

Houghton Middle School
2023-2024 Student Handbook



The faculty and staff of Houghton Middle School welcome you to another year of learning, fun, and opportunities for growth. The Middle School years are significant in your preparation for high school. We are here to help you in every way that we can. We want your time in the middle school to be a meaningful and enjoyable experience. Together, we will work for a successful school year.

This handbook is intended for use by students, parents, and staff as a guide to the rules, procedures, and general information about the District. The use of the word “parent” in this handbook means a student’s natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian. Students and their parents are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this handbook, and parents should use the handbook as a resource to assist their children with following its rules and procedures.

Students must comply with all school policies, regulations, rules, and expectations. The use of the word “Policy” in this handbook includes bylaws or policies adopted by the Board of Education. Although the information in this handbook is comprehensive, it is not intended to address every situation that may arise during a school day or school year. This handbook does not create a contract between the District and parents, students, or staff. The administration is responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook to ensure the implementation of the school’s educational program and well-being of all students. If a situation arises that is not specifically addressed by this handbook, the administration may respond based on applicable law and policy.

The rules and information provided in this handbook may be supplemented or amended by the administration at any time, consistent with applicable law and policy.

HOUGHTON MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of Houghton Middle School is to assist students in reaching their full potential through the teaching of Goals, Respect, Integrity and Teamwork (GRIT).

HPTS MISSION STATEMENT: We deliver transformative education to equip and empower all students to achieve.

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HPTS VISION STATEMENT: Houghton Portage – a top performing inclusive school community where our students acquire confidence and capability to adapt and succeed in an ever changing world!

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

District Website

hpts.us

Board Policies

Board Policies are available at: [policies](#)

Addresses

Houghton Middle School

1603 Gundlach Rd

Houghton, MI 49931

Contact Information

HPTS: (906)482-0450

Administration

Superintendent: Anders Hill

Middle School Principal: Julie Filpus

Athletic Director: Rob Fay

High School Principal: Tiffany Scullion

Elementary School Principal: Cole Klein

Elementary School Assistant Principal: Patrick Aldrich

Houghton-Portage Township Schools 2023-24 Calendar

Tuesday, August 29 Teacher In-Service Day

Wednesday, August 30 Teacher In-Service Day

Tuesday, September 5 First Day of School – Full Day

Friday, October 13 No School for Students In-Service Day

Thursday, November 9 Parent Teacher Conferences 1-3 & 5-7 p.m.

Half Day for Students

Friday, November 10 Parent Teacher Conferences 1-3 p.m.

Half Day for Students

Wednesday, November 22 No School for Students In-Service Day

Thursday, November 23 Thanksgiving Recess NO School

Friday, November 24 Thanksgiving Recess NO School

Wednesday, Dec. 20 – Tuesday, Jan. 2 Winter Recess NO School

Thursday, January 25 Half Day for Students - Records Day

Friday, January 26 Half Day for Students - Records Day

Friday, February 16 No School for Students Full Day In-Service

Monday, February 19 No School Mid-Winter Break

Friday, March 8 No School for Students In-Service Day

Friday, March 29 - Friday, April 5 Spring Break NO School

Monday, May 27 Memorial Day NO School

Exams

Thursday, June 6 Half Day for Students Last Day of School

- If no make-up days are required

Friday, June 7 Records Day – No Students

2023-2024 DAILY SCHEDULE

Hour	Time Interval
1st	8:10 - 9:06
2nd	9:11 - 10:05
3rd	10:10 - 11:04
Lunch (7th & 8th grade)	11:04 - 11:34
4 th (6 grade)	11:07 – 11:32
Lunch (6 grade)	11:32 – 12:02
4 th continued (6 grade)	12:04 – 12:33
5th	12:38 – 1:32
6th	1:37 – 2:31
7th	2:36 – 3:30

Late Start Schedule

Hour	Time Interval
1st	10:10 – 10:48
2nd	10:53 – 11:30
3rd	11:35-12:12
Lunch (6th - 8th grades)	12:12 -12:42
4 th	12:47 – 1:24
5th	1:29 – 2:06
6th	2:11 – 2:48
7th	2:53 – 3:30

Half Day Schedule

Hour	Time Interval
1st	8:10 – 8:39
2nd	8:44 – 9:13
3rd	9:18 – 9:47
4th	9:52 – 10:21
5th	10:26-10:55
6th (7th & 8th grade)	11:00 – 11:29
Lunch (6 grade)	11:00 - 11:29
Lunch (7th & 8th grade)	11:29 – 11:59
6th (6 grade)	11:29 – 11:59
7th	12:04 – 12:33

School staff will supervise students on school grounds 10 minutes before the school day begins. Unless students are participating in a school activity, school staff will not provide supervision before 8:00 am or after 3:30 pm.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency school closure, such as a bad weather day or when school is unexpectedly closed early, the District will notify students, parents, and the general public about the closure in the following manner:

- parent listserv email
- one-way text message via PowerSchool
- District Website
- Keweenaw Report
- Upper Michigan Source
- local radio stations

If inclement weather or an emergency occurs during the school day, please check the above sources for possible early dismissal information. If an early dismissal becomes necessary, all after-school functions are canceled.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, or sexual orientation), disability, age, height, weight, marital or family status, veteran status, ancestry, genetic information, military status, or any other legally protected category (collectively, “Protected Classes”), in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by law.

The District prohibits unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment and retaliation. The District will investigate all allegations of unlawful discrimination and will take appropriate action, including discipline, against any person who, following an investigation, is determined to have engaged in unlawful discrimination.

“Unlawful harassment” is verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a person because of the person’s membership in a Protected Class that has the purpose or effect of: (1) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or (2) unreasonably interfering with the person’s ability to benefit from the District’s educational programs or activities.

- **Race, color, and national origin harassment** can take many forms, including, but not limited to, slurs, taunts, stereotypes, or name-calling, as well as racially motivated physical threats, attacks, or other hateful conduct. Harassment based on ethnicity, ancestry, or perceived ancestral, ethnic, or religious characteristics is considered race, color, and national origin harassment.
- **Disability harassment** can take many forms, including, but not limited to, slurs, taunts, stereotypes, or name-calling, as well as disability-motivated physical threats, attacks, or other hateful conduct.
- **Sex-based harassment** can take many forms. For the definition of sex-based harassment, including sexual harassment under Title IX, see Policies 3118 and 5202. The District’s Title IX Policy is attached to this handbook as Appendix A.

Any student who witnesses an act of unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment or retaliation, is encouraged to report it to District personnel. No student will be retaliated against based on any report of suspected discrimination. A student may also anonymously report an incident of unlawful discrimination. The District will investigate anonymous reports pursuant to its investigation procedures described by Policy. Minor students do not need parent permission to file complaints or participate in the formal complaint resolution process described by Policy.

If you or someone you know has been subjected to **sex-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation**, you may file a report with any District employee. Formal Complaints of sexual harassment must be filed with the Title IX Coordinator:

Julie Filpus, Principal, Houghton Middle School
1603 Gundlach Rd, Houghton, Michigan 49931
(906)482-0450
jfilpus@hpts.us

If you or someone you know has been subjected to **disability-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation**, you may file a complaint with:

Julie Filpus, Principal, Houghton Middle School
1603 Gundlach Rd, Houghton, Michigan 49931
(906)482-0450
jfilpus@hpts.us

Tiffany Scullion, Principal, Houghton High School
1603 Gundlach Rd, Houghton, Michigan 49931
(906)482-0450
tscullion@hpts.us

If you or someone you know has been subjected to **any other type of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation**, including unlawful conduct based on race, color, or national origin, you may file a complaint with:

Sara Marcotte, Business Manager
1603 Gundlach Rd, Houghton, Michigan 49931
(906)482-0450
smarcotte@hpts.us

A report of unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment or retaliation, may be made orally or in writing.

A student found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination, including unlawful harassment or retaliation, may be subject to discipline, including suspension or expulsion, consistent with Policy 5206.

SECTION I: DISTRICT-WIDE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance

Students are expected to attend school every day school is in session. Students are to arrive before the first class and stay until the scheduled end of their school day. If a student is unable to attend school, parent/ guardian must report that absence by calling the district (482-0450) and following the prompts. The call may be made at any time; however, in order to excuse the absence, your parent or guardian must make the call BEFORE noon on the day of the absence. **YOU MUST CALL TO EXCUSE AN ABSENCE.** We will not accept notes, calls, or emails.

If a student arrives late, the student must check in at the office. A student may only leave school early if the student's parent notifies the office or the student is an emancipated minor or 18 years old.

The following absences will be considered excused if they are confirmed by communication to the school from the student's parent:

Excused absences are those approved by your parent or guardian, such as for an illness, medical appointment, or a family trip. The following absences will be considered excused if they are confirmed by communication to the school from the student's parent/guardian:

- the student's physical or mental illness (a physician's verification is required after 4 consecutive days of absence for illness);
- severe weather;
- medical appointments for the student;
- death or serious illness of the student's family member;
- attendance at a funeral, wedding, or graduation;
- appearance at court or for other legal matters;
- observance of religious holidays of the student's own faith;
- college planning visits; and
- personal or family vacations.

Students who arrive to class after the bell (or are not prepared for class per their teachers expectations) are considered tardy. Three tardies is equal to one lunch detention.

A student who violates attendance expectations may be subject to discipline and any other applicable consequences.

Absences due to illness

The school will contact parents if a student becomes ill at school and may ask that the parent pick up the student. A student who is absent due to illness has as many days for each day of absence to complete missed assignments.

Planned absences

Parents who know in advance that a student will be absent must contact the school at the earliest possible date. Students who will be absent for reasons that can be anticipated, such as routine medical appointments and school activities, must complete any work required by the teacher before the absence unless alternative arrangements are approved by the teacher in advance. Parents should make every attempt to schedule medical and other appointments outside of school hours.

Students are expected to:

- Complete all class work in advance for any absence that can be anticipated or make alternative arrangements with their teacher in advance of the absence.
- Sign out of school at the office if leaving school during the school day.
- Make up all work that is assigned by teachers for the instructional time that has been missed.
- Middle school students taking high school classes will be subject to the high school attendance policy for the high school classes only.

For more information, see Policy 5301.

Books and Supplies

The District will provide free instruction to all students and will not charge a fee for materials necessary to complete required or elective courses. Students and parents may purchase additional supplies at their own expense. The District may charge a reasonable and refundable deposit to cover damage to textbooks and supplies. A teacher may provide a list of suggested materials that students and parents may purchase. Purchasing materials is voluntary and not required for curricular activities.

Students must take care of books and other supplies provided by the District. The District may assess fees to repair or replace District property that is lost, damaged, stolen, returned in a different condition, or not returned on time.

Bulletin Boards

Space may be provided within school buildings or on school electronic media for students and student organizations to post notices about student groups. Rules for posting on bulletin boards are found in Policy 5503.

Bullying

All types of student-on-student bullying, including cyberbullying, without regard to subject matter or motivation, are prohibited. The District's Anti-Bullying Policy is attached to this handbook as Appendix B.

Cafeteria Rules

- Lunches will be eaten in the multi-purpose room or other designated area. Club advisors may choose to have their members eat in their classrooms during lunchtime meetings. Any spills and consequent stains are the responsibility of the organization that is meeting at that time.
- Students are to remain in the lunchroom, commons area or gymnasium until dismissed. The library may be open for student use during the lunch periods.
- Restaurants may not make deliveries to the school.

Cell Phone Use

Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices during school hours, with the exception of before 8:00, during lunch, and after 3:30. Cell phones or other electronic devices must be stored in the student's locker during school hours if a student chooses to bring them to school.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones and other electronic devices. The District is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of any cell phone or other electronic device.

Taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal photographs, video, audio, or other similar data, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (including via cell phone or other electronic device), may constitute a crime under state or federal law. A student engaged in any of these activities at school, at a school event, or on school-provided transportation, may be subject to discipline. A student engaged in any of these activities outside of school may be disciplined if the student's activities substantially disrupt or negatively affect the school environment.

School administrators and teachers may confiscate a student's cell phone or other electronic device if the student's use or possession of a cell phone or electronic device violates Board Policy, the student code of conduct, or any applicable building or classroom rule. The building principal or designee may require a meeting with the student's parent to discuss the rule violation before returning the cell phone or electronic device.

If a student is using a device during a non designated time/ location, the following consequences apply:

- 1st Offense - Student can get their device back at the end of the day
- 2nd Offense - A parent or guardian must pick up the device from the middle school office (Office hours 7:45 am - 4:00 pm)

- In addition to the above consequences, using a cell phone during a test/ quiz will result in a zero for the grade.
- In addition to the above consequences, students using an electronic device to be mean/harass/ bully others, will be subject to further discipline.

Cheating, Plagiarism, and Academic Dishonesty

Students may not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise participate in academic dishonesty in any form. Unless specifically authorized by a teacher, prohibited behavior may include, but is not limited to:

- Obtaining, attempting to obtain, or aiding another person in obtaining credit for work by any dishonest or deceptive means.
- Copying another person's work or answers.
- Discussing with other students the answers or questions on a test or assignment before the test or assignment has been submitted for a grade.
- Taking or receiving copies of a test.
- Using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or other sources of unauthorized information.
- Using the ideas or work of another person as if they were your own without giving proper credit to the source.
- Using artificial intelligence to assist or complete an assignment or test.
- Submitting work or any portion of work completed by another person.

A student who cheats, plagiarizes, or otherwise participates in any academic dishonesty may receive no credit on that assignment or class and will be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

Children's Protective Services Investigations

The District will cooperate with Children's Protective Services (CPS) during an investigation of suspected child abuse or neglect. Cooperation may include allowing CPS access to a student without parent consent if CPS determines access is necessary to complete the investigation or prevent abuse or neglect. As a matter of law, the identity of an individual who makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is confidential and will not be disclosed.

Classroom Behavior

Teachers may establish classroom conduct rules that students must follow.

Closed Campus

The school campus is a closed campus. All students must remain on campus during school hours. Students who leave campus without authorization are subject to disciplinary action.

Communicable Diseases

The District, in conjunction with local health department officials, may exclude students who:

- Are suspected of having a communicable disease until a physician or local health department official determines the student is no longer a risk; or
- Lack documentation of immunity or are otherwise considered susceptible to a communicable disease until the local health department officials determine the risk of spreading the disease has passed.

Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, COVID-19, and other conditions indicated by the local and state health departments. Any removal will only be for the contagious period or as directed by the local health department.

Damage to School Property

Students who damage school property either intentionally or unintentionally may be subject to discipline and required to pay to replace or restore the property.

Dress and Grooming

In general, clothing should be clean and appropriate for the climate and the situation. Student dress, hair style, make up, cleanliness, or personal appearance that is a threat to the safety, health, or welfare of others; violates any statute, Policy 5101, or the Dress Code; or substantially disrupts the educational environment or that school officials reasonably forecast will substantially disrupt the educational environment, is grounds for remedial or disciplinary action.

The final decision in any situation involving inappropriate attire rests with building administrators.

Students who are dressed inappropriately will be asked to change clothing immediately. If necessary, parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing, students can use extra clothing provided by the District, or the student may be sent home to change. Repeated dress code violations may result in more severe consequences.

Dress Code

Hats, hoods and head coverings (except those worn for religious purposes) must be removed when entering the building. Tops must have straps or sleeves and must cover the student's entire torso from armpit to armpit. Pants, shorts, and skirts must have an inseam at least 4 inches in length. Clothing may not display material that:

- Is materially and substantially disruptive or that school officials can reasonably forecast will create a substantial disruption;
- Is obscene, sexually explicit, indecent, or lewd;
- Promotes the use of or advertises illegal substances, including but not limited to substances illegal for minors;

- Incites violence;
- Contains “fighting words”;
- Constitutes a true threat of violence;
- Demonstrates hate group association/affiliation or uses hate speech targeting groups based on their membership in a protected class; or
- Displays nipples, genitals, or buttocks.

Students who represent the District at an official or school-sponsored function or public event (e.g., athletic teams, bands, choirs, and other groups) may be required to follow specific dress requirements as a condition of participation or attendance.

Emergency Contact Information

Parents must provide emergency information for each student enrolled in the District. The information should include the family physician’s name, contact information for parents or a responsible adult, and any necessary emergency instructions. Parents must promptly inform the school if this contact information changes.

Fees

The District will not charge students a fee to participate in curricular activities. The District may charge students a fee to participate in extracurricular and non curricular activities to cover the District’s reasonable costs. The District may require students to furnish specialized equipment and clothing required for participation in extracurricular and non curricular activities or may charge a reasonable fee for the use of District-owned equipment or clothing. The activity’s coach or sponsor will provide students with information about the fees charged and the equipment or clothing required.

Food Services

Students that qualify for free and reduced lunch are encouraged to do so. This benefit helps ensure that all children eat breakfast and lunch. Studies have proven that eating breakfast and lunch increases mental, physical and emotional productivity. Forms are available online at www.lunchapp.com and all district offices.

Field Trips

Classes occasionally take field trips off school property for educational enrichment. Each student must submit a completed permission form signed by the student’s parent before being allowed to attend a field trip.

A student’s failure to comply with Board Policy, the Student Code of Conduct, or any other applicable rules or behavioral expectations while on a field trip may result in disciplinary action and removal or exclusion from the trip or future field trips.

Students who have not met academic or behavioral expectations may not be allowed to attend field trips.

First Aid, Illness, or Injury at School

Students who feel ill or are hurt while at school should seek immediate assistance from their classroom teacher or the nearest staff member.

When the building principal or designee determines that a student is too ill or injured to remain at school, school staff will contact the student's parent or other designated responsible adult to pick up the student from school. If the student requires immediate medical attention, the District will first attempt to contact a parent or other designated responsible adult when reasonably possible. If contact cannot be made, the building principal or designee will take any reasonable action necessary on the student's behalf, consistent with state law.

Students showing symptoms of a communicable disease may be sent home. The District may require a statement from a licensed physician or local health official before allowing the student to return to school.

Head Lice

A student with nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the scalp or live lice may remain at school until the end of the school day. The student will be restricted from activities that involve close head-to-head contact or sharing of personal items. The District will notify the student's parent and provide educational materials on head lice prevention and treatment.

The student will be readmitted to school after treatment so long as the parent consents to a head examination and the examining District official does not find live lice on the student. If the District official finds nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the student's scalp, the student may return to class, but the District must inform the student's parent about the need to remove the nits. District personnel will not ostracize or embarrass a student with lice or nits and will maintain student confidentiality.

If a student has a persistent infestation after 6 weeks or 3 separate cases within 1 school year, the District will form a team that may include the student's parents, teacher, social workers, or administrators to determine the best approach to resolve the issue.

Homeless Children and Youth

The District will provide a free public education to homeless children and youth who are in the District and will afford them the educational rights and legal protections provided by federal and state law. Homeless children and youth will not be stigmatized or segregated based on their homeless status and will have the same access to services offered to students who are not homeless.

A student or parent in a homeless situation who requires assistance should contact the District's homeless liaison:

Nancy DeForge
1603 Gundlach Rd, Houghton, MI 49931
(906)482-0450 ext. 1130
ndeforge@hpts.us

For detailed information about Homeless Children and Youth, see Policy 5307.

Immunizations

For a student entering the District for the first time or entering 7th grade, a parent must provide the building principal or designee with a certificate stating that the student has received at least 1 dose of an immunizing agent against each disease specified by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) or other responsible agency or documentation of an applicable approved exemption.

The student's parent must provide the certificate or documentation at the time of registration, or no later than the first day of school. A parent of a student who has not received all doses of any required immunizing agent must provide the District an updated immunization certificate demonstrating that the immunizations have been completed as required by the MDHHS. The updated certificate must be provided within 4 months of the student entering the District for the first time or upon entering 7th grade. The District will not permit a student to attend school unless the parent provides evidence of immunizations or exemptions consistent with Policy 5713 and state law.

Law Enforcement Interviews

Law enforcement officers may be called to the school at the request of school administration. Students may be questioned by law enforcement consistent with Policy 5201. Students may be questioned by school officials at any time, without parent notice or consent, consistent with the District's obligation to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.

Limited English Proficiency

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to a student's equal participation in the District's instructional or extracurricular programs. Those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular programs offered by the District.

Locker Use

Pursuant to Policy 5102, lockers are District property and may be made available for student use. Lockers are assigned to students on a temporary basis, and District administration may revoke a student's locker assignment at any time. The District retains ownership of lockers notwithstanding student use.

Students have no expectation of privacy in their lockers. The building principal or designee may inspect lockers without any particularized suspicion or reasonable cause and without advance notice. Upon the request of the building principal or designee, law enforcement may assist with searching lockers.

During a locker search, student privacy rights will be respected for any items that are not illegal or violate Board Policy or building rules.

Lockers will be inspected on a regular basis and appropriate fines assessed if they have been damaged or rigged. Please use magnetic holders to keep locker decorations in place. The outsides of the lockers are not to be decorated or written upon. Any type of adhesives, including tape or stickers are not permitted on the inside or outside of the lockers.

Students must keep all personal belongings including hats, coats, purses/fanny packs and backpacks in their locker for the school day.

Lost and Found

All lost and found items are to be taken to the middle school office or the designated PE bin. Students may claim lost articles there. Unclaimed items may be donated to a local charity or otherwise disposed of at the conclusion of each semester.

Media Center

Students must check out materials from the media specialist or designee on duty. Each borrower is responsible for all materials checked out in the borrower's name. A fine may be charged for overdue materials. Each student is responsible for any fine that accumulates on materials charged to the student. If materials are lost and not returned by the end of the semester, the student must pay for the replacement cost. Students must also pay for any damage they cause to materials.

Medication

Whenever possible, parents should arrange student medication schedules to eliminate the need for administration of medication at school. When a student requires prescription or over-the-counter medication at school, the following procedures apply:

- The student's parent must annually submit a written request and consent form as required by the District.
- A building principal or designee must request that the parent supply medications in the exact dosage required whenever feasible.
- The building principal or designee will notify the student's parent of any observed adverse reaction to medication.
- All medications must be in the original container.

For additional information and requirements, see Policy 5703.

Asthma Inhalers and Epinephrine Auto-Injectors/Inhalers

A student may possess and use an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector or inhaler with written approval from the student's healthcare provider and consistent with Policy 5703. A minor student must also have written permission from the student's parent. The required documentation must be submitted to the building principal or designee. If a student is authorized to self-possess or self-administer an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector or inhaler, the building principal or designee will notify the student's teachers and other staff as appropriate.

Additionally, the school must maintain a written emergency care plan drafted by a physician in collaboration with the student's parent. The emergency care plan will contain specific instructions related to the student's needs. The physician and parent should update the emergency care plan as necessary to address any changes in the student's medical circumstances.

Parties

Classes may have seasonal or curriculum-related parties during the year. Students must follow all expectations and rules established by the teacher or other relevant staff during the party. Invitations for private parties and non-school-sponsored events may not be distributed in the classroom.

Recess Rules

Students must follow classroom rules during recreation and lunch time when outdoors.

Students who violate these rules may be disciplined.

Staff will supervise students when the students use the playground or recess area during the school day or as part of a school activity. At all other times and circumstances, the District does not provide supervision of its playgrounds, equipment, or surrounding areas.

Protection of Pupil Rights

The District respects the rights of parents and their children and has adopted a Protection of Pupil Rights policy as required by law. The policy is available on the District's website or upon request from the District's administrative office. Parents may opt their child out of participation in activities identified by the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the Superintendent. Parents may have access to any survey or other material described in the Protection of Pupil Rights policy by submitting a written request to the Superintendent. A copy of the District's annual notice to parents regarding the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment is attached as Appendix C.

Public Display of Affection

Students may not engage in public displays of affection.

Rights of Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents

Unless a parent has provided the building principal or designee with a court order that provides otherwise, District personnel will treat each parent, regardless of custody or visitation rights, the same as to accessing student records, meeting and conferring with District personnel, visiting a child at school, and transporting a child to or from school. District personnel are not responsible for enforcing visitation or parenting time orders.

Parents, regardless of custodial status, will be provided information about conference times so both parents may attend a single conference. The District is not required to schedule separate conferences if both parents have been previously informed of scheduled conference times.

If either or both parents' behavior is disruptive, staff may terminate a conference and reschedule it with appropriate modifications or expectations.

Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline in school and protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student or the student's personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, athletic bag) as permitted by law and may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. As noted in "Locker Use," student lockers and desks are school property and remain at all times under the District's control. Student lockers and desks are subject to search at any time for any reason and without notice or consent.

School officials may use canines, metal detectors, wands, or other tools to conduct searches.

A student's failure to permit a search and seizure may be grounds for disciplinary action. A student's person and personal effects may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student possesses illegal or unauthorized materials. If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, these items may be turned over to law enforcement.

Student Education Records

The District may collect, retain, use, and disclose student education records consistent with state and federal law. See Policy 5309 for an overview of the District's collection, retention, use, and disclosure of student records.

Parents may inspect and review their minor child's education records, regardless of custody status, unless a court order specifies otherwise. An eligible student (i.e., a student who is 18 years or older or an emancipated minor) may also inspect and review their education records.

Right to Request Explanation or Interpretation

A parent or eligible student may request, in writing, an explanation or interpretation of a student's education records. School officials will respond to any reasonable request.

Right to Request Amendment of Education Records

A parent or eligible student may request that a student's education record be amended if the parent or eligible student believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights as explained in Policy 5309.

Directory Information

The District designates the following information as directory information:

- a. student names, addresses, and telephone numbers;
- b. photographs, including photographs and videos depicting a student's participation in school-related activities and classes;

- c. date and place of birth;
- d. major field of study;
- e. grade level;
- f. enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time);
- g. dates of attendance (e.g., 2013-2017);
- h. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- i. weight and height of athletic team members;
- j. degrees, honors, and awards received; and
- k. the most recent educational agency or institution attended.

School officials may disclose “directory information” without the prior written consent of a parent or eligible student unless the parent or eligible student specifically notifies the District that the parent or eligible student does not consent to the disclosure of the student’s directory information for 1 or more of the uses for which the District would commonly disclose the information.

A Directory Information Opt Out Form is attached to this handbook as Appendix D. This form allows the parent or eligible student to elect not to have the student’s directory information disclosed for 1 or more of the listed uses. Upon receipt of a completed Directory Information Opt Out Form, school officials may not release the student’s directory information for any of the uses selected on the form.

Technology

Use of District technology resources is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to use computers, the Internet, and other District technology resources for school-related educational purposes only. Students and their parents are required to sign and return the Acceptable Use Agreement attached as Appendix E before they may use or access District technology resources or indicate acknowledgement on the Annual Student Information Form at the start of the school year. Students who violate the District’s Acceptable Use Agreement may have technology privileges terminated or suspended and may be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

Transportation Services

School Vehicle Rules

Riding in school vehicles is a privilege, not a right. Students must comply with the following rules and all school conduct rules and directives while riding in school vehicles. In addition, students must comply with the Student Code of Conduct while in school vehicles.

When in school vehicles, the following rules apply:

1. Students must promptly comply with any directive given by the driver.
2. Students must wait in a safe place for the vehicle to arrive, clear of traffic and away from where the vehicle stops.
3. Students may not fight or engage in bullying, harassment, or horseplay while riding or waiting for school vehicles.
4. Students must enter the vehicle without crowding or disturbing others and go directly to a seat.
5. Students must remain seated and keep aisles and exits clear while the vehicle is moving.
6. Students may not throw or pass objects on, from, or into vehicles.
7. Students may not use profane language, obscene gestures, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any other controlled substance on the vehicles.
8. Students may not carry weapons, look-a-like weapons, hazardous materials, nuisance items, or animals onto the vehicle.
9. Students may converse in ordinary tones and volumes but may not be loud or boisterous and should avoid talking to the driver while the vehicle is moving. Students must be absolutely quiet when the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing and any time the driver calls for quiet.
10. Students may not open windows without the driver's permission. Students may not dangle body parts or other items (e.g., legs, arms, backpacks) out of the windows.
11. Students must secure any item(s) that could break or cause injury if tossed about the inside of the vehicle if the vehicle were involved in an accident.
12. Students must respect the rights and safety of others at all times.
13. Students must help keep the vehicle clean, sanitary, and orderly. Students must remove all personal items and trash upon exiting.
14. Students may not vandalize or intentionally cause damage to the vehicle.
15. Students may not leave or board the vehicle at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school unless approved prior to departure by the superintendent or designee.

Video cameras may be placed on vehicles and buses to monitor student behavior on the vehicle/bus. Exceptions or modifications to these rules may be made as necessary to accommodate a student with a disability.

School Vehicle Misconduct Consequences

Students who violate the school vehicle rules will be referred to the building principal for discipline. Disciplinary consequences may include parent notification, suspension of vehicle/bus riding privileges, exclusion from extracurricular activities, in-school suspension, and suspension or expulsion.

These consequences are not progressive and school officials have discretion to impose any listed consequence they deem appropriate in accordance with state and federal law and board policy.

Records of vehicle misconduct will be forwarded to the appropriate building principal and will be maintained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of serious misconduct may be reported to law enforcement.

Video Surveillance and Photographs

The District may monitor any District building, facility, property, bus, or vehicle with video recording equipment other than areas where a person has a legally recognized and reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g., restrooms and locker rooms). Except in those school areas, a person has no expectation of privacy.

The District may use video recordings for any lawful purpose, including student discipline, assisting law enforcement, or investigations.

Students may not make recordings: on school property; when on a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the District; or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event unless otherwise authorized by Policies 5210 or 5805, applicable law, or a District employee.

Withdrawal From School

Students who are transferring from the District must submit written notice to the building principal at least 1 week before the withdrawal.

SECTION II: ACADEMICS

To encourage students and parents to stay apprised of student academic information, grades, attendance, and other information can be accessed via PowerSchool.

PowerSchool can be accessed through the school website at: <http://www.hpts.us>, select the PowerSchool Access link.

Academic Awards

In order for a student to achieve honor roll designation the following criteria must be met:

- Students must possess a B or better (3.0) average. E's and incomplete grades disqualify students.
- All classes in grades 7-8 will be counted including Band, Chorus and Encore classes. All 6th grade classes will be counted except the Encore classes.
- Satisfactory and unsatisfactory grades will not be counted.

Students receiving an Incomplete (I) may qualify for the honor roll upon completion of missing work, but may not be published as such because of timing. Honor roll will be posted as follows: All A's (nothing less than straight A's or 4.0 GPA) and B or Better Average (3.000 GPA or above). Honor roll is calculated each semester. Students who have achieved a grade point average of 3.333-4.000 may be eligible to receive academic medals. Honor roll ribbons may be awarded to students with average of 3.000-3.332.

Dropping or Adding a Class

Students are asked to plan carefully for the next academic year so that the best possible schedule of classes can be devised. Schedule changes will only be permitted the first week of the 1st semester and the week prior to the start of the 2nd semester. The parent and counselor or principal must approve all changes.

Dual Enrollment

Students in grades 9 and above may be eligible to dually enroll in college classes to obtain high school and college credit. Please contact your assigned counselor for information about enrollment eligibility, charges paid by the District, eligible institutions, and other matters related to dual enrollment.

Grades

Grades, progress reports and student information may be accessed through PowerSchool. If you do not have computer access, please contact the middle school office. Teachers will post grades on PowerSchool at a minimum of twice per quarter (mid-quarter and at the end of the quarter.)

Report cards will be issued after quarter one. Semester and end of the year grades can be accessed through PowerSchool. Grades are calculated using the following grading scale:

Houghton Middle School uses the 4-point grading system to calculate academic grade points.

A 4.0	B- 2.67	D+ 1.333	I Incomplete
A- 3.67	C+ 2.333	D 1.0	O Outstanding
B+ 3.333	C 2.0	D- .067	S Satisfactory
B 3.0	C- 1.67	E 0	U Unsatisfactory

Homework

Classroom teachers may assign homework. Parents who have questions about homework or concerns about class work should contact their student's teacher.

Each student is expected to spend time preparing for classes outside of school hours. The amount of time that is needed will depend upon each student and each class.

Online Classes

The ability to take online courses will comply with the current Michigan laws. Students interested in this option must see a school counselor in the previous semester and complete an application prior to taking any course. Failure of an online course may deem a student ineligible for another online course.

Placement

The District has the sole discretion to make promotion, retention, and placement decisions for its students, consistent with state and federal law. The District may consider parent requests that a student be placed in a particular classroom, building, educational program, or grade. The District's placement decision is final.

Students with Disabilities

Eligible students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are entitled to a free appropriate public education. The District will follow state and federal law and applicable rules and regulations in identifying, locating, evaluating, and educating students with disabilities.

A parent who believes their student is eligible for special education or accommodations due to a disability or suspected disability should contact Kristen Rundman, middle school counselor (krundman@hpts.us) or Julie Filpus, middle school principal (jfilpus@hpts.us)

Summer School

Summer school plans for the 2023-34 school year are pending.

Testing Out

A student may test out of high school classes and earn credit. Students interested in testing out of a class should review Policy 5409 and make arrangements with their assigned counselor.

Students entering the 8th grade have the option to test out of PE/Health. PE/ Health, taught in the 8th grade, fulfills Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements for high school graduation. If a student desires to "test out" of this course, they need to have a plan for what class they will take if they are successful. One might test out of PE/ Health because they plan on taking band and choir and want a study hall.

Newly enrolled students entering the seventh grade may take a math exam to determine placement in Math 7 or Accelerated Math. Newly enrolled students entering the eighth grade may take a math exam to determine placement into Math 8 or Algebra 1. Math placement will be determined by the principal and math department.

Work Permits

Information about work permits is available at the middle school office.

SECTION III: STUDENT CLUBS, ACTIVITIES, AND ATHLETICS

Students are encouraged to participate in the various student clubs, activities, and athletics offered by the District.

For the 2023-2024 school year, the District offers the following student clubs, activities, and athletics:

- Math Team
- Yearbook Club
- Drama
- SnowBots - First Tech Challenge
- Other clubs determined by student interest and principal approval

A student's failure to comply with Policy, the Student Code of Conduct, or any other applicable rules or behavioral expectations while participating in or attending a student club, activity, or athletic competition, meeting, event, or practice, may result in disciplinary action.

Extracurricular Activities

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. Participation is open to students who meet the eligibility requirements established by the District and any applicable governing body.

The District has exclusive control over extracurricular activities including, but not limited to, formation, naming, structure, operation, financing, and discontinuance.

Student athletes are also subject to the Athletic Code of Conduct (see Appendix F) and any applicable team rules.

For more information, see Policy 5507.

Student-Initiated Non-Curricular Clubs

Students may voluntarily form clubs that are not directly related to the school curriculum to promote activities unrelated to curriculum. Membership in a student-initiated, non-curricular club must be open to all interested and eligible District students, and the club may not refuse membership to a student based on any protected classification under state or federal law.

For more information about student-initiated non-curricular clubs, including how to form a club, see Policy 5510.

Transportation To/From Extracurricular Activities

The District may provide transportation to students who participate in school-sponsored events. If District-provided transportation is available, students must ride to and from those events in a school vehicle unless otherwise excused by the activity sponsor.

SECTION IV: DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline Generally

The District may discipline students who engage in misconduct, up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

The District will take steps to effectively discipline students in a manner that appropriately minimizes out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. The District will comply with applicable laws related to student discipline, including the consideration of specific factors and possible use of restorative practices.

If an administrator determines that an emergency requires the immediate removal of a student from school, the administrator may contact the student's parent or local law enforcement or take other measures to have the student safely removed from school.

Students who are involved in extracurricular activities and engage in misconduct may face consequences related to the activity in addition to the consequences provided in this handbook.

The District reserves the right to refer to an appropriate non-school agency any act or conduct which may constitute a crime. The District will cooperate with those agencies in their investigations as permitted by law.

The District's rules and policies apply to any student who is on school property or school-affiliated transportation, who is in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity or function, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operation, discipline, or general welfare of the school, regardless of location, date, or time.

Forms of School Discipline & Applicable Due Process

Detention

Students may be assigned detentions by the principal or any member of the faculty. Detentions are for students with undesirable patterns of attendance, tardiness, or conduct, as well as other disciplinary problems. Students may be assigned a detention before school, lunch time or after school or as soon as possible following the offense. Parents will be notified of the problem prior to students serving a detention before or after normal school hours.

After-School Detention

Teachers and administrators may require students to stay after school to serve a detention when the student violates any of the rules contained in this handbook or violates classroom-specific conduct rules set by individual teachers.

Students who ride the bus home from school will be given a 24-hour notice of a detention so that parents may make transportation arrangements for the student the following day.

In-School Suspension

The building administrator may require a student to serve in-school suspension, during which students follow strict rules and must work on assignments the entire time, except for short breaks. Students not completing their In-School Suspension will face further disciplinary action.

Snap Suspension - Suspension from Class, Subject, or Activity by Teacher

A teacher may suspend a student from any class, subject, or activity for up to 1 full school day if the teacher has good reason to believe that the student:

- intentionally disrupted the class, subject, or activity;
- jeopardized the health or safety of any of the other participants in the class, subject, or activity; or
- was insubordinate during the class, subject, or activity.

Any teacher who suspends a student from a class, subject, or activity must immediately report the suspension and its reason to the building principal or designee. If a student is suspended from a class, subject, or activity, but will otherwise remain at school, the building principal or designee must ensure that the student is appropriately supervised during the suspension and, if the student is a student with a disability, that all procedures applicable to students with disabilities are followed.

Any teacher who suspends a student from a class, subject, or activity must, as soon as possible following the suspension, request that the student's parent attend a parent/teacher conference to discuss the suspension. The building principal or designee must attend the conference if either the teacher or the parent requests the building principal's attendance. The building principal or designee must make reasonable efforts to invite a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker to attend the conference.

Removal for 10 or Fewer School Days

Before a student is suspended for 10 or fewer school days, an administrator will: (1) provide the student verbal notice of the offense the student is alleged to have committed, and (2) provide the student an informal opportunity to respond and explain what happened. Except in emergency circumstances, an administrator will not suspend the student unless, after providing the student notice and an opportunity to explain, the administrator is reasonably certain that the student committed a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and that suspension is the appropriate consequence. The building administrator will consider the 7 factors provided in the Student Code of Conduct before suspending a student.

Removal for More than 10 and Fewer than 60 School Days

Before a student is suspended for more than 10 school days but less than 60 school days, the Superintendent or designee will provide the parent or student with: (1) written notice of the offense the student is suspected to have committed; (2) an explanation of the evidence relied upon by the District in arriving at the conclusion that disciplinary

action may be warranted; and (3) an opportunity for a hearing at which the student may present evidence and witnesses to show that the student did not commit the alleged offense or that suspension is not an appropriate consequence.

The Superintendent or designee will provide the parent or student at least 3 calendar days' notice before the hearing. The parent and student may be represented, at their cost, by an attorney or another adult advocate at the hearing.

The Superintendent or designee will not suspend the student unless, following the hearing, he or she is convinced by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and that suspension is the appropriate consequence. The Superintendent or designee will consider the 7 factors noted in the Student Code of Conduct before suspending a student.

A parent or student may appeal the Superintendent's or designee's decision to the Board. The appeal must be submitted to the Board within 3 calendar days of the decision. The Board will hear the appeal at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board's decision is final. The student's suspension will run while the appeal is pending.

Removal for 60 or More School Days

Before the Board suspends or expels a student, the Superintendent or designee must provide the parent or student with: (1) written notice of the offense the student is suspected to have committed; (2) an explanation of the evidence relied upon by the District in arriving at the conclusion that disciplinary action may be warranted; and (3) an opportunity for a Board hearing at which the student may present evidence and witnesses to show that the student did not commit the suspected offense or that suspension or expulsion is not an appropriate consequence.

The Superintendent or designee will provide the parent or student at least 3 calendar days' notice before the hearing. The parent and student may be represented, at their cost, by an attorney or another adult advocate at the hearing.

The Board will not suspend or expel the student unless, following the hearing, a majority of the Board finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed misconduct that should result in suspension or expulsion under either the Student Code of Conduct or Board Policy and that suspension or expulsion is the appropriate consequence. The Board will consider the 7 factors noted in the Student Code of Conduct before suspending or expelling a student. The Board's decision is final.

Student Code of Conduct

This Student Code of Conduct is meant to be a guide and is subject to the discretion of administration and the Board.

Administration will, as required or permitted by state law, always consider the use of restorative practices as an alternative to, or in addition to suspension or expulsion. Nothing in the following table limits the District's ability to impose more or less severe disciplinary consequences depending on the situation's unique circumstances and the following factors:

1. the student's age;
2. the student's disciplinary history;
3. whether the student has a disability;
4. the seriousness of the behavior;
5. whether the behavior posed a safety risk;
6. whether restorative practices will be used to address the behavior; and
7. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the behavior.

Nothing in this handbook limits the District's authority to discipline a student for conduct that is inappropriate in school, but that is not specifically provided in this table. Depending on the circumstances of a particular situation, separate athletic or extracurricular sanctions may be imposed, in accordance with the applicable handbook or rules.

Prohibited Conduct	Potential Consequence(s)
Illegal Substances or Paraphernalia, including Alcohol: possession, sale, attempted sale, distribution, attempted distribution, use, or attempted use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, illegal steroids, illegal inhalants, or look-alike drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative Practices ● Parent Notification ● Suspension or Expulsion ● Police Referral
Tobacco/Nicotine: possession, sale, attempted sale, distribution, attempted distribution, use, or attempted use of any form of tobacco, including vaping devices or supplies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative Practices ● Parent Notification ● Suspension or Expulsion ● Police Referral
Disruptive Behavior or Insubordination: disrupting the learning environment or school activity or violating a school rule or directive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative Practices ● Parent Notification ● Suspension or Expulsion
Dangerous Weapon Possession: firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over 3 inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restorative Practices ● Parent Notification ● Suspension or Permanent Expulsion ● Police Referral

<p>Other Weapons and Look-Alike Weapons Possession: an object that is not a “dangerous weapon,” including but not limited to a pellet or air-soft gun, a knife with a blade of 3 inches or less, items intended to look like a dangerous weapon, or similar items.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Permanent Expulsion • Police Referral
<p>Use of an Object as a Weapon: any object used to threaten or harm another, regardless of whether injury results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Permanent Expulsion • Police Referral
<p>Arson: purposefully, intentionally, or maliciously setting a fire on school property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Permanent Expulsion • Police Referral
<p>Physical Assault (Student to Student): causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through intentional use of force or violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion up to 180 school days • Police Referral
<p>Physical Assault (Student to Employee, Volunteer, or Contractor): causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through intentional use of force or violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Permanent Expulsion • Police Referral
<p>Verbal or Written Threat, including Bomb or Similar Threat: statement that constitutes a threat against a student, employee, other person, or school property.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion • Police Referral
<p>Plagiarism, Cheating, or other Falsification of Schoolwork: submitting work that is not your own, including copying from others’ work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Credit Loss or Grade Reduction • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion

Discrimination, Harassment (including Sexual Harassment), and Bullying: violating Board Policy addressing anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-bullying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion
Criminal Sexual Conduct: commits criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school grounds; or pleads to, is convicted of, or is adjudicated for criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the same school district; or commits criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the same school district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Permanent Expulsion • Police Referral
Fighting, Inciting Violence, Filming a Fight or Assault, Distributing or Publishing a Fight or Assault Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion
Sexting: distribution or publication of lewd, pornographic, or sexually suggestive videos or photographs of students or staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion • Police Referral
Misuse of District Technology: violating the District's acceptable use policies and agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative Practices • Parent Notification • Suspension or Expulsion • Police Referral

SECTION V: BUILDING-SPECIFIC RULES AND PROCEDURES

- Core Curriculum Guide
- Deliveries to Students
- Drop Off and Pick Up
- Hall pass rules
- Homework Request
- Use of office phone
- Visitors

CORE CURRICULUM GUIDE

	English	Science	Social Studies	Math
6th	Language Arts 6	Life, Physical and Earth	World Geography	Math 6
7th	English 7	Life, Physical and Earth	Ancient World History	Math 7 or Accelerated Math 7
8th	English 8	Earth Science	Integrated United States History	Math 8 or Algebra 1 (For high school credit)

Mapping Out the Math Curriculum Grades 6 – 12

	Option 1	Option 2
Grade 6	Math 6	Math 6
Grade 7	Math 7	Accelerated Math 7
Grade 8	Math 8/Intro. to Algebra	Algebra
Grade 9	Algebra	Geometry
Grade 10	Geometry	Algebra II
Grade 11	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus
Grade 12	Math related course	AP Calculus

Notes:

- Both options, if successfully completed, do prepare students for college Calculus.
- Students are required to take 4 years of Math to graduate.
- Because of this requirement, other High School Math options may be offered in addition to what is listed here.

Criteria used in choosing which curriculum to follow:

1. Recommendation of Math 6 Teacher (based on grades, timely completion of homework and attitude)
2. Scores on the M-STEP tests (Math and Reading) & FastBridge tests
3. End of Year Math 6 Assessment

A new student entering the district, wishing to take Accelerated or Algebra, will be required to take a math placement test.

Any high school courses taken in middle school will count for high school credit and GPA. The high school attendance policy applies to any high school courses taken.

DELIVERIES TO STUDENTS

With the exception of parent(s)/guardian(s) or permission from the principal, no “packages, presents, gifts, or goods of any kind will be accepted for delivery to any students.” Such items, if delivered to the school, will be retained in the school office, and the parents will be notified to pick up the item. The school will assume no liability for any such items lost or misplaced.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

Parents can drop their child(ren) off at the middle school entrance beginning at 7:45 am. All students must be picked up by 4:00 pm. Students remaining after school to loiter is unacceptable. Unless students are participating in a school activity, school staff will not provide supervision before or after these times.

HALL PASSES

Students leaving a classroom when classes are in session must possess a pass from a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Students found in the halls without a pass will be subject to disciplinary action. Students must go directly to the destination indicated on the pass

HOMework REQUEST

Daily homework assignments are posted on our website www.hpts.us for students in the sixth and seventh grades. Click on the Middle School link and select Homework. Worksheets may be picked up from the teacher upon the students' return. Homework assignments are posted on our website daily by 3:00 p.m. .

USE OF OFFICE PHONE

In case of emergency, students will be permitted to use the telephone in the middle school office. You must obtain permission from the office staff before using the telephone. Use of the phone in the principal's office will be limited to school related activities, medical and illness. Telephone messages from parents/guardians will be delivered to students when possible. No other messages will be taken by the school secretaries.

VISITORS

Students considering enrollment at Houghton Middle School and would like to visit, must make arrangements through the office at least 24 hours in advance. Students must check in with the office the day they will be visiting and provide guardian contact information. A current student will accompany the guest. The administration reserves the right to grant or deny any visitors

APPENDIX A: TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT

3118 Title IX Sexual Harassment

Consistent with Policy 3115, the District prohibits unlawful sex discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, in any of its education programs or activities in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and corresponding implementing regulations.

This Policy addresses allegations of Title IX sexual harassment that occurred on or after August 14, 2020. Allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation not covered by this Policy should be addressed under the District's applicable non-discrimination or anti-harassment policies. Allegations alleging both Title IX sexual harassment and other forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment (e.g., race, age, disability) that cannot be reasonably separated into two distinct complaints should be investigated under this Policy. Investigating other forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, through this Policy will fulfill the District's investigation requirements under Policies 4104 or 5202, but nothing in this paragraph limits the District's right to determine at any time that a non-Title IX allegation should be addressed under Policies 4104 or 5202 or any other applicable Policy.

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to designate one or more employees who meet the training requirements in Section M of this Policy to serve as the District's Title IX Coordinator(s). The Title IX Coordinator will designate an Investigator, Decision-Maker, and Appeals Officer, if applicable, for each Formal Complaint made under this Policy. If a Formal Complaint is made under this Policy against the Title IX Coordinator, the Board President will designate the persons who will serve as the Investigator, Decision-Maker, and Appeals Officer and will work with District administrators to ensure that all other requirements of this Policy are met.

The Investigator, Decision-Maker, Appeals Officer, and any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process cannot be the same person on a specific matter, and the persons designated to serve in those roles may or may not be District employees. Any person serving as the Investigator, Decision-Maker, Appeals Officer, or person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process must meet the training requirements in Section M of this Policy.

Inquiries about Title IX's application to a particular situation may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or both.

[Click here for the full policy.](#)

APPENDIX B: ANTI-BULLYING

5207 *Anti-Bullying Policy*

All types of bullying, including cyberbullying, without regard to subject matter or motivating animus, are prohibited.

[Click here for the full policy.](#)

APPENDIX C: PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS

5308 Protection of Pupil Rights

[Click here for the full policy.](#)

APPENDIX D: DIRECTORY INFORMATION AND OPT OUT FORM

5309 Student Records and Directory Information

The District may collect, retain, use, and disclose student education records consistent with state and federal law.

[Click here for the full policy.](#)

5309-F-2 Directory Information and Opt-Out

Student's Name: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that Houghton-Portage Township Schools obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records, unless certain conditions specified by FERPA are met. FERPA distinguishes between personally identifiable information and directory information, however, and the District may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without your written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary.

If you *do not* want your student's directory information released for one or more of the purposes listed below, please complete this form and return it to your student's school office by September 15.

If you fail to complete and return this form, the District will presume that you give permission to release your student's directory information for all the uses listed below.

Your Opt-Out request will be recorded in the student information system and kept on file in the school's office for 1 school year.

1. Directory information includes "Directory information" is the information contained in a student's education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The Board designates the following as directory information
 - a. student names, addresses, and telephone numbers;
 - a. photographs, including photographs and videos depicting a student's participation in school-related activities and classes;
 - b. date and place of birth;
 - c. major field of study;
 - d. grade level;
 - e. enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time);

-
- f. dates of attendance (e.g., 2013-2017);
 - g. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
 - h. weight and height of athletic team members;
 - i. degrees, honors, and awards received; and
 - j. the most recent educational agency or institution attended.
2. The Board further designates District-assigned student email addresses as directory information for the limited purposes of: (1) facilitating the student's participation in and access to online learning platforms and applications; and (2) inclusion in internal school and District email address books.

Please check the boxes next to the purpose(s) for which you *do not grant* the District permission to disclose your student's directory information, below.

Houghton-Portage Township Schools *may not* disclose my student's directory information for the following purposes:

- ☐ For School or District publications, including but not limited to, a yearbook, graduation program, theater playbill, athletic team or band roster, newsletter, and other school and district publications.
- ☐ For School or District auto-dialer system to communicate School or District information.
- ☐ To news media outside the School or District.
- ☐ To the School PTO or District parent organization.
- ☐ To other groups and entities outside of the School or District, including community, advocacy, and/or parent organizations.
- ☐ On official school-related websites or social media accounts.
- ☐ On school employees' personal classroom websites or social media accounts.

Information to U.S. Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education Recruiters

Federal law requires the District to release a secondary school student's name, address, and telephone number to U.S. Military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon their request. If you do not want your student's information released for one or both of those purposes, please check one or both of the boxes below:

- ☐ Do not release my student's name, address, or telephone number to U.S. Military recruiters without my prior written consent.

☐ Do not release my student's name, address, or telephone number to institutions of higher education recruiters without my prior written consent.

Parent/Guardian/Eligible Student Signature

Date

APPENDIX E: ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

3116 District Technology and Acceptable Use

The Board will provide students, staff, volunteers, and other authorized users access to the District's technology resources, including its computers and network resources, in a manner that encourages responsible use. Any use of District technology resources that violates federal or state law is expressly prohibited.

[Click here for the full policy.](#)

3116-F-2 Agreement for Acceptable Use of Technology Resources Middle School/High School

Houghton Portage Township Schools

Building/Program Name

User Name

This Agreement is entered into on: _____

This Agreement is between _____ ("Student" or "User")

and **Houghton Portage Township Schools** ("school").

The purpose of this Agreement is to grant access to and define acceptable use of the school's technology resources ("Technology Resources").

Technology Resources are any type of instrument, device, machine, equipment, technology, or software that is capable of transmitting, acquiring, or intercepting any telephone, electronic, data, Internet, audio, video, or radio transmissions, signals, telecommunications, or services and include without limitation: (1) internal and external network infrastructure, (2) Internet and network access, (3) computers, (4) servers, (5) storage devices, (6) peripherals, (7) software, and (8) messaging or communication systems.

In exchange for the use of the school's Technology Resources either at school or away from school, you understand and agree to the following:

- A. Your use of the school's Technology Resources is a privilege that may be revoked by the school at any time and for any reason.
- B. You have no expectation of privacy when using the school's Technology Resources. The school reserves the right to monitor and inspect all use of its Technology Resources, including, without limitation, personal email and voicemail communications, computer files, databases, web logs, audit trails, or any other electronic transmissions accessed, distributed, or used through the Technology Resources. The school also reserves the right to remove any material from the Technology Resources that the school, in its sole discretion, chooses to including, without limitation, any information that the school determines to be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, harassing, intimidating, disruptive, or that otherwise violates this Agreement.

- C. The Technology Resources do not provide you a “public forum.” You may not use the Technology Resources for commercial purposes or for political positions or candidates unless expressly authorized in advance by a teacher or administrator as part of a class project or activity. You may, however, use the Technology Resources to contact or communicate with public officials provided you follow all other rules.
- D. The school’s Technology Resources are intended for use only by registered users. You are responsible for your account/password and any access to the Technology Resources made using your account/password. Any damage or liability arising from the use of your account/password is your responsibility. Use of your account by someone other than you is prohibited and may be grounds for suspension from the Technology Resources and other disciplinary consequences for both you and the person(s) using your account/password. Likewise, using or accessing another person’s account is prohibited and may be grounds for suspension from the Technology Resources and other disciplinary consequences for both you and the person whose account or password you used or accessed.
- E. You may not use the Technology Resources to engage in bullying, including cyberbullying. Bullying and cyberbullying are defined as:

Any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely, to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health; or
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Use of other communication/messaging devices (including devices not owned by the school) to engage in bullying or cyberbullying may be grounds for discipline under the school’s student code of conduct.

- F. If you misuse the Technology Resources, your access to the Technology Resources may be suspended and you may be subject to other disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Misuse includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Accessing or attempting to access material that is “harmful to minors.” Material that is “harmful to minors” includes any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that: (1) taken as a whole and with respect to

- minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (2) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (3) taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
2. Accessing or attempting to access material that is unlawful, obscene, pornographic, profane, or vulgar.
 3. Accessing or attempting to access material that is inappropriate for minors. Material that is inappropriate for minors includes all material described in Sections F.1 and F.2 of this Agreement.
 4. Bullying and cyberbullying (as defined in paragraph E).
 5. Sexting, which includes, without limitation, possessing, sending, or distributing nude, sexually explicit, or sexually suggestive photographs, videos, or other visual depictions of yourself or another person.
 6. Vandalism, which includes, without limitation, any malicious or intentional attempt to harm, steal, destroy, or disrupt user data, school material, or school hardware or software.
 7. Hacking, which includes, without limitation, gaining or attempting to gain access to, modifying, or obtaining copies of information belonging to others or information you are not authorized to access.
 8. Unauthorized copying or use of licenses or copyrighted software.
 9. Plagiarizing, which includes the unauthorized distributing, copying, using, or holding out as your own, material that was written or created by someone else, without permission of, and attribution to, the author/creator.
 10. Posting or distributing confidential or inappropriate information meant to harass, intimidate, or embarrass others.
 11. Allowing someone else to use your account or password or not preventing unauthorized access to Technology Resources when leaving them unattended.
 12. Using or soliciting the use of or attempting to use or discover the account information or password of another user.
 13. Attempting to or successfully disabling security features, including technology protection measures required under the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").
 14. Misusing equipment or altering system software without permission.

15. Commercial for-profit activities, advertising, political lobbying, or sending mass mailings or spam. You may contact a public official, however, to express an opinion on a topic of interest.
 16. Copying, recording, or sharing any information received or obtained via the school's Technology Resources that includes personally identifiable information about any other student including, without limitation, videos, audio, documents, or other records that identify another student by name, voice, or likeness.
 17. Using the Technology Resources in any way that violates any federal, state, or local law or rule, Policy, or the school's codes of conduct, or student handbooks.
- G. You must promptly disclose to your parent/guardian or teacher any content you view or receive over the Technology Resources that is inappropriate or that makes you feel uncomfortable, harassed, threatened, or bullied, or that contains sexually explicit content. You should not delete such content until instructed to do so by a school employee.
 - H. It is the policy of the school, as a recipient of certain federal funds, to monitor the online activities of its minor students and provide technology protection measures on its computers with Internet access designed to prevent minors from accessing visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors.
 - I. It is the policy of the school to prohibit its minor students from: (1) accessing inappropriate matter on the Internet; (2) engaging in hacking or other unlawful online activities; and (3) accessing materials that are harmful to minors. It is also the policy of the school to educate students about cyberbullying awareness and response and about appropriate online behavior, including disclosing, disseminating, or using personal information and safely and appropriately interacting with other individuals in social networking websites, chat rooms, by email, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
 - J. The school does not guarantee that measures described in paragraphs H and I will provide any level of safety or security or that they will successfully block all inappropriate material from the school's students. You agree that you will not intentionally engage in any behavior that was intended to be prevented by paragraphs H and I.
 - K. The school does not warrant or guarantee that its Technology Resources will meet any specific requirement or that they will be error free or uninterrupted; nor will the school be liable for any damages (including lost data, information, or time) sustained or incurred in connection with the use, operation, or inability to use the Technology Resources.
 - L. You will return all Technology Resources to the school in good working order immediately on request.

M. You are responsible for the proper use of the Technology Resources and will be held accountable for any damage to or replacement of the Technology Resources caused by your inappropriate use.

I agree to follow this Agreement and all rules and regulations that may be added from time to time by the school or its Internet Service Provider. I also agree to follow all rules in the applicable student code of conduct and handbook. As a condition of using the Technology Resources, I agree to release the school and its board members, agents, and employees, including its Internet Service Provider, from all liability related to my use or inability to use the Technology Resources.

I understand that data I send or receive over the Technology Resources is not private. I consent to having the school monitor and inspect my use of the Technology Resources, including any electronic communications that I send or receive through the Technology Resources.

I have read this Acceptable Use Agreement and agree to its terms.

Student Signature

Date

I have read this Agreement and agree that as a condition of my child's use of the Technology Resources, I release the school and its board members, agents, and employees, including its Internet Service Provider, from all liability related to my child's use or inability to use the Technology Resources. I also indemnify the school and its board members, agents, and employees, including its Internet Service Provider, for any fees, expenses, or damages incurred as a result of my child's use, or misuse, of the school's Technology Resources.

I authorize the school to consent to the sharing of information about my child to website operators as necessary to enable my child to participate in any program, course, or assignment requiring such consent under the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.

I understand that data my child sends or receives over the Technology Resources is not private. I consent to having the school monitor and inspect my child's use of the Technology Resources, including any electronic communications that my child sends or receives through the Technology Resources.

I agree that I will not copy, record, or share, or allow my child to copy, record, or share, any information sent to my child via the school's Technology Resources that includes personally identifiable information about any other child including, without limitation, videos, audio, or documents that identify another student by name, voice, or likeness.

I agree that my child will return all Technology Resources to the school in good working order immediately on request and that I am responsible for any damage to the Technology Resources beyond normal wear and tear.

I understand and agree that my child will not be able to use the school's Technology Resources until this Agreement has been signed by both my child and me.

I have read this Acceptable Use Agreement and agree to its terms.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

cc: parent/guardian, student file

APPENDIX F: ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in Houghton-Portage Township School's (the "District") athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are students first. When participating in District athletics, student-athletes are District representatives and are held to the highest standards. Accordingly, this Athletic Code of Conduct applies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Student-athletes and parents should be familiar with this Athletic Code of Conduct. By participating on any school-sponsored athletic team both student-athletes and parents agree to abide by these terms and by those defined in the HPTS Student Athlete Handbook.

[Click here to view the full HPTS Student Athlete Handbook](#)

Athletic Director: Rob Fay

906-482-0450 ext 1070

rfay@hpts.us

Available Sports

Cross Country, Basketball, Soccer, Football, Volleyball, Track

Communication Protocol

The District has full faith in its coaches to make decisions that are in the best interest of their teams. If parents have questions or concerns about their student-athletes' sports participation, use the following protocol:

1. Wait 24 hours before contacting the coach.
2. Schedule a time to speak with the coach, either via phone or in-person, at the coach's discretion.
3. If the issue is unresolved, schedule a time to speak with the Athletic Director, either via phone or in-person, at the Athletic Director's discretion.

Concussion Protocol

The District will comply with the concussion protocol in Policy 5712.

Athletic Code of Conduct

A student-athlete must:

1. Learn and understand the rules and regulations of your sport.
2. Unless otherwise approved by your coach, if school is in session, attend school for the full day to be eligible to practice or play in an event on the same day.

3. Comply with the law, Board Policy, the Student Code of Conduct, the Athletic Code of Conduct, and all team rules. Failure to comply with this provision may result in suspension or removal from a team.
4. Not possess, use, or consume alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, nicotine (including a vape), or controlled substances (other than those prescribed by a physician for the student-athlete).
5. Not engage in conduct that is unbecoming of student-athletes.
6. Maintain academic eligibility as required by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the HPTS Student Athlete Handbook.
7. Notify your coach or District athletic trainer of any injury or medical condition that may affect your athletic participation.

If a student-athlete violates any provision of the Athletic Code of Conduct, practice, game, team, or complete athletic suspension may result. Any disciplinary consequences will be at the sole discretion of the Athletic Director or designee.

If a student-athlete is suspended or expelled from school, the student-athlete is prohibited from participating in any practice or game during the suspension or expulsion.