



CODE OF CONDUCT

2025-2026

ABRIDGED VERSION

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Middleburgh Central School District to be a productive and responsible learning community, where all are inspired to achieve excellence.

INTRODUCTION

At Middleburgh Central School, we want our school to be a safe and peaceful place where everyone can learn and grow. Students should focus on learning, and teachers and staff can teach without interruptions. To make this happen, everyone—students, teachers, staff, parents, and visitors—must act responsibly.

We expect everyone on school grounds, online, and at events to:

- Respect others
- Be honest and show good character
- Be kind and fair
- Act responsibly as part of our school community.

The rules for behavior apply to everyone, not just at school but also at school events and even outside of school if actions might cause serious problems at school.

What You Should Know

- We will clearly explain what behavior is okay and what isn't.
- If someone breaks a rule, there will be consequences.
- Discipline will be fair and happen quickly.

GOAL OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

At Middleburgh Central School, we want to help every student learn how to manage their behavior, make good choices, and treat others with respect. Here's how we work together to create a positive school environment:

- **Help Students Grow** – We use fair and age-appropriate ways to help students learn how to manage their behavior and get along well with others.
- **Keep Spaces Safe and Respectful** – We work to make sure classrooms, hallways, and other areas are safe, respectful, and calm places to be.
- **Stop Unsafe Behavior** – We look for ways to stop unsafe or inappropriate actions before they happen.
- **Support for Students Who Need Extra Help** – For students who need more help, we provide extra support to improve their behavior.

What We Focus On

- **Fair Discipline** – We try to avoid using in-school and out-of-school suspensions too much. Instead, we focus on other ways to encourage positive behavior.
- **Clear Expectations for Everyone** – All adults in our school are committed to following and supporting our behavior expectations.
- **Strong Support from Administrators and Counselors** – Our school leaders and support staff work together to help students make better choices, especially those who need it most.
- **Respectful Problem Solving by Teachers** – Teachers are dedicated to helping students improve behavior in respectful and helpful ways.

UNABRIDGED VERSION

The District's full, unabridged version of the *Code of Conduct* can be found on-line at:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/middleburghcsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CHUM2E558CF8>

Hard copies of either the full or abridged version can be obtained from the main office.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
To attend school in the district in which one's parent or legal guardian resides.	To attend school daily, regularly and on time, perform assignments, and strive to do the highest quality work possible and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education.
To expect that school will be a safe, orderly and purposeful place for all students to gain an education and to be treated fairly.	To be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines.
To be respected as an individual.	To respect one another, and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
To express one's opinions verbally or in writing.	To share opinions respectfully without hurting or limiting the rights of others.
To dress in such a way as to express one's personality.	To dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
To be afforded equal and appropriate education opportunities.	To be aware of available educational programs in order to use and develop one's capabilities to their
To take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color creed, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability.	To work to the best of one's ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, as well as being fair and supportive of others.
To have access to relevant and objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse, as well as access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students with serious personal problems.	To be aware of the information and services available and to seek assistance in dealing with personal problems, when appropriate.
To be protected from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school-sponsored event, function or activity.	To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment or discrimination.

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT (DASA)

Our school is committed to being a place where everyone feels safe, respected, and accepted. We work hard to make sure there's no bullying, harassment, or unfair treatment of any kind.

We don't allow:

- **Bullying or Harassment** – No one—whether it's another student or a staff member—should bully or mistreat others, in school or at school events.
- **Discrimination** – We treat everyone fairly, no matter their race, color, body size, background, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender. Mistreating someone for these reasons is not allowed, even if it happens off school property and could lead to serious problems at school.

What to Do if You or Someone You Know Needs Help

If you or someone else is experiencing bullying, harassment, or discrimination, you can report it by filling out the DASA Reporting Form. This form is available in the main office, on our school website, or in the counseling office. You can also talk to a staff member you trust—they will listen to you, respond quickly, and make sure you feel safe.

Dignity Act Coordinators (DAC)

Elementary School Principal: Amy Irwin

Junior-Senior High School Principal: Matthew Sloane

STUDENT DRESS CODE

At Middleburgh Central School, we expect students to come to school clean and dressed appropriately. Your clothes should be safe, respectful, and help everyone focus on learning. Here are some guidelines to follow:

- **Be Safe and Focused** – Your clothes should be safe and not cause distractions in class.
- **Cover Up in School** – Your chest, stomach, back, and bottom should be covered with solid (non-see-through) fabric at all times. Your midriff (stomach area) should be mostly covered, with no more than a hand's width of skin showing.
- **Keep Underwear Covered** – Make sure your underwear isn't showing. Bra straps are okay, but other parts should be covered by your clothes.
- **Wear Footwear** – You must wear shoes at all times that are safe for school activities. Some shoes, like flip-flops, may not be allowed in certain classes for safety reasons.
- **Keep Your Face Visible** – Sunglasses can't be worn inside unless you have a medical reason.
- **Respectful Clothing** – Don't wear anything with rude or offensive language or images, especially anything that puts down others based on race, religion, gender, or other personal characteristics.
- **No Promotion of Harmful Items** – Clothing should not advertise alcohol, drugs, or anything violent or illegal.

Headwear in School

You can wear hats, bandanas, or hoodies in common areas. However, in classrooms, the teacher decides if it's okay to keep headwear on. Be respectful of their decision.

If You're Asked About Dress Code

If a staff member talks to you about your outfit, please follow their request. If you don't understand why or if the clothing is important to you and isn't offensive, you may respectfully ask for clarification. If you still feel your viewpoint isn't heard, follow the request and then speak to an administrator.

USE OF CELL PHONES

Effective August 1, 2025 pursuant to the NY State Bell-to-Bell Cell Phone Ban

GRADES PK-12

All students are prohibited from using cell phones or any internet-connected devices during the school day. These devices must be stored in lockers and may not be carried on the student's person at any time during school hours.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE FOR DEVICE MISCONDUCT

If a phone is seen (or heard) the phone is immediately given to the adult and a parent/caregiver needs to pick up the phone in the office at the end of the school day.

FIRST OFFENSE

- If the phone isn't immediately given to the adult, the phone will be confiscated by someone from the administrative team. The phone will remain in the office until a caregiver comes to pick it up. Student serves In-School Suspension on that day and after-school detention from 2:45-4:45 P.M.. Student cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars that day.
- Student serves after-school detention from 2:45-4:45 P.M. on that day and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars that day.

SECOND OFFENSE

- If the phone isn't immediately given to the adult, the phone will be confiscated by someone from the administrative team. The phone will remain in the office until a caregiver comes to pick it up. Student serves an Out-of-School Suspension and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars while suspended.
- Student serves In-School Suspension on that day and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars that day.
- The student also serves after-school detention from 2:45-4:45 P.M. on that day and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars that day.

THIRD OFFENSE

- If the phone isn't immediately given to the adult, the phone will be confiscated by someone from the administrative team. The phone will remain in the office until a caregiver comes to pick it up. Student serves an Out-of-School Suspension and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars while suspended.
- Student serves three (3) days of In-School Suspension and cannot attend clubs, sports, dances or any extracurriculars for two (2) weeks.
- For the remainder of the year the student will be required to leave their cell phone in the main office.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Taking the school bus is a privilege, which means it's something special that can be taken away if rules aren't followed. Here's how to stay safe and respectful on the bus:

- **Stay Safe and Respectful** – Always behave in a way that doesn't distract the driver or cause any safety issues.
- **Listen to the Driver and Bus Aide** – They are in charge on the bus, so follow their instructions at all times.
- **Always Walk in Front of the Bus** – When getting on or off, make sure to pass in front of the bus so the driver can see you.
- **Keep Everything Inside the Bus** – Don't stick your arms, hands, or head out of the windows.
- **Stay Seated While Moving** – Once the bus starts moving, stay in your seat until it comes to a full stop.

SEARCHES

At Middleburgh Central School, lockers, desks, and other storage spaces are school property, which means the school owns them. Students should know that these areas can be checked by school staff, so there is no guarantee of privacy.

Keeping Our School Safe

To make sure everyone is safe, school officials may need to ask questions or check belongings if they believe someone has broken a school rule or law. Here's what you need to know:

- **Questioning** – If a school official asks you questions about a rule or law being broken, they will tell you why they're asking. They do not need to contact your parents first.
- **Searching** – If there's a good reason, the superintendent, principals, or school nurse may check a student's belongings, like backpacks or lockers, to find evidence of a rule being broken.
- **Limited Checks** – Sometimes, a school official may do a quick check, like feeling the outside of a backpack, if they have a reason to believe it's necessary.
- **Information from Others** – School officials might search belongings based on information from someone they trust, especially if it helps keep everyone safe.
- **Asking for Cooperation** – Before searching, officials will try to talk to the student first and ask if they'll admit to having something they shouldn't or if they'll allow a search.

Privacy and Respect

Whenever possible, searches will happen privately in an office, and the student will be present. School officials will try to have two adults there whenever possible.

RESPONDING TO BEHAVIOR VIOLATIONS

Our school uses a system with four levels of responses to help students learn from mistakes and make better choices in the future. When a student breaks a rule in a serious way, they get a consequence that shows the behavior is not okay, safe, or respectful. The level of response depends on how serious the behavior was.

Our Goals for Positive Change

This system helps students understand why their actions weren't acceptable and encourages better choices in the future. Here's how it works:

- **Learning from Mistakes** – We want students to think about what happened and learn from it.
- **Understanding Why** – Students will understand why certain behaviors are not allowed.
- **Acknowledging Impact** – Students will think about how their actions might have hurt others or caused problems.
- **Considering Alternatives** – We help students consider what they could have done differently.
- **Taking Responsibility** – Students are encouraged to own up to their actions.
- **Learning New Skills** – Students get a chance to learn positive ways to handle situations next time.
- **Understanding Consequences** – If the same behaviors continue, there will be stronger consequences and more support to help the student improve.

LEVELS OF RESPONSE

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Classroom support and student support team.	Classroom support, intensive out-of-class support, and appropriate administrative interventions, up to issuance of detention.	Supports and consequences up to a short-term suspension (maximum 5 days OSS).	Supports and consequences up to a long-term suspension (greater than 5 days OSS).

Our school has four levels of responses for handling different kinds of behavior. Each level is designed to help students learn and improve based on the seriousness of their actions.

- **Level 1 – Everyday Expectations**
This level includes basic, school-wide rules and classroom routines to help students practice positive behaviors, self-control, good study habits, and overall well-being. Teachers respond right away to small issues to keep them from becoming bigger problems.
- **Level 2 – Targeted Consequences**
If a student's behavior requires more attention, Level 2 responses provide specific consequences and support. For example, if a behavior issue needs extra focus beyond the classroom, a student might be assigned to detention or receive other consequences.
- **Levels 3 and 4 – Serious Concerns**
These levels are for behaviors that could put the safety and order of the school or classroom at risk. Students with ongoing, serious behavior, academic, or health concerns receive extra, individualized support to help them make positive changes.

District-Wide Behavior Chart: Intervention and Consequences

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
Classroom support and student support team	Classroom support, intensive out-of-class support, and appropriate administrative interventions, up to issuance of detention	Supports and discipline up to a short-term suspension (maximum 5 days OSS)	Supports and discipline up to a long-term or permanent suspension



Law enforcement MAY be called

















Law enforcement MUST be called


















Students in grades PK-5 cannot be suspended out-of-school unless the behavior at issue has a green triangle below and posed a serious and immediate threat to student, staff or public safety.


















Behavior Violations and Levels of Response










Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Attendance							
Failing to attend class without a valid excuse (skipping)	X	X					Significant unexcused absences will result in the possible filing of a PINS petition.
Persistent tardiness to school or class	X	X					
Persistent or excessive absences from school	X	X					
Chronic absenteeism (unexcused absences in excess of 20 days)	X	X					
Academic Dishonesty							
Plagiarism, copying another’s work, cheating or altering records	X	X	X				Students may receive a failing grade for the assignment.
Alcohol							
Under the influence			X				School staff will refer student to appropriate substance abuse counseling.
Use or possession			X				
Distributing or selling			X	X			School nurse will be immediately notified.











Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Arson							
Staring a fire			X				NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code 401.3 requires building principals to contact the fire department for any and all unwanted fires. Principals must complete NYSED Office of Facilities Planning Fire Incident Report Form 2014.
Destruction of property as a result of starting a fire.			X	X			
Bomb Threat							
Making threats or providing false information about the presence of explosive materials or devices on school property.			X	X			
Bullying, Harassment, and/or Discrimination							
Intentional conduct (including verbal, physical or written) or electronic communication that constitutes bullying, discrimination or harassment	X	X	X				A Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) investigation is always required when bullying, discrimination and/or harassment are suspected. Depending on the allegations a Title IX or other investigation as outlined in applicable Board policies may be required.
Persistent and repeated incidents of bullying targeted at same person or group		X	X	X			
Very serious incident that is life-threatening, seriously harmful or personally damaging to the person who is targeted.			X	X			
Damage to Personal or School Property							
Minor damage (< \$50)		X					
Damage from \$50—\$500		X	X				
Damage > \$500			X	X			

Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Electronic Devices							
Use of cell phones, handheld mobile devices, electronic game devices and other similar items.		X	X				
Use of electronic devices that lead to the threat of harm to another person			X	X			
Recording and publishing a fight			X	X			
Use of an electronic device to cause direct physical or emotional harm to another person			X	X			
Entering a Class Without Permission							
Entering a class not enrolled in without permission	X	X					
Extortion							
Obtaining money, property or information from another by coercion or intimidation		X	X	X			
Failure to Clear Security/Bypassing Security							
Entering school or school property without passing through the requisite security	X	X					
Intentionally or repeatedly entering school property without passing through the requisite security.		X	X				
False Activation of Fire Alarm							
Improper activation of fire alarm			X	X			Principals must complete NYSED Office of Facilities Planning Fire Incident Report Form. If the fire alarm is activated the fire department must be notified and they have jurisdiction until the event is investigated.
Forgery							
False and fraudulent making or altering of a document or the use of such a document			X	X			
Gambling							
Participating in games of chance or skill for money, things of value, or exchangeable goods	X	X	X				

Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Hallway Misbehavior							
Running, making excessive noise, loitering, or occupying an unauthorized place in the school hallway.	X	X					
Illegal Drugs							
Under the influence			X				School staff is required to refer students to appropriate substance abuse counseling.
Using or possessing			X				
Distributing or selling			X	X			School nurse must be immediately notified.
Inciting or Participating in Disturbance							
Participating in a large disruption to the atmosphere of order and discipline in the school that is necessary for effective learning, outside of general classroom disruption.		X	X				A large disruption is defined as a disruption that causes an administrator to initiate a “shelter in place” emergency procedures, prevents large number of students from moving through the hallways, disrupts the educational process for a large number of students across the school, or poses a serious and grave threat to the safety of large numbers of students.
Causing a large disruption to the atmosphere of order and discipline in the school that is necessary for effective learning, outside of general classroom disruption (such as a riot)		X	X	X			
Using an electronic device to bring others to initiate or engage in a disturbance.		X	X	X			
Inhalants							
Under the influence		X	X				School staff is required to refer students to appropriate substance abuse counseling.
Using or possessing			X				
Distributing or selling			X	X			School nurse must be immediately notified.
Leaving School Without Permission							
Leaving the school without permission	X	X	X				

Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Non-Compliance							
Failure to follow directions	X	X					
Failure to respond to school staff directives, questions or requests	X	X					
Failure to comply with school rules, regulations, policies or procedures	X	X					
Persistent failure to comply with school rules, policies and procedures		X	X	X			
Physical Contact with Others							
Unintentional physical contact with school personnel	X	X					
Unintentionally striking a staff member who is intervening in a fight or other aggressive behavior.		X	X				
Unintentionally striking a staff member who is intervening in a fight or other aggressive behavior that causes injury to the staff member		X	X	X			
Intentional offensive touching, poking, pushing, or physical intimidation		X	X	X			
Intentional physical attack on school personnel			X	X			
Attack on student or fight with injury.		X	X	X			
Attack on student or fight with serious bodily injury.				X			
Two or more persons intentionally attacking a student with injury.			X	X			
Two or more persons intentionally attacking a student with serious bodily injury.				X			
Fight that causes an administrator to initiate "shelter in place" emergency procedures.			X	X			

Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Sexual Assault							
Forced sexual act				X			School staff is required to refer students to appropriate counseling.
Sexually Based Infraction or Offenses							
Sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual advances; request for sexual favors; other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature)		X	X	X			School staff is required to refer students to appropriate counseling. Possession and/or transmission of child pornography is subject to prosecution and must be reported to police.
Sexual activity or sexual misconduct (indecent exposure, engaging in sexual activity, etc)		X	X	X			
Technology Acceptable Use Policy Violation							
Violation of the Middleburgh CSD Acceptable Use Policy	X	X	X				Possession and/or transmission of child pornography is subject to prosecution and must be reported to police.
Theft							
Under \$500		X	X				
Over \$500			X	X			
Taking money or property from another by force			X	X			
Threat (Written or Verbal)							
Verbal or written threat against any member of the school community		X	X	X			
Tobacco/Nicotine Products/Vaping Products							
Possession or use		X	X				Includes the use of e-cigarettes and vaping
Trespassing							
Entering school property when prohibited from doing so or remaining on school grounds after receiving a request to depart	X	X	X	X			

Behavioral Violation	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4		Police	Notes
Verbal Aggression/False Statements/Disrespectful Behavior							
Misleading or giving false information to school staff	X	X	X				
Confrontational and aggressive arguing		X	X				
Name calling; insults; making inappropriate gestures, symbols, or comments; or using profane, obscene or offensive language	X	X	X				
Weapons, Firearms, Explosives							
Possession of instruments or objects that could be used as a weapon		X	X				Expulsion for no less than one calendar year is mandated by state law for firearms violations, but can be modified on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent of Schools.
Possession of an instrument or object used as a weapon with intent to cause injury			X	X			
Possession of a weapon				X			
Firearms: Possession of a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 of the federal code (e.g. handguns, rifles, shotguns, bombs)				X			
Other Guns: Possession of any other type of gun of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable including BB guns and pellet guns.				X			
Explosives: Possession, sale, distribution, detonation, or threat of detonation of an incendiary or explosive material or device including firecrackers, smoke bombs, flares, or any combustible or explosive substances or combination of substance or articles, other than a firearm				X	