

# Homer Intermediate School

## Handbook for Students and Parents

2023-2024



Homer Intermediate School  
P.O. Box 500, 58 Clinton Street  
Homer, NY 13077-0500  
School Phone: 607-749-1240  
[www.homercentral.org](http://www.homercentral.org)



# Homer Intermediate School

## Handbook for Students and Parents

Dear Parent/Student:

It is my pleasure to welcome you and your parents to the Homer Intermediate School. The teachers and staff all join in saying we are happy to have you as part of the Intermediate School family.

We are using this handbook as a means of communicating between the home and school. There are many policies, regulations, and services discussed in these pages. Please read and keep this handbook readily available throughout the year.

Many of your questions have been anticipated and are discussed in some detail. We are always available to clarify any school matter. The telephone numbers listed for key staff members will prove helpful. Do not hesitate to use them.

Close cooperation between the home and school is essential to promote the best interests of the child. Parents are encouraged to visit school and to attend scheduled meetings of parents and teachers.

Please feel free to contact the school with any questions you may have concerning the material included in the handbook.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Stephanie J. Falls, Principal

### Vision Statement

**PRIDE—Partnerships, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence**—is the foundation for the Homer Central School District.

**Partnerships** promote collaboration among students, staff, families, and the community to support student learning.

**Respect** grows through mutual kindness, compassion for others, and the development of strong moral character in a student-centered environment.

**Integrity** guides our actions so that they are honest, open, and fair.

**Diversity** enriches our opportunities to create multiple pathways for learning and to foster independent intellectual growth.

**Excellence** through rigorous learning experiences empowers students to become critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, and responsible citizens.

### Mission Statement

The Homer Central School District is committed to excellence for all students. Our mission is to graduate responsible and productive citizens who embrace life-long learning. We work together as a team of dedicated, effective, and well-supported professionals to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment.

### Homer Central School 2023-2024 Calendar

September	4	Labor Day (no school)
	5	Superintendent's Conference Day
	6	First Day of School
October	9	Columbus Day (no school)
	13	Superintendent's Conference Day
	27	15-Minute Early Release Drill
November	9	K-8 Parent/Teacher Conference Day
	10	Veteran's Day (no school)
	22-24	Thanksgiving Recess
December	25-29	Holiday Recess (no school)
January	1	Holiday Recess (no school)
	2	Classes Resume
	15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (no school)
	26	Shortened Instructional Day <b>(half day for students)</b>
February	19-23	Winter Recess
	26	Classes Resume
March	15	Superintendent's Conference Day
	29	Good Friday (no school)
April	22-26	Spring Recess
May	24	No School
	27	Memorial Day
June	19	Juneteenth (no school)
	Regents Exams	
	26	Rating Day /Last day for staff

# District Directory

## Homer Intermediate School

Office.....607 749-1240  
Nurse .....607 749-1132

## Central Administration and Support Services

District Office .....607 749-7241  
*Mr. Thomas Turck,*  
*Superintendent of Schools*  
*Mr. Michael Falls,*  
*Assistant Superintendent for Management*

Office of Evaluation and Instruction.....607 749-1206  
*Mr. Jeffrey Evener,*  
*Assistant Superintendent for Instruction*  
*Ms. Kendra Chambers,*  
*Registrar*

Athletic Office .....607 749-1213  
*Mr. Todd Lisi,*  
*Director of Physical Education and Athletics*

Building & Grounds.....607 749-1234  
*Mr. Scott Cavellier,*  
*Assistant Director of Facilities III*

Cafeteria Office.....607 749-1216  
*Mrs. Joan Redfield,*  
*School Lunch Manager*

Special Education Office .....607 749-1226  
*Mr. Christopher Moore,*  
*Administrator for Special Education*

Transportation Office.....607 749-3873  
*Ms. Jenn Fox,* or 7607 49-1221  
*Transportation Supervisor*

Technology Office.....607 749-1010  
*Mr. Joshua Finn,*  
*Director of Technology*

## Homer Elementary School

Mr. Douglas Pasquerella  
Mrs. Erin Hammes.....607 749-1250

## Homer Junior High

Mrs. Kara Schneider.....607 749-1230

## Homer High School

Mr. Douglas Van Etten  
Mr. James McGory.....607 749-7246

## Homer Central School Board of Education

Mr. Aaron Bouwens,  
*President*  
Mr. Eddie Maslin  
*Vice President*

Mr. Charles Tummino

Mr. K.C. Slade

Mrs. Emily Olsenwik

Mrs. Amy Kida

Mr. John Lawrence

Mrs. Meghan Gilbert

Ms. Jessica White

Further contact information is available on the Homer Central School District website.

# 2023-2024 Homer Intermediate School Faculty And Staff

## OFFICE

**Mrs. Stephanie Falls** ..... **Principal**

Mrs. Ahren Morse..... Secretary/Bookkeeper

Mrs. Tiffany Walrath ..... Office Clerk

Officer David VanOrden..... School Resource Officer

## SUPPORT STAFF

Mrs. Lori Schmidt..... School Psychologist

Mrs. Kelley Brown..... School Social Worker

Mrs. Jennie Guy..... Instructional Coach

Mrs. Kimberly Carmichael..... School Nurse

Ms. Michele Carpenter..... School Nurse

Mrs. Victoria Thornton..... Speech and Lang. Pathologist

Mr. Matthew Hartl..... Occupational Therapist

Mr. Ben Bowers..... Adapted Physical Education

Dr. Carrie Finn ..... Physical Therapist

Ms. Stefanie Fellows..... Family Counseling Services

Mrs. Lisa Matijas ..... Community Liaison

## GRADE 3

Mrs. Samantha Alm

Mrs. Jennifer Berthelot

Mrs. Kristen Cinquanti

Mr. Robert DePuy

Miss Erin Fieldhouse

Mrs. Lisa Higgins

Mrs. Morgan Seibel

Mrs. Inna Soloviov

Miss Naomi Streeter

## GRADE 4

Mrs. Roxanne Crumb

Mrs. Rebecca Fernandez

Mrs. Amanda Jackson

Mrs. Jacquelyn Lingurovski

Mrs. Deborah Nelson

Mrs. Kate Pitcher

Mr. Alex Rosato

Mrs. Meghan Stone

## GRADE 5

Ms. Megan DeCarlo

Ms. Kate Fulton

Mrs. Jaclyn Giamichael

Mrs. Micheala Gordon

Mrs. Amber LeFever

Mrs. Brianna Murphy

Mrs. Heather Slade

Mr. Tim Whelan

Mrs. Erika Withers

## SPECIAL AREA TEACHERS

Ms. Michelle Matteson..... Instructional Music

Ms. Jessica Nistad . .... Vocal Music

Mr. CJ Nye..... Physical Education

Mrs. McKenna L'Hommedieu .... Physical Education

Mrs. Katie Totman... .... Librarian

Mrs. Julie Burhans... .... Reading

Mrs. Connie Martin .. .... Reading

Mrs. Jeanne Stevens..... Reading

Ms. Staci Schaffer ... .... ENL

## TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Mrs. Elizabeth Congdon

Mrs. Lisa Jones

Mrs. Dee Dee Gallagher

Ms. Emma Morgan

Mrs. Candie Ostrander - Reading Materials Facilitator

Ms. Reilly Record

Mrs. Pamela Russell

Miss Hannah Stupke

Mrs. Erin Voorhees

Mrs. Sherri Williams

## MAINTENANCE STAFF

Mr. John Henderson

Mr. Mark Coon

# Daily Information

## School Day

8:30..... Students may enter building  
8:50.....Announcements/Attendance  
9:00..... Classes begin  
3:20-3:45..... Dismissal

## Emergency School Closings

When schools are closed because of weather conditions or other emergencies, early morning announcements will be made over the following radio and television stations:

**District Website:** [www.homercentral.org](http://www.homercentral.org)

### Radio:

*WKRT (920 AM), WHEN (620 AM),  
WSYR (570 AM), WHCU (870 AM),  
WSEN (92.1FM), WSKG (91.1 FM),  
WXHC (101.5 FM), WTKO (1470 AM),  
WNTQ (93.1 FM)*

### Television:

*WIXT (Channel 9),  
WSTM (Channel 3), WTVH (Channel 5),  
News Channel 10*

## Text/Email: Parent Square

On certain rare occasions, emergency conditions such as impending storms, etc., may necessitate dismissal of students before regular school closing time. In such an event, efforts will be made to have the emergency closing announced on the radio and television stations listed above.

In order to ensure that your child will be properly cared for if no one is at home, please make arrangements at the beginning of the school year so that your child will be assured of shelter when arriving home. Please be sure to carefully explain all of these arrangements to your child; especially if there is inclement weather in the local weather forecast.

When dangerous road conditions exist, we will make every attempt to return the students as close to their regular bus stop as possible.

Parents should be aware of what procedures their children would be following in the above events. We will use the information provided by you on the **Early Pupil Dismissal Form** sent home at the beginning of the school year.

***If school is cancelled/delayed, the YWCA Child Care Program will also be cancelled/delayed.***

## Home/School Communications

A strong home/school relationship is vital to help ensure the academic/social-emotional success of your child. At the Intermediate School we attempt to maintain an open line of communication by using the following methods:

1. weekly newsletters
2. telephone calls, notes home, e-mail
3. Parent Square
4. parent-teacher conferences
5. District website

Each staff member has regular access to e-mail, which can be an effective mechanism to maintain regular dialogue between teachers and families. To locate your child's teacher's e-mail please go to the Homer District Website at **[www.homercentral.org](http://www.homercentral.org)**, click on the Intermediate School page and find our staff directory icon. Teachers are expected to respond to any e-mail within 24 hours. **Please do not ask teachers to email confidential information.**

## Limited Visitor Policy/Parent Sign In

Any person authorized to enter the building during school hours must report to the secure entrance to sign in, show appropriate identification, and receive a visitor's pass. **All visitors must be prepared to show photo identification.** It is expected that school personnel will question anyone seen in the building without a visitor's pass and employee escort. To ensure the safety of students and staff, all doors to the building are locked.



## Parent Organizations

### School Community Association (SCA)

The Homer Intermediate School Community Association is designed to help promote a sense of community within the school walls by sponsoring a number of projects that help bring families and staff together. Some of the activities include assemblies, Family Movie Night, book fairs, and much more.

Each year, countless volunteers help to carry out the duties necessary to ensure successful community activities. If you are interested in becoming more actively involved with any one of the SCA sanctioned events, please call the main office at 749-1240.

### Shared Decision Making Team and Other Leadership Committees

The Homer Intermediate School offers many opportunities to be part of committees comprised of both parents and school personnel. Our school strongly believes in the need for teamwork, between school and home, if we are going to be successful in providing children with the best program possible.

Committee members are expected to be an active participant, attend scheduled meetings, and volunteer for sub-committees. If you are interested in becoming a part of our decision making groups, please call the main office at 749-1240.

## Dignity for All Students Act

On June 18, 2012, the New York State Senate and Assembly passed the "Dignity for All Students Act." In keeping with the law, our handbook has updated the definitions for 'harassment' and 'bullying,' including cyberbullying. More detailed language on the "Dignity for All Students Act" can be found in The Homer Code of Conduct Manual on our district webpage. You can also request a copy of this at our building's main office.

The significant changes included in the update are an updated definition of harassment, contained in Education Law 11 (7). The new definition is for "harassment" and "bullying," and specifies that it applies to cyberbullying. The new definition maintains, with slight modifications, language about "the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or threats, intimidation or abuse" which (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's education performance, opportunities or well-being; or (b) reasonable causes or would reasonable be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The definition also adds two new categories which prohibit similar conduct that "9c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student" or "(d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property." The amendment also adds Education Law 11 (8) which defines cyberbullying to include all behaviors described in Education Law 11 (7) (a)-(d), "where the harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication."

**PRIVACY:** The Homer Central School District respects every student's right to privacy as well as their right to access and use the District's facilities in a manner consistent with their gender identity. While the District will make arrangements for students to use the bathrooms and changing facilities of the gender with which they identify, the District also provides private spaces in the form of gender neutral facilities in single stall bathrooms for changing for any student desiring privacy or for any other permissible reason.

The Dignity Act Coordinator for the Homer Intermediate School is Mrs. Stephanie Falls.

# Student's Rights and Responsibilities

With every right comes a responsibility.

## It is the student's right:

- To attend school in the District in which one's parent or legal guardian resides.
- 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 respected as an individual.
- To express one's opinions verbally or in writing.
- To dress in such a way as to express one's personality.
- To be afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities.
- 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 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 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.

## It is the student's responsibility:

- 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 be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior, and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines.
- To respect one another, and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
- To express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict the rights and privileges of others.
- 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 aware of available educational programs in order to use and develop one's capabilities to their maximum.
- 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 be aware of the information and services available and to seek assistance in dealing with personal problems, when appropriate.
- 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.



# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

## PARENTS

All parents are expected to:

- Recognize that the education of their child is a joint responsibility of parents and the educational community.
- Send their child to educational programs ready to participate and learn as required by NYS Law and in accordance with the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy (#7110). Ensure their child attends class regularly, on time, and that absences are for legal reasons as outlined in the student handbook.
- Insist their child be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
- Help their child understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
- Build good relationships with other parents and their child's friends.
- Demonstrate civility and use appropriate language at all times.
- Know Homer Central School rules and help their child understand them.
- Convey to their child a supportive attitude toward education and toward Homer Central School.
- Enhance relationships with teachers and administrators by participating in school functions such as Open House and parent-teacher conferences.
- Help their child deal effectively with peer pressure.
- Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
- Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
- Report potentially unsafe situations to a staff member, even if done anonymously.

## PARENTS, continued:

- Teach their children respect and dignity for themselves and other students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen the child's confidence and promote learning in accordance with the Dignity for All Students.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of Homer Central School when participating in or attending Homer Central School-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct.

## TEACHERS

All Homer Central School District staff shall conduct themselves in a professional manner, performing all duties in their job descriptions, as applicable, and are expected to:

- Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn. Professional demeanor will be demonstrated by the use of appropriate language at all times.
- Be well prepared to teach each day and demonstrate a concern for the educational development and achievement of each student.
- Know Homer Central School policies and rules and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Communicate the following to students and parents: course objectives and requirements, marking/grading procedures, assignment deadlines, expectations for students, classroom discipline plan, and the importance of attending parent/student conferences and Open House.
- Communicate regularly with students, parents, and other teachers concerning student growth, achievement, behavior, and well-being.

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

## TEACHERS, cont:

- Confront issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee, or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- Promote a safe, orderly, and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Dress appropriately for school and Homer Central School District functions.
- Be approachable with any problem by any student, parent, or community member, regardless of how large or small.
- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- Attend teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent-teacher/student counselor conferences as a way to solve problems.
- Regularly review with students their educational progress and encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
- Report potentially unsafe situations to the appropriate administrator.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed, or otherwise brought to a teacher's attention, to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality concerning students in their charge and share personal information only on a "need to know" basis.
- Conduct themselves as representatives of the HCSD when participating in or attending Homer Central School sponsored extracurricular events.

## SCHOOL COUNSELORS

- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- Initiate and appropriately document teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/ teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to resolve problems.
- Regularly review with the students their educational progress, career plans, and graduation requirements.
- Provide information to assist students with career planning.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
- Coordinate Intervention Support Services, as needed, with students, parents, Building Principal, and teachers.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed, or otherwise brought to the counselor's attention, to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

## SUPPORT SERVICE PERSONNEL

- Support educational and academic goals.
- Know school rules, abide by them, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- Set a good example for students and colleagues by demonstrating dependability, integrity, and other standards of ethical conduct.
- Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

## SUPPORT SERVICE PERSONNEL, cont:

- Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences, parent/teacher conferences, and student/counselor conferences, as necessary or requested, as a way to resolve problems and communicate as necessary in any other manner with parents and other staff regarding student progress and needs.
- Provide information to assist students with career planning.
- Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plan.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular programs.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

## OTHER DISTRICT STAFF

- Follow the Code of Conduct; know, abide by, and enforce school rules in a fair and consistent manner.
- Set a good example for students and other staff by demonstrating dependability, integrity, and other standards of ethical conduct.
- Assist in promoting a safe, orderly, and stimulating school environment.
- Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.

- Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed, or otherwise brought to a staff member's attention, to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) in a timely manner.

## ADMINISTRATORS

All Administrators are expected to:

- Ensure that students, staff, and parents have the opportunity to communicate regularly with administrators and approach them to review grievances.
- Evaluate on a regular basis instructional programs for which they have responsibility.
- Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
- Be responsible for enforcing the code of conduct and ensure that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
- Investigate unsafe situations promptly and take appropriate actions based upon the findings of the investigation.
- Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- Follow up on any incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed, or otherwise brought to the Principal's attention, in a timely manner in collaboration with the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC).

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

## SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent is expected to:

- Promote a safe, orderly, and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- Review with district administrators the policies of the Board of Education along with state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
- Inform the Homer Central School Board about educational trends relating to student discipline.
- Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- Work with district administrators in enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
- Report annually to the Board of Education violent incident information submitted to the State.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education is expected to:

- Collaborate with students, teachers, administrators, parents, Homer Central School safety staff, and other Homer Central School staff to develop a code of conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, Homer Central School staff, and visitors on Homer Central School property and at Homer Central School functions.
- Adopt and review, at least once each year, the Homer Central School code of conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness, fairness, and consistency of its implementation.
- Appoint a Dignity Act Coordinator in each school building. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/ gender identity, and sex. The Dignity Act Coordinator will be accessible to students and other staff members for consultation and advice as needed on the Dignity Act.
- Lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful, and courteous manner.

In accordance with Section 86.0 of the regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, you are hereby notified that the Homer Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and this policy includes the following areas: Counseling services for students; access by students to educational programs, course offerings and student activities; recruitment and appointment of employees; employment pay and benefits.

## Pledge of Allegiance

- Students have a constitutional right not to participate in the pledge of allegiance.
- Students are expected to display respect during the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- As long as the student is not infringing upon the rights of others and is not being disruptive, the student should not be treated differently from those students that choose to participate.
- Students should be allowed to remain quietly seated and should not be criticized, sent to the hallway, ordered to stand, threatened or punished due to not standing.
- The students' parents should not be contacted regarding their participation or nonparticipation in the pledge. The Constitutional right belongs to the student.

# Student Discipline Code

The Board of Education expects students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, Homer Central School staff, and for the care of Homer Central School facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility and consequences for their own behavior. Homer Central School staff who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct, while on Homer Central School property or engaged in a Homer Central School-sponsored function, specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including permanent suspension from Homer Central School programs, when they:

## 1. Engage in Disorderly Conduct, including but not limited to:

- Running in hallways,
- Making unreasonable noise,
- Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive,
- Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic,
- Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the HCSD community,
- Trespassing,
- Misusing computer/electronic communications devices,
- Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices/equipment.

## 2. Bullying and Harassment

Bullying/harassment, real or perceived, is understood to be

the creation of a hostile environment that has, or would have, the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's: educational performance, opportunities or benefits; or mental, physical or emotional well-being. Bullying may be subtle or easy to identify. Refer to HSC Policy Manual #7550 for definition.

**Verbal bullying:** which includes but is not limited to:

- Name calling, insulting remarks,
- Verbal teasing, frightening phone calls,
- Violent threats, extortion, taunting,
- Gossip, spreading rumors, racist slurs, anonymous notes, etc.

**Physical bullying:** which includes but is not limited to:

- Poking, slapping, hitting,
- Tripping or causing a fall,
- Choking, kicking, punching, biting, pinching, scratching, spitting,
- Twisting arms or legs,
- Damaging clothes and personal property, taking personal belongings without permission, threatening gestures.

**Social bullying:** which includes but is not limited to:

- Excluding someone from a group, isolating, shunning,
- Spreading rumors or gossiping,
- Arranging public humiliation,
- Undermining relationships, teasing.

**Cyberbullying:** A form of harassment/bullying which occurs via electronic communication on the Internet, on cellular phones, or other electronic media.

Cyberbullying involving District students may occur both on campus and off school grounds, and may involve student use of the District internet system or student use of personal digital devices including but not limited to: cell phones, digital cameras, personal computers, electronic tools.

# Student Discipline Code, cont.

Cyberbullying or harassment has, or could have, the effect of:

- Causing physical, social/relational, emotional, or mental harm to a student,
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm,
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to, or loss, of personal property, or
- Interfering with a student's educational performance and/or denying or limiting a student's ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities in the school's programs.

### 3. Harassment

Harassment in any form will not be tolerated.

**Bias Harassment** - The act of threatening bodily harm or by repeatedly tormenting another person based on the victim's race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression). Bias harassment may take the form of comments, jokes, name-calling, innuendoes, offensive conversations, perpetuating rumors or gossip, offensive gestures, noises, blocking a victim's path, assault, or any other behavior that is designed to show disrespect to an individual based on the categories listed above.

**Sexual Harassment** is unwelcome sexual behavior that makes a person feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Examples of sexual harassment are:

#### **Verbal (Unwanted and Unwelcome):**

- Comments about body parts or rating someone's body,
- Sexual suggestions or threats,
- Spreading sexual rumors or stories,
- Sexual jokes,
- Conversations that are too personal,
- Insulting comments about sexual orientation,

#### **Visual (Unwanted and Unwelcome):**

- Staring or pointing at a person's body in a way that is too personal,
- Displaying obscene sexual material or placing it in someone's locker or computer,
- Writing a person's name along with sexual remarks, suggestions, or drawings in public places,
- Making obscene gestures.

#### **Physical (Unwanted and Unwelcome):**

- Grabbing or touching in a sexual way,
- Tearing or pulling at a person's clothing,
- Purposely bumping or brushing against someone,
- Kissing or holding a person against his or her will,
- Preventing someone from moving freely.

People sometimes confuse sexual harassment with flirting. If you are unsure about the effect of your behavior on another, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I making the person uncomfortable?
2. Would I do the same things in front of a parent, a teacher, or others I respect?

### 4. Insubordination

i.e. failing to comply with the lawful directions of a teacher, school administrator, or other school employee in charge of the student.

### 5. Endangering the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others by any act, including but not limited to:

- a. Selling, using, or possessing alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia,
- b. Selling, using, or possessing weapons, fireworks, or other dangerous instruments or contraband,
- c. Selling, using, or possessing obscene materials,
- d. Using profane, vulgar, or abusive language (including ethnic slurs),
- e. Possessing tobacco in any form, including vaping, smokeless, or electronic cigarettes/Juuls,
- f. Gambling,
- g. Hazing, or
- h. Engaging in lewd behavior

# Student Discipline Code, cont.

## 6. Engaging in academic misconduct including:

- a. Lateness for missing or leaving school or class without permission or excuse,
- b. Cheating (including but not limited to copying, using unauthorized help sheets and the like, illegally obtaining tests in advance, substituting for a test taker, and other forms of unauthorized collusion),
- c. Plagiarism.

## 7. Committing theft or vandalism of school property.

The school district has the legal authority to bring suit in a civil court to recover damages. It is the Board of Education's desire that student discipline be progressive, as well as depend upon the nature of the violation. For instance, a student's first violation should merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

## Consequences for Violations to the Code of Conduct

All factors will be taken into consideration when determine the penalty. These and other appropriate penalties may be imposed for violations of the student disciplinary code; a penalty may be imposed alone or in combination:

1. teacher/student conference to discuss what is the expected behavior or plan of action
2. verbal warning or reprimand
3. written warning
4. use of restorative practices (may include but not limited to: restoration conference between parties, written reflections, voluntary service learning, and any action to "make it right and do no harm")
5. written notification to parents and/or parent conference
6. counseling
7. SRO conference
8. referral to the school psychologist for counseling or testing and/or possible referral to the Committee on Special Education

10. lunch, recess, or after school detention
11. suspension from transportation
12. suspension from athletic participation
13. suspension from social or extracurricular activities
14. suspension of other privileges
15. in-school suspension
16. suspension from school
17. referral to law enforcement

Suspension from school is a severe penalty, which may be imposed only upon students who are insubordinate, disorderly, violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others.

The Board retains its authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the Superintendent, Program Directors, and the Building Principals.

# Student Discipline Code, cont.

Any staff member may recommend to the Superintendent or the Principal that a student be suspended from a class. All staff members must immediately report, and refer, a violent student to the Principal or the Superintendent for a violation of the code of conduct. All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate action. In such cases a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member recommending the suspension.

The Superintendent or Principal, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension, or when processing a case for suspension, shall gather the facts relevant to the matter and record them for subsequent presentation, if necessary.

## REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Any student observing another student possessing a weapon, alcohol, or illegal substance on Homer Central School property or at a Homer Central School function shall report this information immediately to a Homer Central School staff member. The failure of any student to promptly report such information shall constitute a violation of this code. Any weapons, alcohol, or illegal substances found shall be confiscated, followed by notification of the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary action taken, up to and including long term suspension and referral for prosecution.

The Building Principal, or program supervisor, must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Principal learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student(s) and explain the conduct that violated the code of conduct and constituted a crime.

**BE AN UP STANDER, NOT A BYSTANDER**

**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING**

**PERFORM RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS –  
REACH UP, REACH OUT, KINDNESS IS WHAT  
IT IS ALL ABOUT!**

**TO REPORT BULLYING AT THE HOMER  
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

- Tell your teacher or another adult at school.
- Give a note or talk to the principal.
- Ask a friend or an adult at home for help.



# Policies

## Threats of Violence in School

The school district is committed to the prevention of violence against any individual or property in the schools or at school activities whether such acts and/or threats of violence are made by students, staff, or others. Threats of violence against students, school personnel, and/or school property will not be tolerated, whether or not such threats occur on school grounds or during the school day.

Any acts and/or threats of violence, including bomb threats, whether made orally, in writing, or by e-mail, shall be subject to appropriate discipline in accordance with applicable law, district policies, and regulations.

The district reserves the right to seek restitution, in accordance with law, from the parent/guardian and/or student for any costs or damages which had been incurred by the district as a result of the threats or acts of violence in the schools.

***This policy will be enforced in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.***

## Dangerous Weapons in School

The possession of any type of weapon or object intended to be used as a weapon which poses a danger to the safety and welfare of others is not permitted on school property. The possession of weapons, including mace or pepper spray, any type of knives, fireworks, box cutters, will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school. All such weapons will be confiscated and the police notified if appropriate.

## Firearms

Any student found guilty of bringing a firearm onto school property shall be excluded from school for a period not less than one year, provided that the Superintendent of Schools may modify such suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations, and after affording the student due process pursuant to section 3214 of the Education Law.

## Bicycling, Scootering and Skateboarding

- Any student riding a bicycle or scooter to school must follow all traffic safety rules.
- The student must park and lock the bicycle in the designated area on school property.
- The school cannot assume responsibility for bicycles left at school during the day.
- Skateboards, any wheeled footwear and in-line skates are not allowed on school property.

# Policies, cont.

## Bus Regulations

All pupils must behave appropriately as passengers of a school bus. Clearly understood and well-enforced rules are necessary for the successful management of the pupils who ride school buses.

- Students should be ready when the bus arrives and wait until bus stops completely to board.
- Students may only ride the bus route as assigned by the Transportation Dept. There are no visitors permitted on buses.
- At the end of the school day, students should report immediately to the bus at dismissal.
- Students must follow all aspects of the Code of Conduct while riding the school bus, including but not limited to:
  - Remaining in assigned seat until bus stops at their destination.
  - Refraining from quarreling, fighting, rough play, swearing, or shouting.
  - Refraining from eating, drinking, smoking, or using alcohol on the bus.
  - Not extending any body part through the bus window.
  - Not having physical contact with the driver.
- Students may only bring objects on the bus that can be held on the student's lap, without bothering other students in the seat.
  - Objects must not hang over the seat into the aisle or be taller than the seat.
  - Any large or special school projects should be transported by parents.
  - No animals of any kind shall be transported on the school bus.

## Exiting the Bus

- 1) WALK 10 feet beyond bumper when crossing in front of the bus.
- 2) STOP in line with the driver and wait for signal to cross.
- 3) CHECK both ways for traffic.
- 4) CROSS directly across and keep checking both ways for traffic.
- 5) Students must be 15 feet away from the bus before it can move.

## Misbehavior on the Bus

Misbehavior problems on the buses will be handled in the following manner:

**First** - The bus driver should make an attempt to correct any discipline problems by asking the pupil to behave.

**Second** - After two or three verbal warnings have been given to the pupil by the driver on discipline problems, a bus report will be completed and given to the principal by the driver. At this time, the principal will notify the child's parents of the complaint. The action taken by the principal will be noted on the bus report kept on file in the office.

**Third** - After the next offense the pupil is again brought to the principal, who contacts the parents by letter. The action taken will be noted on the bus report again.

**Fourth** - After the next offense, a bus report is completed by the bus driver and the student is brought to the principal. A suspension of bus riding privileges may occur.

### Bus Suspensions

Suspensions from bus riding privileges may be short term (five days or less) or long-term (beyond five days).

**Short-term suspensions** may be imposed by the Board of Education, superintendent, assistant superintendent, or school principal authorized. *No other employee may impose a short-term suspension.* Any student suspended for five days or less must be afforded the following:

1. Oral or written notice of the charges against him/her.
2. If the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence the school has and an opportunity to rebut these charges must occur before the suspension begins, except when the student's conduct poses an emergency situation. In these cases, the notice and hearing must follow as soon as practicable. On request, the student and parent must be given an opportunity for an informal conference with the principal, at which time the parent may ask questions of the witnesses who made the complaint. During his/her suspension, a student is required to report to school as usual.

A **long-term suspension** from bus riding privileges is a suspension in excess of five school days. A student has a right to a superintendent's hearing prior to a suspension in excess of five days and also has a right to appeal such a suspension to the Board of Education pursuant to Educational Law 3214.

# Policies, cont.

## Tobacco on School Premises

Due to the health hazards associated with tobacco, and in accordance with federal and state law, students and adults are forbidden to use or possess tobacco in any form, including vaping, smokeless, or electronic cigarettes/Juuls, on school premises, on school buses, or at school-sponsored activities.

## Use of Electronic Devices

The unauthorized use of cellular phones, hand held games, still or video cameras, and music players by students is prohibited on school premises. We are not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen electronic devices. Electronic devices will be confiscated if they are out during the school day, including recess; parents may pick up such devices from the office.

## Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any district staff is strictly forbidden. However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

1. Protect oneself, another student, teacher, or any person from physical injury.
2. Protect the property of Homer Central School or others.
3. Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of Homer Central School functions, powers and duties, and if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

*The district will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with commissioner's regulations.*

## Fundraising

All fund raising projects must be approved by the Board of Education. Projects which involve selling merchandise to residents of our community should be limited to one per year per organization. Tickets or articles of any kind, other than those associated with school sponsored activities, are not to be sold on school property by students or outside organizations.

## Police Involvement in Searches and Interrogations of Students

Homer Central School administrators are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in Homer Central School buildings or at Homer Central School functions, or to use Homer Central School facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter Homer Central School property or a Homer Central School function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students only if they have:

1. A search or an arrest warrant or
2. Probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on Homer Central School property or at a school function, or
3. Been invited by Homer Central School administrators.

Before police officials are permitted to question or search any student, the building Principal or program director shall first try to notify the student's parent to give the parent the opportunity to be present during the police questioning or search. If the student's parent cannot be contacted prior to the police questioning or search, the parent shall be informed of the questioning or search, in writing, as soon thereafter as possible.

## Policies, cont.

The Principal or director will also be present during any police questioning or search of a student on Homer Central School property or at a Homer Central School function. Students who are questioned by police officials on Homer Central School property or at a Homer Central School function will be afforded the same rights they have outside the school. This means:

1. They must be informed of their legal rights.
2. They may remain silent if they so desire.
3. They may request the presence of an attorney.

### **Child Protective Services Investigations**

Consistent with the district's commitment to keep students safe from harm, and the obligation of Homer Central School administrators to report to child protective services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been abused or maltreated, the district will cooperate with local child protective services workers who wish to conduct interviews of students on Homer Central School property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or custody investigations.

All requests by child protective services to interview a student on school property shall be made directly to the Building Principal. The Building Principal shall set the time and place of the interview. The Superintendent shall decide if it is necessary and appropriate for a Homer Central School administrator to be present during the interview, depending on the age of the student being interviewed and the nature of the allegations. If the nature of the allegations is such that it may be necessary for the student to remove any of his or her clothing in order for the child protective services worker to verify the allegations, the nurse or other Homer Central School medical personnel must be present during that portion of the interview. No student may be required to remove his or her clothing in front of a child protective services worker or district official of the opposite sex.

A child protective services worker may not remove a student from Homer Central School property without a court order, unless the worker reasonably believes that the student would be subject to danger of abuse if he or she were not removed from Homer Central School property before a court order can reasonably be obtained. If the worker believes the student would be subject to danger of abuse, the worker may remove the student without a court order and without the parent's consent.

# Student Dress Code

The school administration and teachers will continue to encourage all students to dress in a fashion that reflects good taste and a style appropriate for a school day. Students' clothing needs to fall under the following rules:

1. **K-2:** Be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with the instructional process. Building principals shall make determinations of whether individual student's dress is in compliance with the above.  
**3-12:** Be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with the instructional process. Examples of clothing which is inappropriate include, but is not limited to: tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps (shoulder straps less than 1" wide), garments with low necklines to reveal cleavage, any see-through garments, clothing failing to cover midriff, and shorts or skirts that do not extend at least to a point located mid-thigh. Building principals shall make determinations of whether individual student's dress is in compliance with the above.
2. Ensure that undergarments are completely covered.
3. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed; including but not limited to shoes with wheels and high heels. Level heeled sneakers with laces are mandatory for PE class, recess, and/or any outdoor activities.
4. No unauthorized wearing of hats, visors, or other head coverings in district buildings except for a medical or religious purpose, or where it is part of a uniform during a normal school day.
5. Not include items that are suggestive, vulgar, obscene, libelous, or that denigrate others on account or race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
6. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

This policy is to be published annually in the school handbook and reminders are to be sent to parents periodically.

*Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension.*

# School Meal Program

Homer Central School serves breakfast and lunch in all of our buildings. We understand the important relationship between nutrition and health, and nutrition and learning. We encourage every student to eat a nutritious breakfast and lunch every day.

Students are expected to use good manners and common courtesy when eating. Students are expected to follow the rules set by the staff. Students may eat in classrooms or the cafeteria. Students may bring a book, homework, or paper and pen to the cafeteria to use once they have finished their meal. Students that are unwilling to follow cafeteria rules and fail to show good character will be removed from the cafeteria.

Planned menus are distributed monthly via Parent Square and may be found on the district website. Two options are available every day.

**What Is Free and Reduced Lunch?-** New applications must be submitted every school year. Parents may always access the applications on the district website or request one from the main office at any time during the school year. Students eligible for free or reduced meals are eligible for both breakfast and lunch. **All information on the meal application is confidential.** Participation in the Free and Reduced lunch program is vital to the Federal Funding that the district receives for your child's academic programs. If you have any questions about the meal application or our school meal programs, please call the Food Service office at 749-1216.

## Charging Meals-

- A. Students may charge up to ten dollars at the High School and nine dollars PK-8, and will not be permitted to exceed this limit until the outstanding charges are paid in full;
- B. If a student's prepaid meal card or account has been exhausted, he or she will be given a grace period where no more than ten dollars at the High School and nine dollars PK-8 may be charged, to allow time for the meal card or account to be replenished;
- C. The only item(s) permitted to be charged are a complete meal or milk. A la carte items such as snacks or ice cream may not be charged;
- D. The District's point-of-sale system will track all charges and payments;
- E. If a student comes to school without a lunch, and has exceeded the maximum reimbursable-meal limit, the District may provide a reimbursable meal (that is available to all students) so that he or she does not go hungry that day;

F. As appropriate, District administration may contact Social Services to report a student's consistent failure to arrive at school with a meal.

Unpaid meal charges will be addressed directly with the student's parent or guardian who is responsible for providing funds for meal purchases; discreet notifications of low, exhausted, or deficit balances will be sent at appropriate intervals during the school year. The notification may include a repayment schedule, but will not charge any interest or fees related to meals charged during the grace period. District administration will further consider the benefits of attempted collections and the costs that would be expended in collection attempts.

## Computerized Payment System for Breakfast and Lunch

Every student in the building has been entered into the computerized system and will be provided with a four digit pin number. Students can pay in cash, however, we strongly recommend parents/guardians deposit money into the student's account weekly or monthly. These prepayment slips will be available on our school web site at <http://www.homercentral.org/info/lunch/prepayment.pdf>.

If your child has qualified for free or reduced price lunches or breakfasts, this information is in the system, and the meal will be processed just as it is for all other students.

If you are concerned about a food allergy that your son/daughter has, please notify the cafeteria with this information. A warning will appear on the cashiers' screen for a review of the items on the student's tray.

If for any reason you would like a copy of the transactions of your child's account we will be able to give you a print out.

If you have questions please feel free to call our Food Service Director at 607-749-1216.

## Homer Central School District Meal Prices

Breakfast-All buildings	\$1.90
Lunch Grades PK-8	\$2.65
Lunch Grades 9-12	\$2.90
Milk	\$0.70

# Health and Safety Information

## Medications:

If it is necessary for your child to take medicine during school hours, it **must** be accompanied by a signed note from the parent and doctor. The note should include the diagnosis, permission for the nurse to administer the medication, the amount of each dose, and the time(s) it is to be given. Medication permission forms may be obtained from the health office. No student may have medicine in a classroom or give him/herself medicine at school. If you need to take medicine during the day, you must have a parent or guardian bring it to the nurse's office marked with your name in its original container. Parents can ask the pharmacist for two containers, one for home and one for school.

## Physical Examinations:

Physical examinations are mandated by state law. They will be required to all students entering grades 3 and 5 and new students to the Homer School District during the school year by the school physician, if not done by your own doctor. A form will be sent home to be filled out and returned to the school for our health records if your own doctor does the examination.

## School Health:

Under Section 2164 of the New York State Public Health Law, all children attending school must be immunized against Hepatitis B, diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella. Minimum requirements include:

- 3 doses of Hepatitis B (for all children born on or after 1/1/93)
- 3 doses of diphtheria toxoid (usually administered as either DTP or TD)
- 3 doses of oral polio vaccine (OPV) or 4 doses of Salk vaccine (IPV)
- 2 doses of live measles vaccine (if born on or after 1/1/85)
- 1 dose of live mumps vaccine administered after the age of 12 months
- 1 dose of live rubella vaccine administered after the age of 12 months
- 2 doses of varicella (chicken pox) vaccine administered before the commencement of kindergarten (for all children born on or after 1/1/98).
- Students who have had measles or mumps disease must provide a signed certificate from a licensed physician verifying the diagnosis. If this is not provided, the child must be vaccinated.

Immunizations can be received from your family physician or at a free clinic which is held in the County Office Building, 60 Central Avenue, Cortland, N.Y. To attend this free clinic, you must first make an appointment by calling 753-5203. Students must be accompanied to immunization clinics by a parent until age 18.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WILL RESULT IN EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL.**

## Injuries at School:

Students sometimes suffer injuries in the school or on the school grounds. Report all injuries immediately to the teacher and to the nurse no matter how slight and minor. Minor cuts and abrasions will be treated as first aid in the school nurse's office. More serious injuries which cannot be fully cared for by the school will be referred to the family physician or school physician. In an emergency the school will be responsible if a parent is not available for obtaining medical care for the student at the time of injury. However, if students have to return to a doctor's office or hospital for additional treatment, x-rays, etc., it is the responsibility of the parents to see that the students are transported to the doctor's office or place of treatment. If your child is injured at school, the school's insurance coverage begins after claims under the parent's insurance have been applied. There is a \$25.00 deductible fee.

NOTE : GLASSES AND ARTIFICIAL DENTURES ARE NOT COVERED BY INSURANCE. INJURIES SUSTAINED BY A STUDENT DUE TO "HORSEPLAY" OR A FIGHT WITH ANOTHER STUDENT ARE NOT COVERED BY SCHOOL INSURANCE.

## Nurse Practitioner Support

We are excited to share that Homer School District is continuing our partnership with Guthrie Medical Group, GMG, to provide health services to students. We know that students' health and success in school are absolutely connected. We have seen that by bringing services directly to students during the school day, we can proactively meet their health needs and support overall health, wellness and school attendance.

Examples of services provided include:

- Medical care and treatment, including diagnosis of acute and chronic illness and disease.
- Medically prescribed laboratory test such as strep test, and some medications, such as antibiotics.
- Annual health assessment.
- Referrals for service not provided through school health services
- Comprehensive physical examination including those for school, sports, working papers, etc. (Consent not required)

GMG Health Services staff cannot provide medical services and/or treatment without written consent. Consent forms may be obtained by calling your child's nurse's office.



# Things You Need to Know

## Homework When You Are Absent:

You are responsible to make up homework when you are absent from class due to illness, music lessons or other activities. If you are absent for one day, you may call a friend to get the assignments or see the teachers when you return. Specific homework policy expectations will vary depending upon the teacher/grade level.

**State law requires a written excuse when a child returns to school after being absent.** The date of the absence, the child's full name, and the reason for the absence must be in the note. This note must be signed by the parent/guardian of the child. In accordance with NYS law, the following are legal reasons for absences:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness or death in family
3. Remedial health treatment (doctor, dentist etc.)
4. Required court appearance
5. Religious observance
6. Approved music lessons
7. Impassable roads or weather

Email and phone calls cannot be accepted as documentation for student absences.

## Promptness:

Students are expected to be in homeroom and classes on time.

## Attendance Monitoring Procedure

The Homer Central School District Board of Education recognizes the importance of regular student attendance to a successful learning experience. Research supports the fact that attendance is crucial to improving student achievement. On-time attendance is a critical starting point for high levels of student achievement. The opportunities lost through student absence and tardiness leave learning gaps that are difficult to fill. We appreciate the partnership the district has with its parents to ensure positive attendance and we recognize that most students have an excellent attendance record and plan to reward those who do. However, for students whose poor attendance interferes with their learning, Homer Schools has developed a clear, understandable procedure for monitoring student attendance. Below is the attendance monitoring protocol in place for the 2018-2019 school year and beyond.

1. A daily robo-call will be used to notify families of a student absence.

2. After three or more consecutive unexcused absences, a phone contact with the family will be made by a school employee.

3. If a student falls below the 93% attendance threshold at any time, the student is spoken to and a letter sent to the family detailing the next steps if attendance does not improve. The letter will include a period of time for improvement and possible disciplinary consequences if attendance does not improve.

4. If a student falls below the 85% attendance threshold, a parent meeting or home visit will be conducted, with a consideration of DSS preventative services or Cortland County Coordinated Children's Services Initiative (CCSI) referral.

5. A student who remains at or below the 85% attendance threshold for more than five weeks will be subject to a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) diversion referral.

Finally, some confusion has arisen about what constitutes a legal absence from school. Below is the definition of a legal absence:

*A student is considered legally absent (excused) from school for the following reasons: sickness, death in the family, health treatment, and court appearances.*

A written parent excuse for an absence that does not fit this definition does not make the absence legal.

If you have any questions about the attendance monitoring procedure, please contact your child's building principal.

## Things You Need to Know, cont.

### Accountability:

New York State Law makes your principal and teachers responsible for you in place of your parent (“in loco parentis”) during the time when school is in session. Your teacher, the nurse, and/or the principal must know where you are. If your parent gives you permission to leave school property during the day, it must be cleared with your teacher and the principal and you must sign out and be picked up in the main office.

### Study Halls:

These classes are provided so that you may work on your own. Assignments and interventions may be completed, as well as extra reading or review work. Students who sit without anything to study, annoy others, or who attempt to avoid study are not using the study period to good advantage.

### Emergency Management Plan:

A detailed Emergency Management Plan is on file in the school office and deals with specific emergencies. This plan is updated annually and provides for training of all staff.

In case of an emergency in which school is closed early, students are to follow the instructions on the “Early Pupil Dismissal” Form which their parents returned to school in September.



### Safety Drills:

We are required by law to conduct a minimum of 12 safety drills during the school year. The fire drills involve the evacuation of all students, instructional, and non-instructional personnel from the building. Your homeroom teachers and classroom teachers are familiar with the route to take in evacuating the building. Students are expected to move quickly and in an orderly manner. Drills of this kind are carried out so that we know what to do if an emergency occurs and all people will leave the building as quickly and orderly as possible. When it is declared safe, staff and students will return to the building.

All schools will be conducting additional safety drills as part of our yearly practice. Our evacuation drills will include using secondary routes of egress/departure as well as lock-down drills. If you arrive during the school day to pick up or drop off your child during the mandatory safety drills, we ask that you wait with your child until the drill is completed. The doors will not be opened until the drill has been completed.

### Textbooks:

All basic textbooks are furnished on a loan basis by the Board of Education without charge to the student. All books issued will be numbered and a record made of the condition of the book by the teacher. Students who are careless with their books and damage them will have to pay for the damage when the books are returned to the teachers. All books must be returned to the teacher who issued them.

Any student who loses books will have to pay for them. If lost books are found later, the student will be reimbursed. Any student leaving this school must turn in his/her school-issued books and equipment or be charged for these items. Transfer papers and other school records will not be released until all book fees are paid.

Expensive and valuable books and materials are entrusted to the care of each student. These books should be covered with book covers. Books should be kept free of pencil and ink markings.

## What If?

**Q. I get to school early?**

A. If you arrive early then you are to wait outside.

**Q. I want to store something at school?**

A. You will be assigned locker space and a desk. It is your responsibility to keep it clean. Please do not bring personal items to school.

**Q. I ride my bicycle to school?**

A. Bike racks are provided near the school entrance. It is a good idea to lock your bike. When arriving at school riders will place their bikes in the bike rack. Bikes may not be ridden on school grounds while school is in session. It is the law to wear a helmet.

**Q. I ride my skateboard, wheelies or roller blades to school?**

A. Roller blades, shoes with wheels, and skateboards are not to be ridden on school grounds at any time. Upon entering school, put your roller blades, wheelies, or skateboard in your locker.

**Q. I lose something?**

A. Tell your teacher or another adult immediately. You may look for lost items with your teacher's permission and an escort.

**Q. I need to make a phone call?**

A. The teacher will make the determination as to whether a student may make a call or not:

1. The child must ask the teacher for an escort to go to the office to make a telephone call, IF the call can't be made from the classroom.
2. The student will make the call and immediately return to the classroom.

**Q. I don't feel well?**

A. Tell your teacher or another adult. They will instruct you what to do.

**Q. I have a question, or something is bothering me?**

A. Tell your teacher or another adult. If they cannot help you or give you an answer, you will be allowed to see a counselor or principal. Do not ever be afraid to ask for help!

**Q. I see someone doing something wrong in the bathrooms?**

A. If you see someone throwing papers or other objects into the toilets or someone breaking anything in the bathroom, do not discuss it while you are in the bathroom. Go to your teacher and tell him/her what you have seen.

**Q. I see trouble starting between two other people?**

A. Tell a teacher or another adult immediately. Do not get involved in name calling or fighting.

**Q. I see someone breaking rules or being mean on the bus?**

A. Report it to the bus driver immediately. Do not get involved yourself.

**Q. I want to bring games/toys to school?**

A. **Toys and electronic devices are not allowed to be shared or used in school. This includes cards like Pokémon and other trading/game cards.** Please check with your teacher about allowable items.

# What to do About Special Situations and Appointments

**GENERAL RULE:** Attend classes daily—making up work is difficult.

## **Absent From School:**

- A. Your parent should call the main office anytime before 9:30 AM. An answering machine is available 24 hours a day to tell us you are not coming to school.
- B. We now have an automated calling system that will contact you if your student is absent and we haven't received notice from you.
- C. Bring a written excuse from home your first day back. Give it to your homeroom teacher.
- D. **YOU** are responsible for getting assignments made up, and for making up tests and projects.

## **If You Must Leave During the Day:**

- A. Bring a written excuse from home and give it to your homeroom teacher. It will be sent to the office to be entered with the daily attendance as an early dismissal, and you will be given permission to leave your classes at the time stated. *All adults picking up students must show photo identification.*
- B. Get your coat, etc., and wait in the main office to be picked up and signed out. **Students may not sign themselves out of the building.**
- C. If you return during the day, sign back in at the main office and return to your class.

## **Late To School:**

- A. If you are late to school you will report directly to the main office.
- B. Sign in and give your excuse to the secretary.
- C. Move quietly to your classroom after signing in.

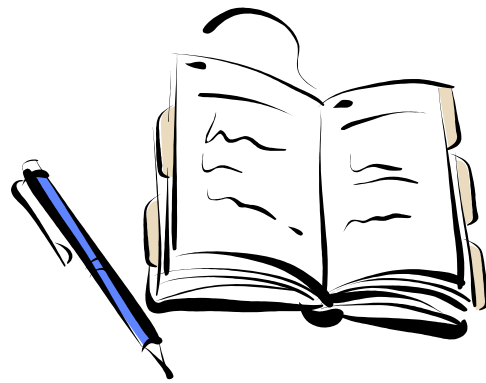
## **In School on Time, but Late for Classes:**

- A. If a teacher has detained you, ask for a note.
- B. You may not visit classrooms or other areas. Due to COVID regulations you must report directly to your classroom.

## **Going Somewhere Other than the Usual After School:**

- A. You must go home in the normal manner unless you have a written note stating otherwise. These notes are to come down to the office in the morning.

**No changes will be made to transportation routes. Parents must contact the Transportation Office regarding route assignments.**



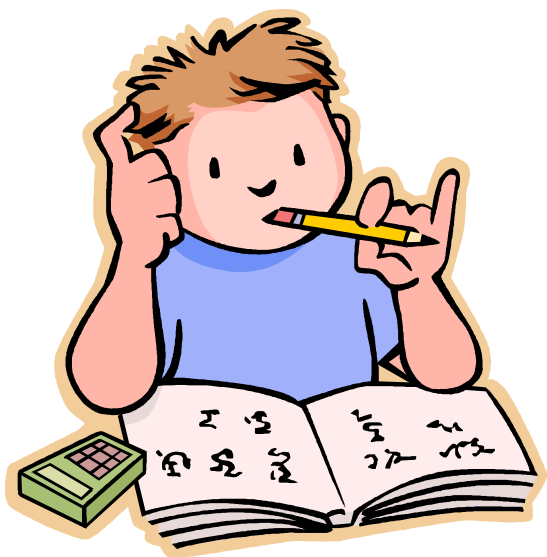
# Academic Intervention Services

## What are Academic Intervention Services (AIS)?

Academic Intervention Services consist of additional instruction which supplements the instruction provided in the regular classroom. Academic Intervention Services are intended to assist students who are at risk of not achieving the State Learning Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and/or who are at risk of not gaining the knowledge and skills needed to meet or exceed designated performance levels on State Assessments. Academic Intervention Services may include extra academic classes, instruction in study skills, or other support which is needed to encourage improved academic performance. At the Intermediate School all students receive some type of skill instruction during the grade level TEAM time each for 30 minutes.

## Why Does My Child Need AIS?

We assign students to AIS classes for a variety of reasons. Generally speaking, however, students in AIS classes are at risk of earning or have earned a low score (2 or below) on a New York State Assessment. Poor study habits, low/failing grades, bench mark assessments, skill deficits, and teacher recommendation are just a few of the reasons a student may be asked to join an AIS class.



## How long does my child need to stay in AIS?

Students' cumulative progress is checked every ten weeks. If a student has shown sufficient improvement, his or her AIS status will be re-evaluated. Teachers will monitor progress with FastBridge as well as other methods. Reports will be sent home to parents on a consistent basis.

## When is AIS offered in the school day?

All students who participate will receive interventions during the TEAM time for his or her grade level.

## What can parents do to help?

There are several things that parents can do to help their children succeed in school; such as:

- Put homework time into the afternoon or evening schedule and stick to it.
- Make sure your child has a quiet place to work that has everything he or she needs to complete homework.
- Check your child's agenda for homework assignments and any notes from his or her teachers.
- Stay in touch with your child's teachers. Email is a great communication tool.

## Who can I contact if I still have questions?

You may contact the Principal or classroom teacher at the Intermediate School.

# NYS Testing for Grades 3-8

## **PARENTS - What you need to know about NYS Grades 3-8 Testing:**

### **Why does my child have to take these tests?**

Under Federal law, states that receive federal funding for education must test all students in grades 3 through 8 annually in Math and English Language Arts, beginning in the 2005-2006 school year. New York State has been testing fourth and eighth-grade students in these two subjects since 1999. To comply with the federal mandate, the State Education Department has created tests, which are frequently revised to meet standards as well as students' needs.

Test results will determine if a school is making Adequate Yearly Progress toward student achievement goals determined by the state.

### **When will the tests be given?**

The first ELA tests in grades 3-8 were given in January 2006, followed by the Math tests in March. Each test consists of two sessions. The total test time ranges from 60-90 minutes per session per subject area; though the tests have unlimited time for students to work through the tests. NYS tests are now annually administered in April/May and June (Science).

### **What's on the tests?**

In **ELA**, students may be asked to:

- Read and answer multiple-choice questions about multiple stories.
- Answer questions and/or write an essay about a passage they have read.
- Complete graphic organizers about texts.

In **Math**, students may be asked to:

- Answer multiple-choice questions.
- Answer open-ended questions that require them to show how they arrived at their answer.
- Read and interpret graphs and tables.
- Recognize and use signs, symbols and terms that represent mathematical concepts.

### **How will the tests be scored?**

Scores will range from 1 to 4. A score of 1 or 2 is considered below the state standard; a score of 3 is proficient; a score of 4 is highly proficient. ELA and Math test results are scheduled to be available to schools before the beginning of the next school year.

### **What if my child does poorly?**

Tests will be scored by an approved outside group of educators. Children who score a 1 or a 2 are entitled to receive extra help. Principals must contact parents of those students and your school district is responsible for providing extra help to your child. That could include extra help during the school day and/or summer school. How your district provides this help is spelled out in a document called the Academic Intervention Services plan.

### **Can a child who scores low on a state test be held back?**

The tests help identify students needing additional help in meeting state standards. Districts use them, together with your child's classroom performance and your input, to decide whether your child is ready to be promoted. Because they are only one indicator of a student's performance, the tests alone should not be used to decide whether your child is promoted.

### **Do students with disabilities take the tests?**

In general, students with disabilities are expected to take state tests. At Individualized Education Plan meetings, you have the opportunity to discuss the tests and whether your child might be allowed accommodations in how the tests are given. Your district's Committee on Special Education would determine whether accommodations, such as more time to take the test, are appropriate.

Continued....

# NYS Testing for Grades 3-8

## How can I help my child?

Research has shown that there are some good ways to help children learn:

- Set up a dedicated area for homework and studying.
- Require your children to complete homework assignments and challenge them to respond in detail to writing assignments.
- Have frequent discussions with your children about their studies.
- Stay in contact with your child's teachers.

## Preparing for the tests-

Kids can't "cram" for these tests. The best way for parents to help is to introduce fun activities and study habits at home that will strengthen your child's abilities in these key subject areas:

### ***Reading, writing and listening:***

- Have your child explain information from a newspaper or magazine article.
- Encourage children to keep a journal.
- When watching a television commercial, ask your child to separate fact from fiction.
- Play word games during car trips.
- Read aloud with your child, alternating paragraphs. This helps motivate your child to complete assignments and helps you monitor progress in reading.
- Help your child get started on a writing assignment by asking relevant questions. This helps a child internalize the questions writers ask themselves when composing a piece.

### ***Mathematics:***

- Demonstrate the everyday uses of math.
- Let your child tally your spending while shopping, calculate the savings on a sale item, or help estimate how many gallons of paint you need to cover the living room walls.
- While driving or walking, have your child identify the geometric shape of common items that you see.
- Give your children the chance to help put together a budget for a family vacation, calculating what you might spend for gasoline, accommodations, and activities.

## What is the opt out option?

Opting out is not an option at the Homer Central School District. We are required by our district and NYS Education Department as certified personnel to administer these tests. All students will be given the assessments regardless of parent request.

## For more information . . .

- Your child's teacher is the first source for help and advice.
- <https://www.engageny.org/> offers videos, text, websites, and more for parents.
- Participate in your local parent-teacher association, SCA, Site-Based Decision Making Team, and attend school events. Parents and teachers need to work together to make sure our children get the time, extra help, and resources they need to meet more challenging academic standards.

# Home/School Communications

## How do parents know what's happening at the Homer Intermediate School?

**Trojan Messenger:** Our district newsletter can be viewed at [www.homercentral.org](http://www.homercentral.org). It is updated frequently with news of school happenings.

**District Website:** The school district website ([www.homercentral.org](http://www.homercentral.org)) provides an updated calendar, closing announcements, SCA information and much more, as well as an Intermediate web page and Intermediate teacher web pages. Parents are able to subscribe for email updates on new website postings in the district.

**School Tool:** Parents have access to this database which has students' report cards, attendance and disciplinary information.

**Parent Square** Each month Intermediate families are given an update which highlights upcoming social and academic events.

**Intermediate School Community Association (SCA):** Meetings are held several times per year. Sub-committees, the SCA web page, as well as school and community events are also ways to learn more about our school.

**Site-Based Team:** A team of school and community volunteers that work together to make our school a better place. Please contact Mrs. Falls if you are interested in joining the team.

**Intermediate Handbook:** A handbook of rules, regulations and procedures that is located on the district website.

**Teacher Newsletters:** Teachers in grade levels 3-5 provide electronic newsletters listing things like upcoming classroom events, tests/quizzes, and topics in each subject area.

**Academic Reports:** Reports are sent home every 5 weeks, either in the form of a progress report or a report card.

**Personal Communication:** Teachers encourage parents to call and/or email them when there are questions or concerns. **Please do not ask teachers to email confidential information.**

- **Phone:** through the Intermediate Office at 607 749-1240