


YORK



MIDDLE SCHOOL

1010 Devinney Road

York, SC 29745

803-684-5008

<http://www.york.k12.sc.us/YMS>

Office Hours: 8:15-4:10

School Hours: 8:15-3:35

Twitter: @York1YMS

Instagram: @York1YMS

Facebook: www.facebook.com/York1YMS

2023-2024 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

Principal: Cassidy Valerino

Assistant Principals: Sean Cunningham and Kellie Mondo

Username and Passwords	
<p>Chromebook</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>	<p>Parent Portal</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>
<p>Canvas</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>	<p>Other: _____</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>
<p>IXL</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>	<p>Other: _____</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>
<p>Other: _____</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>	<p>Other: _____</p> <p>Username: _____</p> <p>Password: _____</p>

Cougar Creed

I am here to commit my time and effort to my future.

I will treat myself and others with RESPECT.

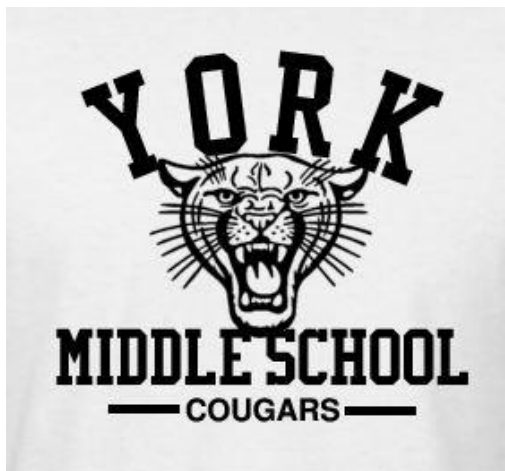
I am ORGANIZED and prepared to succeed.

I know my ATTITUDE can change my entire day.

I am RESPONSIBLE for my actions and my future.

York Cougars ROAR with Pride and we ROAR as One.





School Spirit:

Colors: Black and Gray

Mascot: Cougar

Motto: ROAR as One

Welcome to York Middle School

Our programs are designed to help students make the successful transition from elementary and intermediate school to the independence of high school. Middle school is a time of change. The workload, levels of responsibility, and social adjustments are greater than at the levels below 7th and 8th grades. All students are expected to attend regularly, be prepared daily, perform in class, develop effective study habits, and behave appropriately.

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with York Middle School, our expectations, guidelines, and activities. Please read all items carefully. ***You are responsible for knowing the contents of this handbook.*** Let us all work together for a successful and rewarding school year.

ATTENDANCE

Importance of Attendance

Attendance is one of the most important predictors of student success in school. Students must be present in order to learn the necessary material for him/her to progress in school.

Truancy

A student ages 6 to 17 years meets the definition of a truant when the student:

- Has 3 consecutive unlawful absences or a total of 5 unlawful absences.
- In such cases, an Attendance Intervention Plan should be developed.

Chronic Absenteeism

A student in grades K-12 meets the definition of chronic absenteeism when the student:

- Misses 50 percent of an instructional day for any reason for 10 percent (or more) of their enrollment period
- All absences contribute to chronic absenteeism including excused, unexcused and OSS.

Perfect Attendance

A student must be in school at least 3 ½ hours to be counted present. If a student is tardy more than 3 times each nine weeks, or if a student is tardy more than 6 times during the school year, he/she will not be considered for an attendance award for the year. If a student is dismissed early more than 5 times, he/she will not be eligible for an attendance award.

Academics

Academic Integrity

It is important for students and parents to understand the importance of academic honesty. It is expected that what a student turns in represents his/her academic skill and efforts, and not that of someone else. Each teacher establishes classroom policies and procedures for tests, quizzes, and academic work. Students are expected to follow those rules.

Honor Code

We consider academic dishonesty a serious violation of school rules. Each student is responsible for his or her own work. The following statements are what are considered to be academic dishonesty:

1. Receiving or providing information during a test or for a test given in an earlier period
2. Using materials for tests/quizzes without the teacher's permission
3. Violating the teacher's testing rules and procedures
4. Using or copying someone else's writing or work (word-for-word – or almost so), calling it your own, and not giving credit to the author (plagiarism)
5. Using or copying another student's work/assignment to turn in as your own work
6. Allowing other students to use your work on assignments with the exception of specific group, lab, or collaborative projects

****The above list identifies the most common forms of academic dishonesty, but other actions may be considered.**

Academic Awards

During the 2023-2024 school year, academic awards for Principal's Scholars (All A's) and Honor Roll (A's/B's) will be awarded at the end of each semester. In order to qualify, students grades in core classes as well as elective classes are considered.

Year-long awards will be awarded at the end of the year at grade level awards ceremonies.

Daily Procedures

Arrival to School

Doors open for students at 8:15 a.m. Parents should not leave students at school before that time, as there may not be adequate supervision.

Dismissal from School

No student will be allowed to go home a different way from his/her regular travel unless permission is requested by a parent/guardian in writing. Any parent asking to change a student's bus route (for the day) must obtain permission from the transportation office.

The normal mode of transportation can be altered under one of the following conditions. If these arrangements have not been made, the child will be sent home according to his/her usual mode of transportation:

- The child comes to school with a signed and dated note with the parent's phone number from the parent. The note should be taken to the office.
- The parent personally comes into the school office and makes the request in writing. The office will relay the message to the student.
- A parent calls the office **prior to 3:00** and requests the child's mode of transportation be changed. Identifiable information will be requested.

If students are left at school after 4:00 PM without contact from the parent/guardian, the local Sheriff's Office or Police Department will be contacted for assistance.

Early Dismissal of Students

Students are expected to remain in their class until the end of the instructional day (3:35 pm). **For the safety of all students, no student will be dismissed early without a parent or legal guardian coming to the Main Office to sign the student out. Students will not be dismissed between 3:00-3:30.** Parent/Guardian will be required to provide identification to school authorities.

Should there be a need for someone other than a parent or legal guardian to pick up a student early, written authorization from the parent is required and the person authorized must be listed on the student's enrollment form as an emergency contact. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to alert the office immediately if there are any changes to the emergency contacts. Proper identification will be required.

Please keep early dismissals to a minimum. All early dismissals or tardies may appear on the student's school attendance records.

Car Riders

School personnel will accompany students being transported by car to the parent pick-up line at the front of the school. Please follow the blue line for parent pick up. Because of the number of students being transported by personal vehicles, as well as safety concerns, parents are required to wait in the parent pickup line to pick up children. Parents must remain in line in their vehicle.

Lost and Found

Articles that have been found in the school building, on school grounds, or on school buses are placed in the Lost and Found area in the bin by the cafeteria where their owners may claim them. At the end of the year, unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity. Parents are requested to label all removable articles of clothing, lunch boxes, and important school supplies with the child's first and last name.

Cafeteria

Our cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch each school day. Daily menus are posted in the student's Launchpad on their Chromebooks. Students will have an ID number assigned to them which they will use at the register.

Lunches

We know that circumstances may arise where students will need to have lunch dropped off during the day (before their assigned lunch.) However, we request the following:

- Lunch should arrive BEFORE your students assigned lunch time.
- If an outside lunch is brought for a student (a lunch is brought from a fast food restaurant by a parent/guardian for lunch), additional lunches or food cannot be brought for other students. This is a safety concern related to allergies.
- **We do not accept food deliveries for students** from places such as DoorDash, GrubHub, or any other food delivery directly from a restaurant.

We are excited to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision, in a new effort to help end childhood hunger in all of the schools in York School District One. The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a key provision of The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, allows the nation's highest-poverty districts and schools to serve all students free meals without the burden of collecting household applications. Breakfast and lunch will be free. A la carte items such as snacks, chips, ice cream, juice, individual entrée items, soft drinks, and cookies are not free. Students MUST have funds in their account or cash to purchase items

****Note:** If you are seeking a waiver from the technology fee, individual free/reduced lunch applications must be completed.

Gum/Food/Beverages

- **NO GUM** at YMS
- **All food and beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria** unless instructed by a YMS staff member.
- Water (not colored or flavored) **in a bottle** with a lid is the only beverage allowed in hallways or classrooms at any time.

****Students are NOT allowed to drink any other beverages during the day in the school building.**

This includes, but is not limited to energy drinks, sports drinks, soda, or other juices.**

Media Center

The Media Center is open each school day from 8:15 am until 3:35 pm for all students. If allowed by their teacher, students may go to the Media Center to quietly read, study, or work. After one warning, students who continue to misbehave may be banned from the Media Center during the "free times" for one week. Continued abuse of free time will result in further disciplinary actions. Students who owe fines or who have overdue books may lose the privilege of free time in the Media Center.

Books are due two weeks from the day they are checked out. Fines for overdue books are 5¢ per day. Students must pay for lost or damaged materials. Magazines, newspapers, computers, and reference books are available for use in the Media Center.

Money, Valuables, and Other Personal Items

Children are discouraged from bringing money to school except for specific purposes. Any money brought to school will be more efficiently handled if the exact amount is placed in an envelope, labeled with the child's name and the purpose for which the money is to be used. ***Students are cautioned never to leave money or other possessions in the classroom unprotected.*** Students are advised to not bring valuable items, such as iPods, tablets, phones, etc., to school for there is a possibility that they may be broken, damaged, or stolen. Your child still remains as the responsible person over any personal electronic devices brought to school. Your child is not to bring dangerous or distracting articles to school, such as guns, knives, water guns, toys, music devices, jewelry, pets, etc.

Snacks Provided by Parents/Legal Guardians

Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs should make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Snacks and beverages brought from home or donated for special occasions must be pre-packaged and contain a listing of their nutritional and allergy contents.

Technology

York School District One (YSD1) supplies a technology device for all students in 3rd grade through 12th grade for educational use during the school year.

- a. Each student will be required to pay a yearly non-refundable technology fee for the use of the device.
- b. The technology fee will be based on the previous year's lunch status.
 - i. Technology Fee - \$30.00
 - ii. Technology Fee (reduced lunch) - \$15.00
 - iii. Technology Fee (free lunch) - \$0.00
- c. Technology Fee's will cover general maintenance of devices.
- d. Any device subject to malicious damage that renders the device unusable will require full payment for a device replacement not to exceed \$350.

Telephone Use/Messages

The school telephone number is (803) 684-5008. The telephone is for school business. Students will not be called from class for incoming calls unless it is an emergency. Parents are requested not to phone-in messages to students unless it is absolutely necessary. Parents wishing to confer with teachers on the phone are requested to limit their calls to before or after school unless a teacher has requested a call during his/her planning period.

Student Conduct

Behavior Plan

We focus on positive intervention to support each individual student to perform his/her best. We want our children to learn in a safe and positive environment. The following rules will be strictly enforced for the safety of all students and for the promotion of a more positive school atmosphere:

R.O.A.R.

R – Respect O – Organization A – Attitude R – Responsibility

The focus of ROAR is to demonstrate and teach the students of YMS the expectations throughout the school building.

Consequences for misbehaviors may include, but not limited to: teacher/student conference, time out, reduction or loss of privileges, parent contact (by note, phone, person to person, email), school counseling referral, office referral, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, removal from class., and/or parent contacted to pick up child early from school.

YMS Behavior Matrix

Minor Offenses	Classroom-Managed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warnings/teacher intervention • Minor incident reported in Educator's Handbook with specific intervention listed
Classroom Disruptions	Examples of classroom disruptions include but are not limited to talking, blurting out, or sleeping during class.
Out of Area	Five minutes after the start of class constitutes skipping. In addition, students being in a portion of the building that is not in their transition pathway between classes.
Horseplay and Inappropriate Behavior	Behavior that includes but is not limited to running, playing, or engaging in other behaviors that are not permitted inside the building or during instructional periods.
Not Following Directions (Off Task Behavior)	Offenses such as these impede instruction. (Note: This does not include sleeping or lack of school supplies for instruction until a reminder is provided by the teacher.) If a student refuses teacher redirection, then the student becomes defiant in their behavior choices.
Unauthorized Use of Cell Phones or Electronic Devices	Students may use cell phone devices at dismissal only. Additional unauthorized use of technology would be playing games or not on assigned technology sites. In addition, any time a student violates the YSD1 Acceptable Use Policy for technology, he/she would be in this category.
Dress Code Violations	All outfits worn at school, in the classroom or in gym class, should be within the YMS student dress code policy. Shorts and tops should be appropriate no matter what the class. A student whose outfit does not comply with the dress code should be sent to their grade level counselor to secure appropriate clothing. (Note: All pants should be worn at the waist and there should be no exposed undergarments.)
Public Display of Affection	Examples include but are not limited to kissing, affectionate lingering embrace, arms around waist or shoulders.

Major Offenses	Office Managed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher contacts administration and calls and/or emails parents before the end of the day. Parent contact logs should be kept with the team. Major referral entered in Educator's Handbook.
Repeated Minor Offenses	Three cumulative minor offenses in the same 9-week period. Three cumulative visits to Behavior Intervention in the same 9-week period garners a day of Out of School Suspension.
Bullying	Defined through the student code of conduct
Disrespect to Students or School Personnel	Examples include but are not limited to instances of student confrontation, invasions of personal space (touching one another or property) and minor language offenses (language that is directed to a peer or adult).
Throwing Objects	Throwing objects directed at someone with intent to harm them. Examples include but are not limited to throwing large pieces of paper, pens, pencils, or other classroom material items.
Misbehavior in Restrooms	Examples include but are not limited to horseplay and vandalism.
Defiance/Non-compliance	After teacher redirection and correction of behaviors, if students do not adjust, it is deemed as defiance.
Skippping Class	Students intentionally not reporting to class

Major Offenses	Emergency Action Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative call Major Referral entered in Educator's Handbook
	Destruction of property/vandalism
	Major language offenses directed towards staff
	Weapons
	Smoking/vaping/chewing tobacco/alcohol/drugs/lighters/paraphernalia
	Fighting
	Filming a fight/altercation
	Threatening school personnel
	Theft
	Sexual/racial harassment
	Any action that endangers the safety of another person
	Hit/kick/push with mal intent

Consequences for Poor Choices

The following chart lists the level of consequences teachers and administrators follow. Interventions/consequences are not listed in any hierarchy.

Level 1 – Verbal Warning/Reprimand/Reminder

Level 2 – Intervention/Classroom Level – Minors

- 1st-3rd: Parent contacted by referring teacher

- **4th and beyond:** Parent contacted by referring teacher
 - **Beyond a 4th minor offense, this behavior becomes a major offense with administrative referral**

Level 3 – Administrative Referral - Conference, Lunch Detention/In-School Suspension

Level 4 – In-School Suspension (Behavior Intervention) (Administrator’s discretion)

Level 5 – Suspension (Out-of-School 1-5 Days)

Level 6 – Suspension (Out-of-School 6-10 Days)

Level 7 – Expulsion

The following serves as a general guide for consequences at York Middle School.

Action	Level Range	Action	Level Range
Violation of Honor Code	4-5	Dress Code	1-5
Class/School Disruptions	1-7	Disrespectful Behavior	1-6
Insubordination	1-5	Profanity/Obscenity	1-7
Trespassing	3-7	Unauthorized use of Technology	1-6
Fighting/Assault	5-7	Defacing/Destroying School Property	2-6
Theft/Attempted Theft	3-7	Tobacco	3-7
Drugs and Alcohol	5-7	Weapons/Explosives/Fireworks	5-7
Sexual Offenses	4-7	Other Serious Violations	4-7
Repeated Small Violations	4-7	False Fire Alarms/Bomb Threats	4-7
Gambling	1-5	Violation of Attendance Guidelines	1-5
Hate Speech/Harassment	4-7	Skippping	4-6
Public Display of Affection	1-4	Filming a Fight/Altercation	5-6

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Cell phones, smart watches, and headphones/Airpods may be brought to school and used before or after school to communicate with parents. They must be turned off or placed on silent/airplane mode and stored in bookbags for the length of the school day from 8:15 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. (**Note: These devices CAN NOT be carried in clothing such as hoodies, pants pockets, waistbands, or any other piece of clothing during the school day. If this occurs, this will lead to confiscation of the device.**)

1ST violation: warning and confiscation of device until the end of the day

2nd violation: lunch detention and confiscation of device until the end of the day

3rd & 4th violation: one day of ISS/Behavior Intervention and confiscation of device until the end of the day

5th violation and beyond: one day of ISS/Behavior Intervention for each offense, a plan for future device use at school, parent conference with administration.

****Violation and refusal to give school employees the electronic device will result in additional punishment of no less than one day of ISS/Behavior Intervention***

Disclaimer - Students will be given more serious consequences for the following inappropriate uses: inappropriate taking of pictures or videos, texting or messages, any use threatening to harm anyone or anything at YMS, or any major violation of our district’s acceptable use policy. Any acts which are not covered by these regulations and which are of such nature as to pose a threat to the physical or mental welfare of the students, teachers or other school personnel or which create a disruption in the orderly operation of the school program may result in suspension or expulsion as well as law enforcement involvement.

Calling/Texting parents or others from the school without permission is a violation.

Sexual Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

Internal threats to student safety, such as sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature directed at students, either male or female, by district employees, substitutes, other students, volunteers or third parties associated with schools are strictly prohibited. Such conduct is considered a violation that is disorderly, disruptive, and/or criminal in nature and will not be tolerated.

Any employee or substitute who engages in such conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination or permanent removal from the district's active substitute roster. A student who engages in such conduct may be disciplined up to and including expulsion. All school employees, including substitute employees, are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or his/her designee immediately. Sexual harassment may be defined as unwelcome (as determined based on the age of the student) sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and written, spoken, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature directed towards students will also not be tolerated. For further information regarding the district's policy related to the prohibition of sexual harassment of students or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature directed towards students, refer to Board Policy JI, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and its accompanying Administrative Rule.

Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature by an employee, substitute, another student, a volunteer, or a third party, is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with Board Administrative Rule JI-R. For details and further information, see Board Policy JI. All complaints will be investigated promptly. Students who file such complaints or any individuals who provide information relevant to such a complaint will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. Students who have knowledge that sexual harassment or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature directed at students is or may be occurring should notify the school's principal, a school counselor, or a school administrator immediately.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying of students is prohibited. Harassment, intimidation or bullying is defined as a gesture, electronic communication or a written, verbal, physical or sexual act reasonably perceived to have the effect of the following: harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying, as defined in State law and Board Policy JICFAA (Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying), is encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with Policy JICFAA/JICFAA-R. Reports may be made anonymously. Complaints will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. Students who file such complaints or any individuals who provide information relevant to such a complaint will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any individual determined to have engaged in such conduct towards a student.

Bullying is unfair and one sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose. Language that is intended to harass, humiliate, and intimidate another student is considered serious behavior. This includes racial or gender slurs, sexual harassment, and threats of physical harm. Students shall avoid any conduct, behavior or action that could be characterized as bullying. Bullying may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Hurting someone physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, pushing, etc.
- Stealing or damaging a student's property
- Ganging up on someone
- Teasing someone in a hurtful way
- Using put-downs, such as insulting someone's race or making fun of someone for being a boy or a girl
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Leaving someone out on purpose or trying to get other students not to play with someone

- Demeaning or systematically excluding any student or group

Bullying is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex. Administration will do the following things to help prevent bullying so that students feel safe at school:

- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school
- Watch for signs of bullying behavior and stop it when it happens
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports
- Take parents' concerns about bullying seriously Look into all reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on school discipline code.
- Provide immediate consequences for anyone who retaliates against students who report bullying.

The school will work to do the following to prevent bullying:

- Provide a copy of the bullying policy to all students and parents.
- Inform all students and parents about the definition of bullying, the procedures for registering a complaint, and the consequences for bullying.
- Designate administrators (and school counselors, school resource officers, teachers, etc.) who are informed of the procedures and understand how to implement them. For example, they should be made aware of the kinds of acts that constitute bullying, the district's commitment to eliminating and avoiding bullying in the schools, the penalties for engaging in bullying behaviors, the procedures for reporting incidents of bullying, and the procedures for coaching the student who was bullied and coaching the student who engaged in bullying.

Students will be encouraged to do the following things to prevent bullying:

- Treat each other respectfully.
- Refuse to bully others.
- Refuse to let others be bullied.
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied.
- Try to include everyone in activities, especially those who are often left out.
- Report bullying to an adult.

Reporting and Response Procedures

Students who believe they have been bullied are encouraged to immediately inform a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school staff. Staff, students, or volunteers who witness or have reliable information that a student has been harassed or bullied are to report the matter to an administrator, counselor, teacher, or other school staff member immediately.

- Teachers are to report incidents of bullying either witnessed or reported to an administrator.
- All administrators and/or designated employees will follow up periodically on any incident of bullying they were involved in investigating to determine whether the student has been subject to any further bullying since the corrective action was taken.
- Incidences of bullying should be documented to determine a pattern. Disciplinary consequences may become more severe based on the number of infractions.
- Retaliation against students who report bullying is prohibited. Retaliation against those who participate in an investigation of bullying is prohibited. All incidents of retaliation shall be immediately reported to an administrator and are subject to disciplinary action.

Students making false accusations of bullying as a means of reprisal, retaliation or harassment are subject to disciplinary action. Engaging in bullying behavior on school property or when under the jurisdiction of the school, including while on a school bus, is considered a violation, is disorderly, disruptive, and/or is an act of criminal nature. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension, and/or expulsion in certain instances.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that user activities are monitored and retained. **(School Board Policy IJNDB-R)**

Loitering, Trespassing (Going on School Campus Without Proper Authorization)

A student is not allowed to enter the premises of a school other than his/her own school, unless prior permission is received from an administrator of the school to be visited. A student may not enter any building on weekends or after school hours without proper authorization.

NOTE: When a student refuses to leave school property and/or returns to school property after being instructed by school staff to leave, the matter will be referred to the York Police Department.

Vandalism

Destruction of and/or threats to destroy school or public property which may include such actions as: setting fires and/or attempts or threats to destroy, damage or deface school property or property used by the school with the permission of the owner, and theft and/or attempted theft; extortion or attempted extortion; possession of stolen property; vandalism; destruction or defacement of public or private property located on the school premises, at a school function, on the property used by the school with the permission of the owner, or at any school event held away from school.

Repeated Violations/Misbehaviors

Repeated violations of school rules and/or repeated misbehavior.

Action: Penalty may range from suspension to recommendation for expulsion. Prior to this charge being made, parent(s) must have been contacted about the past misbehavior, the student warned to possible other consequences, and a referral made to the appropriate resource personnel. Before the student is readmitted to school after a suspension or expulsion, a Student Behavioral Contract must be agreed upon and signed by the student and parent or guardian.

Student Dress

The school recognizes there are fads and styles, which affect student dress. Students should come to school dressed in a manner not hazardous to their health or safety or disruptive to classroom routine. We ask both parent and student cooperation in maintaining a standard of dress appropriate for school.

There appears to be a definite relationship between good dress habits, good work habits, and proper school behavior. The school district realizes that dress and grooming are personal matters; however, students should not distract fellow classmates from the important business of learning by displaying extreme fads in clothing or grooming. York Middle School seeks the cooperation of the students and parents as we work together toward having our students enjoy today's styles while at the same time students are developing good taste in grooming and dress. The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students shall rest with individual students and parents. They have the right to determine how the student shall dress, providing that such attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not interfere with the educational process. The administration is authorized to act in instances where individual dress is

determined to be disruptive to instruction or the orderly operation of the school or school events. Consequences will be issued at the discretion of the administrator.

The following, while not an exhaustive list, are examples of inappropriate dress and will not be permitted in class at York Middle School:

- Tight fitting and/or revealing clothing (i.e., midriff, strapless, undergarments, biker shorts, or are see-through items)
- Shirts that do not cover the full upper body (including underarms, backs, side, and cleavage)
- Tank tops or shirts where the sleeves are less than “three-finger width” (spaghetti straps are not allowed)
- Clothing that does not cover the waist and back with skin showing
- Clothing with obscene or suggestive language or images; any clothing or jewelry with advertisements or symbols of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sexual connotations or violence/gang related items
- Clothing that depicts inappropriate behavior
- Hats, bandanas, head bands, hoodies or any garments which cover the head for males and females
- Sunglasses
- Pants, shorts or jeans worn below the student’s natural waistline that displays undergarments
- Shorts that are less than the “finger-tip”/mid-thigh length
- Pants with holes/rips higher than the “finger-tip”/mid-thigh length
- Slits in skirts or pants higher than the “finger-tip”/mid-thigh length
- Tights, leggings, yoga pants or bottoms that are form fitting without a shirt that covers to the “finger-tip”/mid-thigh length
- Combs/picks/etc worn in the hair
- Pajamas/nightwear/bedroom/house slippers
- Blankets and body coverings such as capes
- Earbuds/headphones outside of the allowed learning environment (not in hallways/cafeteria)

We recommend the following items at YMS:

- **Crewneck** sweatshirts/long sleeve t-shirt to accommodate for temperature differences throughout the building
- Shoes with backs to prevent foot injuries during transitions in large groups and during safety drills.

Students may not continue to attend class wearing inappropriate clothing.

Violations of the dress code will result in the following:

- Student(s) will be required to change into appropriate attire from the YMS clothes closet OR parent/legal guardian can bring proper clothing to school OR student will be sent to BI (Behavior Intervention).
- Repeated violations of this dress code will be treated as disruptive behavior in violation of the student code of conduct.

Any article of clothing or type of dress not covered above but causing a disruption is prohibited. The administration reserves the right to make amendments deemed necessary for the welfare of the school. Dress (student or adult) that in the opinion of the school administration may disrupt or distract from the learning

environment or may be detrimental to the health or safety of students is not allowed at school. Exceptions to this dress code will be considered by the administration on a case-by-case basis.

Note: It is also requested that parents and visitors comply with these same rules while visiting the school.

Student Involvement

Clubs and Organizations

Every student is encouraged to take part in a club, organization or athletic program at YMS. Research shows that students that are involved in their school perform better academically, have greater school pride, and experience positive social involvement. Examples of Clubs offered at York Middle School:

- Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)
- LegoMasters
- Drama Club
- Student Council

Athletics

YMS offers a wide variety of extracurricular sports activities to students who qualify academically. To be eligible to participate in a fall sport, a student must have been promoted from the previous grade. To participate in a spring sport, a student must pass first semester of the current year. Several forms must be completed before participating on teams. These include a physical by a doctor, a parent permission form, and a copy of the student's birth certificate. The physical forms are available in the school office. Sports offered are as follows

- Fall Sports
 - Football
 - Volleyball
 - Cheerleading
- Winter Sports
 - Basketball
 - Wrestling
 - Cheerleading
 - Academic Challenge
- Spring Sports
 - Track and Field
 - Baseball
 - Softball
 - Soccer (at YCHS)
 - Academic Challenge

Parent and Community Involvement

Communication Between Parent and School

Regular communication between the home and school is an excellent way to support your student. Our Parent Portal allows you to review grades/attendance whenever you like – if you are not registered for this, please contact the office. Sometimes, parent conferences are needed to provide more information. Conferences can be scheduled by contacting your child's team. Every teacher maintains a Canvas home page where assignments and homework may

be viewed. The school sends home a weekly electronic newsletter each Sunday night. Grade level teams also send home weekly communication electronically. Make sure your email address is up to date with the school.

Electronic Communication

We communicate through electronic connections and social media. Please provide an updated email address to the office and your child's teacher. We can also provide you a paper copy of information only if requested.

Parent Communications

- Weekly school events through newsletter and parent phone call
- Electronic classroom newsletters
- School handbook for parents and students (outlining school policies and procedures)
- School web site (updated with calendar of events and school information)
- Web Address: <http://www.york.k12.sc.us> (click on middle schools and then York Middle School)
- YMS Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/york1YMS/>
- YMS Twitter page: @York1YMS
- YMS Instagram page: @York1YMS
- School marquee (displays upcoming events)
- York School District 1 and YSD1Transportation Facebook pages

Telephone Communications

- An automated calling system for school and district announcements and emergency communications.

School Programs/Meetings

- Open House
- Parent Nights
- PTO/SIC meetings
- Student musical programs
- Student recognition programs
- Sporting events
- School events
- End-of-Year Awards Day
- Book Fairs
- Scheduled Parent Conference Days

To inform parents about these and other important meetings, we send a letter from the office and place information about the upcoming events:

- Email
- Social Media
- On the school marquee
- On the school website
- Use automated system to call each home

Parent Involvement

The York School District One (YSD1) Board of Trustees encourages parental involvement in all areas of student life. Parental involvement is essential to a student's success. YSD1 deems mutual respect, trust and effective communication between school and home to be fundamental to that success. The district will observe the following guidelines:

- Parents of students experiencing academic difficulty will be notified by the school. When applicable, information will be provided regarding workshops and seminars relating to parental assistance and guidance at home.

- Parents of disruptive students will be notified as soon as possible by an administrator. In cases of severe classroom disruptions, parents may be asked to come to the school to remove the student, or upon notification of parent, the student will be transported home or to the parent's work site.
- Parents will attend an administrator/parent/student conference before the student is allowed to return to school on probationary status following an expulsion hearing.
- Parents of students assigned to York One Academy (YOA) will be required to meet with the Director of YOA prior to their student attending classes.

Classroom Visits and Observations

The YSD1 Board of Trustees and administrators encourage parents and guardians to visit classrooms to observe the work of the school. Protocol for classroom visits and observations by parents/legal guardians of current students are as follows:

- A parent/legal guardian may either visit his/her student's classroom at the teacher's/school's invitation or make a request to the school principal to have a formal observation of the classroom.
- Classroom visits and/or conferences by a parent/legal guardian must be arranged in advance.
- Classroom observations are at the discretion of the school principal.
- A building-level administrator or his/her designee may remain with the parent/legal guardian during a classroom observation, and the administrator may conduct a post observation conference with the parent/legal guardian.
- Classroom visits and conferences must be conducted in such a manner that the visits and/or conferences do not interfere with the classroom activities of any student in the class. Principals retain the authority to deny access to the school for any individual who has or may disrupt or disturb the learning environment.
- Classroom observations should be scheduled for no longer than one hour.
- **Visitors** Non-essential visitors to district buildings will be limited in accordance with administrative rule KI-R, *Visitors*. Visitors include, but are not limited to, parents/legal guardians, contract service providers, and delivery persons.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are invited, on a scheduled basis, to meet with teachers to discuss their child's school progress. The Parent-Teacher Conference offers the opportunity to ask questions relative to your child, and to build an avenue of communication between home and school to better assist your child's progress. Throughout the school year, parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher whenever necessary.

Telephone Calls for Teachers

We encourage communication between parents and teachers; however, because of their teaching responsibilities, teachers will not be called to the phone during instructional hours. Parents may leave a message for the teacher or email them.

If at any time you have a concern regarding your child's education or school procedures, please begin with your child's teacher. If after talking to the teacher you still feel concerned, please call a school administrator.

PTO and Parent Volunteers

We welcome parents' help as volunteers and will assist parents in choosing an area in which to participate. Parents may assist with activities sponsored by the PTO and other areas within the school (as needed). Volunteer surveys sent out at the beginning of school year (includes checklist for parents who may wish to volunteer at home by making materials,

etc. and parents who might want to talk to students about their careers or hobbies) York County School District One requires background checks for all volunteers and training.

School Improvement Council

A SIC is a broad-based body intended to advise the principal and school and is focused on helping to achieve school improvement. Parent, teacher, and community member representatives serve on an SIC, as do the school's principal and other ex-officio members. Parents are elected by the parents of the school to serve. Teachers are elected by their fellow teachers. Community members are appointed by the principal. SIC duties focus primarily on the school improvement process. SICs:

- provide input and feedback during the development of the school's five-year renewal (improvement) plan and annual updates.
- assist in implementation of school improvement programs and activities.
- monitor and report on progress toward improvement goals in the annual *SIC Report to the Parents* and with the principal in the narrative to the *SC School Report Card*.
- provide other assistance as requested by the principal.

Safety and Medical Attention

Student Safety

Your child's safety is our highest concern. York Middle School has an emergency plan which is practiced and reviewed annually. The school practices the following drills as outlined in the YSD1 district handbook:

- fire/hazmat
- tornado/severe weather drills
- loss of lighting
- fixed nuclear facility-emergency plan
- earthquake
- lockdown and secure
- bus evacuation

Risk Assessments

The safety and security of all students is of the utmost importance to our faculty and staff. Should a concern arise about a student being a danger to him/herself or others, district protocols for conducting a risk assessment (suicide and/or threat) will be followed to the extent appropriate. These assessments may include interviews with students and staff, a review of student records, and consultation with district mental health staff, local law enforcement, or other community agencies that help support our schools and students. If, as part of its assessment and response, the school determines there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose personally identifiable information from educational records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Medicine

All parents/students must follow the procedures as outlined in the YSD1 handbook for both prescription and over the counter medicine.

York School District One Clear Bag Guidelines and Procedures

Ensuring the safety of students, staff, and guests of York School District One is a top priority. Clear bags provide another level of safety and security recommended by the Department of Homeland Security. In keeping with this recommendation, York School District One will implement Clear Bag Guidelines and Procedures to ensure that our venues are safe for all. As students, staff, and guests' approach and enter event venues, law enforcement and staff workers can more easily spot prohibited items providing the ability to resolve safety or security concerns before they become an issue or threat. Additionally, YSD1 Clear Bag Guidelines and Procedures promote the Department of Homeland Security's "See Something, Say Something" campaign.

Students, staff, and guests of after school Athletic and Performing Arts events held at York School District One venues will be expected to comply with Clear Bag Guidelines and Procedures.

Students, staff, and guests are allowed one large clear bag plus a small purse-type clutch. The large clear bag must be no larger than 12"x 6" x 12" and made of clear material that is easily searched. A gallon Ziploc-style bag is a readily available clear bag that meets these requirements. The small purse-type clutch can be used to carry more personal items but remains subject to search. The clutch must be no larger than 4.5"x 6.5." Medically necessary items are approved but subject to search. Every spectator, including children, is allowed to enter the venue with one clear bag.

The following prohibited bags include, but are not limited to:

Purses larger than a clutch bag, briefcases, backpacks, fanny packs, cinch/drawstring bags, luggage of any kind, computer bags, diaper bags, binocular cases, and camera bags.

1. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, the following: weapons, alcohol, animals, (other than service animals as defined by ADA), drugs, lasers, fireworks, or outside food and drinks.
2. If a spectator attempts to enter the venue with a clear bag, the event staff member should visually inspect the contents of the bag by looking through the outside of the clear bag. In the majority of cases, a visual inspection through the outside to the clear bags should be sufficient to determine that no contraband is being brought into the venue. If the event staff member determines that he/she is unable to adequately screen the bags contents from the outside bag, he/she is permitted to feel the bag or open it to look for any concealed items. Event staff members should be aware of the possibility that contraband may be concealed within blankets/garments carried in the clear bag or within a smaller bag stored inside the clear bag.
3. If a spectator attempts to enter the venue with a permissible non-clear bag such as a small purse, "clutch," or medical device the bags are subject to search.
4. If a member of the media with proper credentials attempts to enter with an equipment bag, the event staff member should conduct a search of the bag prior to allowing entry.
5. If a spectator does not comply with a request to search a bag, he/she will be asked to return the bag to his/her vehicle. No spectator should be authorized to enter a venue without first complying with this procedure.
6. On occasion event staff members may encounter noncompliant or verbally aggressive individuals during the screening process who do not agree with the application of the rules to their person or property. If this occurs, the event staff should remain calm and attempt to deescalate the situation by re-explaining the rules. If the situation persists, the event staff member should stop the interaction and the uncooperative individual should be asked to step outside of the venue until a supervisor and/or nearby law enforcement officer can be notified and respond. At no time should the event staff member make the interaction personal or do anything that would escalate the situation.
7. If contraband is located, the appropriate event supervisor or law enforcement officer should be notified.

**York Middle School
Student/Parent Handbook
2023-2024**

Dear Parents,

Please sign and return this form to the school office after you have reviewed the 2023-2024 York Middle School and York School District One Handbooks.

Thank you,

Cassidy Valerino, Principal

"I have read, reviewed, and agree to follow the following policies and procedures: The YSD1 Student/Parent Handbook, Important School Attendance Information, FERPA Rights of Parents and Guardians (Student Directory Information Notice), Bus Conduct Agreement, and the Internet User Agreement."

I have read and reviewed the information in the handbook regarding student conduct, YMS behavior plan, cell phone policy and dress code.

Student Name (Please Print)

Date:

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date: