

Timberlane Middle School

51 South Timberlane Drive
Pennington, NJ 08534
609-737-4004



Mission Statement

By the end of 8th Grade, Timberlane students will enter the world as self-motivated learners, resourceful problem solvers, and compassionate individuals. They will be able to adapt to a change, collaborate with peers, and make good decisions that reflect open-mindedness and sound critical thinking.

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Chris Turnbull, Principal
Mrs. Tammy Pegrem, Vice Principal
Mr. Michael Emmich, Vice Principal

SECRETARIES:

Mrs. Marie DelGrande
Ms. Nancy Palker
Mrs. Sharon Tiziker

SCHOOL NURSE:

Mrs. Kim Shevlin

SCHOOL COUNSELORS:

Dr. Amy Parker, Grade 6
Ms. Christine D'Avirro, Grade 7
Mrs. Terri Stimmler, Grade 8

Ms. Jodi Capman, Student Assistance Counselor
Mr. Ryan Stingel, Student Assistance Counselor

CHILD STUDY TEAM:

Ms. Jackie Stoy, School Social Worker and Grade 6 Case Manager
Mrs. Greta Gennace, LD/TC and Grade 7 Case Manager
Ms. Tori Brokaw, School Psychologist and Grade 8 Case Manager

MEDIA SPECIALIST / TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT:

Dr. Barbara McCarty

CAMPUS SAFETY OFFICERS:

Mr. Dave LaBaw
Mr. Michael Simonelli

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

ELIGIBILITY FOR SPORTS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Good Disciplinary Standing: Students will not be eligible to participate on any day during which a detention is served or during any period of suspension. Students with continued infractions of the Behavior Code will face suspension from these activities for a period of one month or longer.

Good Academic Standing: Students must be in good academic standing at the beginning of the year, and remain in good academic standing, in order to be eligible for extracurricular activities. "Good academic standing at the beginning of the school year" means successful completion of the previous year's requirements, with no failures. "Continuing good academic standing" means maintaining passing grades in all subjects during the current year. If a student fails a course for the marking period, they must remediate in our Failure's Not an Option Program. If the student is participating in an extra-curricular activity at the time of the failure, they will be removed from the activity until remediation is complete.

Attendance Requirement: A student may not participate in a performance, exhibition, practice or extracurricular event unless he/she has been present in school that day or has been absent for an excused reason other than sickness. Students must be in school by **10:45am** to be given credit for a full day.

HARASSMENT INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING (HIB)

The overall motivation behind our behavioral expectations is to create an environment for learning that is safe and caring. The practices and policies highlighted below are designed to help us accomplish this goal. These policies and practices are based on the *NJ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act*, effective September 2011. For more information regarding this act, please, refer to our district website. The state of New Jersey passed an Anti-Bullying Law for all schools to implement and follow. The law states as follows:

BP 5512 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L.2010, CHAPTER 122, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

- a) a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; [or]
- b) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students [in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school]; or
- c) creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

Students and parents are encouraged to report cases of harassment/intimidation/bullying to teachers or school administration. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Conflict v. Bullying: Bullying is not a phase young people must endure or outgrow. Bullying is not a conflict between students or among groups of students. Conflict is a mutually competitive or opposing action or engagement, including a disagreement, an argument, or a fight which is a normal part of human development. Bullying is one-sided, where one or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, which is intended to physically or emotionally hurt the victim(s).

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Hopewell Valley is an equal opportunity employer and has an Affirmative Action plan, as well as policies on nondiscrimination on file in the Board Office and in each school building. Parents and students have the right to file a grievance with the building Affirmative Action representative, Mrs. Terri Stimmler, if they feel the district, school, or a staff member has violated state or federal discrimination statutes. If the concern is not addressed to the satisfaction of the parent or student, the complaint should be forwarded to Ms. Tana Smith, the district Affirmative Action Officer.

Copies of the grievance procedure may be obtained from the building principal and grievances must begin at the lowest level stated in the policy. Hopewell Valley may not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, political affiliation, physical handicap, or social or economic status in its education programs or activities.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

COMPUTER ACCESS AND GUIDELINES: Each student is assigned an account, user name, and password. Accounts and passwords should not be shared. Students should never log in using another student username and password. Please refer to our district Responsible Computing Guidelines, outline of our Chromebook policies, and use of social media which are located on our website. Students who violate the Responsible Computing Guidelines face consequences outlined in our code of conduct located on page 12 of this handbook.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students should demonstrate integrity and honesty at all times. Simply stated, cheating is taking credit for work that is not one's own. Cheating can result in loss of credit for the assignment and may result in further disciplinary action as determined by the building administration. While educating the offending student about the importance of academic integrity is paramount, instances of academic dishonesty will also result in disciplinary consequences as outlined below.

FOOD and GUM CHEWING: It is up to teacher discretion whether or not food and/or gum chewing is permitted in the classroom. It is expected that students follow the rules set forth by the classroom teacher. Should a student disobey the food and/or gum chewing policy of the classroom teacher, consequences can be given for willful disobedience.

STUDENT ABSENCES AND TARDIES

ABSENCE: Students learn best when they are in school. Our hope is that you will be present at Timberlane each of the 182 days in the school year. If you are going to be absent, your parent or guardian should leave a message on the Tel-Safe line (609-737-4004 ext. 2). **Parents who do not leave a message for an absent student will be contacted by the school attendance secretary to verify that the absence is authorized by the parent.** Please note that any student absent for five days will have a warning letter sent home along with a copy of the Board Attendance Policy. After 12 absences, the Timberlane Attendance Committee will meet to review the situation and possibly require the student to make up time. A full copy of the Attendance Policy (BP #5200) is available from the main office and on the district website.

LATENESS: Students reporting to school after 7:45 a.m. are late. At the discretion of the administration, lateness may be excused for medical appointments with a doctor's note or family emergencies explained in a parent's note. If a student is late four times, a consequence will be assigned. Chronic tardiness may be the basis for further disciplinary action. Students arriving at school after 7:45am should report to the Main Office for a pass to homeroom. Students must be in school by **10:45am** to be given credit for a full day of school. If you are going to be late, your parent or guardian should leave a message on the Tel-Safe line (609-737-4004 ext. 2). Students are also expected to be on time to their classes during the school day. Students who are late to class four times will be assigned a teacher detention. Excessive tardiness to class will be reported to the Vice Principal's office.

EARLY DISMISSAL: Students having a valid reason for leaving school early must take a note signed by a parent to the office during homeroom. Students will receive an early dismissal permission slip which

they should show to their teacher at the beginning of the period during which they will leave. Return the slip to the office and sign out before leaving school.

MAKEUP WORK: Students are responsible for making up any work missed because of an absence. Upon returning to school, a student should arrange for makeup tests within a grace period equal to the number of days missed. Students absent the day of a test, but present the previous day, are eligible to be tested on the day of return to school. Students missing class due to a music lesson, guidance appointment, etc., are responsible for getting assignments. Parents may contact the main office to obtain assignments following an absence of three or more days. Students may also obtain assignments and homework through OnCourse if they are absent one or two days.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: To be excused from physical education class for an extended period of time, a student needs to present the school nurse with a note from a doctor. Students must inform their PE teacher of their excused absence.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

SCHOOL CLIMATE: Learning thrives in an atmosphere of mutual respect. As part of the Timberlane School Community, it is your responsibility to contribute to a positive and productive learning environment. Observing the rules and procedures will ensure a more enjoyable and successful school year for everyone.

TRANSPORTATION: The bus driver has authority over students on the bus. Disciplinary problems will be reported to the principal. Students are expected to act maturely, stay seated at all times, and not extend any part of their bodies outside the bus. All Timberlane students are expected to sit in the front half of the bus. The district website contains a thorough explanation of transportation rules for students.

CAFETERIA:

- Use an inside voice
- Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself
- Listen and follow directions
- Clean up your area
- Ask permission to leave your assigned seat

HALLWAYS / BATHROOMS:

- Go directly to your destination
- Use an inside voice
- Allow space for others to get to their lockers
- Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself
- Stay to the right when walking

STUDENT ATTIRE: Although we recognize that the way students dress is a reflection of personal choice, there is certain attire that is not appropriate for school. Timberlane Middle School requires students to dress in a manner appropriate for an educational environment. Students should be mindful, especially when representing the school on field trips, visits and competitions, that they are a representation of Timberlane, and should dress appropriately.

CELL PHONES: Cell phones, as well as social media, are a distraction to learning. It is for these reasons that cell phones are to be off and away during school hours. Students will receive daily reminders when entering school, as well as a review of the consequences for having a cell phone out during the day, especially in the hallways. Some teachers may permit the use of AirPods in the classroom, however wearing them in the hallways, lunch and recess is prohibited.

BEHAVIOR CODE: Our mission is to develop a supportive environment where respectful, responsible, and thoughtful behavior is fostered toward self and others; and to establish a safe environment conducive for learning. Once such an atmosphere is established, a productive learning experience will take place. The following guidelines are provided for all teachers and students in order to produce responsible behavior on the part of everyone. These guidelines are important for the safety and protection of all

students (BP 5500).

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES: At Timberlane, good citizenship is the foundation for a positive school climate. The Timberlane staff is dedicated to ensuring that students learn to be productive members of the school community. With this goal in mind, teaching staff will adhere to the following guidelines to maintain a caring and nurturing learning environment.

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES: Good behavior and citizenship contribute greatly to how effectively a school operates from day to day. Students are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their teachers, a counselor, or a building administrator. Teaching and learning cannot take place in a disruptive atmosphere. Standards of student behavior must be set cooperatively among the students, parents, staff, and community, providing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self discipline. Lack of respect for adults, peers, and/or school property will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The following guidelines are set to improve communication among all parties, providing clarification concerning administrator responsibilities.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ROLES: Schools are most effective when a partnership exists between the school and the home. Interaction among students, staff, and parents/guardians can produce an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self discipline. The following guidelines will help parents/guardians to have an effective role in this cooperative effort to establish such an environment.

1. Read and discuss the Behavior Code with your child. Be sure they understand the behavior that is expected.
2. Show support for school rules.
3. Help your child to understand that they have a choice and that they are responsible for their actions.
4. Praise your child. Positive self-esteem breeds good behavior.
5. Communicate with your child's teachers, guidance counselor, and administrative team when there is a concern.

POLICY ON ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (BP 5530 / R530)

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or any other drug, the student will be immediately assessed by the school nurse. Parents / guardians will be contacted to take the student to a school-sanctioned medical facility for evaluation and testing. A family doctor may perform the evaluation at the family's expense. In the event that a parent / guardian is unable to take a student for an evaluation and testing, the student will be transported to a local emergency room accompanied by a staff member for testing. Students who are found to be in violation of Board Policies 5530 or R5530 on alcohol and other drugs are subject to additional sanctions as outlined in the Board Policy

POLICY ON STUDENT USE OF NICOTINE AND TOBACCO (BP 5533/Municipal Ordinance 16-8A)

The use, distribution, and/or possession of tobacco/nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes, are prohibited. Students who violate this rule are subject to the provisions of the Behavior Code. **Alcohol, drug, and smoking policies apply both to and from school, throughout the school day, and at any school related functions.**

Timberlane Middle School

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR MAJOR INFRACTIONS

Consequences for student misbehavior always have the purpose of empowering students to understand, correct, and take control of their own behavior. The following list of consequences is not exhaustive. Other consequences may include, for example, written apologies, community service, conflict mediation, educational seminars with the police liaison, loss of privileges and possible police notification. Our hope with any disciplinary consequence is that parents, teachers and administrators work together to help students improve their own behavior.

INFRACTION	1ST OFFENSE	2ND OFFENSE	3RD OFFENSE
Academic Dishonesty	Teacher-led conversation about necessity of Academic Integrity, phone call to Parent/Guardian, Grade of 0 at teacher discretion	ESD, Parent/Guardian Conference, Grade of 0, Restorative Justice & Education	2 ESD, Parent/Guardian Conference, Restorative Justice & Education
Assault	OSS (number of days may vary), Restorative Justice & Education, Potential Referral to police	OSS (number of days may vary), Restorative Justice & Education, Referral to police	OSS (number of days may vary), Restorative Justice & Education, Referral to police & Superintendent
AUP Violation	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required
Cutting Class	1 EWD	1 ESD	2 ESD
Dress Code	Warning, change of clothing required	Office detention, change of clothing required	EWD, change of clothing required
Drug/Alcohol Policy Violation	5 Day ISS/OSS, 15 Day ECA Suspension, Restorative Justice & Education Required	8 Day ISS/OSS, 30 Day ECA Suspension, Restorative Justice & Education Required	10 Day ISS/OSS, 45 Day ECA Suspension, Restorative Justice & Education Required, Referral to Superintendent & BOE
Electronic Devices	Confiscation (return at end of school day)	Confiscation (parent/guardian must pick up device)	Confiscation (parent/guardian must pick up device), EWD
Endangering the Safety of Self or Others	1 Office Detention	2 Office Detentions	EWD/ESD/ISS
Fighting	4 Days ISS/OSS, Restorative Justice & Education Required	4+ Days ISS/OSS, Restorative Justice & Education Required	
Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required

Inappropriate Use of Physical Force	Discipline consequence may vary due to the nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to the nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to the nature of offense, Restorative Justice & Education required
Insubordination	1 Office Detention	2 Office Detentions	EWD / ESD
Leaving Class Without Permission / Wandering	1 Office Detention	2 Office Detentions	1 EWD
Leaving Building Without Permission	1 Office Detention	1 EWD	1 ESD
Leaving School Grounds Without Permission	1 EWD	1 ESD	ISS
Open Defiance	EWD	ESD	ISS/OSS
Possession of Bodily Fluids	ESD	ISS/OSS	ISS/OSS
Possession of e-cigarette/vaping/smoking paraphernalia	2 Days ISS/OSS Restorative Education Required	4 Days ISS/OSS Restorative Education Required	
Profanity/Obscene Language	1 Office Detention, Restorative Justice Required	2 Office Detentions, Restorative Justice Required	EWD/ESD, Restorative Justice Required
Profanity to Staff	2 Days OSS, Restorative Justice Required	4 Days OSS, Restorative Justice Required	
Smoking/Vaping in School / On School Property	2 Days ISS/OSS, Restorative Justice & Education Required	4 Days ISS/OSS, Restorative Justice & Education Required	5 Days ISS/OSS, Restorative Justice & Education Required, Referral to police department
Spectator Conduct Violation	Removal from a game or event will result in a minimum one week suspension from future events, with extended suspension enforced based on the nature of the offense.	A minimum two week suspension from future events, with extended suspension enforced based on the nature of the offense.	A minimum one month suspension from future events, with extended suspension enforced based on the nature of the offense.
Theft/Vandalism	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required
Threats to Student	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (ISS - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required

Threats to Staff	OSS (Length of suspension determined based on nature of offense), Restorative Justice & Education required, potential referral to police	OSS (Length of suspension determined based on nature of offense), Restorative Justice & Education required, referral to police & Superintendent	
Trespassing	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required	Discipline consequence may vary due to nature of offense (EWD - OSS), Restorative Justice & Education required
Weapon Violation	10 Days OSS, Referral to police & Superintendent, Restorative Justice & Education required		

GLOSSARY

Infraction	An infraction is any type of student behavior that is unacceptable on school property. For any major infraction the teacher and/or an administrator will automatically contact the parent or guardian.
EWD/ESD	The student will attend an Extended Weekday Detention from 3:00-5:00 or a Saturday Detention from 7:45 – 10:45 a.m. depending upon the incident
ECA (Extracurricular Activity)	Students are suspended from all Extracurricular Activities, such as team sports and the after school enrichment program for 5 calendar days for each day of OSS.
OSS (out of school suspension)	The student will not be permitted to attend school, and he/she will be readmitted only after a parent or guardian admission conference.
Willful disobedience	Students may not disobey the rules and regulations of a staff member or the school.
Open defiance of authority	Students may not blatantly defy the authority of a staff member in the school or at any school activity.
Academic dishonesty	Acts of academic dishonesty include cheating, plagiarism and forgery. This includes but is not limited to the sharing of answers on tests and homework, plagiarizing assignments by submitting work that is not the student's original work, collaborating with a student in preparing an assignment without the consent of the teacher, and signing someone else's name on a report card or a progress report.
Pass restriction	Students who are on pass restriction will not be given a hall pass during class unless it is an emergency.
Other privileges	Dances, activity nights, non-curricular trips and attendance at sporting events are considered privileges. Students who repeatedly violate school rules will lose these privileges for a period of one month or longer depending on the nature of the infraction.

STUDENT/PARENT APPEAL PROCESS

Following is the suggested way for parents and students to express their concerns to school administrators. Concerns should be discussed with the first person listed below; if those discussions have not led to a satisfactory conclusion, then the student and/or parents should proceed to discuss the matter with the next person on the list. Please note that it is important to follow the suggested steps in the order they are listed.

(1) Classroom Teacher(s); (2) Subject Supervisor; if the problem is subject matter centered; (3) Principal, who may include at his/her discretion the Assistant Superintendent; (4) Superintendent of Schools; (5) Board of Education; (6) County Superintendent of Schools; and (7) Commissioner of Education.

An appeal to the Superintendent or Board of Education must be submitted in writing. The Board of Education may conduct a hearing, and both the Board and Superintendent shall render written decisions. A further appeal may be made to the county Superintendent of Schools, and then finally to the Commissioner of Education, who is empowered to hear and decide controversies and disputes related to the conduct of the public schools.