and general safety of all persons.

## DUE PROCESS FOR EXPULSION

The power to expel students rests exclusively with the Board of Trustees. The principal/administrator of a school may recommend expulsion of a student by letter to the superintendent and shall contain the following: (1) date suspension began; (2) reasons for expulsion recommendation; and (3) administrator's signature. If the Superintendent concurs, a copy of the administrator's letter will be sent by certified mail to the student and his/her parent, together with a notice, which contains the recommendation to be made to the Board.

The Board hearing on an expulsion will be scheduled no later than the next regularly scheduled school board meeting. Board members may request a special meeting to hear the case notice will be made of the scheduled hearing. The Board, in accordance with Montana law, will conduct the expulsion hearing. Formal rules of evidence are not binding upon the Board's conduct of the hearing. At the expulsion hearing, the Board shall consider solely the question whether to expel the student.

The student/parent/guardian shall be entitled to access of evidence, his/her own records, representation by another person (including legal counsel), comment on evidence, testify, and cross-examine witnesses, obtain a record of long-term suspension hearing and comment on any alleged violation of due process.

The Board will announce its decision and give notice of the decision by certified mail to the student and parent.

After the lapse of the term of expulsion, the student may apply for re-entry to the school by making a written application to the Board through the Superintendent. It is the prerogative of the Board to stipulate appropriate conditions for re-admittance. The application for re-admittance shall contain evidence indicating resolution of the problem, which caused expulsion. The student shall have the burden of establishing such resolution. Any supporting statements from persons other than the parent or student should be included with the application. The Board shall consider each application individually and make an independent determination of whether or not the request will be granted. Re-admittance may occur only at the beginning of a grading period.

Students or parents/guardians have the right to appeal decisions beyond school authority (i.e., County Superintendent of Schools, State Office of Public Instruction, or District Court, whichever applies).

## TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS

In compliance with state and federal legislation, Columbus Schools and properties are tobacco free, use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited. Anti-tobacco policies and education programs will be implemented in accordance with these laws.

## DRUG-FREE AND MEDICAL MARIJUANA-FREE WORKPLACE & PROPERTY

No student, staff member, or member of the public shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use on school property any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and as further defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1300.11 through 1300.15. "Property" includes any school building or any school premises; any school-owned vehicle, or any other school-approved vehicles used to transport students to and from school or school activities; off school property during any school-sponsored activity, event, or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district. Any student(s) determined to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action under the disciplinary grid found on page 8 of this handbook. In addition, any student(s) whose behavior is suspicious, disruptive, or distracting to the classroom may be subject to emergency suspension as defined in this handbook.

## HARASSMENT – INTIMIDATION – BULLYING POLICY

The Columbus Public Schools are committed to a positive and productive working and learning environment free from sexual harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying of its employees or students, whether committed by a coworker, supervisor, subordinate, contractor, volunteer, or student, and finds such behavior just cause for disciplinary action. The District will not tolerate such behavior between members of the same or opposite sex. The District will take prompt, effective and remedial action on complaints, grievances, and reports of sexual harassment or intimidation (including informal reports of inappropriate sexual or gender-directed conduct) which come to the attention of the District. Bullying that results in intimidation as defined under Montana Code Annotated 45-7-303 (2) (b), Assault by knowingly or purposely causing reasonable apprehension of bodily injury as defined under Montana Code Annotated 45-5-201 will be forwarded to the school resource officer.

Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors and other verbal and/or visual contact of a sexual or gender-directed nature; any intimidating hostile or offensive educational environment in which unwelcome sexually-oriented jokes, innuendoes, obscenities, pictures/posters or any action with sexual connotation makes a student feel uncomfortable or any aggressive, harassing behavior in the school that affects learning, whether or not sexual in connotation, directed toward an individual based on their sex. Other conduct of a sexual nature that is prohibited according to Montana or United States law is also prohibited.

To get help if you are concerned about sexual harassment, follow these reporting procedures:

1. Talk to a teacher.
2. Contact the school counselor (Mrs. Cross).
3. Contact the school principal (Mr. Morse).
4. Follow up with any trusted adult

## GUN-FREE SCHOOLS

No individual shall possess any firearm, ammunition, explosives, bombs, or weapons, on the way to and from school, on school property, at school activities, during lunch, intermission or recess. Violation of this provision shall result in discipline up to and including expulsion. Firearms shall include any weapon which is designed or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, ammunition or any explosive, bomb, incendiary, or poison gas.

Law enforcement will be notified of all violations of this policy. This policy in no instance applies to law enforcement officers and other officials provided for in law. Violators may be charged with violating civil and/or criminal law.

Students found in possession of said materials shall be immediately suspended from school pending an expulsion hearing before the school board. Any student subject to expulsion is entitled to a hearing before the school board as described in this handbook.

## SEARCHES

School lockers and desks are the property of the school. District personnel or their authorized representatives may search a student's locker when there is reason to believe that the locker is improperly used to store contraband, a substance or object which is illegal or material that may pose a hazard to the safety and good order of the school. Canine teams may make periodic checks of all lockers. Any student found with contraband will be subject to disciplinary action.

School officials may ask students to remove all items from pockets or other personnel effects if they have reasonable cause to believe that something is concealed that may be of immediate danger to the student or to other students or prohibited contraband materials or substances, Failure to empty pockets as requested may result in school personnel calling parents or law enforcement for assistance.

Vehicle searches, with student permission, may be conducted if school personnel or authorized representatives have reasonable cause to believe that something is concealed that may be of immediate danger to the student or to other students, Failure to comply with the request for a search, school personnel may call parents or law enforcement for assistance. *(Reference: SBP 3230, 3231, and 3232)*

## GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Guidance services are available to every student. The goal of counseling is to help students make better decisions. Together you and your counselor discuss needs and feelings and explore alternatives. Counseling is confidential so don't be afraid to talk with the counselor. It is the professional responsibility of school counselors to fully respect the right to privacy of those with whom they enter counseling relationships. A counseling relationship requires an atmosphere of trust and confidence between client and the counselor. A client has the right to privacy and to expect confidentiality. This confidentiality must not be abridged except where there is a perceived clear and present danger to the client and/or to other persons. Additionally, Montana law mandates school district personnel to report suspected cases of abuse/neglect.

## LUNCH/BREAKFAST

Breakfast : \$2.50

Lunch : \$3.00

A La Carte items are available for an additional cost, prices vary.

*Lunch and milk prices are based on the current cost, but are subject to increase as cost increases.*

### **How to Replenish Lunch Accounts:**

Infinite Campus

Cash or Check to the Office, 1st Period Teacher, or Lunch Attendant

Applications to apply for free/reduced lunch prices are available in the office or on the website.

## LUNCH ROOM

Each student is expected to practice good manners and consideration for others.

1. Middle school students will have a closed campus at lunchtime.
2. Only those students who bring a signed note from their parent or guardian to their Homeroom teacher will be allowed to go home for lunch.
  - a. Notes are only good for one week at a time.
3. Students going home for lunch must sign out in the office, and back in upon return.
4. Students eating in the school cafeteria will leave the table and surrounding area clean and orderly and may not take food out of the lunch room.

*\* Violations of these lunchroom policies may result in disciplinary action.*

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are required by law to be held at regular intervals and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, students promptly obey and clear the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. Students are not permitted to talk during a fire drill and are to remain outside of the building until a signal is given to return inside.

## SEVERE WEATHER - SCHOOL CLOSING

Closures due to severe weather - snow, low temperatures, ice, etc. may be heard over KMXE (99.3 FM) and KGHL (790 AM) in Billings, beginning at 6:00 a.m. We will make every effort to have school for those who can make it. The School App will be updated as well.

## LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office, where the owner may claim them. The lost and found department is in the middle school office. There is also a PE lost and found area in the PE storage room. Articles not claimed by the end of each quarter will be disposed of or given away.

### PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Students required to take prescription medication during the school day shall bring the medication to the office and will take the prescribed amount there. Parents shall provide a written request for the student to take prescription medication during school hours.

### USE OF OFFICE TELEPHONE

Students are allowed to use the office telephone between classes and before and after school only. Students will be called to the office to receive important messages, but will be called to take a phone call only in EXTREME EMERGENCIES.

### FUND RAISING PROJECTS

The Principal must approve all money making projects in advance. Organizations are not permitted to sell goods or operate any concession sales without this approval.

### ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are not optional and everyone is expected to attend except students who are placed on in-school suspension. Students are expected to be courteous and considerate. School-sponsored or student-sponsored assemblies must be arranged in advance with the principal. Regular student discipline is expected.

Parents wishing to excuse their child from an assembly must do so in writing prior to the assembly. The student shall remain in the building in an assigned location.

### USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES

Middle school students are not allowed to drive to school or travel in personal vehicles during the school day without permission from both the parent and the principal.

### BACKPACKS, BOOKS, AND COATS

Backpacks, book bags and coats must be stored in lockers. These items are not allowed in classrooms.

### BAND INSTRUMENTS

Band instruments must be stored in the band room or the rack provided in the CMS lobby before and after band class. Students will not be able to carry them to their classes. If they need to take them to and from school, they need to take them to the designated area before school starts and pick them up after school is dismissed.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

In today's world, social media is an important part of how people communicate. Please do not be discouraged or upset if a teacher/staff member does not "friend" you on Facebook or some other social media source. We encourage teachers/staff to stay in contact with parents through several other web based applications in their professional position. On that same line, if you are upset or have a concern with what is happening at CMS, please talk to the teacher or the administrator before posting on Facebook or other social media sites. We know there will be times when you are upset about things at school but please take the time to discuss them with the teacher or administrator and get all the facts before posting on social media. Our school appreciates your consideration in this matter.

## DRESS CODE

CMS respects their students' right to express themselves in the way they dress. All students should respect the school community by dressing appropriately for the educational environment.

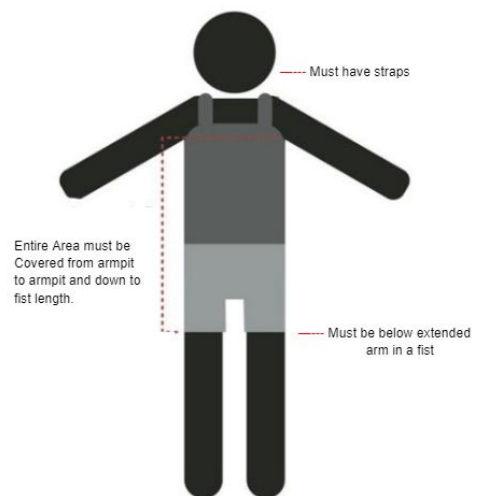
### Minimum Requirements:

1. Clothing must cover from armpit to armpit, down to a shorts level longer than arm extended in a fist. Tops must have straps. Rips or tears in pants must be below shorts level.
2. Shoes must always be worn.
3. See through or mesh garments must be worn with appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
4. Shorts must not be shorter than the hands when in a fist with arms to the side.
5. Baseball caps are not to be worn during the school day, unless specified as a hat day.
6. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.

### Additional Requirements:

1. Clothing may not depict, imply, advertise, or advocate for illegal, violent, or lewd conduct, weapons, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
2. Clothing may not depict or imply pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
3. Clothing may not display or imply vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene language or images.
4. Clothing may not state, imply, or depict hate speech/imagery targeting groups based on ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.
5. Apparel, jewelry, accessories, tattoos, or manner of grooming that by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang that advocates for illegal or disruptive behavior is prohibited.

The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress. Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or the student refuses dress code appropriate clothing.





## EXTRA-CURRICULAR SPORTS

The purpose and intent of the extracurricular program is to provide students with experiences designed to encourage good sportsmanship, responsibility, reliability and good moral character. Participants in these activities are expected to reflect these attitudes. Any action by a participant in any extracurricular program, which detracts from the achievement of these goals, will be considered a violation of training rules and be dealt with accordingly.

Columbus Middle School offers the following sports:

### **7th & 8th Grade**

- Cross-country running, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling and track

### **6th Grade**

- Cross-country running, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling

All practices, and most games, are held after school and on Saturdays. All students are encouraged to participate in one or more activities during the year. A physical exam, student drug testing consent, concussion statement agreement, emergency form, signature page and a participation fee paid, is needed before players can participate.

\*Academics take precedence over participation in extracurricular sports. Coaches will not begin practice or imply/require "suing up" or "dressing out" prior to 3:45 PM. Coaches are encouraged to establish "study groups" between school dismissal and 4:00 PM for the purpose of helping students maintain academic excellence. Students are responsible for seeking assistance from classroom teachers. Coaches will not punish players/participants for being late for practice if the student has written verification that he/she has been receiving academic assistance from a teacher. (*Reference: SBP 2150; 21*)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION / ELIGIBILITY

Columbus Middle School students involved in activities are expected to maintain academic achievement while participating in extracurricular activities offered outside of the regular classroom setting and outside the school day.

### Eligibility

Classroom grades will be checked at the beginning of each season and checked each week during the activity. There will be a four tier system to determine eligibility.

Tier 1: Full Eligibility – An athlete is passing all classes.

Tier 2: Academic Probation – A student/athlete who has one (1) F or more than two (2) D on a grade report.

Tier 3: Academic Limited Participation – A student/athlete who has one (1) F or more than two (2) D on a grade report twice during a season.

Tier 4: Academic Ineligibility – A student/athlete who has one (1) F or more than two (2) D on a grade report on two consecutive grade reports.

Fully Eligible athletes may participate in practices and games with no limitations.

Academic Probation allows athletes to participate in practices and games, however they must attend homework club daily! Athletes will be on this tier for a period of 5 school days. At the end of the 5 days all grades will be checked. If all grades are passing the athlete will be granted Full Eligibility. If the athlete has one (1) F or more than two (2) D's, he/she will be declared Academically Limited Participant.

Academically Limited Participation allows athletes to participate in practices but not in events, however they must attend homework club daily! Athletes will be on this tier for a period of 5 school days. At the end of the 5 days all grades will be checked. If all grades are passing the athlete will be granted Full Eligibility. If the athlete has one (1) F or more than two (2) D's, he/she will be declared Academically Ineligible.

Academically Ineligible athletes are not allowed to participate in practices or events. They must attend homework club daily! Athletes will be on this tier for a period of 5 school days. At the end of the 5 days all grades will be checked. If all grades are passing the athlete will be granted Full Eligibility. If the athlete has one (1) F or more than two (2) D's, he/she will be dismissed from the activity.

## STUDENT / ATHLETE OF THE YEAR CRITERIA

Student / Athletes are to be nominated by the coaches or his/her sport and their teachers. Once nominations are in, all coaches, teachers and principal discuss, then vote on the final awards. Student / Athletes must meet the following criteria in order to be considered for the nomination:

1. Compete in and finish (except in the case of injury) at least three sports during the school year. This can include soccer in the fall and baseball/softball in the spring.
2. Demonstrate athletic ability and achieve a quality performance level within each sport.
3. Be a first-time 8<sup>th</sup> grader and maintain a 3.33 G.P.A. or higher.
4. Demonstrate the qualities of leadership, sportsmanship and citizenship in each sport as well as in the classroom.
5. Participate in other extracurricular activities or clubs.
6. Demonstrate a positive attitude and cooperation with coaches, staff, and students.
7. Show a willingness to improve in all areas mentioned.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Columbus Middle School runs under the philosophy that students who are active in school tend to have more success. Keeping this in mind there is a number of activities provided by the faculty to help meet the different interests of the typical middle school student.

The following clubs are provided as an extension of the academic curriculum:

**\*Student Council \*Builders Club \*Mathcounts \*Academic Olympics \*Spelling Bee \*Honor Society**

## Dances

The middle school group, organization, or club that wants to sponsor a dance must have the group's committee submit a "Request for School Activity" to the office at least 14 days prior to the dance for approval. The sponsoring group is responsible for communicating their expectations to the faculty members previously assigned to chaperone the dance – one of those being the group's advisor. Other areas of responsibility include completed use of facilities procedures, cash box for change, decorations, music, and clean-up for the dance.

- After school with times dependent on administrative approval of Student Council requests
- Only students currently enrolled in Columbus Middle School may attend dances.
- School behavior expectations shall be observed in accordance with school and district policy.
- All dress codes will be observed in accordance with the normal dress code requirements.
- Once in, always in. Once out, always out. Students will not be permitted to return to the dance once they have left the building. Students may only exit the dance while the dance is in session with a parent/guardian or one of the chaperones.
- Students must be in attendance the day of the dance to be able to attend the dance. If a student is sent home ill on the day of the dance, they will not be permitted to attend. If a student is signed out of school by a parent/guardian for a doctor appointment or other related appointment, a note showing proof of the appointment will be presented to a teacher chaperone at the dance prior to admission.
- Students missing one or more classes because of unexcused absences on the day of the dance cannot attend.

## MEETINGS

Class and organizational meetings will be set up with the sponsors and approved by the principal, at least one day in advance. At least one class or organizational sponsor will be present at all meetings. Robert's Rules of Order on Parliamentary Procedure will be used to conduct meetings. The secretary of each class organization shall keep minutes of each meeting held. A financial record of income and expenditures is the responsibility of the treasurer of the organization. Balances should be checked monthly with business office personnel.

## SCHEDULING ACTIVITIES

Organizations wishing to schedule activities must have the faculty advisor and the building principal's approval. The principal must approve all activities at least five days before the activity.

- ◆ *Only middle school students will be allowed unless the principal grants PRIOR approval.*
- ◆ *At school dances the doors will be locked one half hour after the dance is scheduled to begin.*
- ◆ *Students leaving the dance after the door is locked will not be allowed to come back in.*
- ◆ *The organization sponsoring the event is responsible for clean up afterwards*
- ◆ *Regular dress will be acceptable at all school-sponsored activities unless otherwise authorized.*
- ◆ *Chaperones will consist of the advisors of the organization sponsoring the event. Additional chaperones consisting of parents are highly recommended.*

## ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Class and Activity Treasurers are responsible for all the money their organizations collect. This money must be submitted to the business office for deposit by noon following the day of collection. Procedure for paying money from an activity account is as follows:

1. Obtain a requisition form from the business office.
2. Fill out items to be paid.
3. Advisor and organization officer must sign the form.
4. Turn into the business office. Allow a minimum of two days for check to be written.

### *Columbus Middle School Honor Society*

Selection is a privilege rather than a right. Students who are considered for membership will submit an application addressing the student's accomplishments in terms of leadership, character, scholarship, and service. Additionally, students will be asked to provide letters of recommendation speaking to these same traits. This information will be reviewed by a faculty selection committee. Students in grades 6-8 are eligible for participation (6th after the first semester). Being a CMSHS member requires that students organize and participate in community service projects (minimum of 2 hours/year). Failure to maintain membership standards will result in disciplinary proceedings. These may include warning, probation, or dismissal.

#### **Membership Standards:**

- Maintaining a 3.75 GPA
- Participate in at least 2 hours of community service a year
- Maintaining positive behavior and active participation

**Leadership:** The student who exercises leadership: successfully holds offices or positions of responsibility; conducts business effectively and efficiently; demonstrates reliability and dependability; is a leader in the classroom, at work, and in other school and community activities; demonstrates academic initiative in completing assignments and projects and assuming leadership in the classroom when completing assigned activities; inspires positive behavior in others; is able to delegate responsibilities; and is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted. Furthermore, the successful candidate is a student within the school community who is esteemed by others in all grade levels through their positive interactions and leadership.

**Character:** A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility; trustworthiness, fairness, caring and citizenship. A student of character would; take criticism willingly and accept recommendations graciously; consistently exemplify desirable qualities of behavior; uphold principles of morality and ethics (from National NHS guidelines); demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and reliability; demonstrate self-discipline both in and out of the classroom; candidates must be able to demonstrate an outstanding record of conduct and behavior with regard to school and community rules, guidelines, and policies or be able to demonstrate sufficient growth and improvement to compensate for previous inadequacies.

**Scholarship:** A student must have a cumulative grade point average (as determined by the fall semester grades of this year) of at least a 3.75.

**Service:** Service is usually considered to be those actions undertaken by the student that are done with or on behalf of others without any financial or material compensation. Service can be provided to the school, to a religious institution, or to the community. This is defined as a person who does some of the following: Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance; works well with others and is willing to take on difficult responsibilities; cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school; performs committee and staff work without complaint; participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church; mentors persons in the community or other students in schools.

#### INTERNET POLICY

Students will be provided with a copy of the District's Internet use policy at the beginning of each school year. Parents and students must return the final page complete with signatures before the student will be allowed access. Failure to comply with the use policy will result in the suspension of the student's access to the internet for the remainder of the school year.

#### SECURITY CAMERAS

A security camera system is present throughout the school system. It is considered to be a part of our overall security and safety system, much like the smoke alarms and fire alarm system. Tampering with the system in any manner will result in severe penalties, up to and including expulsion from the school system. Further, this should serve as notification that the video system may be used within the District to monitor activity in and around its facilities. All information gathered can be used as documentation for disciplinary and/or legal proceeding purposes.

#### SECURITY/AUDIO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES

A security/audio camera system is present on all school buses. It is considered to be a part of our overall security and safety system. Tampering with the system in any manner will result in severe penalties, up to and including expulsion from the school system. Further, this should serve as notification that the video/audio system may be used in the school buses to monitor activity. All information gathered can be used as documentation for disciplinary and/or legal proceeding purposes.

#### CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE USAGE

Cell phones and other electronic devices are permitted for learning purposes under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. Students may use devices for calculation, research, dictionaries and spell check, or for special applications relating to our digital curriculum. These are all considered appropriate uses of technology and are encouraged within the classroom setting.

Students are prohibited from using any electronic device to take pictures or record video/audio in locker rooms, bathrooms, or on school buses or other district vehicles. The use of electronic devices for social media, to take pictures or record video/audio is also prohibited in classrooms, unless deemed appropriate by the teacher and used for educational/instructional purposes only. Students are prohibited from using any electronic device in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.

The inappropriate use of cell phones at school is detrimental to the academic climate because it takes valuable time away from instruction and creates disciplinary problems. Camera phones and text messaging are used to cheat on quizzes and tests. Phones are stolen, loaned to other students, may be lost or broken and have exacerbated crisis situations. Ringing cell phones are disruptive during class time. Inappropriate use of cell phones and devices is prohibited on our campus.

Students who inappropriately use a cell phone at school will be subject to discipline as stipulated in the Student Handbook. Additionally, students may lose the privilege of using or possessing a cell phone or any other electronic device at school for a length of time to be determined by the school administrators.

## CELL PHONE CONTINUED

Due to the enormous time spent on stolen cell phones, the school will NOT investigate stolen cell phones. Their security is the sole responsibility of the student.

Students may possess and use cell phones on the school campus before and after school only. Cell phones must be kept in lockers and turned off during the instructional day if not being used for instructional purposes. Consequences for violating cell phone/electronic device policy:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Devices will be kept in the office until the end of the day.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Devices will be kept in the office until the parent/guardian comes in and picks it up. 3<sup>rd</sup>

Offense: Devices will be banned from school.

