

8th Grade Privileges and Responsibilities

Sometimes we need to talk about things before they happen. How to make this a fruitful, enjoyable year is important. Below you will find two things: first, things to avoid, and second, consequences that may result.

How can you as an 8th grader succeed and avoid some of the pitfalls that could make the eighth grade an unhappy one?

1. It is expected that you show respect for your fellow students and adults in the building. This entails:
 - Not bullying another student. Bullying takes many forms, like: repeatedly calling a student names after the student has asked you to stop; pushing or bumping into someone repeatedly when the pushing or bumping could be avoided; making fun of someone's ethnic background or orientation, or spreading rumors about a person when it is clear that the rumor is untrue.
 - Accepting other students' ideas when those ideas are presented in class, and not putting others down when those ideas are expressed.
 - Being civil when an adult, whether the adult is your teacher, a hall monitor, cafeteria personnel, custodian, secretary, or the school nurse, makes a reasonable request, e.g., get to class on time, wear appropriate clothing, etc.
 - Demonstrating appropriate behavior in the cafeteria during lunch period: avoiding the misuse of language, not cutting the line, never throwing food, etc. When a cafeteria monitor asks you to cease and desist, you do so immediately.
 - Wearing appropriate clothing that does not distract from the instruction in the building.
 - Getting to class on time so that the teacher can begin the lesson on time and the instruction and learning of the other students are not negatively impacted.

2. It is expected that you refrain entirely from physical or disorderly verbal confrontations of any sort. This includes:
 - What many of you describe as playful “wrestling” in the hallway. The playful aspect oftentimes results in physical conflict that may result in injury to another student or yourself.
 - A severe response to something that someone says, or a slight of any kind, or even a bump or jostle in the hallway, ending in punching a fellow student and causing serious injury to another person.
 - Yelling and other unruly behavior in the hallway that results in causing others to yell back or behave in an unruly manner. This animated behavior generally takes time to quell and encourages a mob mentality with others joining in. When behavior disrupts the learning environment, it is unacceptable.
3. It is expected that you follow the Code of Conduct that has been adopted as part of district policy. This includes:
 - Statements about
 - a. Dress code
 - b. Conduct that is disorderly, i.e. running in the halls, vulgar language, trespassing
 - c. Conduct that is violent, i.e. possessing a weapon, threatening to use a weapon, destroying personal property of a student or teacher
 - d. Conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of themselves or others, i.e. lying to school personnel, stealing, harassment, intimidation
 - e. Bullying
 - f. Misconduct on a school bus or at a bus stop
 - g. Misconduct while at a school-sponsored activity
 - h. Academic misconduct, i.e. plagiarism, cheating, copying, altering records

Now, what could happen to my 8th grade privileges if I engage in a serious violation of the Code or be involved in several serious breaches of the code of behavior during the course of the school year?

Let's first explore this notion: We are the sum total of our actions. When we do things wrong, people may look at us negatively; conversely, if we do things right, they perceive us in a more positive light. We cannot blame others for the things that we decide purposely to do. We are the guardians of our own fate. **If we choose to ignore the rules of our organization, then we have to expect that the organization will react and provide us some consequences.** Avoiding consequences can be easy—know and follow the rules as closely as you possible can.

We recognize as that everyone is capable of changing or altering their paths. You are not always the same person who committed a series of unacceptable acts or even one very serious infraction. If you choose to change your path, that will be taken under consideration. The events outlined below are geared toward those students who elect to continue to violate the rules after being spoken to repeatedly by teachers, parents, guidance counselors and administrators. As teachers, we are in the business of watching people grow and change. **Attendance at an 8th grade event is a privilege not a right. You have to earn the privilege.** If you wish to take part in 8th grade or school sponsored events such as PEP rallies, you should pay particular attention to the consequences that may result from negative behaviors.

Here are some things that can occur if you choose to follow a wrongdoer's path:

- a. If you receive more than three detentions for serious disregard of the school code: harassment, bullying, running in the halls, disrupting the natural flow of instruction, being rude, etc. , your name will be flagged. That is, 8th grade teachers will begin to consider whether or not you are able to participate in 8th grade activities or school-sponsored events. If you continue down this path and accumulate additional detentions, in-house detentions or an OSS, it is unlikely that the 8th grade teachers and your 8th grade administrator will not support your participation in 8th grade activities.

- b. If you receive an in-house detention for a serious breach of the school code: fighting, lying to school personnel, stealing, you raise an automatic flag and your name will be brought to the table for discussion by the 8th grade teachers and the 8th grade administrator. Your behaviors in and out of your classes will be brought into the discussion and the teachers along with the 8th grade administrator will determine whether or not you can participate in the 8th grade activity or the school-sponsored event. If your behaviors in and out of the classroom create a pattern that establishes that you are likely not to behave appropriately, it is to be expected that you will not be permitted to attend.
- c. If you receive an out-of-school suspension, it is likely that that was received for a more serious breaking of the rules of conduct, i.e. bringing a weapon to school, brandishing that weapon, a violently attacking a fellow student, etc. As a result, you will not be permitted to attend the 8th grade event nearest to the imposition of OSS. We recognize, once again, that people are capable of changing their behaviors. For instance, if you committed an act that resulted in OSS and you have nothing else in your history indicating that you cannot behave appropriately, and you choose to follow the rules outlined in the Code of Conduct for the remainder of the year, you will likely be permitted to attend the other 8th grade events. Obviously, if you have several out-of-school suspensions, and you continue to break the rules, you will not be permitted to attend 8th grade activities.

I have read and discussed the above with my advisory teacher and will share this information with my parents. My signature below indicates that I fully understand my responsibilities and the rules of the school and that I will abide by them to the best of my ability.

Student's Signature

Printed Name

Date

Advisory Teacher

Room

Date