



BIGFORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

Mission Statement

The mission for School District 38 is to help all students acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be individually successful throughout life. In partnership with students, parents, and community, we are committed to having high expectations for all students by maintaining a safe, nurturing environment that promotes success, learning as a lifelong process, responsibility, and respect for one another.

BIGFORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

**BIGFORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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Purpose of the Student Handbook

This Handbook has been prepared to help acquaint the student with the rules and guidelines which are necessary for our school to operate and function smoothly. It is the family's responsibility to become familiar with the contents and follow the directions given.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FACULTY

Mrs. Brenda Clarke, Principal
Mrs. Carol Venegas, Secretary
Mrs. Andrea Rossman, Counselor
Mrs. Crystal Dahlman, Kindergarten Teacher -
Ms. Siloti-Raykowski, Kindergarten Teacher
Ms. Lauren Young, Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Jo Ahles, 1st Grade Teacher
Mrs. Dawn Lupan, 1st Grade Teacher
Mrs. Mandy Fausett, 2nd Grade Teacher
Mrs. Ashley Herriott, 1st/2nd Grade Teacher (Looping Classroom)
Mrs. Kelly Leisinger, 1st/2nd Grade Teacher (Looping Classroom)
Mrs. Jennifer Gustavson, 2nd Grade Teacher
Mrs. Jill Morley, 3rd Grade Teacher
Ms. Jane Sundell, 3rd Grade Teacher
Mrs. Jana Barrett 3rd/4th Grade Teacher
Mr. Erik Gustavson, 4th Grade Teacher
Mrs. Tabatha Venezio, 4th Grade Teacher
Mrs. Heather Epperly, Art & Music Teacher
Mrs. Julie Bonner, Elementary & MS Librarian
Mrs. Jessica McGinnis, PE Teacher
Mrs. Tanya McAnally, Computer Teacher
Mrs. Angie Hansen, Speech Therapist
Mrs. Aubrie Kallenberger, Reading and Intervention Specialist
Mrs. Kassidy Fisher, Elementary Special Education Teacher
Mrs. Donna Fink, paraprofessional
Ms. Amber Mulder, paraprofessional
Ms. Juanita Wiley, paraprofessional
Mrs. Richalle Close, paraprofessional
Ms. Sandra Swede, paraprofessional
Mrs. Julie Dachs, paraprofessional
Mrs. Katelyn Harrington, paraprofessional
Mrs. Sharman Chabot, paraprofessional
Mrs. Donna Burggraf, paraprofessional

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To Students and Parents:

The Bigfork Elementary School student handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the school year. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic. Throughout the handbook, the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The student handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that this document is updated annually, while policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Therefore, any changes in policy that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications. These changes will generally supersede provisions found in this handbook that have been made obsolete by newly adopted policy.

Please note that references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm current policy.

In case of conflict between Board Policy or any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions in the student handbooks are to be followed.

The Bigfork School District’s policies can be found on the district website at: www.bigforkschools.org

ANNUAL NOTICES

Federal and state annual notices are located on the school’s main webpage and are updated each year.

EQUAL EDUCATION, NONDISCRIMINATION

The District will make equal educational opportunities available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious belief, physical or mental handicap or disability, economic or social condition, actual or potential marital or parental status. No student will be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, or advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

• Release of “Directory Information”

Regarding student records, federal law requires that “directory information” on my child be released by the District to anyone who requests it unless I object in writing to the release of this information. This objection must be filed within ten school days of the time this handbook was given to my child. Directory information ordinarily includes the student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, and participation in officially recognized activities and sports. This information needs to be consistent with Policy 3600P, 3600F1, and 3600F2. In exercising my right to limit release of this information, I have completed the Student Directory Information Notification and returned it to the school.

Rights concerning a Student's School Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and copy the student's education records, within a reasonable time from the day the District receives a request for access.
2. The right to request amendment of the student's education records which the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, irrelevant, or improper.
3. The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA or state law authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.
5. The right to prohibit the release of directory information concerning the parent's/guardian's child.
6. The right to request that information not be released to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education.
7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education — to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual.

State law requires:

- A student between the ages of 7 and 16 **must** attend school unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her sixteenth birthday is required to attend each school day.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent from school without permission, from any class or from required special programs, will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of a penalty by a court of law against the student and his or her parents. See Policy 3122, and 3123.

Bigfork School District believes every student should attend school every day. The process of education requires instruction that is based on skill-building, class participation, learning experiences, and study. We realize some absences are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. However, we also know that when a child misses school or a lesson for any reason, it interferes with their learning environment and that of others. This can, in turn, cause students to fall behind. Research (*Attendance Works*) shows:

1. Children chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
2. By sixth grade, chronic absence is an early warning sign for students at risk for dropping out of school.

Absences can add up quickly. A child is considered chronically absent if he or she misses just two days of school per month. When a student is absent from any class for more than 10 days, the principal or designee will send a letter to the parents/guardians per Bigfork School Board policy.

CAFETERIA SERVICES

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential. See www.bigforkschools.org to apply.

Lunch prices are as follows:

K-6: breakfast = \$1.75 reduced breakfast = \$.30 lunch = \$2.75 reduced lunch = \$.40

7-12: breakfast = \$2.00 reduced breakfast = \$.30 lunch = \$3.25 reduced lunch = \$.40

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal so that other students who **may** have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

These diseases include, but are not limited to:

Amebiasis	Hepatitis	Ringworm of the Scalp
Campylobacteriosis	Influenza	Rubella (German Measles),
Chickenpox	Lyme disease	including congenital
Colorado Tick Fever	Malaria	Salmonellosis

Diphtheria	Measles (Rubeola)	Scabies
Gastroenteritis	Meningitis	Shigellosis
Giardiasis	Mumps	Streptococcal disease, invasive
Hansen's Disease	Pinkeye	Tuberculosis

The District shall manage common communicable diseases in accordance with DPHHS guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. If a student develops symptoms of any reportable communicable or infectious illness as defined while at school, the responsible school officials shall do the following:

- (a) isolate the student immediately from other students or staff; and
- (b) inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request him or her to pick up the student; and
- (c) consult with a physician, other qualified medical professional, or the local county health authority to determine if the case should be reported to the local health officer.

Students who express feelings of illness at school may be referred to a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board and may be sent home as soon as a parent or person designated on a student's emergency medical authorization form has been notified. The District may temporarily exclude from onsite school attendance a student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease that is readily transmitted in a school setting. Offsite instruction will be provided during the period of absence in accordance with Policy 2050. The District reserves the right to require a statement from a student's primary care provider authorizing a student's return to onsite instruction.

When information is received by a staff member or a volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer shall promptly notify a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board to determine appropriate measures to be taken to protect student and staff health and safety. A school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board, after consultation with and on advice of public health officials, shall determine which additional staff members, if any, need to know of the affected student's condition.

All students, staff, and others present in the any school building shall engage in hand hygiene at the following times, which include but are not limited to:

- (a) Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- (b) Before and after preparing, eating, or handling food or drinks
- (c) Before and after administering medication or screening temperature
- (d) After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- (e) After recess
- (f) After handling garbage
- (g) After assisting students with handwashing
- (h) After use of the restroom

Hand hygiene includes but is not limited to washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

Staff members shall supervise children when they use hand sanitizer and soap to prevent ingestion. Staff members shall place grade level appropriate posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.

Further information may be found at policy 3417 in the District's Policy Manual

COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS / PARENTS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply — by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a uniform complaint procedure policy at 1700 in the District's policy manual. In general, a parent or student should first discuss the complaint with the individual involved. If unresolved, a written complaint and a request for a conference should be sent to the Principal. If still unresolved, the matter may be referred to the Superintendent. Under some circumstances, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees in the event the matter cannot be resolved at the administrative level.

Some complaints require different procedures. Any building office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for filing complaints. Additional information can also be

found in the designated Board policy, 1700, available on the website, [in the Principal's and Superintendent's offices].

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly computerized society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action. Students and parents should be aware that electronic communications — e-mail — using District computers are not private and may be monitored by District staff.

[For additional information, see policy 3612, 3612P]

CONDUCT

In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our campus community, each student is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy — even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.

- Meet District or building standards of grooming and dress.
- Obey all building and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other District staff.
- Respect the property of others, including District property and facilities.
- Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.

The Board grants authority to a teacher or Principal to hold a student to strict accountability for disorderly conduct in a school building, on property owned or leased by a school district, on a school bus, on the way to or from school, or during intermission or recess.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to instances set forth below:

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco products, and alternative nicotine and vapor products as defined in 16-11-302, MCA.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages, including powdered alcohol. Students who may be under the influence of alcohol will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling drug paraphernalia, illegal drugs, marijuana, controlled substances, or any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind, including such substances that contain chemicals which produce the same effect of illegal substances including but not limited to Spice and K2. Students who may be under the influence of such substances will not be permitted to attend school functions and will be treated as though they had drugs in their possession.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a firearm or other weapon in violation of Policy 3311.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon as referred to in Policy 3311.
- Disobeying directives from staff members or school officials or disobeying rules and regulations governing student conduct.
- Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's property.
- Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
- Unexcused absenteeism. Truancy statutes and Board policy will be utilized for chronic and habitual truants.
- Intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, hazing or bullying; or retaliation against any person who alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226 or participated in an investigation into alleged misconduct under Policy 3225 or 3226.
- Defaces or damages any school building, school grounds, furniture, equipment, or book belonging to the district.
- Forging any signature or making any false entry or attempting to authorize any document

used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.

- Engaging in academic misconduct which may include but is not limited to: cheating, unauthorized sharing of exam responses or graded assignment work; plagiarism, accessing websites or electronic resources without authorization to complete assigned coursework, and any other act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student.

These grounds stated above for disciplinary action apply whenever a student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to the circumstances set forth below:

- On school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any other time when school is being used by a school group.
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school.
- Travel to and from school or a school activity, function, or event.
- Anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation or bullying of a staff member or student, or an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

Disciplinary Measures

Disciplinary measures include but are not limited to:

- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Detention, including Saturday school
- Clean-up duty
- Loss of student privileges
- Loss of bus privileges
- Notification to juvenile authorities and/or police
- Restitution for damages to school property

Non-Disciplinary Measures

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to assign a student to non-disciplinary offsite instruction pending the results of an investigation or for reasons related to the safety or well-being of students and staff. During the period of non-disciplinary offsite instruction, the student will be permitted to complete all assigned schoolwork for full credit. The assignment of non-disciplinary offsite instruction does not preclude the Superintendent or designee from disciplining a student who has, after investigation, been found to have violated a School District policy, rule, or handbook provision.

Delegation of Authority

The Board grants authority to any teacher and to any other school personnel to impose on students under their charge any disciplinary measure, other than suspension or expulsion, corporal punishment, or in-school suspension, that is appropriate and in accordance with policies and rules on student discipline. The Board authorizes teachers to remove students from classrooms for disruptive behavior.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

No person who is employed or engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include, and district personnel are permitted to use, reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense.

COUNSELING

Personal Counseling

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. Students who wish to meet with the counselor should contact Andrea Rossman at 406-837-7412.

Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL

The distribution of materials from outside the school system uses a considerable amount of valuable educational time. This time is taken away from students, teachers, and the clerical staff. It is the District's policy to limit the distribution of materials to parent and student organizations sponsored by the District or other governmental agencies. Materials which provide information valued or needed by the District may also be distributed. All organizations must have the approval of the Superintendent before materials may be distributed. The Superintendent will use the guidelines listed above in the approval of the distribution of the materials. In addition materials must advertise a youth oriented activity, not promote religion or political positions or be disruptive, libelous, or obscene.

In order to facilitate the distribution of materials with information about student activities offered in the community, each school may do the following:

- A. Maintain a centrally located bulletin board for the posting of bulletins.
- B. Maintain a table where flyers and other information can be made available to students.
- C. Include announcements for student-related activities in materials that go home to students.

It is the intent to post all notices and place flyers on the distribution table except those that are viewed by the principal as likely to be disruptive, libelous, or obscene.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The District's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards (refer to Policy 3224).

The Board recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The Board or its agents will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding student dress and appearance except in cases that disrupt the educational environment of the schools, or pose a health and safety threat to others. The Board

authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee to develop and enforce procedures for the monitoring of student dress and grooming in school or while engaging in extracurricular activities.

Procedures shall be specifically outlined in each school's student handbook and, at a minimum, shall prohibit student dress or grooming practices that:

- Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student, other students, staff, or visitors to the school.
- Create a disruption of the educational environment of the school.
- Represent gang membership or reference to gang related activities.
- Express obscene language or symbols, or symbols of sex, drugs, or alcohol.
- Express any message deemed inappropriate for a school environment.

Building administrators shall use reasonable judgment in determining the appropriateness of student dress and grooming and shall take disciplinary action according to board policy and the student handbook.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

CELL PHONES

Cell Phones, smart watches and other smart devices are not to be on, out, or used during the school day as per policy 3630. Inappropriate use may result in confiscation of equipment. The principal/staff member will confiscate equipment used during the school day. Parents may be asked to pick up any confiscated systems.

1. Phones and other smart devices are prohibited during the school day by the school board.
 - a. Breaking a rule will result in
 - i. Loss of device for the day (student may pick up)
 - ii. Loss of device for the day (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iii. Loss of device for the day and lunch detention (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iv. Loss of device for the day and 1 day of in school suspension (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - v. Continued defiance may result in board action.
 - b. Not giving a phone to an adult when asked will result in an in-school detention for insubordination.
 - i. The principal will hear all appeals on a phone being taken, but only if the student hands the phone over without argument or complaint.
 - ii.

Students will have access to school-issued technology.

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extra-curricular activities
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.

- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Participation fees for extracurricular activities.
- Musical instrument rental.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Summer school courses that are offered tuition free during the regular school year.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the school secretary.

A school district may withhold the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a current or former pupil who is responsible for the cost of school materials, unpaid lunch fees, or the loss or damage of school property until the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian satisfies the obligation. (Refer to Policy 3520)

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

It is the policy of Bigfork School District to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and state law 20-5-202 (2), MCA, pertaining to students who bring a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with 20-5-202 (3), MCA, a teacher, superintendent, or a principal shall suspend immediately for good cause a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district. In accordance with Montana law, a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to, or possess a firearm at, any setting that is under the control and supervision of the school district must be expelled from school for a period of not less than 1 year unless modified in accordance with District policy. Any disciplinary hearing conducted under this section will honor due process rights outlined in state law and Policy 3311.

For the purposes of the firearms, the term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 921 (4).

Possession of Weapons other than Firearms

The District does not allow weapons on school property. Any student found to have possessed, used or transferred a weapon on school property will be subject to discipline in accordance with the District’s discipline policy. For purposes of this section, “weapon” means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury, including but not limited to air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; fake (facsimile) weapons; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; numchucks (also known as nunchucks); throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace or other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon

Refer to Policy 3311

HOMEWORK

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

A school employee who has successfully completed specific training in administration of medication, pursuant to written authorization of a physician or dentist and that of a parent, an individual who has executed a caretaker relative educational authorization affidavit, or guardian, may administer medication to any student in the school or may delegate this task pursuant to Montana law.

A student who has authorization to possess and self-administer medication must have completed and filed, with the office, either a Montana Authorization to Carry and Self-Administer Medication or a Montana Authorization to Possess or Self-Administer Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication form. Details regarding self-administration of medication are available at the office as outlined in Policy 3416, 3416F, 3416F1]

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, pertussis, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, poliomyelitis and tetanus. Haemophilus influenza type B is required for students under age five (5).

A student who transfers into the District may photocopy immunization records in the possession of the school of origin. The District will accept the photocopy as evidence of the immunization. Within thirty (30) days after a transferring student ceases attendance at the school of origin, the District must receive the original immunization records for the student who transfers into the District.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the student must present a statement signed by the student (or by the parent, if the student is a minor) stating that immunization conflicts with the beliefs and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member. This statement must be renewed yearly.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a Montana licensed or certified health care provider stating the immunization required would not be considered safe. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. The statement for an exemption shall be maintained as part of the student's immunization record in accordance with FERPA as specified in Policy 3600P.

[For further information, see policy 3413]

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school:

- The Principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student.

- The Principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify parents unless the interviewer raises what the Principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The Principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the Principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The Principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

- **Students Taken into Custody**

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Montana Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Montana Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the Principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The Principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact. [refer to Policies 4410-4411]

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parents, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.

Review the information in the student handbook with his or her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s) and the directory information notice. A parent with questions is encouraged to contact the building Principal.

Become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or Principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, and the options available to the child. Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed.

Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or Principal, please call the school office at 406-837-7412.

A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.

Participate in campus parent organizations, such as PTA. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles.

PRAYER

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS [Policies 3200, and 2132]

The District recognizes fully that all students are entitled to enjoy the rights protected under federal and state constitutions and law for persons of their age and maturity in a school setting. The District expects students to exercise these rights reasonably and to avoid violating the rights of others. The District may impose disciplinary measures whenever students violate the rights of others or violate District policies or rules.

Surveys

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation.

Instructional Materials

Parents have the right to inspect instructional materials used as a part of their child's educational curriculum, within a reasonable time. This does not include academic tests or assessments.

Collection of Personal Information from Students for Marketing

The district will not administer or distribute to students any survey or other instrument for the purposes of collecting or compiling personal information for marketing or selling such information, with the exception of the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products/services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

Pursuant to federal law, the district will not request, nor disclose, the identity of a student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the district) containing one or more of the following:

- Political affiliations.
- Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family.
- Sexual behavior and attitudes.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or the student's parent/guardian.

- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Unless the Principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the office or school nurse. The administrator or nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parents.

REPORT CARDS, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND CONFERENCES

Written reports of absences and student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every trimester.

SAFETY

Accident Prevention

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

If injured while at school or at a school sponsored activity, contact your teacher, advisor, or coach and have them fill out the district's injury report form as soon as possible. This form can be obtained at the nurse's office.

Students MUST tell the coach/sponsor of the injury so that the coach/sponsor can file an accident report. Notification to the coach/sponsor PRIOR to seeking a physician's care is very important. The insurance carrier for Bigfork Schools will not process any paperwork without first having an accident report on file.

Accident Insurance

The school district does not provide accident or medical insurance coverage for students. Insurance coverage may be purchased by parents through a private company for a minimum fee.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the office to update any information.

Disaster Drills and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner. [Policy 8301]

Emergency School-Closing Information:

In the event Bigfork Elementary School must be closed, a Bright Arrow message will be sent out to parents and families.

SEARCHES

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, District officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

Students' Desks and Lockers

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by District policy, whether or not a student is present. Searches may also be conducted at random, in accordance with law and District policy. See policy 3231. The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Drug Detection Dogs

The Superintendent may request the assistance of law enforcement personnel or private individuals to conduct inspections and searches through the use of specially trained dogs.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 ("SECTION 504")

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards. The safeguards shall cover students' identification,

evaluation, and educational placement. This system shall include: notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent or legal guardian, and a review procedure. Parents who feel their child may qualify for 504 should contact the building principal to initiate an evaluation. Refer to Board Policy 2162 & 2162P.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT / SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

The District encourages staff, parental, and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment and sexual discrimination in the public schools. Students and/or parents will discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the building Principal.

For purposes of this section and the grievance process, "sexual harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity or;
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(8) or "stalking" as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(30).

All students are expected to treat other students and District employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop. A substantiated complaint against a student or staff member will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense. Supportive measures are available to parties involved in Title IX investigations.

The District will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual discrimination by an employee. To the greatest extent possible, complaints will be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by another student or sexual harassment or sexual discrimination by a staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the Title IX coordinator. The parent or other advisor may accompany the student throughout the complaint process. The conference will be scheduled and held as soon as possible. The principal coordinator District will conduct an appropriate investigation in accordance with Policy 3225 and 3225P. The student will not be required to present a complaint to a person who is the subject of the complaint.

If the resolution of the complaint is not satisfactory to the decision may appeal in accordance with Policy 3225P.

For more information about the District's complaint procedure, see Policy 3225, 3225P, 3225F.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/HAZING

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated.

"Bullying" means any harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication ("cyberbullying") or threat directed against a student that is persistent, severe, or repeated, and that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, at any official school bus stop, or anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student or staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated.

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry.

[See Policy 3226]

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The District will provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the District, as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provisions of Montana law, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

For students eligible for services under IDEA, the District will follow procedures for identification, evaluation, placement, and delivery of service to children with disabilities, as provided in the current *Montana State Plan under Part B of IDEA*. Refer to Policy 2161 & 2161P.

Parents who feel their child may qualify for Special Education services should contact the building principal to initiate an evaluation.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the District until the time the student withdraws or graduates. A copy of this record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights. The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours, upon completion of the written request form. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the

District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

Working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an individual education plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA, or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504; compiling statistical data; investigating or evaluating programs.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

Students over 18, and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education if they believe the District is not in compliance with the law regarding student records.

Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the District is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone, including military recruiters and/or post-secondary institutions, who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Should circumstances change, the parent can contact the principal to indicate his or her desire to change the original request. Directory information may include: a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

Special Education Records

Parents of a student with disabilities who has been provided special education services by the District will be notified when any information that specifically identifies the student is no longer needed. If the parent requests destruction of the information and the time established by law for retention has expired, the records will be destroyed. However, if the expired, the material will be deleted from the records but the records will be maintained until the time has expired.

TEXTBOOKS

Board-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school or damaging a book issued by the school may be charged to replace the book.

TRANSPORTATION School Sponsored

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally requests that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or the parent presents — before the scheduled trip — a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The District makes school bus transportation available to all students living three or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. Further information may be obtained by visiting the school website: www.bigforkschools.org. Students are expected to assist District staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding school buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, band instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus and before crossing in front of the bus.
- Remain seated while bus is moving.

When students ride in a District van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times. Misconduct will be punished and bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

Transporting Students with District/Personal Vehicle

Any person transporting students in a personal vehicle must provide the District with proof of current car insurance.

VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS

The District uses video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

VISITORS

Parents and others are welcome to visit District schools. Bigfork School District has a restricted access system, all visitors must be buzzed in at the front entrance and check in with the school secretary. All visitors will be asked to wear a visitor identification lanyard while on campus. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the Principal and teacher and so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

• Receipt of Handbook

"I have received a copy of the Bigfork Elementary School Student Handbook for 2023-2024. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the handbook."

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

Bigfork Middle School

Handbook

2025-2026



Best Work
Best Self

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission for School District 38 is to help all students acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be individually successful throughout life. In partnership with students, parents, and community, we are committed to having high expectations for all students by maintaining a safe, nurturing environment that promotes success, learning as a lifelong process, responsibility, and respect for one another.

BIGFORK MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

**BIGFORK MIDDLE SCHOOL
600 COMMERCE STREET
P. O. BOX 188
BIGFORK, MT 59911**

**PHONE: 837-7412
FAX: 837-7438**

Charles Appleby, Middle School Principal

www.bigforkschools.org

Superintendent Tom Stack

Board of Trustees

Dan Elwell

Carol Field

Deb Johnson

Mac Kirk

Julie Kreiman

Paul Sandry – Chairperson

Ben Woods

Purpose of the Student Handbook

This Handbook has been prepared to help acquaint the student with the rules and guidelines, which are necessary for our school to operate and function smoothly. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the contents and follow the directions given.

**“If your mind can conceive it, and your heart can believe it,
then you can achieve it!”**

John F. Kennedy

MIDDLE SCHOOL FACULTY

Mr. Charles Appleby, Principal

Mrs. Carol Venegas, Secretary

Mrs. Jennifer Wood, Counselor

Mrs. Elise Van Valkenburg, Science

Ms. Andrea Roseno, Science

Ms. Laura Milam, Reading & Social Studies

Mr. Bronson Ericksen, Social Studies

Mrs. Erin Shea, Math

Mrs. Jessica Johnson, Math

Mrs. Shannon Appleby, English

Mrs. Carol Bernard, English

Mrs. Elizabeth Fetterhoff, English

Ms. Samantha Aklestad, Social Studies

Mr. Hunter Johnson, P.E. / Health Enhancement

Mr. Brandon Piazzola, P.E. / Health Enhancement

Mr. Brian Phillips, Band

Ms. Brooklyn Little, Art

Mr. Erik Heuchert, Choir

Mrs. Julie Bonner, Librarian

Ms. Amber Tyrone Special Education

Mrs. Karen Johnston Special Education Paraeducator

Mrs. Aleisha Rust Special Education Paraeducator

Ms. Mary K Hovland Math Interventionalist Paraeducator

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SECTION I – Policies & Legal Requirements

ANNUAL NOTICES

Federal and state annual notices are located on the school's main webpage and are updated each year.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Once students enter the school campus in the morning, they must remain on campus until the end of the school day unless:

1. They are excused and checked out through the office.
2. A parent/guardian or principal permission is required to check out.
3. Leaving the campus without following the checkout process any time during the school day will result in disciplinary action.

DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

Student enrollment information is not publicly released without parental/guardian permission. Students' names and pictures are printed in school publications (newspapers, yearbook) and names are released for awards and recognition to media. A parent/guardian may notify the school to withhold this activity for their student.

DRESS CODE

The school requires that all students will exercise good taste with regard to their personal appearance. Attire that is disruptive or could be a health or safety problem is not appropriate. The school acknowledges that a connection exists between good grooming, personal attire, self-respect and student achievement.

1. Shorts, skorts, dresses, and skirts must be an appropriate length to cover the student. Tights, pantyhose, leggings and bare legs are appropriate leg wear underneath dresses, skirts, etc. Leg wear does not change the defined length requirement.
2. No see-through clothing, including mesh tops or bottoms, leggings, etc.
3. All exposed straps must be at least ½" in width. Clothing with exposed straps must be worn with shirts or dresses that cover chest and midsection. Ex: bralette straps can be showing if the shirt or dress worn covers the entirety of the chest and midsection.
4. No apparel that exposes the mid-section or body below the armpits.
5. No underwear or bra straps showing.
6. No drug slogans, beer/alcohol slogans, sexually explicit or profane pornographic slogans.
8. No "Gang" dress/signs: apparel that identifies a "gang," i.e., colors, slogans, or other accessories interpreted to symbolize or recognize a "gang."
9. Pants must be worn at the waist without exposed underwear.
10. Rips or tears in jeans must not show undergarments or body parts. The rips must not be higher than the ends of your fingertips.
11. Footwear must always be worn.
12. No trench coats.

If the administrator believes the student is breaking a rule or multiple rules, and if the infraction is proven true, the student will be asked to cover/remove/or change clothing item(s) to fit the dress code. If the student cannot fit the dress code with the clothes provided by the school, he or she must have a change of clothes brought to them. Until they are properly dressed the student will remain in the office.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL

All prescription drugs should be checked with the school nurse. Parents must provide medications in their original containers. Over-the-counter medication is available from the school nurse with a completed parent permission form. Illegal use, possession, being under the influence, attempted distribution or distribution of drugs (including prescription medication)/alcohol/narcotic paraphernalia/drug or look-alike substances is prohibited on school premises and at all school functions – 24 hours per day, every day of the year. This includes activities under District 38 Drug Free School Policy requirements.

Student Presence Rule: Any student party to the use, present where drugs/alcohol are present, being sold, used, or given away, will be suspended pending a discipline hearing and subject to implementation of District 38 policy requirements.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

CELL PHONES

Cell Phones, smart watches and other smart devices are not to be on, out, or used during the school day as per policy 3630. Inappropriate use may result in confiscation of equipment. The principal/staff member will confiscate equipment used during the school day. Parents may be asked to pick up any confiscated systems.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES INFORMATION

The use of the District's Electronic Information Services, including the Internet and electronic mail, is a privilege. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of these privileges and will result in disciplinary action. Additionally, if inappropriate use violates the law, appropriate law enforcement entities will be notified. Students who use the District's Electronic Information Services should not expect that communications or information sent, retrieved or stored via EIS would be private. The district has the right to review all files and communications and monitor system utilizations at any time without notice or permission. The district may close accounts, and review and delete files at any time.

Consequences for misuse of Chromebooks and other smart devices at BMS

1. Chromebooks are for school use during class time. Use of other educational sites are at the teacher's discretion.
 - a. Misuse of a Chromebook will result in:
 - i. A warning
 - ii. Penalty box for 3 weeks,
 - iii. Penalty box 1 trimester
 - iv. Loss of ability to take a computer home
 - v. Loss of computer privileges at BMS.
2. Phones and other smart devices are prohibited during the school day by the school board.
 - a. Breaking a rule will result in
 - i. Loss of device for the day (student may pick up)
 - ii. Loss of device for the day (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iii. Loss of device for the day and lunch detention (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iv. Loss of device for the day and 1 day of in school suspension (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - v. Continued defiance may result in board action.
 - b. Not giving a phone to an adult when asked will result in an in-school detention for insubordination.
 - i. The principal will hear all appeals on a phone being taken, but only if the student hands the phone over without argument or complaint.
3. Students found to be using a computer in any manner other than is deemed appropriate may lose use of a computer for the day.
 - a. Computer breakage through negligence will result in the student or family paying to have the computer fixed.
4. All other devices students wish to bring to school must be okayed by the school principal before use at the school. Any device not already okayed by the principal will be confiscated for the day and will not be allowed back at the school until it has gone through the proper channels.
 - a. Any devices specifically banned by the principal that show up at school will be confiscated and must be picked up by a parent.

RESTRICTED SEARCHES

Student computer use at BMS is tracked using a system called GoGuardian, which searches for lewd, explicit, dangerous or troubling keywords in student searches, emails, correspondence, or digital assignments. While this system is used to make sure students are remaining safe on the internet, If a student is making those searches intentionally or continues to use language that is not allowed in our school the student may be placed in the computer “penalty box” which limits the student’s ability to go to most websites outside of the sites needed to be successful in their classes. If the behavior continues the student may lose the use of technology on the school campus and/or have other disciplinary action taken.

EQUAL ACCESS/OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATION

Bigfork Middle School offers academic course work, vocational course work, counseling services, and activity opportunities to all enrolled students without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, or handicap. Bigfork Middle School Title IX Officer is Matt Porrovecchio (837-7412); Civil Rights Section 504 Compliance Officer is the principal (837-7412).

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Parents/guardians and eligible students have a right to view a permanent file kept on their student. This request must be directed to the building principal. A time will be set for the review. The principal will make corrections if necessary. The records remain the property of District 38.

FIRE DRILLS/EMERGENCY EVACUATION/LOCKDOWN/DRILLS

The teacher will give specific instruction for the drill. In general, orderly exit and safety are the major concerns. Students must adhere to teacher direction without delay.

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Students (members of the Bigfork Middle School student body) who are in dispute with a District policy, the interpretation of policy, or the application of policy may use the following procedure to have their grievance reviewed. The student (s) will present the grievance in writing to the appropriate school official following the step procedure.

STEP 1: Student(s) – teacher/principal:

The person with whom the grievance has been presented will have a meeting with the student(s). The principal will render a decision. After the decision has been given, the aggrieved party will have three (3) school days to go on to the second step.

STEP 2: Student(s) – Superintendent:

After the grievance has been filed at the second step, the superintendent shall render a written decision. Following the decision at the second step, the aggrieved party will have three (3) school days to consider and go on the Step 3.

STEP 3: Student(s) – Board of Trustees:

The student’s (or students’) parents may submit an appeal, in writing of the Superintendent’s decision to the Board of Trustees. The Board may or may not hear the appeal depending on the circumstances. If the Board decides to not review the appeal, the Superintendent’s decision stands. Should the Board decide to hear the matter, the appeal will be scheduled as soon as practical.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION (PDA)

Bigfork Middle school recognizes that genuine feelings of affection may exist between students; however, students shall refrain from inappropriate behaviors on campus or at school related events. The District Board of Trustees recognizes their obligation to provide a safe and secure learning environment. The school has the duty to protect the morals, health and safety of all pupils of the Bigfork School District. These obligations and authority include providing all students an environment free of embarrassment or discomfort because of others displaying unacceptable public displays of affection.

Unacceptable public displays of affection include, but are not limited to, any prolonged embracing and/or kissing, inappropriate touching, and touching of a sexual nature. Unacceptable public displays of affection at school are in poor taste, disruptive to the educational environment, and may violate sexual harassment laws. Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, counseling and/or parental intervention.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

School District 38 reserves the authority to conduct physical searches of classrooms, storage areas, lockers, individual belongings, school building, automobiles parked on school property, and all other sites within the district boundaries in the interest of public health and safety.

STUDENT ALERT RULE

Each student is responsible to immediately report to the building principal any and all instances of dangerous behavior, threats/suicide/weapons/drugs/intruders or situations that may endanger self or others that require immediate response by school authorities.

SCHOOL BUS VIDEO RECORDS

School bus video records are equipped with a video camera capable of recording video and audio of the passengers, driver and staff on the bus. Video and audio recordings may be used as evidence in disciplinary actions.

SEARCH OF LOCKERS, VEHICLES, ETC.

Desks, lockers, and other equipment at any school belong to the district. Any school property and/or student property may be entered and searched by school officials whenever there is reasonable suspicion that some substance or item is contained therein which is illegal, potentially harmful to the safety of the students or disruptive to the overall discipline of the school. The school reserves the right to conduct general searches using animals or electronic means to detect the presence of drugs, alcohol, explosives, etc. School officials may impound any items, which are prohibited by law or by policy.

SECTION II – General Information

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

Each student enrolled at Bigfork Middle School is here to pursue an educational program that leads towards promotion to high school. Teachers will do the best they can to teach, motivate, counsel, and discipline students to ensure that valuable educational goals can be reached each day. Students are responsible to meet academic requirements, prepare for class, and follow school rules. Students that consistently resist meeting their responsibilities and exhaust remedies the school has to offer should consider selecting alternate educational options.

ACCIDENTS

If you are involved in an accident, no matter how trivial, report the accident to the office. Be certain to fill out a **Standard Student Accident Form**. Complete the form and return the completed form to the school secretary.

ACTIVITY CARDS

Activity cards are \$10 per student. If the card is lost, the student will be charged \$10 to replace the card. Activity cards allow students admission to all extra-curricular events at Bigfork High School and Bigfork Middle School.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

The guidance counselor will help students with schedule planning and assisting with any school-related problems. Should you have a problem, personal or otherwise, feel free to discuss it with the counselor. Counseling services are available to all students.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Reasonable and proper care of equipment and facilities is expected from each student. Equipment that is checked out to students is the sole responsibility of the student. They are responsible for its care and return at the end of the activity. Individual(s) responsible will pay for lost equipment or careless damage to the facilities.

LOCKERS AND LOCKS

Lockers are assigned to each student. Students must use the locker assigned by the office. Locks can be checked out from the office. The School District has the right to inspect any locker at any time.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS AT SCHOOL

A breakfast and hot lunch program is provided daily. Meal tickets may be purchased in the cafeteria. Students will not be able to charge lunches. If financial assistance is needed, please fill out a free and reduced lunch application from our office or website. Contact Roger Vanlandingham for further assistance at 837-7409.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We welcome parent volunteers in our schools and on our field trips. All volunteers will need to complete a background check at our District Office prior to working with students. Background checks will need to be updated every two years.

POWERSCHOOL

Students and parents may see updated attendance records and grades anytime by going to <https://bigfork.powerschool.com/public> or by visiting the school site at www.bigforkschools.org and clicking PowerSchool. Parents and students will need their PowerSchool login information. Report cards are generally issued the week following the end of each of the trimester grading periods. Report cards are emailed to parents/guardians. If a parent would like a report card printed, please contact the main office.

SCHOOL DANCES

All school-sponsored dances are organized by working through the student council, teachers, and administration. Bigfork Middle School students, grades 6-8, may attend MS dances. Outside guests must fill out and turn in the school dance guest form at least one week before the dance.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit school. Bigfork School District has a restricted access system, all visitors must be buzzed in at the front entrance and check in with the school secretary. All visitors will be asked to wear identification. Students are not allowed to bring friends to visit classes without prior permission from the principal.

SECTION III - Attendance

There is a direct relationship between school attendance and student achievement. The fewer school days missed during the year, the more successful students are in the classroom. Students must attend school regularly in compliance with Montana Law 920-5-103, Compulsory Attendance.

The **Missing Children Act of 1985** makes it mandatory that the parent call the school immediately to report an absence. Call the school (837-7412) and select attendance from the menu (press 1). Parents can leave a voice message to report an absence by stating his/her name, the student's name, grade, and the reason for the absence. Homework may also be requested at the time of reporting an absence.

Any time you know you will be absent from school for any length of time such as a provisional absence (family vacation, pre-scheduled medical appointment, etc.), please bring a signed note from a parent to the school office prior to the absence.

Students who are tardy must report to the office so the attendance records can be corrected.

POLICY

The school must enforce the required school attendance laws. Parents are responsible for helping students attend school on time according to the absence guidelines established by the Board of Trustees for District #38 Policy 3122. Please see the full policy on the Bigfork Website for complete information regarding attendance at all Bigfork Schools.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those permitted by statute or identified as appropriate by the Board of Trustees. Students with an excused absence will have one day after their return to complete work assigned during their absence. Work assigned before their absence is due when they return or on the date originally set, whichever is last. The Building Principal is authorized to determine the validity of excused absences as defined in this section as follows:

Illness	Bereavement
Family emergencies	Medical appointments with a doctor's note
Participation in school activities	Any other reason prescribed by policy adopted by the Board of Trustees

Tuancy/Unexcused Absences

Absences which do not fall within the categories listed above are to be considered unexcused and constitute truancy. Truancy is also defined as any absence from school without prior knowledge or approval of the parent or Building Principal. Students are not eligible to receive credit for work missed during the period of unexcused absence unless prior arrangements are made and approved by the Building Principal.

In addition, truancy is further defined as any absence from school of a non-enrolled child subject to compulsory attendance under §20-5-102, MCA, Compulsory Enrollment and Excuses. Chronic truants will be reported to legal authorities as prescribed by law.

The Board will, upon recommendation from the Superintendent, consider an expulsion for chronic truants. The Building Principal is the designated attendance officer and authorized to enforce compulsory attendance requirements under the provisions of §20-5-104, MCA Attendance Officer; §20-5-105, MCA, Attendance Officer – Power and Duties; and §20-5-106, MCA, Truancy.

Parent (or Guardian) Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to assure their student attends school. When a student must be absent for illness or other unforeseeable emergencies, parents must inform the school during the morning of the absence that their student will not be in attendance. If a student is not present and the parent has not notified the school of the absence, the school will attempt to call the parent during that school day. If the school is not notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the last absent day, the absence will be considered truancy. The principal may excuse the absence, after consideration of the circumstances related to the failure to notify and to the frequency of the student's absence. In all cases where the validity of an excuse is in question, the administration may require verification from other sources.

Checking Out of School

When a student finds it necessary to leave after the start of the school day, the student shall follow the office procedures for checking out of school. Failure to follow this procedure may be considered truancy and subjects the student to disciplinary action.

SECTION IV – Student Conduct and Discipline Procedure

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to ensure that students are given the opportunity to develop their potential for learning and to interact positively with other students in a safe environment free of disruptions. The Code of Student Conduct explains in detail the types of violations that disrupt the educational process and the formal disciplinary actions that can be taken when a student violates the Code of Student Conduct. It is a list of student rules, responsibilities, and rights to assist students, parents, teachers, and administrators in promoting and maintaining a positive teaching and learning environment.

When students cause disruptions, they deprive the others of their basic right to learn. Students must show respect for their teachers and to other students. Obscene language, threats, intimidation or insubordination will not be tolerated in the classrooms or on the school campus.

Anything that is against a local, State, or Federal Law is against the law at school or school functions. Students who violate local, state, or federal statutes or refuse to cooperate during an investigation by school authorities will be reported to the law enforcement authorities.

DEFINITIONS

Detention/Study Sessions: At the request of the principal or classroom teacher, a student may be required to spend time at school outside the normal school day and during lunch break. Detention may occur in the mornings before school, at lunch time, or after the school day. Failure to fulfill detention may result in additional detention until the detention(s) are complete.

In-School Suspension: In-school suspension is removal from the classroom to an alternate setting which will isolate the student from socializing opportunities.

Suspension: Suspension is the removal from school for a period of 10 days or less assigned by the principal.

Expulsion: The Principal, through the Superintendent, may recommend that a student be expelled. The student will be suspended pending a hearing and/or action by the Board of Trustees. Expulsion is a disciplinary action available only to the Trustees. The right of due process shall be observed during such cases.

Non-school Conduct Rule: A student may be disciplined, suspended or expelled from District #38 schools for conduct/behavior that has a direct and or immediate effect on the discipline or general welfare of District #38 schools. Violation of federal, state or local law is included in the rule.

Drug Free School: Illegal use, party to the use, possession, or distribution of drugs, alcohol, narcotic paraphernalia, or drug look-alike substances is prohibited on school premises and at all school functions, 24 hours per day, every day of the year. This includes activities under District #38 sponsorship held off school premises. Violation of this policy will result in immediate suspension Level III, notification of proper authorities, notification of parents, and implementation of District #38 Drug Free School Policy requirements. If a short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion action becomes necessary, the student forfeits the right to receive credit for class work missed due to the disciplinary action. Student conduct that is determined to be an extreme violation of policy may result in an immediate recommendation for expulsion.

Possession Defined: Possession is defined as having the prohibited items in the possession of the student on campus, at school activities (home or away), or having access to the prohibited items during school time. This includes but is not limited to lockers, book bags, backpacks and vehicles.

Tobacco Free School: Bigfork Schools are tobacco-free schools. Possession of tobacco products or tobacco look-alike products (ie. Vaping products) by a minor is against the law. Tobacco use by anyone, or possession by a minor, is not allowed within the boundaries of the school campus. Students found in violation of this restriction will be referred to the principal. She will enforce the initial suspension process at Level II, file a complaint with the proper authorities, and notify parents of the incident.

Theft/Vandalism: Any District #38 student found responsible for the theft/vandalism of school property or of a private person's property, on school campus or on a school activity will be suspended, Level II, out-of-school, for a minimum of three school days, referred to the appropriate legal authority and be required to make restitution of all losses. Multiple occurrences or incidents of a serious nature may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Hazing/Harassment: Any act that injures, degrades, threatens, disgraces, or intimidates another student or staff member will result in Level II or III suspension. Multiple occurrences or acts of a serious nature may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Legal Definition of Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is unwanted behavior that is sexual or directed at a person because of the person's sex. Examples include unwanted sexual comments, slurs, rumors, notes or visuals, groping, grabbing, strap-snapping, gestures, threats, or attempted or actual assault. It may also include this type of behavior directed toward members of the same sex. Sexual harassment is illegal and a violation of the policies of this school district and will not be tolerated. Violators will be dealt with seriously and discipline may range from warnings, suspension, up to and including expulsion. If you have any questions about sexual harassment, contact the principal.

Weapons: It is prohibited to possess, handle or transmit any gun, knife, debilitating spray, or other object that could be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument in any District #38 school building, on any school premises, on any school-sponsored bus, or at any school-related activity, event, or function. Violations of this policy will result in immediate suspension, Level III, notification of legal authorities, parents, and a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion.

Plagiarism: Students may not take ideas, writing, internet information, including artificial intelligence sites (ChatGpt etc.), from another source and submit them as their own for credit. This is to include written documents, art projects, presentations, and/or any other original creation.

Consequences: First Offense 'F' (0) grade for assignment/project – Second Offense 'F' grade for assignment/project, discipline meeting with teacher/principal/student/parent. May result in loss of credit for class.

DISCIPLINE INFRACTIONS

Listed are the probable consequences for violating school rules. These consequences are general guidelines, and the school administration may assign lesser or more serious consequences depending upon the circumstances of the incident. The student can expect (1) the parent/guardian will be informed by phone or other means (2) where several options are listed, the administrator may choose any or all the items (3) the student will be moved up on the discipline ladder for future infractions, and (4) a violation listed under one level may under certain circumstances be moved into a more severe level.

BIGFORK MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE INFRACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

	Peer Abuse/ Bullying Behavior	General Misbehavior	Academic Behavior	Consequences
Level 1 Any behavior may be advanced to a higher level – depending upon the severity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pushing/shoving Tripping Name calling (less offensive) Inappropriate, insulting gestures or words Gossiping or false reporting Starting/spreading rumors Teasing Blocking another's path Dirty looks Writing graffiti on a person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiding other's possessions Dress code violation Public display of affection Possession/use of electronics Inappropriate language/tone Throwing snowballs, water balloons, etc. Lying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skipping class Plagiarism/cheating/lying 3-5 tardies Unprepared for class Inappropriate noises, comments, and/or questions Minor class disruption Possession of disruptive items Passing notes 	<u>TEACHER OR PRINCIPAL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warning Call parents Lunch detention After-school detention Change clothes Zero on assignment Referral to Principal
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic level 1 behavior Name calling (offensive) Minor fighting (no punches) Threatening Cyber-bullying (includes text messaging and email) Encouraging individual/group harassment Intentional embarrassment Causing physical harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic level 1 behavior Failure to do detention Leaving campus Stealing Vandalism Defiance of authority Insubordination Inappropriate language with adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic level 1 behavior 6-9 tardies Major classroom disruption Disruption with substitute Visiting inappropriate Internet sites Lost/damaged school property 	<u>PRINCIPAL</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call/letter, meeting with parents Counseling referral Individual behavior plan Loss of technology privileges In-school suspension Report to law enforcement Reparation for damages
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic Level 2 behaviors Serious fighting Sexual harassment Prolonged harassment Arranging public humiliation Extortion Repeated acts of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic Level 2 behaviors 3 office referrals Possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and/or weapons (Policy 3300) Possession of inappropriate material Arson False alarms Major disrespect Breaking a law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic Level 2 behaviors More than 10 tardies 	<u>PRINCIPAL SUPERINTENDENT BOARD</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-school suspension Out-of-school suspension Disciplinary hearing Expulsion "F" for the semester Report to law enforcement

BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATIONS

BIGFORK MIDDLE SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, HAZING POLICY

Bigfork Middle School is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our school works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community. Acts of bullying of students at Bigfork Middle School is strictly prohibited. The school administration will promptly and fully investigate all acts of bullying. Students will have the right to attend a bully-free school, and Bigfork Middle School will work diligently and collaboratively with all stakeholders in the community to prevent all types of bullying of Bigfork Middle School students.

Bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. Any retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

Each student at Bigfork Middle School has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly environment
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of aggressive, intentional or deliberately hostile behavior that occurs repeatedly and has an imbalance of power. Bullying behaviors normally fall into three categories: physical, emotional, and verbal; and may include, but are not limited to, intimidation, assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; exclusion; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks; gestures, or actions; rumors; false accusations; hazing, social isolation, and cyber-bullying.

BULLYING IS:

- Intent to do harm
- Repeated over time
- Unfair numbers or imbalance of power

SCOPE

This policy covers any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that occurs in the school, on or off school property (if there is a substantial disruption at school), at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles, at bus stops, and on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

1. Student Instruction/Awareness
Bullying will not be tolerated, and all acts of bullying are prohibited. Students will do the following to ensure that all acts of bullying never occur at Bigfork Middle School:
Student Rules about Bullying
 - We will treat all others with kindness and respect. We will not bully!
 - We will help others who are being bullied or treated poorly by others.
 - We will include and welcome all students.
 - We will report bullying behaviors to an adult and expect adults to intervene effectively.
2. Staff Awareness/Action
Staff at Bigfork Middle School will engage in the following activities and actions in order to prevent bullying and maintain a safe environment for students:
 - Closely supervise students in all areas of the school
 - Monitor for signs of bullying
 - Address bullying when it happens
 - Model appropriate behavior for students
 - Bigfork Middle School will raise bullying awareness and create opportunities for response training to bullying for staff.
3. Student/Parent Action
Bigfork Middle School encourages students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying to immediately report the incident(s) to a school administrator for further investigation. Students who retaliate against those who report bullying may also be subject to investigation and disciplinary action.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Staff, students, parents and others are required to report bullying
- The designated site administrator investigates the allegations

ANONYMOUS REPORTING

- Bigfork does not have a system for reporting bullying anonymously, however students and parents can ask to remain anonymous when giving a report to a teacher or school administrator and their wishes will be met within the constraints of the law.

RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- Designated site administrator will investigate all reports of bullying and determine if bullying occurs
- If the report meets the definition for bullying, the administrator will:
 - Create a safety plan for the targeted student
 - Create an action plan for the student who engaged in bullying behavior
 - Contact the parents/guardians of the students involved
- The safety and action plan are placed in each student's incident logs on PowerSchool.

INTERVENTIONS/CONSEQUENCES

Acts of bullying will be investigated by the site administration at Bigfork Middle School in an efficient and timely manner. Consequences may include but are not limited to the following:

- Loss of privilege
- Parent conference
- Counseling
- Suspension
- Expulsion

HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS

GOAL: The students will utilize safe and smooth transitions between classes.

DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTATIONS:

Students will walk on the right-hand side of the hallways and utilize railings for hand support.
Students will continue walking until completely up and down the stairwells.
Stairwells are designated no passing zones.
Students are responsible for holding on to their own possessions at all times.
Students will have four minutes passing time and must be in the classroom by the tardy bell.
Students will keep walking and not obstruct traffic.
Students will obey the “speed limit” in the hallways (walking on the right only).
Students will keep their hands, feet and objects to themselves.
Students will have passes to move through the halls before school, during class time, and at lunchtime.
Permits Include:

- Signed, dated planners
- Permanent passes
- Signed, dated temporary passes

Students will show pride and responsibility in helping to maintain their school. Floors and locker areas will be free of litter.
Students will “park” backpacks, coats, hats/scarves winter boots in lockers when not in use.
Students will not bring backpacks to the lunchroom or outside at recess.
Students will use low (quiet) voices.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INFRACTIONS:

Give non-verbal or verbal warnings (look/gestures/comment/question)
Verbalize what behavior is expected and the practice appropriate behavior.
Issue a detention.
Issue a “Major citation” (office referral)

OUTDOOR CAMPUS EXPECTATIONS

GOAL: The students of BMS will have a safe, fun, peaceful outdoor campus.

DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTATIONS:

Hallway expectations are in effect.
Promptly leave the academic area when bell rings
Once you are outside at recess, remain outside until the monitors blow their whistle,
At the end of the school day, remain outside until you leave the campus.
Food and drinks will not be consumed outside the building.
Stay within the boundaries of the play area. This is a closed campus. You must stay on the school grounds.
Students are expected to communicate problems immediately to duty teachers.
Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
Sports and games will be non-contact.
Refrain from spitting.
Use playground equipment appropriately. If you borrow the school’s equipment, it is your responsibility to be sure that it is returned to the appropriate storage in the building.
Clean mud and snow off shoes and clothing before entering the building.
Stay a safe distance away from the doors. For student safety, do not crowd.
Stay out of standing water and marsh-like areas.

Winter Weather Conditions:

Stay safe, be safe
Snow must stay on the ground and outside
No snowballs, ice balls, or slush balls

*Respectful behavior and Language are expected at all times.

Looks Like:	Sounds Like:
Safe/non-violent	Appropriate Language
Fun for everyone involved	Kind words (no teasing or harassment of any kind)
Respectful Body language	

Consequences for Infractions:

Give non-verbal or verbal warning (look/gesture/comment/question)
Verbalize what behavior is expected and then practice appropriate behavior
Stand on the wall for a period of time
Issue a detention
Issue an office referral

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

We believe that we are very fortunate to have such a beautiful school. As responsible students at Bigfork Middle School, we appreciate our cafeteria and its pleasant environment. As a result, we pledge to act in a responsible manner, which includes both polite behavior and an emphasis on taking care of the building by cleaning up after ourselves and taking care of our school environment.

Goal: The students of BMS will participate in creating a safe and orderly cafeteria.

Description of Expectations:

Students are to take coats to the cafeteria rather than returning to their lockers following lunch.

All backpacks are to remain in lockers or in their classes. No backpacks in the cafeteria.

Students have the right to sit in any unoccupied seat. Any monitor can move a student to another unoccupied seat.

No phones or devices will be out or used in the cafeteria.

All students will go to the cafeteria during the assigned time period.

Students must be seated in the cafeteria while eating. Food, snacks, and drinks are not to be eaten outside.

Students are responsible for cleaning up their tables and area.

Students may assist by cleaning up any messes in the lunchroom and by reporting any unacceptable behavior to the supervising staff.

Students must be sitting on benches and not walking around.

Students are to treat peers and adults with respect.

If serving yourself, PLEASE be mindful of other students and take the appropriate size serving. The remaining students will need food to eat as well.

If you are asked/required to take food you do not want, please be respectful of the person asking. Your Foodservice "friends" are required by law to make sure you take certain food groups. If you do not want it, please, just leave it clean and unopened on the SHARE TABLE for other students who may still be hungry.

Students are to properly deposit trash into the appropriate receptacles.

All students will EXIT through the playground door and remain outdoors. Or exit to the hallway and walk up the main middle school staircase.

*Respectful behavior and language are expected at all times.

Looks like:

Courtesy in the line

Use of good table manners

Cleaning up after yourself

Sounds Like:

Voices at low levels

Appropriate language

Kind, mannerly words

Consequences for Infractions:

Give non-verbal or verbal warning (look, gesture, comment, question)

Verbalize what behavior is being expected, practice behavior

Remove offending student to alternative seating area

Assign cafeteria clean-up

Issue detention

Issue office referral

Assign seats

GUEST TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

GOAL: The students of BMS will treat our guest teachers in a polite, respectful and cooperative manner.

DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTATIONS:

Great the guest teacher politely and respectfully as you enter the room.

Follow all directions given by the guest teacher.

Ask the guest teacher if you can do anything to assist him/her.

Proceed to your assigned seat in the classroom.

If the guest teacher requests your assistance, cooperate in every way possible.

Remember that the guest teacher is not your regular teacher, so they may not do things exactly the way your regular teacher does them.

Remember that you are representing yourself, your family, your teacher, and your school to the guest teacher.

Follow all the rules and procedures set out by your classroom teacher even though the teacher is not present.

Thank the guest teacher for being at our school.

***RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR AND LANGUAGE ARE EXPECTED AT ALL TIMES**

Looks Like:

Calm and friendly

Respectful body language

Sounds Like:

Quiet and respectful

Kind Words

CONSEQUENCES FOR INFRACTIONS:

- Note to teacher with consequences defined

-Loss of privileges for repeat offenses

-Issue a detention

-Issue an office referral

8TH GRADE PROMOTION CEREMONY AND FIELD TRIP EXPECTATIONS

We have high expectations in our middle school, and we feel that the promotion ceremony should be a celebration for those that have met the high standards and expectations of Bigfork Middle School students. The expectations fall into three (3) categories, and we want to make sure that we communicate these expectations and notify families if their student is in danger of not being eligible to participate. These expectations apply to participation in the 8th grade field trip as well.

Behavior:

No more than ten points against you for behavior for the year. For every month a student goes without a referral to the office, a student loses one point.

Points

Serious office referral 1 point

Lunch detention 2 points

ISS 5 points

OSS 10 points (automatic disqualification if this happens in the third trimester)

Attendance:

No more than ten excused absences per semester

Truancy = ISS (5 points behavior)

5 tardies = 1 absence

(Attendance issues may be nullified if a student finished each trimester with A's and B's in all their classes.)

Grades:

Finish the third trimester in good standing (A's, B's, or C's,) in all core classes (math, science, English, social studies).

May finish third trimester with 1 D per trimester they finished in good standing earlier in the year (i.e. if they finished in good standing 1st and 2nd trimester they could still walk with up to 2 D's in core classes third trimester)

No F's in core classes in the third trimester will be allowed to walk

Students with behavior, attendance or academic modifications or accommodations built into their 504 or IEP plans will be afforded those accommodations where they apply.

The principal advisory committee will look at extenuating circumstances and may consider accommodations for any student.

SECTION VI – Student Activities

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

At Bigfork Middle School, we are committed to the success of all our students. Because of this, we have a good standing policy for all extra-curricular activities. In order to be in good standing, the following standards must be met:

1. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of seven (7) classes.
2. Students must have no missing assignments.
3. Students must have a C or better in their classes
4. Students must attend study backs if their grades fell below a C or if they had missing assignments.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR BUS TRIPS

Students who attend school-sponsored activities or functions via bus are representing the school. No student shall smoke, use drugs, or bring alcoholic beverages on a bus or on a school trip of any kind. Student dress will be appropriate, clean and well kept. Those who depart from Bigfork by bus are expected to return to Bigfork by bus, unless through prior arrangements the chaperone is provided written permission by the parent/guardian allowing the student to return other than by bus. **Students will be released to adults only.** The chaperone and the bus driver are in charge, and their discretion is to be followed.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Board of Trustees has a policy which allows us to search a student's bags before departure on trips. We will do some searches on single events and will check baggage on all overnight trips.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR CONFLICTS

While Bigfork Schools maintain a district calendar and try their best to limit conflicts between activities, field trips, concerts and sports, there are conflicts and sometimes parents and students might have to make a choice between one activity and another.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR RULES

The following activity rules/penalties are in addition to rules/penalties that govern regular student behavior. The student participant acknowledges and accepts the responsibility to adhere to the additional rules/penalties in order to participate in school activity programs. Bigfork Middle School students who participate in inter-school clubs represent the school in activities covered by the rules.

Co-curricular activities defined: those courses that involved activities inside or outside the classroom.

Extra-curricular activities defined: those activities beyond the immediate scope of grade requirements.

TRAINING RULES: Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco

All violations of established training rules will follow the student throughout his/her school career (grades 6-12), regardless of the participant's activity, i.e. speech, music, football, etc. The rules are in effect from the first day of the activity until the end of the season.

Students will not be allowed to attend any gathering or function (either school-related or non-school-related) where illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present. Non-compliance with this prohibition will invoke all the stated consequences for disciplinary actions. Should a student attend a gathering or function without prior knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol will be present and, therefore, learns that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present; the student must leave the gathering or function immediately. If such student remains at such gathering or function after having knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present, such students will be subject to disciplinary action.

Rule 1: Participants will not use, be party to the use of, or have in their possession, buy/sell or give away tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or any other substance defined by law as an illegal drug. If the violation falls under the Drug Free Policy, that policy will be applied first.

Penalty: Students who violate Rule #1 will be suspended from all activities until a hearing with the principal is conducted.

If the student is found to be in violation of the rule:

1st time: The student will be suspended for eleven (11) school days from all activities. The student will be allowed to practice but not participate in any interscholastic event during that time.

2nd time: The student will be suspended for thirty (30) school days from all activities. The student must attend and complete an approved chemical dependence program at the parents' expense. If the student self-reports, they will be suspended from the activity for fifteen (15) school days, and the student must attend and complete an approved chemical dependence program at the parents' expense. The student will be allowed to practice but not to participate in any interscholastic event during that time.

3rd time: The student will be suspended from all activities for the remainder of his/her school career.

Rule 2: Participants will not violate any school rules resulting in any type of school suspension.

Penalty: Students will not participate in activities for the length of the school suspension. This means no practice, traveling, or participation of any kind.

1st time: Students will not participate in activities for the length of the school suspension. This means no practice, traveling, or participation of any kind.

2nd time: The second violation of **Rule 2** will bring suspension from all activities for forty-five (45) school days.

Rule 3: Participants must be in attendance at least five (5) classes during the day of a practice, on the day of a contest, and/or the Friday before a single Saturday contest. This rule excludes doctor or dentist appointments. The participant must notify the coach/sponsor and the principal in advance and present a note from the doctor on return to the school.

Penalty: The student will not participate in the next practice/event/game nor travel with the activity group.

Rule 4: On all trips, all students will travel together on the transportation provided for them by the School District. All participants must ride home from events taking place under 100 miles from Bigfork. If for some reason a parent would like to check out their child from local trips, this must be approved by the activities director prior to departure for that activity.

Penalty: Failure to travel in transportation arranged by the School District will result in the student not being eligible to participate in the event.

Rule 5: Coaches/directors may add additional participant rules for their activity. The activities director must approve all additional rules.

BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

BIGFORK HIGH SCHOOL
PO BOX 188
600 COMMERCE STREET
BIGFORK, MT 59911

PHONE: 406-837-7420
FAX: 406-837-7245

www.bigforkschools.org



PURPOSE OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook has been prepared to help acquaint the student with the rules and guidelines, which are necessary for our school to operate and function smoothly. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the contents and follow the directions given.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission for School District 38 is to help all students acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be individually successful throughout life. In partnership with students, parents, and community, we are committed to having high expectations for all students by maintaining a safe, nurturing environment that promotes success, learning as a lifelong process, responsibility and respect for one another.

SUPERINTENDENT

Tom Stack

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dan Elwell

Carol Field

Deb Johnson

Mac Kirk

Julie Kreiman

Paul Sandry - Chairperson

Ben Woods

STUDENT BODY OFFICERS

President: Nic Gustavson

Vice Presidents: Noah Hamilton-Dixon/Lillie Suffia

Treasurer: Donovan Stutzman

Secretary: Madi Shaw

OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF OUR SCHOOL

1. Bigfork High School seeks to provide a curriculum that is conducive to educational growth and development. This is accomplished by providing a wide spectrum of courses to satisfy the needs of the individual student. Skills are learned and abilities are discovered through classroom work, pupil-teacher relationships and participation in related activities.
2. A second objective of our high school is to develop student citizenship. This is accomplished by the students who help to plan many social activities, participate in student government, support school clubs, are members of athletic, musical, scientific, literary, and other organizations.
3. A third objective is the development of the physical aspect of the student. This is accomplished through courses in health, physical education, and participation in athletic programs.
4. A fourth objective is to share the responsibility of building the character of each student. It is the school's aim to provide an atmosphere that results in students whose conduct, manners, and integrity will meet the highest ideals.

EQUAL ACCESS/OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATION

Bigfork High School offers all academic course work, vocational course work, counseling services, and activity opportunities to all enrolled students without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, or handicap. Please see our High School Principal for any questions or concerns.

BHS STAFF 2025-2026

<u>STAFF MEMBER</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>ROOM</u>
Blouin, John	Math	110
Britt, Amber	Art	106
Carter, Jodi	Math	108
Castruita, Malinda	Life Skills	111
Christiansen, Zach	Social Science	210
Cummings, Tannar	Science	201
Feller, Josh	Math	109
Hansen, Mark	Principal	Office
Heuchert, Erik	Choir	112
Heupel, Vicki	Science	202
Hines, Suzanne	Spanish	104
Hollow, John	Business	101
Jessop, Louis	English	Shop
Jordt, Adam	PE/Health	102
Knobloch, Trisha	Study Hall/Aide	208
Little, Brooklyn	Art	107
Meyer, James	Industrial Arts	Shop
Munson, Solveig	Counselor	Counseling Center
Nadeau, Christina	RTI/Spec Ed	214
Phillips, Brian	Music	113
Piazzola, Brandon	PE	Gym
Porrovecchio, Matt	Activities Coord.	Office
Reichner, Jill	Family & Con. Sci.	205
Schedel, Samantha	English	212
Seeton, Caleb	English	211
Shanks, Robin	Study Hall/Aide	105
Sherman, Scarlett	Library	Library
Sikon, Annmari	English	209
Stine, Shirley	Special Ed Aide	214
Taylor, Jeremy	Tech Coordinator	206
Taylor, Stormy	Social Science	203
Tillmann, Leanne	Special Education	208
Varner, Shannon	Secretary	Office
Wilondek, Cynthia	Social Science	204

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SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

Each student enrolled at Bigfork High School is here to pursue an educational program that leads to graduation. Teachers will do the best they can to teach, motivate, counsel, and discipline students to ensure that valuable educational goals can be reached each day. Students are responsible to meet academic requirements, prepare for class, and follow school rules.

Students that consistently resist meeting their responsibilities and exhaust remedies the school has to offer will need to select alternate educational options.

ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENT

Students (grades 9-11) must be assigned to a minimum of six (6) full credit academic classes allowing for one (1) study hall period. Seniors must be assigned to a minimum of five (5) full credit academic classes.

RUNNING START:

Provides eligible high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to earn high school and college credits simultaneously through dual credit courses at Flathead Valley Community College. The student is financially responsible for all costs related to the Running Start Program. Interested students must contact the high school counselor's office for more information about the program.

CORRESPONDENCE CLASSES:

The principal and counselor must approve correspondence classes prior to taking the class.

HONORS CLASSES: In recognition of students who excel academically, Bigfork High School offers honors classes in English and Social Sciences.

Application Process: student obtains application from their current English or Social Science teacher, 30 school days prior to the end of the third (3rd) quarter. Student and parents complete the application process and return the complete form to the teacher. Minimum criteria for acceptance into the honors level include: (a) an 'A' average, for the previous three (3) quarters, in the subject area for which you are applying ; (b) a minimum 26 (30 max) score on the evaluation rubric; (c) a completed application. Students in Honors classes must maintain a 'B' or better each semester. If grades go below the 'B', the student will face a review by the teacher that may result in removal from the class. Visit with the teacher you currently have in either English or Social Science for a comprehensive explanation.

MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY/VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL:

Virtual High School (VHS) and the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) offer a catalog of semester and full year courses in the Arts, Foreign Language, Language Arts, Life Skills, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology and AP Study. Interested students must contact the high school counselor's office for more information about the program.

SENIOR INTERNSHIPS: Bigfork High School will have a limited number of internship opportunities for qualifying senior students. The District will work directly with a few local businesses to establish intern opportunities along with the required learning outcomes. Internship will only be available for District established and District approved programs.

ACCIDENTS

If you are ever involved in an accident, no matter how trivial, report the accident to the office. Be certain to fill out a **Standard Student Accident Form** and return the completed form to the high school secretary.

ACTIVITY CARDS

Activity cards are \$20 per student. Activity cards allow students admission to all extra curricular events at BHS

ADVERTISING

All advertising materials must be approved by the administration before posting or presentation to the student body in any manner (announcements, posters, flyers, etc.)

ANNUAL NOTICES

Federal and State annual notices are located on the school's main webpage and are updated each year.

ASSEMBLIES

All students are required to attend school assemblies that are held during the school day unless specifically excused. Students skipping any assembly will be considered truant and disciplinary action will result.

AUTOMOBILES AND PARKING LOT

Safety is our major concern. Students who do not drive in a safe and prudent manner will lose their campus parking privilege. All students are expected to park on school property. Parking is first come first served. Please use the upper parking lot. All cars using the parking area must be properly parked in the designated spaces in the main lot. Student problems relating to the use of automobiles will result in disciplinary action. If a student needs access to their vehicle during the school day, he/she must be escorted by a BHS staff member. **Automobiles parked on school property are subject to search; including canine searches and physical searches of the interior of vehicle by school Administration.**

CAMERAS-Installation and Operation

Any School District bus or private contractor bus may be equipped with a video camera capable of recording video and audio of the passengers, driver, and staff on the bus. Cameras are also installed throughout the high school buildings.

CLASSROOM AIDE

Students must complete a contract, maintain a 2.5 semester cumulative GPA, no 'F' grades for previous semester, follow school rules, and attendance shall be within District policy. Any discipline referrals may result in loss of student aide privilege. **Classroom Aide's are subject to grade checks and study back requirements as outlined in the Activity section of the handbook.**

Failure to comply with study back requirements will result in loss of Classroom Aide privilege.

Seniors must be enrolled in at least five academic classes, Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen must be enrolled in at least six academic classes before applying to be a student aide. All student aides are required to stay in the assigned teacher area – no trips to the library, study hall, etc.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Each teacher establishes the operational rules of the classroom. Students are required to function within the rules. Students that do not, may be removed from the class/activity immediately.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Parents are encouraged NOT to request that their student be released during lunchtime. Students are not allowed to be in their car or in the parking lot during lunch. Once students enter the school campus in the morning they must remain on campus until the end of the school day unless:

1. Excused and checked out through the office. At lunchtime a parent must physically come in to check out their student and come in to physically check in their student upon return to BHS campus. No phone calls will be accepted for excused lunchtime checkout.
2. Parent/guardian and Principal permission is required to checkout.
3. Leaving the campus without following the checkout process, anytime during the school day will result in the following consequences in addition to any consequence for truancy.

First Offense: Outside School Detention

Second Offense: One (1) day in-school suspension

Third Offense: Additional in-school suspension and parent meeting. Continued failure to checkout will result in progressive sanctions and possible referral for discipline hearing. Parents are encouraged NOT to take their son/daughter out to lunch during the school day.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

The guidance counselors will help students with schedule planning, college planning, career guidance, and assisting with any school related problems. In the guidance office we have information on many occupations and colleges. This information is available to all students. Should you have a problem, personal or otherwise, feel free to discuss it with the counselors. Counseling and guidance services are available to all students.

DETENTION

At the request of the principal or classroom teacher, a student may be required to spend time at school outside the normal school day. Detention may occur before or after the school day or during lunch. Failure to fulfill detention will result in additional disciplinary sanctions.

DRESS CODE

The school acknowledges that a connection exists between good grooming, personal attire, self-respect and student achievement. A similar relationship exists between student dress and acceptable standards of conduct. The dress code is designed to allow for student comfort while maintaining an environment conducive to learning and appropriate for school.

Recognizing these relationships, Student Council, teachers and administration developed the following rules:

1. Shorts, skorts, dresses, and skirts must be an appropriate length to cover the student. Tights, pantyhose, leggings and bare legs are appropriate leg wear underneath dresses, skirts, etc. Leg wear does not change the defined length requirement.
2. No see through clothing, including mesh tops or bottoms, leggings, etc.
3. All exposed straps must be at least ½" in width. Clothing with exposed straps must be worn with shirts or dresses that cover chest and midsection. Ex: bralette straps can be showing as long as the shirt or dress worn covers the entirety of the chest and midsection.
4. No cleavage showing.
5. No apparel that exposes the mid-section or body below the armpits.

6. No underwear or bra straps showing.
7. No drug slogans, beer/alcohol slogans, or profane pornographic slogans. (Apparel that displays a restaurant or business can be worn as long as the clothing item(s) does not advertise the consumption of alcohol.
8. No "Gang" dress/signs: apparel that identifies a "gang," i.e., colors, slogans, or other accessories interpreted to symbolize or recognize a "gang."
9. Pants must be worn at the waist without exposed underwear.
10. Rips or tears in jeans must not show undergarments or body parts.
11. Footwear must be worn at all times.
12. No trench coats.

Teachers are responsible to distribute a Dress Code slip to the individual. If the administrator believes the student is breaking a rule or multiple rules. The student will then take the slip to the office, where the principal, if present or another office staff member will look to the handbook and decide if the infraction is proven true. The student will be asked to either cover/remove/or even change clothing item(s) to fit, and a mark will be placed on their record. After three marks per semester, the student will have to attend a 1 hour detention before or after school. If the student cannot fit the dress code with the clothes provided by the school, he or she must go home to change and return immediately. If the student chooses to go home, time away from school will serve that day in after school detention.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL

All prescription drugs should be checked in at the high school office. Over the counter medicine is available from the school nurse, with parent permission. Illegal use, possession, being under the influence, or distribution of or attempt to distribute drugs (including prescription medication)/alcohol/narcotic paraphernalia/ drug look alike substances is prohibited on school premises and at all school functions, 24 hours per day, every day of the year. This includes activities under District 38 Drug Free School Policy requirements.

STUDENT PRESENCE RULE: any student party to the use, present where drugs/alcohol are present, being sold, used, or given away, will be suspended, pending a discipline hearing and subject to implementation of District 38 policy requirement.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES INFORMATION

The use of the District's Electronic Information Services with personal or school provided technology, including the Internet and electronic mail, by students is a privilege. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of these privileges and will result in disciplinary action. Additionally, if inappropriate use violates the law, appropriate law enforcement entities will be notified. Students who use the District's Electronic Information Services should not expect that communications or information sent, retrieved or stored via EIS will be private. The District has the right to review all devices (school or privately owned), files and communications and monitor system utilizations at any time without notice or permission. The District may close accounts and review and delete files at any time.

EXPULSION

The Principal, through the Superintendent, may recommend that a student be expelled. The student will be suspended pending a hearing and/or action by the Board of Trustees. Expulsion is a disciplinary action available only to the Trustees. The right of due process shall be observed during such cases. Student conduct that is determined to be an extreme violation of policy may result in an immediate recommendation for expulsion.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Reasonable and proper care of equipment and facilities is expected from each student. Equipment that is checked out to students is the sole responsibility of the students. They are responsible for its care and return at the end of the activity. The individual(s) responsible will pay for lost equipment, or careless damage to the facilities.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA): Parents/guardians and eligible students have a right to view a permanent file kept on their student/self. That request must be directed to the Building Principal. A time will be set for the review. Corrections, if any, will be made by the Principal. The records remain the property of District 38.

FIELD TRIPS/ ACTIVITY TRIPS

Field trips are an extension of the regular class and all school rules will apply. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to notify the field trip coordinating teacher/administration of current grades and absences, which would prohibit field trip involvement.

Students must be in good academic standing (C or above) in all classes in order to participate. Components of good academic standing include, but are not limited to: attendance and assignments/course work completion. Students experiencing academic difficulty as a result of, but not limited to, the above noted situations can earn the right to attend field trips by attending Study Backs until their grade(s) are above a D. Teachers of students that have a grade of an F, if they feel it is in the best interest of the student to attend the field trip, may seek an exemption from the principal. Students with excessive absences may lose the privilege of attending a field trip. Students in Band and Choir are required to attend District Music Festivals as part of their co-curricular grade.

FIRE DRILLS/EMERGENCY EVACUATION/LOCK DOWN DRILLS

Your teacher will give you specific instruction for the classroom you are in. In general, orderly exit and safety are the major concerns. Students must adhere to teacher direction without delay.

FUND RAISING PROJECTS

The building and/or central office administration must approve all fund raising projects in advance. Organizations and/or individuals may not sell goods or operate any concessions without approval.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Grade point averages are computed for all students attending Bigfork High School. This is done by assigning number values to each grade: A-4, B-3, C-2, D-1, F-0. The semester GPA is the average of the earned grades.

GRADING SYSTEM: The following grading system is in effect for Bigfork High School:

- A- 100-90 superior scholarship
- B- 89-80 excellent scholarship
- C- 79-70 average scholarship
- D- 69-60 below average - yet passing
- F- 59-0 unsatisfactory (Semester F = no credit)

W/F - Withdrawal - Failing - withdrew from the course (given after the second week of the course).

Waivers may be granted under extraordinary circumstances upon approval of the teacher and principal. A W/F grade will adversely affect the student's grade point average.

P - Passing: Achieved expected progress for the individual. Credit awarded without grade points

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 23 credits are required for graduation. Within the required credit hours students must have:

- 4 units of English
- 3 units of Mathematics
- 2 units of Science (one of which must be a lab science)
- 3 units of Social Studies
 - U.S. History
 - U.S. Government/Economics
 - World History
- 1 unit of Physical Education
- 0.5 units of Health
- 7 units of elective classes
- 1 unit of Fine Arts
- 1 unit of Vocational Education
- 0.5 units of Computer Business Applications

Honors Graduation Requirements (Begins with Class of 2027)

- 4 units of English
- 4 units of Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or higher)
- 3 units of Science (Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Anatomy or higher)

The rest is the same as general diploma requirements.

Cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher

25 Total Credits

Valedictorian and Salutatorian can only come from the Honors Diploma

All students are required to be scheduled for seven periods each day. Each student must complete 1 semester of Computer Literacy. A student may challenge the computer literacy requirement by passing the challenge exam at the required level of proficiency. The student will receive a P (Pass) grade and .5 units of credit.

ALL graduation requirements must be fulfilled prior to the graduation ceremony. Seniors that fail to earn all graduation credits will not be allowed to participate in the graduation commencement ceremony.

HONOR ROLL AND REPORT CARDS

Superintendent's list - **4.00**

Principal's List - 3.60-3.99

Honor's List - 3.20-3.59

Add'l requirements for the honor rolls - six classes, and no 'D' or 'F' grades for the grading period.

ACADEMIC LETTER: student must maintain a 3.6 semester GPA for the entire school year.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS CAMPUS RESTRICTION

Leaving the school grounds during the regular school day must be preceded by a note or phone call from the parent/guardian to the principal and signing out at the office. Absence from, or leaving the school grounds without permission, will result in the application of Bigfork Schools Closed Campus Policy.

LIBRARY POLICY ON LOST OR OVERDUE MATERIALS

There are not costs attached to material usage. In the case of lost or overdue items, at the end of each month students are notified of late materials and asked to return, renew, and/or pay the late fee or replacement cost of the item(s). At the end of the school year, student responsible for financial obligations are billed for the replacement cost (including shipping and processing fees) of all materials not returned.

LOCKERS AND LOCKS

Lockers and locks are assigned to each student. Students must use the locker assigned by the office. The school district has the right to inspect any locker at any time. If a lock is lost, there will be a \$5 fine.

LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

Lost and found items left unclaimed for 30 days will be donated to charity.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS AT SCHOOL

A lunch program is provided daily. Lunch tickets may be purchased in the lunchroom or online. If you bring your lunch, you are to eat in designated areas. The gym is closed during lunch.

MOVIE POLICY

Instructional videos/DVDs add educational value to the approved curriculum in high school.

Teachers may show instructional videos/DVDs that have ratings of G, PG, or PG13. Principals are authorized to allow an exception to the ratings by approving selected excerpts from R or NC 17 movies under the following conditions:

- The excerpt provides clear instructional support for the curriculum being taught
- The excerpts is determined to be age appropriate
- The excerpt does not violate any other District policy or ethical standard
- Parents are notified

Non-instructional videos, movies and DVDs (G, PG, PG13) may be shown with advance approval by the school principal.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

As new technologies continue to change the world in which we live, they also provide many new and positive educational benefits for classroom instruction. "Technology" is privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic hand held equipment or device that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

Personal technology devices are not allowed in Bigfork High School classrooms.

Cell Phones, smart watches and other smart devices are not to be on, out, or used during the school day as per policy 3630. Inappropriate use may result in confiscation of equipment. The principal/staff member will confiscate equipment used during the school day. Parents may be asked to pick up any confiscated systems.

1. Phones and other smart devices are prohibited during the school day, except during lunch, by the school board.
 - a. Breaking a rule will result in
 - i. Loss of device for the day (student may pick up)
 - ii. Loss of device for the day (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iii. Loss of device for the day and lunch detention (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - iv. Loss of device for the day and 1 day of in school suspension (parent or guardian will be asked to pick up device)
 - v. Continued defiance may result in board action.
 - b. Not giving a phone to an adult when asked will result in an in-school detention for insubordination.
 - i. The principal will hear all appeals on the phone being taken, but only if the student hands the phone over without argument or complaint.

Students acknowledge that:

- Personal devices must be in silent mode while on school campuses and while riding school buses.
- Devices cannot be used to take unauthorized pictures or videos within the school or classroom. Posting of unauthorized pictures or videos on the internet may be considered a major violation of technology use.
- Devices cannot be used in locker rooms, restrooms and dressing rooms.
- Devices cannot be used to disrupt the educational and learning environment.
- The school district has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of being involved in/used for harassment and bullying, causing classroom disruptions, or is believed to be in violation of student guidelines outlined in this handbook.
- Office referrals for technology violations will result in disciplinary sanctions. Warnings about appropriate use occur at the classroom level.

Student technology use is a privilege, not a right.

PLAGIARISM

Students may not take ideas, writing, internet information, etc., from another source and submit them as their own for credit. This is to include written documents, art projects, presentations, portfolios, and/or any other original creation.

Consequences: Step 1-First offense: 'F' (0) grade for assignment/project Step 2-Second offense: 'F' (0) grade for assignment/project, discipline meeting with teacher/principal/student, may result in 'F' grade for quarter and removal from course. Home School students may be removed from class.

PORNOGRAPHY

Possessing, using, or distributing pornographic, lewd, or obscene materials in any form is prohibited.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are available online through the PowerSchool system. Paper copies are available upon request.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Public Display of Affection: relationship between students is restricted to handholding or arm & arm. Any language or behavior beyond that will be treated as follows:

1. Warning by teacher/Principal to stop immediately
2. Any argument or second occurrence will result in after school detention and a call made to parents to request their assistance
3. Third occurrence, suspension pending a discipline hearing or meeting with student and parents to stop Public Display of Affection..

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

School District 38 reserves the authority to conduct physical searches of classrooms, storage areas, lockers, individual belongings, school buildings, automobiles parked on school property, and all other sites within the District boundaries in the interest of public health and safety.

PURCHASING

Students are never permitted to charge anything toward Bigfork Schools without prior approval from administration.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be emailed to the parents at the end of each Semester. If you would like a report card for 1st or 3rd quarter you may call the office and request one be sent.

SCHEDULE AND CHANGE POLICY

Please keep in mind that changing schedules is very limited, so make sure you're considering your course offerings for the entire school year. Students will register for seven classes with one alternative each year. The registration process and course selection will be reviewed with all students attending Bigfork the following school year. Schedules will be finalized in late spring of each year.

Course Change Policy

- All schedule changes should be made before the start of each semester.
- Students are not to drop classes at the semester.
- All changes are dependent upon class size limits and graduation requirements.
- Changes are made for the following reasons: teacher recommendation regarding placement, computer errors, classes not requested, or unique circumstances (such as an overloaded class or a class dropped)

SCHOOL DANCES

NO 'grinding' is allowed at any time during a school sponsored dance. All school-sponsored dances must be organized by working through the Student Council, Principal, and Activities Director. Dance applications must be picked up from the student council activities director, filled out, and returned for approval. All dances must be approved two (2) weeks prior to the date of the dance. Students wishing to bring guests to school dances who are not members of Bigfork High School must register the guest with the principal prior to attending the dance. Guests who are not registered prior to the dance will not be admitted to the dance. Student Guest Request forms are available at the High School Office. Only student guests enrolled in an accredited high school (maximum age 19 years old) may attend Bigfork High School dances.

SELF IDENTIFICATION

Students must, upon request, identify themselves to school District personnel or authorities when on or near school property, on school busses, or at any school sponsored event. Failure to self identify or provide correct information will result in disciplinary action.

SENIOR RELEASE PRIVILEGE

Seniors will be allowed to obtain a Senior Release Privilege under the following conditions:

1. A 2.5 semester cumulative GPA must be maintained and the student must have earned a 2.5 GPA in the previous semester.
2. No 'D' or 'F' grades from previous semester
3. Attendance within policy for previous semester
4. No major discipline during previous semester.
5. A student must be enrolled in five (5) credit bearing classes
6. A maximum release time for this permit is two hours
7. A complete Senior Release Agreement must be on file with the Principal
8. Must be meeting all requirements that lead to graduation
9. Seniors earning a D or F during Quarter 1 or Quarter 3 are subject to study back requirements
10. Seniors need to depart campus after their final class period (or lunch). Seniors may not return to campus during senior privilege periods without prior permission from the office.

STUDENT ALERT RULE

Each student is responsible to immediately report to the building principal any & all instances of dangerous behavior, threats, suicide, weapons, drugs, intruders or situations that may endanger self or others that require immediate response by school authorities.

STUDENT COUNCIL AUTHORITY

The Bigfork High School Student Council must approve any student or club activity such as dances, candy, or food sales, petitions, or surveys prior to the event or activity.

STUDENT DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

Student enrollment information is not publicly released without parental/guardian permission. Students names and pictures are printed in school publications (newspaper, yearbook) and names released for awards and recognition to media. A opt-out form will be sent home with students at the beginning of the school year. A parent/guardian may also notify the school to withhold this activity for their student.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Students (members of the Bigfork High School student body) who are in dispute with a district policy, the interpretation of policy, or the application of policy may use the following procedure to have their grievance reviewed. The student(s) will present the grievance to the appropriate school official following the step procedure. Schools officials may request grievance in writing.

STEP 1: Student(s)-teacher/principal: The person with whom the grievance has been presented will have a meeting with the student(s). The teacher/principal will render a decision as soon as practical. After the decision has been given, the aggrieved party will have three (3) school days to go on to the second step.

STEP 2: Student(s)-Superintendent: After the grievance has been filed at the second step, the Superintendent shall render a decision as soon as practical. Following the decision at the second step, the aggrieved party will have three (3) school days to consider and go on to step 3.

STEP 3: Student(s)-Board of Trustees: the student or student's parents may submit an appeal, in writing, of the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Trustees. The Board may or may not hear the appeal depending on the circumstances. If the Board decides to not review the appeal, the Superintendent's decision stands. Should the Board decide to hear the matter, the appeal will be scheduled as soon as practical.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

There are a number of student organizations that provide excellent opportunities for getting acquainted and taking part in activities. Students should select carefully the organization, which serves their interests, and plan to be active workers in the organization.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Substitute teachers will be afforded the same degree of respect and cooperation that expected of students toward the regular teacher. Failure to do so will be dealt with as if the misbehavior that was directed toward the regular teacher.

TECHNOLOGY USE - Please see "Electronic Services Information" and "Personal Electronic Communication Devices"

TELEPHONE - OFFICE

The telephone in the office may be used outside of class time.

TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL

Bigfork High School is a tobacco free school. Possession or use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes by any student violates school policy. Students found in violation of this restriction will be referred to the principal. Students under the age of 18 will be cited by legal authorities in addition to school sanctions.

TOBACCO OR E-CIGARETTE VIOLATION

First Offense: Suspended, out-of-school, 2 days, notify parents, notify appropriate legal authority, refer to Tobacco Free group.

Second Offense: Suspended, out-of-school, 4 days, notify parents, notify appropriate legal authority, refer to Tobacco Free group.

Third Offense: Suspended, pending a discipline hearing before the Board of Trustees.

VIOLATION OF LAW OR SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

Any conduct constituting a violation of any federal, state, or local law, or any policy adopted by the Board of Trustees, is prohibited.

VISITORS

No student visitors are allowed during the school day. Parents are encouraged to visit school. Bigfork School District has a restricted access system, all visitors must be buzzed in at the front entrance and check in with the school secretary. All visitors will be asked to wear a badge. Failure to check-in properly with the main office could result in trespassing charges. Students will not be allowed to bring friends to visit classes.

SECTION II: STUDENT CONDUCT CODE & DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

There are five basic rules of conduct at Bigfork High School. These rules apply any time during the school day (even if the student is off the school grounds) or at any school-sponsored activity, home or away. **Any behavior activity that causes a disruption of the educational environment, as determined by the building principal, is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.**

RULE 1: BE ON TIME AND WHERE YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE.

Truancy or tardiness will not be tolerated. Students are required to be on time to school and class. Students are to stay on campus.

RULE 2: CARE ENOUGH ABOUT YOURSELF TO TRY.

Students will be prepared for class and make every effort to turn in each assignment. The full use of the allotted time improves educational opportunities for everyone.

- a. Students may not possess any item, which may cause a disruption. These items include, but are not limited to: lighters, squirt guns, water balloons, laser pointers, beepers, pagers, cell phones, iPods, or electronic games.
- b. Students must be honest in completing tests and assignments. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated.

RULE 3: RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

Students have the right and responsibility to learn. Teachers have the right and responsibility to teach. When students cause disruptions, they deprive the others of their basic right to learn.

- a. Students must show respect for their teachers. Obscene language, threats, intimidation or insubordination will not be tolerated on or off campus
- b. Students must respect substitute teachers as they have the same authority as regular teachers.
- c. Students must refrain from public displays of affection

RULE 4: OBEY THE LAW.

Anything that is against a local, State, or Federal Law is against the law at school or school functions. If a student breaks the law, law enforcement will be notified, the student will be cited, and there will be discipline consequences from the school.

RULE 5: ASK FOR HELP.

CLASSROOM RULES:

Individual classroom teachers may develop additional rules for students, provided such rules relate clearly to the school's Code of Conduct. For example, teachers may develop their own tardy or cell phone policies in addition to the school policy.

POSSESSION - DEFINED:

Possession is defined as having the prohibited items in the possession of the student on campus, at school activities (home or away), or having access to the prohibited items during school time. This includes but is not limited to lockers, book bags, backpacks, and vehicles.

SEARCH OF LOCKERS, VEHICLES, ETC.

Desks, lockers, and other equipment at Bigfork High School belong to School District 38. Any school property and/or student property may be entered and searched by school officials whenever there is reasonable suspicion that some substance or item is contained therein which is illegal, potentially harmful to the safety of the student or other students or disruptive to the overall discipline of the school. The school reserves the right to conduct general searches using animals or electronic means to detect the presence of drugs, alcohol, explosives, etc. Any items that are prohibited by law or by policy may be impounded by school officials. Refusing a search may result in contacting law enforcement, vehicle impoundment, and referral to the School Board for a disciplinary hearing.

DISCIPLINE INFRACTIONS:

Discipline infractions are divided into three categories: minor, major, or severe. Listed on the following pages are the probable consequences for violating school rules in each of these categories. The principal has the responsibility to determine the best way to bring about the desired change in the student behavior and may, in special cases, select an option not listed. The student can also expect (1) the parent/guardian will be informed by phone for all out of school suspensions and by phone or other means for other types of suspension. (2) where several options are listed the administrator may choose any or all of the items (3) the student will be moved up on the discipline ladder for future infractions, and (4) a violation listed under one category (e.g. minor or major) may under certain circumstances be moved into a more severe category.

Teachers may assign school detentions for violations of classroom rules or school rules. The teacher will determine where the student will be serving the assigned detention (teacher room or detention room) and the time the detention is to be served.

With the help of many, we can do great things!

CONSEQUENCES FOR MINOR VIOLATIONS

Violation or Incidents	1st Incident or Step 1	2nd Incident or Step 2	3rd Incident or Step 3/4
Minor Classroom Disruption	Warning DET ISS	ISS OSS	OSS Parent/Student Meeting
Inappropriate Language	Warning DET	DET ISS	ISS OSS
Dress Code Violation	Warning DET	DET ISS	ISS OSS
Throwing Snowballs, Water Balloons, etc.	Warning DET	DET ISS	ISS OSS
Other Minor Referrals to the Principal	Warning DET	DET ISS	ISS OSS

*DET – Detention – includes lunch, before school, or after school
 ISS – In School Suspension OSS – Out of School Suspension
 Consequences may include community service, loss of privilege, etc.*

CONSEQUENCES FOR MAJOR VIOLATIONS

Violation or Incidents	1st Incident or Step 1	2nd Incident or Step 2	3rd Incident or Step 3/4
Truancy Skipping	DET	DET ISS	ISS Parent Meeting
Vandalism	ISS &/or OSS Restitution Police Contact	ISS &/or OSS Restitution Police Contact	OSS Discipline Hearing Police Contact Restitution
Defiance of Authority	DET	DET ISS	OSS &/or Discipline Hearing
Major Disrespect	DET ISS	DET ISS	OSS &/or Discipline Hearing
Major Classroom Disruption	DET ISS	DET ISS	OSS &/or Discipline Hearing
Classroom Disruption or Disrespect with Substitute	DET	DET ISS	OSS &/or Discipline Hearing

CONSEQUENCES FOR MAJOR VIOLATIONS (Continued)

Violation or Incidents	1st Incident or Step 1	2nd Incident or Step 2	3rd Incident or Step 3/4
Theft	ISS &/or OSS Restitution Police Contact	ISS &/or OSS Restitution Police Contact	OSS Discipline Hearing Restitution
Minor Fighting (no punches)	DET &/or ISS	DET &/or ISS Parent Meeting Police Contact	OSS Discipline Hearing
Fighting	ISS &/or OSS Police Contact	OSS Police Contact Parent Meeting	OSS Discipline Hearing
Use, Possession, Distribution or Transfer, Attempt to Distribute ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES (Inhalants, prescriptions, drugs, alcohol, etc.)	OSS &/or ISS Police Contact	OSS &/or ISS Discipline Hearing Police Contact	OSS &/or ISS Discipline Hearing Police Contact
Tobacco (all forms and e-cigarettes)	OSS &/or ISS	OSS &/or ISS	OSS &/or ISS Contract &/or Discipline Hearing
False Alarm	OSS &/or ISS Police Contact	OSS &/or ISS Police Contact	OSS Discipline Hearing
Harassment, Bullying (including sexual)	OSS &/or ISS	OSS &/or ISS Police Contact	OSS &/or ISS Contract &/or Discipline Hearing
Possession of any weapon (knife, firearm, etc.)	Confiscation ISS &/or OSS Discipline Hearing Police Contact	Confiscation ISS &/or OSS Discipline Hearing Police Contact	Confiscation ISS &/or OSS Discipline Hearing Police Contact
Cheating or Plagiarism	0 grade given	0 grade given Parent Meeting	0 grade given Parent Meeting F for quarter
Parking/Driving Violation	Warning DET	DET No Parking Police Contact	DET No Parking Police Contact

LEGAL DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is unwanted behavior that is sexual or directed at a person because of the person's sex. Examples include unwanted sexual comments, slurs, rumors, notes or visuals, groping, grabbing, strap-snapping, gestures, threats, or attempted or actual assault. It may also include this type of behavior directed toward members of the same sex. Sexual harassment is illegal and a violation of the policies of this school district and will not be tolerated. Violators will be dealt with seriously and discipline may range from warnings, suspension, up to and including expulsion. If you have any questions about sexual harassment, contact the principal.

POSSESSION/USE OF FIREARMS:

FEDERAL LAW prohibits everyone except a police officer from possessing or using any firearm, receiver, or frame of a firearm or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas. Students are not allowed to possess or use a firearm, ammunition, or any explosives or poison gas at school, on the way to or from school or at any school sponsored activity. Each of these infractions will result in a recommendation for expulsion from school by the administration and a discipline hearing before the School Board of Trustees

ASSAULT OR THREAT WITH A WEAPON:

Any student who uses a weapon of any kind to assault, threaten, or intimidate anyone at school, on the way to or from school or at any school sponsored activity will be recommended for expulsion. Weapons include, but are not limited to, pocket knives, clubs, martial arts items, knives, brass knuckles, etc.

SECTION III: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Fall activities: football, cross country, golf, volleyball, soccer, cheerleading/dance team, speech/debate/drama, band, choir, student government, academic competitions

Winter activities: girls' basketball, boys' basketball, girls swimming, boys wrestling, girls wrestling, cheerleading/dance team, speech/debate/drama, choir, band, student government, academic competitions

Spring activities: track, tennis, baseball, band, choir, student government, academic competitions

ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY: For Bigfork High School students to be able to participate in extra-curricular activities, the following academic standards must be met:

1. All students participating in a sport activity, including cheer, must have a fully completed MHSA Physical/Parent Permission form and Concussion form on file in the high school office prior to any participation (tryouts, practice, games, etc.). Managers need to complete the Parent Permission form.
2. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of seven (7) classes. Seniors may be enrolled in minimum of (5) five full-credit bearing classes.
3. A composite 2.00 grade point average, (4.00 scale), must have been earned in the previous quarter or semester. Second quarter and fourth quarter eligibility is determined by the previous quarter's grade point average. Students may earn back their loss of eligibility based on Quarter 1 or 3 grades. First quarter and third quarter eligibility is determined by the previous semester's grade point average. Loss of eligibility based on the semester grades are final. Students determined ineligible based on a Semester grade will have their eligibility status reviewed after the final grades for next quarter have been posted.

4. No 'F's' during season. Student can practice, but not participate in games or travel until grade is above failing and they have completed the Study Back requirements. Grades are looked at for the current grading period only and grades from the previous semester only determine eligibility as indicated in Rule 3.
5. Students are required to be at **five** periods the day of practice or a game or the Friday before a Saturday practice or game. The exception to this is when the bus leaves for a road contest before the end of 5th period. In this case, a student must be at school for all of school until the bus leaves. If a student has senior privilege in the morning, they only have to attend the classes they are enrolled in. It is the responsibility of the coach or sponsor to enforce this rule. A list of all participants in an extracurricular activity must be turned in to the High School office prior to the activity. Exceptions to this will be verified excused absences as defined by Montana state law. Students must be present for the start of school on the day following a midweek game unless otherwise arranged with the principal.
6. Must meet all Montana High School Association (MHSА) eligibility requirements.

ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS/STUDY BACKS: Students ruled ineligible (D or lower grade during current grading period) will be placed on probation and not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities or practices, unless the student agrees to and meets the following requirements:

1. Complete a weekly eligibility check, passing grades in each class.
 - a. Eligibility checks begin the 3rd Monday of each Semester
 - b. Eligibility checks take place on Mondays by noon/12:00 p.m. [1 check per week]
 - i. Monday eligibility impacts participation Tuesday through the following Monday
2. Attend mandatory study time (before school and/or after school) until eligible. This includes any bye weeks.
 - a. "3 minutes or 3 days" = as soon as the students grade is above a D, they no longer need to attend study backs. Must be completed by Friday afternoon.
3. If a student fails to complete the required study-backs, they remain ineligible the following week and are not permitted to participate in the next scheduled game. Athletes are not eligible to travel or miss any school.
4. If the student remains ineligible at the end of the second week, there will be a required meeting with the student, the student's parents, the activities director and principal to determine whether the student-athlete can return to play that season.
5. Students with an F can practice, but not participate in games or travel until grade is above failing.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR BUS TRIPS: Students who attend school sponsored activities or functions via bus are considered to be representing the school. All school rules are in effect. Student dress will be appropriate, clean, and well kept. All students must depart from Bigfork High School by school district provided transportation and are expected to return to Bigfork by the same. Parents or guardians may sign out their son or daughter for the return trip. The activities director and/or principal must approve any additional travel arrangements in advance. **Students will be released to parents only.** The chaperone and the bus driver are in charge, and their directions are to be followed.

Student bags and equipment are subject to search before the departure of trips. We will do random searches on single events and will check all baggage on all overnight trips.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR RULES: The following activity rules/penalties are in addition to rules/penalties that govern regular student behavior. The student participant acknowledges and accepts the responsibility to adhere to the additional rules/penalties in order to participate in school activity programs. Bigfork High School students who participate in inter-school athletics, speech, debate, music, cheerleading, or represent the school in activities are covered by the rules.

Co-curricular activities defined: those credit-bearing courses that involve activities both inside and outside the classroom setting.

Extra-curricular activities defined: those activities outside a classroom setting (sports, cheer, speech/drama, clubs, etc.)

TRAINING RULES- Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco

All violations of established training rules will follow the student throughout his/her school career (grades 7-12), regardless of the participant's activity, i.e. speech, music, football, etc.

Definition of a Season - The rules are in effect from the first day of the activity until the end of the season. The "season" is defined as the first official day of practice through the last day (midnight) of the State Championship event for said activity per the MHSA schedule. Whether or not our team is participating in the state tournament/championship has no bearing on this handbooks definition of a "season."

Students will not be allowed to attend any gathering or function where illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present. Should a student attend a gathering or function without prior knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol will be present and learns that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present: the student must leave the gathering or function immediately. If student remains at such gathering or function after having knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present, students will be subject to disciplinary action.

RULE #1: Participants will not use, be present to the use of, or have in their possession, buy/sell, distribute or attempt to distribute, or give away tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, unauthorized prescription medications, or any other substance defined by law as an illegal drug. If the violation falls under the Drug Free Policy, that policy will be applied first.

Penalty: Students who violate Rule #1 will be suspended from all activities until a hearing with the principal is conducted. If the student is found to be in violation of the rule the following consequences will be assigned.

First time: The student will be suspended for eleven (11) school days from all activities. The student will be allowed to practice, but not to participate in any interscholastic event during that time.

Second time: The student will be suspended for thirty (30) school days from all activities. If student self reports, they will be suspended from the activity for fifteen (15) school days. The student must attend and complete an approved chemical dependency program at parent expense. The student will be allowed to practice, but not participate in any interscholastic event during that time.

Third time: The student will be suspended from all activities for the remainder of his/her school career.

RULE #2: Participants will not violate any school rules resulting in an out-of-school suspension.

First time: Student will lose privilege from all school activities for eleven (11) school days. Students will not participate in activities or attend practice during the term of the out-of-school suspension. After the student returns to school, the student will be allowed to practice, but not participate in any interscholastic event for the duration of the 11 day suspension.

Second time: The second violation of Rule #2 will bring suspension from all activities for thirty (30) school days. Student participation is the same as a first time violation with a 30-day duration.

RULE #3: Participants must be in attendance for at least five (5) classes during the day of a practice, on the day of a contest, and/or the Friday before a single Saturday contest. The participant may not have **ANY** class periods that they have unexcused or truant absences on the day of a contest or on the Friday before a Saturday event. Participants must be in attendance for all periods they are enrolled in if the bus is departing prior to the end of 5th period. **If a participant does not meet the attendance requirements, they do not practice or participate.** This rule excludes verified doctor or dentist appointments. The participant must notify the coach/sponsor and the principal in advance, and present a note from the doctor on return to the school.

Penalty: The student will not participate in the next practice, event, or game, nor travel with the activity group.

RULE #4: On all trips, all students will travel together on the transportation provided for them by the school district. Participants must travel to away games on school provided transportation. Parents/guardians are allowed to sign their son or daughter out after a road game.

Penalty: Failure to travel in transportation arranged by the school district will result in the student not being eligible to participate in that event.

RULE #5: Coaches/directors may add additional participant rules for their activity. The activities director must approve all additional rules for specific activities and copies of the rules need to be on file.

SECTION IV: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Bigfork High School believes that there is a direct relationship between school attendance and student achievement. The fewer school days missed during the year, the more successful students are in the classroom. Students must attend school regularly in compliance with Montana Law (20-5-103), Compulsory Attendance and Excuses.

ABSENCE VERIFICATION

1. Parents/Guardians are responsible for notifying the school whenever their child is absent. We ask parents to call the school the day of the absence, excuse the absence online, or they may send a note with the student when the student returns to school. The absence of a phone call and/or note to the school by the parent/guardian will result in the school making an attempt to phone a parent/guardian at home or work.
2. If doctor or dental appointments must be made during school hours, the student must check out in the main office prior to leaving school. The school requires a medical office note upon return to school.
3. Absences must be verified within 24 hours of the absence to be considered excused. If not, the absence will be a TRUANCY or UNEXCUSED, depending on the circumstances of the absence. It is the responsibility of the school office to determine if an absence is excused, unexcused, or truant. Parents and teachers provide information, but do not determine the type of absence. Montana Law does not allow parents to excuse students from school except for the reasons listed in the "Excused Absence" section of this handbook. If a student is more than ten (10) minutes late for class, he/she will be considered absent.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Bigfork High School has two (2) requirements to earn credit in a course which will begin with the first scheduled class day.

1. the student must have a 60% average or better to receive credit in classes taken, and
2. the student must make a sincere effort to attend classes regularly.

Any student who is absent from a class for ten (10) or more class periods during any semester will be subject to individual classroom teacher policies, which may affect student grades.

TYPES OF STUDENT ABSENCES

- **Excused Absence (EA):** an absence for (1) illness, (2) quarantine, (3) bereavement, (4) emergency conditions approved by the administration. All excused absences must be cleared within 48 hours of the absence.
- **Medical Excused (ME):** A absence for a medical appointment, illness, or other medical needs that has been excused by a note from a medical provider.
- **Unverified Absence (UV):** Parent contact attempted by school personnel to verify absence status. No contact was made with parent so absence is listed as UV. If absence in not excused within 48 hours by the parent, it is considered a truancy.
- **Pre-Arranged Absence (PA):** The Pre-Arranged Absence form is the proper way for students to miss school for any reason other than those listed as excused. **The pre-arranged absence requires the student to get their assignments completed prior to the absence unless a teacher specifically exempts this requirement.** A pre-arranged absence form can be obtained from the main office. Pre-absences must be approved by the student's teachers and

- principal at least three (3) days prior to the absence.
- **Unexcused Absence (UA):** An absence that is considered avoidable by the school even though it may be approved by the parent/guardian or absence that has not been properly cleared through the main office. Examples may include: a hair appointment, a shopping trip, sleeping in, etc. It is the teacher's discretion how to handle the work to be made up from an unexcused absence.
- **Parental Request (PR):** An absence that is necessary based on parental or family needs but does not qualify as an excused absence per board policy.
- **Truancy/Skipping (TR):** Truancy is when a student is not in class or in an area without prior knowledge and approval of the parent or school. A "0" will be assigned to all work missed during a truancy and discipline consequences will be assigned by the Principal.
- **Out-of-School Suspension (OS):** A school assigned disciplinary absence where the students is suspended from school off school grounds. A student will be able to make up "0's" from those classes at the Principals discretion.
- **In-School Suspension (IS):** A disciplinary absence assigned by the principal where a student is assigned to the in-school suspension room. A student will receive credit for work and assignments missed.
- **School Related (SR):** A School Related absence is when the student is absent because he/she is involved in school sponsored extra or co-curricular activities. A coach or advisor will provide a list of those students who will be absent along with the date of the trip. ***It is the student's responsibility to check with each teacher and make sure his/her work is made up to the teacher's satisfaction.***

TARDY POLICY

It is the student's responsibility to be on time for class. **Late arrivals to school will generally not be excused. After the 10 minute mark, a student is considered tardy-absent.**

- Consequences for late arrival to school (1st Period) will be assigned through the office. The consequences for excessive late arrivals will be: 3 tardies = 30 minutes detention, 4th, 5th and 6th tardy and up = 1 hour detention for each. Unexcused and Unverified absences may count towards the total tardies that a student accumulates in 1st period depending upon the circumstances. Arriving 15 minutes late is an TA absence and will count towards the tardy total when determining consequences.
- Consequences for tardiness are progressive and begin at the level of the classroom teacher for the remaining class periods. Teachers may assign lunch and/or afterschool detentions for tardies based on their classroom policy. When a student's tardiness becomes frequent or disruptive, the student shall be referred to the principal for additional consequences.

PARENT/STUDENT ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK & CODE OF CONDUCT

BIGFORK SCHOOL DISTRICT
2025 - 2026

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook and code is to inform parents, students, and coaches of proper guidelines, procedures, and policies that are essential for successful programs. Bigfork School District understands that interscholastic athletics are a significant part of the educational process. The combination of academics and athletics enhances the quality of students' lives and expands their options for learning and personal growth. Athletics provide an educational opportunity in which students can learn essential life lessons beyond those that can be learned in an academic classroom.

Our tradition has been to win with honor, to develop young people of character that our community has pride in, on and off the field. We desire to win, but only with honor to our participants, our schools and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned.

It is the responsibility of the school administration to apply the guidelines of this handbook within school board policy and standard administrative procedures. All concerns should be addressed through the Activities Director's office either in person or in writing.

Please feel free to call or visit the activities director with any questions or concerns.

Matt Porrovecchio
Activities Director
406-837-7420

Mark Hansen
High School Principal
406-837-7420

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PHILOSOPHY

A balanced activities program is an essential component in the achievement of the educational goals identified in the basic statement of philosophy for the Bigfork Schools. The activities program should provide opportunities for youth to further develop interests and talents in such areas as speech and debate, drama, journalism, music, student government, and sports. Participation in these activities should provide many students with a lifetime basis for personal values, work and leisure activities.

The opportunity for participation in a wide variety of activities is a vital part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the activity, the student body and the community. The development of learning skills and emotional patterns enables the student to make maximum use of his or her education. Knowledge and skills gained in classes may be applied and developed further through participation in the activities program.

Young people learn a great deal from their participation in activities. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, competition and how to win and lose gracefully are integral parts of all activities. Activities also play an important part in helping the individual student develop a positive self-concept, an alert mind and a chemical-free, healthy body. Competition enhances school spirit and helps spectators, as well as participants, develop pride.

Every effort should be made, within the priorities of the District to support the activities program with quality staff, facilities, and equipment. Advisors, directors and coaches, through leadership and example, should teach the specific skills necessary for improvement in activities and provide guidance in the development of self-esteem, good sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, ethical behavior, artistic sensitivity and an appreciation for the importance of practice.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Middle School Programs (Developmental Stage): The optimum goals at this stage include teaching fundamentals of the sport, emphasizing sportsmanship and providing equitable practice and game playing time for all participants. Winning can be discussed to build team pride, but should not be stressed as to circumvent the original aforementioned goals.

Sub-Varsity Programs - Junior Varsity, Sophomore and Freshman: The Junior Varsity, Sophomore and Freshmen levels are intended for those students who display the potential for continued development into varsity level performers. Sub-varsity teams are primarily comprised of the underclassmen that their title suggests. Occasionally a younger player will be

moved up to a higher level depending on his or her individual skills and abilities and the varsity coaches' discretion.

Squad sizes may vary dependent upon the program. Therefore, cuts may take place. While it is the philosophy of the school to promote broad participation, the reality is that some sports can only provide a quality, safe experience with squad size limitations.

The understanding that practice sessions are critical to individual as well as team success needs to be demonstrated. A specified amount of game playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the heavy demands of varsity sports. While practices and contests are rarely conducted on holidays, practices are sometimes scheduled during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of commitment is expected at the sub-varsity level.

At this level, athletes are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program, the team and to continued self-development. Accordingly, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of skills and developing an understanding of strategies associated with the sport. Sub-varsity programs work toward achieving a balance between individual player development and striving for team victory. The final outcome of a contest is a consideration.

Varsity Program: Varsity level competition is the culmination of each sports program. Normally, a squad is comprised of junior and senior athletes. Occasionally a sophomore, and infrequently a freshman, may be included on the team, provided evidence of advanced levels of physical development, athletic skill and appropriate socio-emotional development are demonstrated.

Squad size at the Varsity level may be limited depending upon the sport. The number of participants on any given team is a function of the number needed to conduct effective and meaningful practices as well as to adequately meet the strategic requirements for successfully playing in athletic contests. It is important that each squad member recognize and accept the role that they will serve on the team. The number of roster positions is relative to the student's acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team goals. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specific amount of playing time at the Varsity level is never guaranteed. It is important that both students and parents understand this aspect of varsity competition.

A positive attitude and an advanced level of skill are pre-requisites in order to win a roster spot on a Varsity team. There must also be a realization that Varsity athletics requires a major time

commitment. In most sports, a six-day per week regime may be required. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sport seasons.

The Varsity coach is the instructional leader for the entire sport program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. Communication among the modified, junior varsity and varsity programs is the responsibility of the Varsity coach. Preparing to compete at a high level, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the group's maximum potential should be the goals of a Varsity team.

TITLE IX

This is to certify that the Bigfork Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of sex and adheres to the provisions of Title IX and the Settlement Agreement.

The Settlement Agreement deals with sex equity in interscholastic athletics in regard to number of sports offered, coaches, coaching salaries, publicity, team support, scheduling and facilities, laundry facilities, recognition, meals, overnight accommodations, uniforms, equipment and supplies, Booster Club, transportation and officials. Copies of the Settlement Agreement may be obtained from the Activities Director's office.

Matt Porrovecchio, Title IX Coordinator, is responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Settlement Agreement. If you have any questions regarding the provisions of the Settlement Agreement, contact Mr. Hansen or Mr. Porrovecchio by calling 837-7420.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all academic and activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior that are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Good sportsmanship is viewed as a concrete measure of understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.

The concept of sportsmanship is a way of thinking and behaving that must be taught, modeled, expected and reinforced in the classroom and in all competitive activities. Activities are an important aspect of the total educational process in our school. They provide an arena for participants to grow and excel, and to understand and value the concepts of good sportsmanship and teamwork. They are an opportunity for coaches and staff to teach and model sportsmanship, to build school pride, and increase student and community involvement. Ultimately this translates to improved academic performance. All student athletes, in-season or

out, are obligated to represent themselves, the team, Bigfork High School, their families and communities with the highest level of sportsmanship.

SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS

- During the National Anthem, students are to remove their hats, face the flag and not talk. They are to remain standing until the flag has been removed from the floor.
- Proper language is to be used at all times. No swearing or language which is offensive to others will be tolerated. Individual and group vulgarity is unacceptable, as is taunting, trash talk and other verbal forms of harassment and booing of players, coaches, and officials.
- Obscene gestures are unacceptable.
- Making degrading and/or critical remarks about officials during or after a contest either at the competition site or from the bench, locker area or stands is unacceptable.
- Arguing with officials and/or coaches or going through motions indicating dislike or disdain for a decision is unacceptable.
- Respect is the key to good sportsmanship. Opponents should be respected. They are not enemies but fellow teenagers who happen to attend other schools.
- Be modest and humble in victory or defeat. It is easy to be a good winner. Have the courage to show class when you lose.
- Acts of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to the following: Actions detrimental to the health, safety, and well being of others; disrespect; insubordination; abusive or improper language; taunting and/or inciting; harassment; hazing; destruction of school equipment; vandalism; conduct detrimental to the team or school or any other conduct as determined by the coach(es) or administration which could cause embarrassment or criticism to the team and/or school, or which is inconsistent with a student-athletes position as a leader and role model.

PENALTY: Disciplinary action for improper conduct described in this section is based upon the severity of each case. Examples of discipline for behavioral infractions include, but are not limited to the following: a conference involving the student athlete with his/her coach and/or school officials and/or parents to resolve the issue; suspension from practices and/or contests; suspension from the team for the remainder of the season; suspension from athletic participation for a longer period of time in the event of severe or recurring infractions; suspension from athletic participation pending a resolution with school officials; withholding of athletic letter/award; monetary restitution for vandalism and/or destruction or loss of property; hours of school-based community service.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS

Bigfork School District believes that an activities program provides an opportunity for students to acquire tools for lifelong personal growth and fulfillment of potential. These tools include self discipline, ability to work as a part of a team, perseverance, desire to play fair, and grace in winning and losing. Furthermore, lifelong participation in physical activity is valuable for physical and mental health and fitness.

In order to provide the greatest benefit to participants, Bigfork School District will provide adult role models who exemplify the kind of behavior and leadership to be developed from the program. The District also commits to provide, within limits of available resources, the broadest range of competitive programs for all who wish to participate.

While the District takes great pride in winning, we do not condone “winning at any cost” and discourage any and all pressures that lead to poor sportsmanship and neglect good physical and mental health. At all times, the activities program will be conducted in a way that is complementary and supportive of the educational program of Bigfork School District.

LETTERING CRITERIA

The criteria for earning the BHS varsity letter have been established by Bigfork High School coaching staff. A philosophy underlies the criteria. The coaching staff believes that, for students at our school, earning a varsity letter should require evidence of commitment to team and expertise in sport. Measuring expertise is not a science. Nonetheless, we have defined sport-specific standards for the sake of uniform decision making. The criteria are based on standards the coaching staff believes are high, yet reasonable. The policies are intended to encourage students to persevere toward the goal of earning the varsity letter rather than to discourage or belittle anyone who fails to attain the standards. For activity-specific lettering criteria, please contact your coach.

WALL OF FAME CRITERIA

The BHS Activities Wall of Fame represents the pinnacle of success in a given activity in the State of Montana and beyond. It is our hope that those who are so honored will serve as an inspiration to and a source of pride for the students of Bigfork High School, providing the added incentive for them to set and strive to achieve the goals necessary to succeed in their adult life. As with lettering, the criteria are intended to encourage students rather than to discourage or belittle anyone who fails to attain the standards. While students can meet Wall of Fame criteria at any point in their high school career, selection will not be made until their senior or graduation year.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- Graduate of Bigfork High School
- 1st Team All State in a Team Sport/Activity
- State Champion in an Individual Sport/Activity (Speech, Tennis, Golf)
- Selected to All State Choir or Band
- National Merit Champion in a National Academic competition
- College Hall of Fame Inductee in MHSAA sponsored sport/activity

COACH ELIGIBILITY

- Varsity coach at Bigfork High School for 10 or more years; and
- Montana High School Association Hall of Fame coach or Coach of The Year

The coaching staff and athletic director will consider requests for exceptions to the above criteria.

EXPECTATIONS OF ATHLETES

PARTICIPATION

Activities are voluntary. Participation is not required, thus, being part of an extra curricular program is a privilege that must be earned and not a right.

- Participation fee (\$20) must be paid **prior** to the first day of practice. If the fee cannot be paid due to financial constraints, contact must be made with administration to let them know.

ACTIVITIES AS PART OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Activities are just one of many parts of the education program that is provided students. The reason students are in school is to learn; therefore academics will always come first. Maintaining academic eligibility is the student's responsibility, not that of coaches or teacher. Eligibility can be lost because of poor attendance, sportsmanship, or citizenship. Participating in activities and being on a team may mean sacrifices. The commitment a student makes to his/her team and coach requires that choices be made and priorities kept.

BEING A PART OF THE TEAM

Students learn many skills by participating in their chosen activity but the most important skill that must be learned is teamwork. To be successful, every member of the team must work together to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

COME READY TO PLAY

Students should come to practice on time, ready to listen and ready to learn. Students should be prepared physically and mentally for the season. This includes training in the pre-season and taking care of your body and mind during the season and off-season.

CONDUCT ON AND OFF THE PLAYING ARENA

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| On The Field | Students are respectful towards their teammates, coaches, opponents, fans, and officials. They play by the rules of the game at all times. |
| On Campus | Students set an example of good citizenship. They help promote school spirit and they should strive to be positive leaders in school activities. |
| In The Classroom | Students show respect for teachers and fellow students. Students should be in class on time and ready to learn. |
| At All Times | Students represent their team, school, and community. Students should be conscious of their appearance and manners at all times. |

EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

ROLE MODELING

Because coaches' lives are open to public scrutiny, coaches should use good judgment in conducting their private and public lives.

Because impressionable youth many times imitate the actions of their coaches, these coaches should model exemplary behavior on and off the field/court, and encourage their students to do the same. Coaches should instill in the students that they are representing not only their school but also their families and community as well.

PROFESSIONALISM

- Coaches' behavior on and off the arena should exemplify leadership, composure, discipline and integrity.
- Coaches should allow every student a fair and equal opportunity to try out for the team without prejudgment based on prior experiences.
- Coaches should use caution and common sense in any physical contact with their athletes.
- Coaches will support not only their program, but the other school sponsored programs as well.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH ATHLETES

- Coaches should communicate in a positive manner even when correcting or criticizing a student.
- Coaches should emphasize team loyalty and effort, stressing the value of each individual's contribution toward the success of the team.
- Coaches should assist students in setting realistic goals, then achieving them, one at a time.
- Coaches should help each student achieve her/his personal best.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENT

Coaches should have a meeting prior to the season:

- To inform parents, orally and in writing, of practice hours and the schedule of games and tournaments.
- To discuss with parents the various roles they might play in assisting in their student's success.
- Coaches should be open and available to discuss a student's progress with her/his parent.

TEACHING SKILLS AND CONDITIONING

- Coaches should be knowledgeable of and well trained in the teaching of skills of the sport.
- Coaches should physically condition their athletes before each season and teach techniques that enhance a student's safety as well as that of an opponent.
- Coaches should stress the necessity of a student to be in their best physical condition as a responsibility to themselves as well as to their team.

PRIORITIES OF LIFE

- Coaches should remember that activities are only part of a student's life and must be kept in a realistic balance with the demands of academics and one's family.
- Coaches should teach the student to win with a sense of accomplishment and with humility and to lose without excuses.

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL ENVIRONMENT

- Coaches should prepare themselves as students of the game.
- Coaches should be positive and enthusiastic.
- Coaches should develop a program that will attract students to the sport.
- Coaches should make the sport competitively fun.

STUDENT SAFETY

Coaches are responsible for student safety and welfare. This includes physical activities and proper supervision. During physical activity, make sure that the athletes are getting plenty of fluids. Coaches are not to leave students unsupervised at any time.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

KEEPING ACTIVITIES IN PERSPECTIVE

- Emphasize that academics always come first.
- Assist the student to structure time wisely so that activities do not interfere with academics.
- Use activities as a way to teach your children how to react and interact with other people during tense situations. Help your student understand that ability varies with body maturity and that effort is just as important as natural ability.

SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT

- Keep in mind that it is your child's team and competitive event and that he/she needs a supportive parent when returning home.
- Encourage participation by both girls and boys. Allow the student to select the sport based on her/his perceived ability and likes. Provide a pressure free environment regarding scholarship expectations.
- Be supportive of your child; see that her/his medical needs are met; see that she/he has proper equipment; attend as many of your child's contests as possible.
- Stress the importance of the complete athlete, both mental and physical preparation.
- Do not emphasize "quitting" as the best way to solve problems, but rather perseverance.

SUPPORTING THE PROGRAM

- Be supportive of the coaching staff. Go to all meetings requested by coaches. Being on a successful team is important to your child. Support the coaches' preparation plan. Talk to your child frequently about how things are going with her/his activity. Make arrangements to talk to the coaches privately and early about perceived problems.
- During the season, take into consideration practice and games when planning family events.
- Understand the needs of the particular activity. Some take more equipment, some take more time, and others call for some year-around preparation.
- Support the District Policy of no alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
- Model positive behavior toward everyone involved in the events as described in the Sportsmanship Expectations.

STAFF IN-SERVICE

All coaches are required to take the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course every 5 years and the NFHS Concussion in Sports course every year. Staff members are recommended to attend clinics to further their knowledge of their specific activity. All coaches are required to attend yearly rule clinics sponsored by the MHSA.

BIGFORK SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTIVITY CODE

Bigfork School students who participate in inter-school athletics or activities such as speech, debate, drama, music, or cheerleading, or represent the school during activities outside the school are subject to the following regulations throughout the school calendar year.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Board of Trustees now has a policy which allows us to search a student's bags before departure on trips. We will do some searches on single events and will check baggage on all overnight trips.

TRAINING RULES—Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco

All violations of established training rules will follow the student throughout his/her school career (grades 7-12), regardless of the participant's activity. The rules are in effect from the first day of the activity until the end of the season. The "season" is defined as the first official day of practice through the last day (midnight) of the State Championship event for said activity per the MHSA schedule. Whether or not our team is participating in the state tournament/championship has no bearing on this handbook's definition of a "season." Students will not be allowed to attend any gathering or function (whether or not school-related) where illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present. Non-compliance with this prohibition will invoke all of the stated consequences for disciplinary actions. Should a student(s) attend a gathering or function without prior knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present and subsequently learn that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present: the student(s) must leave the gathering or function immediately. If student(s) remains at such gathering or function after having knowledge that illegal drugs and/or alcohol are present, student(s) will be subject to disciplinary actions.

RULE #1

Participants will not use, be party to the use of, or have in their possession, buy/sell or give away tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or any other substance defined by the law as an illegal drug.

PENALTY: Students who violate Rule #1 will be suspended from all activities until a hearing with the Principal is conducted. If the student is found to be in violation of the rule:

- **FIRST TIME:** The student will be suspended for eleven (11) school days from all activities. The student will be allowed to practice, but will not participate in any interscholastic events during that time. The severity and circumstances of the case could forfeit the student's ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport.
- **SECOND TIME:** The student will be suspended for thirty (30) school days from all activities. The student must attend and complete an approved chemical dependency program at parent expense. The student will be allowed to practice, but not participate in any interscholastic event during that time. Student will forfeit the ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport and, based on the severity and circumstances of the case, could forfeit the ability to be selected to the Bigfork High School Wall of Fame.
- **THIRD TIME:** The student will be suspended from all activities for the remainder of his/her school career. Student will forfeit the ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport and ability to be selected to the Bigfork High School Wall of Fame.

Hosts of Parties Lose the Most: There may be a greater consequence for an extracurricular participant if it is determined they are involved in the organization, facilitation, promotion, or hosting of any gathering or social event where alcohol or drugs were known to be available or used.

RULE #2

Participants will not violate any school rules resulting in any type of school suspension.

PENALTY:

- **FIRST TIME:** Students will not participate in activities for the length of the school suspension. This means no practice, traveling, or participation of any kind. Student may forfeit the ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport.
- **SECOND TIME:** Students will be suspended from all activities for forty-five (45) school days. Student will forfeit the ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport and may forfeit the ability to be selected to the Bigfork High School Wall of Fame.

RULE #3

Participants must be in attendance for at least five (5) classes during the day of practice or the day of a contest or the Friday before a single Saturday event. Attendance is defined as a minimum of five periods. This rule excludes all excused absences as defined by Montana state law. The participant must notify coach/sponsor/advisor and the principal in advance, and present a note from the doctor on return to school. Students must also be present for the start of school on the day following a mid-week contest unless otherwise arranged with the principal.

PENALTY: The student will not participate in the next practice/event/game, nor travel with the activity group.

RULE #4

On all trips, all students will travel together on the transportation provided for them by the School

PENALTY: Students not following the proper check out process will not participate in the next contest.

*** All school rules as defined in the student handbook and School Board Policies apply to students engaged in the activities program. The non-school conduct rule also applies:

NON-SCHOOL CONDUCT RULE: A student may be disciplined, suspended, or expelled from District 38 schools for conduct/behavior that has a direct and/or immediate effect on the discipline or general welfare of District 38 schools. Violations of Federal, State, or local law, are included in this rule.

PENALTY:

- **FIRST TIME:** May include, but not limited to, forfeiture of ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport, forfeiture of the ability to be selected to the Bigfork High School Wall of Fame, and removal from team.
- **SECOND TIME:** Will include, but not limited to, forfeiture of ability to earn a varsity letter in the given sport. May forfeit the ability to be selected to the Bigfork High School Wall of Fame, removal from team, and possible suspension from all activities for the remainder of his/her school career.

GENERAL TRAVEL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Coaches will remind students/athletes to let their parents know where the games will be played, game times and approximate return times.

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

As student athletes, you are representing your team, school, community, parents, and most importantly ---YOURSELF.

APPEARANCE

You must be proud of your appearance by dressing neatly and keeping well groomed.

LANGUAGE

Profanity will not be tolerated at any time.

RELEASE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS/DESIGNATED ADULT

Athletes shall ride to and from all contests on school provided transportation. In special instances, athletes may ride to an event with a parent or approved adult. Approval for these instances must be made, in writing, with Mr. Hansen or Mr. Porrovecchio prior to departure

Students may be checked out from a road event by their parents by signing with the coaching staff. A parent may only take their child unless prior arrangements have been made with High School administration.

Follow checkout procedure Rule #4 of the Bigfork School District Activity Code.

Under no circumstances is a student released to another student driving a vehicle. Students will only be released to parents, guardians, or designated adult.

MEALS

In some instances, the team may stop for either a pre-game or post-game meal. Please be prepared by either having the appropriate meal money or bringing your own snacks/meal. Athletes are expected to stay together as a group.

EXPECTED RETURN TIME

In order to avoid parent/guardian concern, please advise your parents/guardian of the approximate return time along with where the bus will unload. Please have your parents either waiting for you at school or expecting a phone call from you upon return to the school. The coach will let you have access to a telephone. Also, stay in the well-lighted area near the front of the foyer. **The coach is responsible for supervision until the parents arrive.**

PROPER BEHAVIOR ON THE BUS

Rules are established for the safety and well-being of others.

WEATHER

The decision to run or not to run a bus during inclement weather will be made by the administration and the transportation supervisor after carefully assessing the most current reports on road conditions. The safety of the passengers will be sole consideration.

The driver will retain absolute veto power and will have the final say on whether a trip should be made.

When the temperature is below 0°F it will be necessary that all passengers have suitable warm weather clothing, including a hat, coat and gloves.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

As stated in School Board Policy, a Bigfork student must meet the following standards to participate in extracurricular activities:

- A student must be enrolled in a minimum of 7 classes; seniors may be enrolled in a minimum of 5 classes.
- A composite 2.0 GPA (4.0 scale) must be maintained from the previous quarter
- No cumulative “F” grades during season. Student can practice, but not participate in games or travel until grade is above failing.

Exception: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSa member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

1. The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in Bigfork School.

For more information please contact school administration.

ELIGIBILITY REVIEWS

Students ruled ineligible (D or lower grade) will be placed on probation and not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities or practices, for nine week period, unless the student agrees to and meets the requirements of the following:

1. Complete a weekly eligibility check, passing grades in each class.
 - a. Eligibility checks begin the 3rd Monday of each Semester
 - b. Eligibility checks take place on Mondays by noon/12:00 p.m. [1 check per week]
 - i. Monday eligibility impacts participation Tuesday through the following Monday
2. Attend mandatory study time (before school and/or after school) until eligible. This includes any bye weeks.
 - a. “3 minutes or 3 days” = as soon as the students grade is above a D, they no longer need to attend study backs. Must be completed by Friday afternoon.
3. If a student fails to complete the required study-backs, they remain ineligible the following week and are not permitted to participate in the next scheduled game. Athletes are not eligible to travel or miss any school.

4. If the student remains ineligible at the end of the second week, there will be a required meeting with the student, the student's parents, the activities director and principal to determine whether the student-athlete can return to play that season.
5. Students with an F can practice, but not participate in games or travel until grade is above failing.

ATTENDANCE ON DAYS OF ACTIVITIES

Students are required to be at **five** periods the day of practice or a game or the Friday before a Saturday practice or game. The exception to this is when the bus leaves for a road contest before the end of 5th period. In this case, a student must be at school for all of school until the bus leaves. If a student has senior privilege in the morning, they only have to attend the classes they are enrolled in. It is the responsibility of the coach or sponsor to enforce this rule. A list of all participants in an extracurricular activity must be turned in to the High School office prior to the activity. Exceptions to this will be verified excused absences as defined by Montana state law.

Students must be present for the start of school on the day following a midweek game unless otherwise arranged with the principal.

COACHES

RECRUITMENT OF COACHES

The recruiting of coaches is an ongoing process. The activities director, school principal, and school board activities liaison work together to hire the best person for the given position. It is the responsibility of the activities director to give support and direction to the new coach.

HIRING PROCESS

The following hiring process will be followed:

1. All openings will be advertised in-house for five days. After five days, opening(s) will be advertised in the local newspaper until filled.
2. All applicants must fill out District application form.
3. For head coach position: the hiring committee (principal, activities director, and school board activities liaison) will use the following procedure:
 - Review all applications and make background checks
 - Select applicants for interview
 - Interview applicants
 - Select an applicant and recommend to superintendent for hire
 - Superintendent will submit recommendation to the Board of Trustees for hire

For assistant and middle school coaches: The head coach of that sport with the support of the activities director will work to select coaches from members of the school and community.

INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

All informal complaints of a minor nature should first be dealt with between player and coach. If this does not work or an understanding is not reached, the parent and coach should meet. If either of the initial meetings are not satisfactory or deemed too contentious to begin with, the activities director can sit in to oversee the discussion between the concerned parties. The activities director will document the complaint and work with the concerned parties to remedy the complaint and/or reach an understanding of position.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

All formal complaints of a serious nature that may result in disciplinary action concerning school personnel must follow school board policy 4310 and procedure 4310P. Required information (in writing) is as follows:

1. The name(s) of the person making the complaint.
2. Whether the person(s) making the complaint represents an individual or a group.
3. Whether the person(s) making the complaint has discussed the problem with the employee in question.
4. Whether the person(s) making the complaint has discussed the problem with the immediate supervising administrator.
5. A summary of the complaint(s) and of the above three items.

The school personnel against whom a complaint is filed will receive a copy of the complaint and have the opportunity to respond in writing.