Kenowa Hills Public Schools
VALUE. SUPPORT. EMPOWER.

Elementary School
Handbook

2026-2027

Revised March 2026

Kenowa Hills Public School
2325 Four Mile Road NW,
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49544
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Revised March 2026

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VISION

Kenowa Hills Public Schools will provide meaningful learning experiences for every student, every day.

MISSION

Kenowa Hills Public School values, supports, and empowers all learners to achieve their full potential.

School Mascot: Lance the Knight

School Fight Song

We are Brave and Bold
Dressed in Black and in Gold
You can tell we're from Kenowa Hills

We're the symbol of
The school we love,
The place where our loyalty dwells.

We will fight, fight, fight,
With all of our might
And we'll cheer them to Victory, Victory!

If you want to see a real great team,
Keep your eyes on those Kenowa Knights.
FIGHT!

PROFILE OF A GRADUATE

The Profile of a Graduate identifies the social and emotional skills identified as most important for all KHPS graduates. The profile was developed based on student, parent, community member, and educator input. It includes five broad categories and the related skills that our community believes are necessary to be prepared for post-secondary success in college, career and life.

KENOWA HILLS DIRECTORY OF SCHOOLS

ALPINE ELEMENTARY 4730 Baumhoff NW Comstock Park MI 49321 Phone: (616) 784-0884 Principal: Jason Snyder	CENTRAL ELEMENTARY 4252 Three Mile Rd NW Grand Rapids MI 49534 Phone: (616) 453-6351 Principal: Abby Wiseman	ZINSER ELEMENTARY 3949 Leonard St Grand Rapids MI 49534 Phone: (616) 453-2461 Principal: Brooke Johnston
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER 3971 Richmond Court NW Grand Rapids MI 49534 Phone: (616) 791-9757 Director: Luke Scholten	KH MIDDLE SCHOOL 3950 Hendershot NW Grand Rapids MI 49544 Phone: (616) 784-3225 Principal: Mike Dodge	KH HIGH SCHOOL 3825 Hendershot NW Grand Rapids MI 49544 Phone: (616) 784-2400 Principal: Nate Robrahan
PATHWAYS HIGH SCHOOL 3950 Hendershot NW Grand Rapids MI 49544 Phone: (616) 965-4036 Principal: Cathy Capy-Cantu	TRANSPORTATION 4353 Remembrance Rd NW Grand Rapids MI 49534 Phone: (616) 453-4757 Director: Valerie Conklin	KH SPECIAL EDUCATION 3971 Richmond Court NW Grand Rapids MI 49534 Phone: (616) 791-9757 Director: Luke Scholten

DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

ELEMENTARY Student Schedule: 8:35 a.m. - 3:37 p.m.

Half-Day Student Schedule: 8:35 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.

Main Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MIDDLE SCHOOL Student Schedule: 7:40 a.m. - 2:37 p.m.

Half-Day Student Schedule: 7:40 a.m. - 11:09 a.m.

Main Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL & PATHWAYS Student Schedule: 7:45 a.m.-2:42 p.m.

Half-Day Student Schedule: 7:45 a.m.-11:14 a.m.

Main Office Hours: 7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Background Checks for Volunteers

Kenowa Hills Public Schools greatly appreciates the support of volunteers providing a defined support service or function that may not be directly supervised by KHPS staff members. Background checks are required for all non-district staff serving in a volunteer capacity within the school during the school day. All background checks require a valid driver's license or state-issued identification card. Requests for background checks must be submitted at least a week in advance of a school or classroom visit for processing and approval. New background checks must be completed EACH school year for all individuals seeking to volunteer in a KHPS school.

1.2 Birthdays & Holiday Celebrations

Celebrations are important to a positive school culture. We encourage our students to make healthy choices during celebrations. We recommend that you support healthy choices by sending non-edible items for celebrations. Please consult with your child's teacher prior to purchasing edible items due to potential student allergies. Edible items must be purchased from a commercial facility and include a list of ingredients to align with best practices from the health department. Personal invitations to parties outside of school should not be distributed at school. Please find alternate means of distribution.

1.3 Books and Technology

Technology and books are the property of the school and are loaned to students on an individual basis. Students are responsible for the proper care and appropriate use of books and technology while they are using them. If books or technology are purposefully damaged at school, returned damaged, or not returned at all, the student responsible is expected to pay for the repair or replacement unless a Technology Protection Plan has been purchased. Use of technology that is not aligned to curriculum may result in disciplinary action (see Personal Belongings for related information).

1.4 Bullying and other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort.

Bullying can be in the form of any written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is verbally threatening or harassing behavior using electronic technology including cell phones, email, social media, or text messaging.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

A. Physical – intentionally and repeatedly hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or demanding money for the return of items, blocking student movement, and unwelcome physical contact.

B. Verbal – intentionally and repeatedly taunting, excessive teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.

C. Psychological – intentionally and repeatedly spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

Bullying will be investigated in the following manner:

A. Any student who believes she/he/they has been or is the victim of bullying, cyberbullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or Assistant Principal. The student may also report concerns to any school staff member who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator.
B. Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive or bullying behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports can be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action can not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
C. If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may range from one or more restorative practices up to and including suspension for students that engaged in the bullying behavior. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials when an investigation determines that laws have been broken.

1.5 Cancellation of School

Occasionally, school may be canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies. All families registered to receive School Messenger Alerts will be notified in their manner of choice. If you are not currently enrolled to receive alerts, contact your school office or email technology@khps.org to request information. Parents may also download the Kenowa Hills App for your mobile device to receive important updates regarding school. In addition, TV channels 8 and 13 provide school closing information. Please do not call the school office with questions regarding school closing as the offices will also be closed. In the event of excessive school cancellations due to weather, additional days may be added to the end of the school year calendar or spring break.

1.6 Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences will be held in the fall and in the spring. We encourage all parents to attend these conferences and keep the lines of communication open with your child's teacher.

1.7 Curriculum

Our district's instructional focus is on the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Math. If a parent is interested in obtaining specific information, they may access our district website links or contact their child's school office. For information about our district's personal curriculum, please refer to this section in our handbook.

1.8 Complaints

The following procedure should be followed by students and their parents or guardians that have a complaint regarding any employee of Kenowa Hills Public Schools:

1. Contact the employee personally and attempt to resolve the problem at a mutually agreeable place and time.
2. If this effort does not resolve the issue, the immediate supervisor of the employee involved should be contacted and an attempt should be made to reach a resolution.
3. If the matter has not been resolved at the supervisor level, the complaint may be brought to the attention of the Director of Human Resources, who will determine further steps necessary to resolve the issue.
4. If the Director of Human Resources is unable to resolve the matter satisfactorily, the person may request to meet with the Superintendent.
5. The Board of Education will consider the concern if the proper steps outlined above have been followed.

For concerns regarding other matters, refer to the process for communicating concerns on the District's Board of Education webpage.

1.9 Dress Code

Students should present themselves in a manner that is non-distracting. This includes clothing, accessories, and personal appearance/hygiene. Clothing that disrupts the learning environment will not be allowed. The school has the authority to determine if a student's dress is disruptive to learning. The school will take steps to minimize the disruption by providing alternative clothes for the student and/or calling home for parental support to provide alternate clothing.

1.10 Dropping Off and Picking up Your Student at School

Students who arrive after the scheduled start of classes must check in at the office prior to going to class. Parents are asked to contact the school office and the teacher as far in advance as possible prior to picking up students prior to the end of the school day. If sending in a note, it is also best practice to also call the school and/or notify the child's teachers as notes often are forgotten by students. We also will not take a child's "word" about early dismissals. Parents/Guardians must call or email the school. Please state the anticipated pick-up time in the note or phone call. For the safety of the children, any adult picking up a child must report to the office, be on the child's emergency form and bring proper identification. Your child will be contacted to meet you at the office. For daily drop off and pick up procedures and times, please see your child's school building office staff or available information.

1.11 Drugs, Alcohol, Mood Altering Substances, Paraphernalia & Fireworks

Students are prohibited from possession, use, delivery, transfer, sale or attempted sale of any alcohol, controlled substances, look-alike drugs, or drug paraphernalia (including but not limited to marijuana, marijuana accessories and/or marijuana-infused products) at any time while they are at school or any school-related activity. Fireworks and other incendiary devices are also prohibited. Violations will be referred to the appropriate authorities, and students will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

1.12 Emergency Procedures (Fire, Tornado and Lockdown)

Fire-escape locations and procedures are posted in each classroom. Each class has an assigned area in the building to go to for tornado drills. If tornado warnings continue beyond the regular end of the student day, students will be kept in school until an all-clear is issued. During a lockdown drill, each classroom has a plan for responding to a given scenario. Visitors are not allowed to enter the building prior to and during drills. Students will not be released to parents prior to the end of the drill. The number of drills held each year is followed per state mandated requirements.

1.13 Fundraisers

Each year, the school and/or parent groups may sponsor one or more fundraisers. All fundraisers must go through the district's approval process.

1.14 Head Lice Policy

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) jointly support the following statements for the management of head lice infestations within school communities. Currently, there is no scientific evidence demonstrating that enforced exclusion policies are effective at reducing head lice transmission. At this time, MDCH and MDE recommend a policy that focuses on the exclusion of active infestations only. Active infestations can be defined as the presence of live lice or nits

found within ¼" of the scalp. Nits that are found beyond ¼" of the scalp have more than likely hatched, or are no longer viable.

- Any student with live lice may remain in school until the end of the school day (See Procedures).
- Immediate treatment at home is advised.
- The student will be readmitted to school after treatment and examination. **The student must be transported to school by an adult for examination by our office personnel.**
- If, upon examination, the school-designated personnel finds no live lice on the child, the child may reenter the school.
- Any student with nits (farther than ¼" from the scalp) will be allowed in school.
- Parents should remove nits daily and treat if live lice are observed.

1.15 Head Lice Procedures

When a member of school staff suspects a child is infested with head lice, the following procedures should be followed:

- The child will be restricted from activities involving close contact (i.e., hugging) or sharing personal items (i.e., hats, clothing, brushes) with other children.
- The school/facility will be notified, and the parents will be contacted.
- Immediate removal of the child is unnecessary. The child can be sent home at the end of the day. Children should be allowed to ride the school bus home.
- A letter will be sent home notifying classmates' parents that a case of head lice is suspected and asking them to check all of their children for head lice.
- The school will provide parents with a copy of an information sheet on head lice infestation and treatment options.
- The child cannot return to school unless lice free (and no nits closer than ¼" of the scalp). Upon return, the child must be checked in the school office prior to entering the classroom. Parents/Guardians must wait with his/her child until the child is cleared.

1.16 Bed Bug Policy

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHS), and Michigan Department of Education (MDE) jointly support the following statements for the presence of bed bugs introduced to the school environment by students or staff.

In general, school environments are not conducive to bed bug infestations. Bed bugs prefer an environment where they can hide during the day and come out at night to feed. Because most schools do not provide this type of environment, major infestations of schools are rare. However, bed bugs hiding in clothing or backpacks can hitchhike to and from schools.

Currently there is no scientific evidence demonstrating that enforced exclusion of students from the school setting is effective at reducing possible bed bug transmission in the school environment. Instead, schools are encouraged to develop a response plan based on management principles described in the Michigan Manual for the Prevention and Control of Bed Bugs (dated September 2010).

These principles include:

- Training staff to identify bed bugs and the signs of bed bugs in the classroom and children's items. This may include actual insects, cast skins, or excessive insect bites on a child.Any student with bed bugs identified on their person or in their belongings may remain in school until the end of the day (see Procedures below).

- Responding promptly to bed bug complaints within the school and through contact and counseling with parents/caregivers. The longer bed bug infestations outside the school setting are allowed to persist, the harder they are to eradicate.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/caregivers in their efforts to promptly respond to bed bugs in the home for the health and safety of the family and school community.

1.17 Bed Bug Procedures

If a bed bug is found on a student, it may indicate that the student has bed bugs at home. However, bed bugs can crawl onto or off of a person (or their belongings) at any time, so it is also possible that the bed bug was brought to school by someone else.

When a suspected bed bug is found on a student or a student's belongings, the following procedures should be followed:

- The student will be discreetly removed from the classroom to allow a school nurse or qualified individual to examine the student's clothing and belongings (bags, backpack, coats, etc.). Any bugs found will be removed and bagged for identification while attempting to keep specimens as intact as possible.

- If a confirmed bed bug is found on a student or their belongings, a school principal, nurse, or other qualified adult will contact the student's parents or guardian to inform them of the situation. Educational materials will be provided for review and a bed bug inspection form with guidance on next steps will be shared with the family for completion.

- Students will not be excluded from school due to the continued presence of bed bugs unless repeated efforts by the school to partner with the family and local support agencies to remedy an infestation have been unsuccessful.

1.18 Flea Policy

School environments are not conducive to flea infestations. Fleas require a host to complete their life cycle and strongly prefer animals with fur over human hosts. Because schools do not provide access to fur-based animals that have not been treated for fleas (KHPS Facility dogs are treated for fleas with prescribed veterinary treatments), flea infestations in schools are very rare. However, fleas can be transported to and from school settings by hiding in student clothing or backpacks.

If fleas are found in the school setting, school administrators and staff will respond to fleas and other insects based on Integrated Pest Management requirements called for by applicable Michigan laws.

The following principles will be used to guide school personnel with respect to fleas:

- Staff will be trained to identify fleas and the signs of fleas in the classroom and on children's items. This may include actual insects, or excessive insect bites on a child. Any student with fleas identified on their person or in their belongings may remain in school until the end of the day.
- Staff will respond promptly to flea complaints within the school and through contact and counseling with parents/caregivers. Staff will contact maintenance staff to identify areas in the school setting to sweep and consider additional steps aligned with the District's Integrated Pest Management plan.
- Designated staff will encourage and support parents/caregivers in their efforts to promptly respond to fleas in the home for the health and safety of the family and broader school community. The Center for

Disease Control outlines flea medication for family pets, insect repellent options, and strategies for cleaning homes and decreasing exposure of household pets to wild animals as primary strategies to minimize exposure to fleas.

1.19 Immunizations

Any student enrolling in a Michigan school shall submit proof of the following immunizations prior to official entry. The school has the authority to deny entrance to children not meeting these requirements. The following are required by law:

- 4 Doses of DTP, DT, or Td: If the 4th dose was not given on or after the 4th birthday, another dose must be given prior to school entry
- 3 Doses of Polio: If the 3rd dose was not given on or after the 4th birthday, another dose must be given prior to school entry
- 2 Doses of MMR (mumps, measles, rubella)
- Hepatitis B immunization series must have been begun prior to school entry
- Two doses of chickenpox vaccine or a written statement from the student's parent indicating their child has had chicken pox

*Hearing and vision tests must be done for all new kindergarten students who did not have one completed in Preschool.

1.20 Medication

Kenowa Hills Public Schools will follow board policy and state regulations regarding the administration of medication. The office staff is not allowed to administer any medication unless the parents have completed a medication form. Forms are available in the office. Students are not allowed to administer their own medication. Medication will be administered based on prescribed directions. All medications, whether prescription or nonprescription, must be in their original container. Students are not to transport any medication. Parents must drop off and pick up any medication at the office.

1.21 Personal Belongings/Electronics

Non-school issued technology items are not allowed at school, unless prior authorization has been received. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, iPods, iPads, smartwatches, mp3 players, hand-held games, other personal electronic devices, toys and other items that can distract from the learning environment. Each building will follow the Kenowa Hills Acceptable Use Policy as it relates to mobile devices. Each building may have additional procedures relating to personal student devices. Confiscated items will be held by building administration on an individual basis and released to parents/guardians. The school is not responsible for any items brought to school.

1.22 Recess Policy

Unless it's raining or below 0º F ("feels like" temperature and wind chill are factors as well), all students can be expected to go outside for every recess, with exceptions made by doctor's orders only and teacher or principal discretion based on an academic or behavioral need. Appropriate clothing is a must if a student is to be comfortable. Please label all clothing.

1.23 Registration

Parents are required to complete the registration process in the registration portal. Parents are required to update registration information annually. This includes providing emergency information as well as other

information necessary to begin or add to the cumulative record of the student. Please inform the district and the school office of any changes to this information during the school year.

1.24 Report Cards

Written report card evaluations are given three times each year. Report cards are sent home with students after the second and third marking period and mailed home at the end of the year.

1.25 Restorative Justice

Public Act 360 adds section 1310d when reviewing student discipline. Schools must consider all of the following factors before suspending and/or expelling a student:

1. The student's age
2. The student's disciplinary history
3. Whether the student has a disability
4. The seriousness of the violation or behavior committed
5. Whether the violation or behavior committed threatened the safety of any student or staff member
6. Whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior committed
7. Whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior committed

Public Act 361 adds section 1310c and requires school officials to consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspending or expelling a student. Restorative practices are defined as "practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by a pupil's misconduct.

1.26 Retention

KHPS is committed to research-based and competency-based educational practices that are effective in enhancing the educational attainment of all students. The practice of retention will be used only when there is compelling evidence that the student is likely to benefit academically and socially.

Before grade retention is considered, the statements must be met:

1. A student will have been provided with intervention either by the classroom teacher or an available interventionist to provide additional opportunities to show mastery.
2. The student must have multiple progress monitoring data points or evidence of progress and be discussed with the school's child study team by the end of the year.
    a. Students have not shown proficiency on grade level standards and are not following growth norms as compared to their peers.
    b. Promotion in grades K-5 shall be based on the student's overall mastery of curriculum. In grades K-5, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on a mastery of the majority of all math and reading standards.
    c. A student who is developmentally young may be considered for retention if the "youngness" is combined with a lack of mastery of curriculum objectives for the grade level.
    d. Excessive absences, combined with a lack of mastery of curriculum, may also prompt consideration for retention.
    e. Behavior cannot be the sole criterion for retention.

1.27 Sales in School

Students are not permitted to sell any items in school except as a member of an approved group and only with the knowledge of building administrators.

1.28 Student Records and Privacy

In compliance with all applicable laws, including those governing student records and privacy, Kenowa Hills Public Schools is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of every student.

Parents and guardians must provide the school with copies of any relevant legal documentation (e.g., custody orders, visitation agreements) that may affect a student's attendance, release from school, or communication arrangements.

To ensure accuracy and clarity, guidance for common scenarios is included below.

Early Release or Non-Guardian Pick-Up: Written permission is required whenever a student is to be released early or to any individual other than a custodial parent/guardian.

Special Arrangements: Any unique communication or pick-up arrangements must be documented in writing and provided to the school.

Access to Records: Parents/guardians have the right to access their student's educational records in accordance with federal and state laws, unless restricted by a court order.

Scheduling Meetings: Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting the school office to schedule meetings and for providing the names of any individuals who will attend.

The school will adhere to all requirements of relevant court orders regarding custody, visitation, and the release of records. If parents or guardians have any questions or concerns, or if there is a need to update student records, please contact the student's school office.

1.29 Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Using Computers and the Internet at School

KHPS students are provided access to computer equipment and services, including the Internet, in an effort to promote educational excellence. Computer and network operations rely on the proper conduct of users who must adhere to strict guidelines. All students will be required to complete an application for Computer and Network Access before access will be granted. The use of computer equipment and services provided by the school district must be consistent with the educational objectives of Kenowa Hills Public Schools. Violations will result in the student being prohibited for an amount of time determined by administration as informed by the severity of the conduct in question.

Using AI Tools for School Work

Students should do their school or homework using what they know and the resources they have. We want to make sure everyone has a fair chance to learn and show what they know. This means that students shouldn't use AI (Artificial Intelligence) and NLP (Natural Language Processing) tools unless their teacher says it's appropriate for certain tasks. Using these tools without permission is like cheating because it doesn't show a student's real work.

Students are responsible for how they use school technology. If students use AI or NLP tools without permission, it will be considered as a form of plagiarism. Any student found using these tools without permission or in a prohibited manner will be disciplined up to and possibly including suspension or revocation of user privileges.

When Students Can Use AI and NLP Tools

Teachers will identify and communicate times that it is appropriate for students to use AI and NLP tools to support research, data analysis, language translation, feedback in writing, and supporting learning for students who speak other languages or have certain needs. When utilized, students must use these tools wisely and fairly.

1.30 Tobacco/E-Cigarettes

Student or adult use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes (including vaping) are not permitted on school grounds. Failure to comply with this will result in administrative action.

1.31 Transportation Services

Student transportation in district-owned vehicles is offered to support district learning environments to support or mission of valuing, supporting, and empowering all learners to meet their full potential. Buses are an extension of the school day, to maintain access to this service, students must comply with transportation rules and driver directives designed to safely transport them to and from academic and extracurricular settings.

To make things convenient for families, we offer the option to have students dropped off or picked up from one location other than their home address (such as a daycare, relative, alternate parent, etc.). If you are in need of this option, please complete and submit a new Alternate Transportation Form prior to the start of each school year. Alternate drop-offs and pick-ups will be limited to one additional location per student and must be scheduled on a consistent regular basis. Please submit completed forms ASAP via email to transportation@khps.org and allow a week turnaround time for processing.

Our drivers are asked to safely transport our students on local roads in situations that are constantly changing. The following transportation expectations and discipline procedures have been established to ensure a safe and orderly transportation experience for students and staff.

Expectations
Follow Directions Promptly: Listen to and follow all directions given by the bus driver immediately.

Wait Safely for the Bus: Stay in a safe area away, at least 10 feet from the roadway, while waiting for the bus to arrive.

Board Calmly: Enter the bus calmly, without disturbing others, and go directly to your seat.

Maintain a Respectful Environment: Engage in polite conversation that does not include profanity, avoid physical or verbal confrontations, and respect everyone's space and well-being.

Stay Seated While Moving: Remain in your seat with aisles and exits clear while the bus is in motion.

Use Windows Properly: Only open windows with the driver’s permission and keep all body parts inside the bus.

Handle Objects Safely: Keep all personal items such as books, packages, and clothing out of the aisles and handle them responsibly.

Communicate Respectfully: Speak in a calm and respectful tone; maintain silence when requested, especially near railroad crossings to help the bus driver hear if there is an oncoming train.

Promote Cleanliness: Help keep the bus clean and tidy by removing personal trash and belongings when leaving the bus. Safety concerns and student allergies require that food is not eaten on district buses or vans. In the event that athletic teams or field trip groups need to travel with food and drink, coaches and lead teachers are responsible for ensuring that the bus or van are clean and tidy before departing the vehicle.

Respect Bus Property: Take care of the bus and avoid any form of damage. Damage to school property may result in the student and/or family covering the cost of repairs.

Use Designated Stops: Board and exit the bus at your assigned stops.

Uphold Safety and Respect: Ensure your actions always respect the safety and rights of others.

Be Mindful of Electronic Device Use: Use electronic devices responsibly; Recording videos or taking pictures on the bus is not allowed while riding a district bus or van.

Prohibited Items: Do not bring prohibited items such as weapons, items that look like weapons (including toys), hazardous materials, controlled substances (including tobacco, vaping products, DAB Pens, alcohol, drugs, etc.), or animals onto the bus. Animals that meet the Americans with Disability Act definition of service animal are permissible in ordnance with School Board policy.

Video cameras and other devices to monitor the use of prohibited materials may be placed on vehicles and buses to monitor student behavior on the vehicle/bus. Exceptions or modifications to these rules may be made as necessary to accommodate a student with a disability. Parents should be aware that the recorded video will not be made public and will only be viewed by authorized school district officials and the police.

Bus Discipline Procedures

1st Offense

- The driver clarifies expectations with the student(s) to explain the unsafe behavior and how to correct it. Parents will be notified by the bus driver that an incident took place with clarification on how to improve the identified behavior.

2nd Offense

- The driver notifies the student(s) that a discipline report will be filled out to document the behavior.
- The parent/guardian(s) will be contacted by the building administrator to discuss the behavior and clarify expectations.

3rd Offense and Beyond

- The driver notifies the student(s) that a report will be filed to document the behavior.
- The building administrator will contact the parent/guardian(s) to notify them of disciplinary action.

Note 1: Depending upon the severity of the student behavior in question, school officials may impose more severe consequences as deemed appropriate under State and Federal Law and/or KHPS Board of Education policy.

Note 2: Issues involving weapons, threats of violence, or violent altercations will be turned over to local law enforcement authorities. Student discipline resulting from these cases are unique to each situation above and beyond that represented here.

1.32 Visitors

Scheduled visitors are always welcome in all KHPS schools. In welcoming visitors, KHPS utilizes a consistent and safe process to screen all visitors (including contractors and volunteers) against national sex offender registries. This process requires all visitors to check in at the front office using the district's visitor management system. This system scans a government issued identification card to complete the screening. Once approved, a visitor pass is printed on a sticker for use during the visit. If you are volunteering or you wish to confer with a teacher, it is also necessary to call ahead in order to schedule the visit to help minimize impacts on classroom instruction.

1.33 Weapons

Public Act 451 provides for the expulsion of any public school student who is found in possession of a dangerous weapon (firearm, dagger, knife with a blade over 3" long, iron bar, etc.) in a school building or on the school grounds. Act 451 requires that children who are in the fifth grade or lower be expelled for at least 90 days unless certain criteria are met. However, a school board is not required to expel a pupil for possessing a weapon if the pupil establishes in a clear and convincing manner at least 1 of the following:

1. The object or instrument possessed by the pupil was not possessed by the pupil for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person as a weapon.
2. The weapon was not knowingly possessed by the pupil.
3. The pupil did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument possessed by the pupil constituted a dangerous weapon.
4. The weapon was possessed by the pupil at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of school or police authorities.

2.0 ATTENDANCE

2.1 Accidents and Illness

Many illnesses do not require exclusion. However, children may be excluded if the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities or if there is risk of spread of harmful disease to others. Criteria provided from the Michigan Health Department include:
1. Severely ill: A child that is lethargic or less responsive, has difficulty breathing, or has a rapidly spreading rash.
2. Fever: A child with a temperature of 100.4 or greater AND behavior changes or other signs or symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, or diarrhea). The child should not return until 24 hours of no fever, and diminishing symptoms, without the use of fever-reducing medications or additional new symptoms.
3. Diarrhea: A child has two loose or watery stools. The child should have no loose stools for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Exception: A healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious. Diarrhea may be caused by antibiotics or new foods a child has eaten. Discuss with a parent/guardian to find out if this is the likely cause.
4. Vomiting: A child that has vomited two or more times. The child should have no vomiting episodes for 24 hours prior to returning. Exception: A healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious.
5. Abdominal pain: A child with abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other symptoms.
6. Rash: The child with a rash AND has a fever or a change in behavior. Exclude until the rash subsides or until a healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious. Note: Rapidly spreading bruising or small blood spots under the skin need immediate medical attention.
7. Skin sores: A child with weeping sores on an exposed area that cannot be covered with waterproof dressing.
8. Certain communicable diseases: Children and staff diagnosed with certain communicable diseases may have to be excluded for a certain period of time.

If a student feels ill and he/she cannot function in the classroom, the child will be sent to the office. Office personnel may have the child lie down or make arrangements for the child to go home. In the event that we are unable to reach a parent, an attempt will be made to contact the person listed on the student's emergency information sheet. If a student receives an injury on the playground, the staff will provide medical attention. For injuries requiring a second opinion or professional medical attention, parents will be notified immediately. For serious injuries that require immediate medical attention, 9-1-1 may be contacted.

2.2 Attendance Expectations

It is imperative that students are present at school for the entire school day for the maximum amount of

learning to take place. Student absences, tardies, and early pick-ups create an environment in which a student does not receive the full benefit of their public education experience. It is state law and a parent's/guardian's responsibility to make certain that students are in school on all scheduled school days for all of the scheduled minutes. Research shows that both excused and unexcused absences can negatively impact a child's potential success in school and ability to master grade level concepts.

Our students learn best with regular, consistent attendance in the company of their peers with guidance and support from KHPS instructional staff. We strongly urge parents and guardians to schedule vacations and appointments during non school hours.

Parents or guardians must communicate with the school the date(s) your child will be absent from school and the reason for the absence. This call may be made the day before or by 9:00 the morning of the absence. Every effort will be made to contact those parents or guardians who do not call in their child's absence

Kenowa Hills Public Schools follow a common student attendance standard as defined by the Kent Intermediate School District (KISD). All students are encouraged to maintain an attendance rate at **90% or greater.**

Research has shown that Chronic Absenteeism (**defined as missing 10% or more of school days for any reason**), can lead to learning loss. Chronic absenteeism may result in school-based interventions and, ultimately, referral for truancy with the KISD Office of School Participation.

2.3 Excused Absences

Definition of an Excused Absence - An absence is excused when a parent/guardian communicates a valid reason for a student to miss school.

Excused Absences Counted Toward 10% for Chronic Absenteeism

- **Student's physical or mental illness -** A physician's verification may be required after four (4) consecutive days of absence or after a pattern of repeated illness.
- **Medical or dental appointments -** Written documentation (e.g., appointment slip or note) is recommended whenever possible.
- **Personal or family vacations -** These count toward the 10% threshold. We strongly encourage families to plan vacations outside of scheduled school days.
- **Other excused absences that count toward the 10% threshold -** Any circumstance where the school has received timely notice and valid explanation, unless the absence clearly meets the "non-counted" criteria below.

Excused Absences Not Counted Toward 10% for Chronic Absenteeism

- **Doctor's Note Restricting Attendance -** A note must explicitly state that the student is not able to attend school for a specific range of dates and include a clear return date and the doctor's signature.
- **School Closings -** Weather or building-related closures do not count as absences.
- **Bereavement (Death or serious illness in immediate family)**
- **Court Appearances / Legal Matters**
- **Religious Holidays -** Observances of the student's own faith tradition.

Note: These absences are documented separately and **do not** count against the 10% threshold for chronic absenteeism. The school reserves the right to request additional documentation to verify reasons for extended or repeated absences.

2.4 Unexcused Absences

An absence is **unexcused** when **no valid reason** has been communicated by a parent/guardian **by the time the student returns** to school.

Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Failure to notify the office about a student's absence.
- Any absence not fitting the criteria for an excused absence.

2.5 Chronic Tardiness/Early or Late Pick-ups

Parent/Guardian Responsibility - It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to arrange timely transportation to and from school if not using district provided transportation. Chronic tardiness or early pick-ups are monitored. When patterns of chronic tardiness or early pick up arise, the elementary building's attendance team will communicate concerns and work with parents to develop a plan for improvement. Additionally, an attendance improvement plan may be developed to help communicate needs and actions for all involved.

Definition of Tardy - Arriving later than 10 minutes after the official start time.

Definition of an Early Dismissal - Leaving school more than 10 minutes before the official dismissal time.

Clarifications Related to Chronic Tardiness / Early or Late Pick-ups

- **Chronic Tardiness/Early Pick-ups -** Defined as arriving late or leaving early **more than two (2) times in one week** or **five (5) times in one month** at any point in the school year.

- **Late Pick-ups -** Students are expected to be picked up promptly at dismissal if not using district provided transportation. Repeated delays in student pick-up after school create supervision and safety concerns. If an unavoidable emergency arises, please contact the office of your elementary school immediately. Students who remain on campus after 4:00 PM may be transported to the Early Childhood Center (ECC), and families will be charged a supervision fee. Habitual late pick-up may result in a required meeting with administration and additional consequences.

- **Conversion to Unexcused Absence -** During the course of the school year, every ten (10) instances of tardiness or early dismissals (under 60 minutes each) = **1 unexcused absence**. This conversion is driven by Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) attendance guidelines used to report truancy.

- **Partial-Day Absences**
  - Arriving **60 minutes or more** after the start of the school day = **absent for AM**.
  - Leaving **60 minutes or more** before dismissal = **absent for PM**.

2.6 Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Processes

Chronic absenteeism includes **all** excused and unexcused absences (except special conditions noted above) and occurs when a student's total absences meet or exceed **10%** of the school year. **Truancy** refers to excessive **unexcused** absences. Processes to support student attendance are based on guidance and support from the KISD Office of School Participation website at https://www.kentisd.org/administrative-services/truancy/.

Both situations can affect academic progress and may trigger the following **progressive interventions**:

1. **Monitoring & Initial Notifications: After 5 total absences (excused or unexcused)**

    - Parents/guardians receive a **letter or phone call** expressing concern and offering resources or support.
    - Attendance is formally monitored.

2. **Intermediate Interventions: After 7–8 absences (or sooner if unexcused absences continue to accumulate)**

    - Second notification letter is sent.
    - Possible **conference or phone call** with parent/guardian to discuss reasons for absences and develop an **Attendance Improvement Plan** (AIP).
    - The AIP may include strategies for addressing barriers to attendance, medical follow-up, or support services (e.g., counseling, tutoring, family assistance).

3. **Chronic Absenteeism Threshold: Once a student's absences (excused or unexcused) exceed 10%** of the total school days to date

    - The school schedules a formal **attendance meeting** with the family to review or revise the Attendance Improvement Plan.
    - A **referral to the Kent ISD Office of School Participation Office** may be initiated if unexcused absences are significant or if there is no improvement after interventions.

4. **Possible Impact on Grade Promotion:** Excessive absences can affect academic performance and **may impact grade-level promotion** recommendations.

Potential Second Referral: If attendance does **not improve** after the first referral or if absences continue to accumulate, the school may make a **second referral** to the Kent County Attendance Office, which could lead to further legal or protective actions.

3.0 BEHAVIOR

A safe and supportive school requires all members of the school community to treat one another with mutual respect. It is important that all students, staff parents, and guests know and understand behavior expectations for all students. Our schools provide clear behavior expectations through building Codes of Conduct and classroom social contracts in addition to classroom procedures and expectations. Common expectations within each elementary building ensure consistency and equitable treatment for all students.

To do this, our elementary buildings focus on creating an environment built upon a positive behavioral support system. Each building has a Behavioral Code of Conduct to help teach and support positive behaviors that support a safe and nurturing school environment. These behavioral norms provide staff with a common, consistent language when speaking with and educating students. This research-based strategy helps students develop the ability to understand and incorporate these characteristics into their own lives now and into the future.

3.1 Codes of Conduct

Alpine Elementary School: **Alpine LEADS**

- L: Listens to Others
- E: Engages in Learning
- A: Acts Safely
- D: Does Their Best
- S: Shows Respect

Central Elementary School: **Central SHINES**

- S: Shows Respect
- H: Has Self Control
- I: Is Trustworthy
- N: Never Gives Up
- E: Engaged to Learn
- S: Stays Safe

Zinser Elementary Schools: **“I’m a Kid Who Cares!”**

- C: Cares for others
- A: Acts Safely
- R: Responsible for my choices
- E: Engages in learning

3.2 Capturing Kids Hearts/Social Contracts

Kenowa Hills Public Schools and all three of our elementary schools are Capturing Kids' Hearts® schools. Our district provides Capturing Kids’ Hearts training for all teachers. Through training, expert coaching, a supporting SEL curriculum for all students, and personalized, coaching support, Capturing Kids' Hearts® equips professionals in K-12 education to implement transformational processes focused on social-emotional wellbeing, a relationship-driven campus culture, and student connectedness. The core of the Capturing Kids' Hearts® program is a focus on building a positive, meaningful relationship with all students. One of the best practices within Capturing Kids' Hearts® is the social contract. A social contract is developed by students with support from the teacher to establish expectations for how students and teachers will treat each other. Every classroom in our elementary schools have a social contract that is referenced throughout the school year to support and monitor positive student behavior.

3.3 Social and Emotional Learning (Character Development)

The District's Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum includes building-level Behavioral Code of Conducts and Capturing Kids' Hearts® practices. This curriculum engages students in multiple learning modes designed to support positive behavior and assist in creating a safe learning environment for all students.

Although we have a robust, research-based program to support positive student behavior, we understand that challenging, negative behaviors are part of the learning process. When students are not responding to efforts focused on supporting positive behaviors, we employ other disciplinary strategies to support our learners.

4.0 RESPONDING TO STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Although we have a robust, research-based program to support positive student behavior, we understand that challenging, negative behaviors are part of the learning process. When students are not responding to efforts focused on supporting positive behaviors, we employ other disciplinary strategies to support our learners.

In order to maximize learning time and promote positive behaviors, every elementary school establishes multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) for students’ social, emotional and behavioral needs. This includes developing clear expectations, directly teaching social-emotional learning skills, and fostering positive relationships between all members of the school community. KHPS is committed to an instructive, corrective, and restorative approach to behavior. In accordance with district policy, all disciplinary responses must be applied respectfully, fairly, consistently, and protect students’ rights to instructional time whenever possible.

Our schools view behavioral incidents as a “teachable moment” that provide students with an opportunity for growth and learning. Staff will respond to student behavior to ensure safety, deescalate the student’s emotions, and reteach appropriate behavior. Consequences will be used on a case by case basis when appropriate. Our schools utilize a variety of behavioral responses and interventions to address reoccurring behavioral incidents. Responses hold students accountable for their choices and help students who engage in unacceptable behavior make changes and show improvement. The goal with any behavioral response is to prevent the recurrence of negative behavior by helping students learn from their mistakes.

All behavioral incidents are treated on a case by case basis as there are a variety of important considerations. Some of these considerations include: age and maturity of students involved, special education needs (IEP, BIP, 504, etc.), prior disciplinary records, nature or severity of the behavior, circumstances/context in which the incident occurred, frequency, duration and intensity of the behavior, and number of persons involved.

If a response to student behaviors requires a consequence, consequences may include: adjustment to seating arrangements in the classroom, loss of classroom privileges, inability to attend school events or experiences (study trips, assemblies, etc.), removal from the classroom (“time out”), loss of recess or alternative recess activity, reduced day/calendar, in school suspension, out of school suspension and/or a parent/guardian/appointee to sit with the student during the school day.

In addition, our schools are ready to work with parents to develop appropriate plans to address chronic or patterns of negative behavior.

4.1 Due Process & Appeals

A student will be given an explanation of the behavioral concerns and an opportunity to tell the student’s side of the story before discipline consequences are issued. The parents/guardians have the right to ask the principal to review the consequence assigned and to reconsider the decision within 24 hours.

4.2 Restorative Practice

The goal is to repair the relationship harmed by the student’s behavior. This allows the student to return to the school community in a safe manner. If the student received an out-of-school suspension for three (3) or more days, the principal or designee must develop a plan to support the student’s transition back into the school community, including strategies for preventing future behavior incidents, restoring relationships, and addressing the student’s ongoing social, emotional, and academic needs, with input from the student and parents/guardians.

4.3 Emergency Removal

There are times when the emergency removal of the student from a learning environment is necessary to support the physical safety of the student and their peers. A removal of this type could mean that the student is removed from a learning setting or other learners are relocated to a different environment for safety/dignity reasons. After an event, every opportunity will be taken to understand the situation, including from the student's perspective, in an effort to be preventative in the future. Even if the event in question results in no consequence the family of the student requiring the support will receive notice of the event.

4.4 Seclusion and Restraint

In accordance with board policy and best practice no student will experience seclusion or restraint by a staff member unless it is a last resort effort to try to stop behavior that is immediately threatening to the safety of that student or others present. Any staff member may/should intervene in matters of significant concern for safety; however, staff members who have received specialized training in proper techniques for seclusion and restraint will be prioritized to directly employ this intervention whenever possible. If a student experiences

either seclusion or restraint by a staff member the family will receive a report in writing within 24 hours containing details of the event.In the event that staff members need to restrain and/or seclude students, it must be done in accordance with our board policy. This intervention may be used only as a last resort in emergency situations, if students pose a threat to themselves or others based on their behavior. School staff and substitute personnel who are trained in permissible seclusion and physical restraint measures shall employ these techniques.

4.5 Threats Made by Students

The safety of all students and staff is a priority at every school across the district. With this focus on safety, students and their families should know that threats of any kind, including those labelled retroactively as “joking” or a statement made while upset are not appropriate for the school setting.

Although rare, students may say or write things that constitute a threat and be cause for investigation. The ultimate goal of these investigative efforts is to understand the thoughts and potential intentions of the student in question. Depending on the nature of the threat, an investigation may include the District's School Resource Officer and/or local law enforcement.

If deemed necessary due to the nature of a student's action, appropriate school disciplinary actions will take place. If called for by law, the Kent County Prosecutor's Office may prosecute specific threats as a felony or misdemeanor.

5.0 SEXUAL HARASSMENT / TITLE IX

Students should not harass each other in any way. Our commitment is to provide a physically and psychologically safe environment in which to learn. Sexual harassment violations, and the resulting discipline from those violations, will be determined on an individual basis.

All students, staff, parents, and visitors are expected to treat others with respect. Sexual harassment is a violation of Title IVV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendment Act of 1972, and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment should be reported to the principal immediately.

Sexual harassment has three parts:
1. Unwelcome or unwanted behavior.
2. The behavior is sexual or related to the gender of the harassed person.
3. The behavior is in the context of power. This can include staff to student, student to student, student to staff, or others.

Harassment can include, but is not limited to:
1. Direct or indirect comments to a person or about a person of a sexual nature.
2. Touching a person’s body or clothing.
3. Looking, ogling, or leering.
4. Displaying pictures or written material of a sexual nature.

5.1 Title IX Statement and Grievance Procedure

1. **Title IX Statement**

Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, in any program, service or activity, including but not limited to, educational programs or activities, such as, extracurricular activities, student services, academic counseling, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, athletics, and

transportation, operated by Kenowa Hills Public Schools ("District"), including admission to these programs and activities. Title IX also prohibits sex discrimination in employment.

The District encourages anyone within the school community who believes a Title IX violation may have occurred to report their concerns to a District Title IX Coordinator identified below.

Dr. Cherie Horner	OR	Luke Scholten
Director of Human Resources		Director of Student Services
2325 Four Mile Road NW		3971 Richmond Ct. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49544		Grand Rapids, MI 49534
(616) 784-2511		(616) 647-0910
chorner@khps.org		lscholten@khps.org

Definitions

"School community" means students, parents/legal guardians, administrators, professional and support staff, as well as Board of Education members, agents, volunteers, contractors or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.
"Complainant" or "reporting party" refers to the person submitting a Title IX complaint.

"Respondent" or "responding party" means the person identified as violating Title IX.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on District property (*e.g.*, visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with or seeking to do business with the Board of Education ("Board") and other individuals who come into contact with members of the school community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

1. Grievance Procedures

Reporting

If students, their parents/guardians, or anyone else on their behalf believe that they have been subjected to sex discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault by school board members, staff, vendors, contractors, or other persons doing business with the District, then a complaint should be immediately reported to the principal of the school where the student attends and/or to the Director of Human Resources, Dr. Cherie Horner (Phone No. (616) 784-2511, Email chorner@khps.org) who is the Title IX Coordinator responsible for Title IX complaints involving adults. Principals shall report any such Title IX complaints to the Director of Human Resources, Dr. Cherie Horner (Phone No. (616) 784-2511, Email chorner@khps.org) who is the Title IX Coordinator responsible for any Title IX complaint involving a staff member or third party.

If the Title IX complaint involves students as both the complainant/alleged victim and responding party, then the complaint should be immediately reported to the principal of the school where the student attends and/or to the Director of Student Services, Luke Scholten (Phone No. (616) 647-0910, Email lscholten@khps.org) who is the Title IX Coordinator for complaints involving students. Principals shall report any such Title IX complaints to Luke Scholten (Phone No. (616) 647-0910, Email lscholten@khps.org) who is the Title IX Coordinator responsible for any Title IX complaint involving students as both the complainant/alleged victim and responding party.

Each Title IX Coordinator is responsible for providing to the other Title IX Coordinator a copy of a Title IX complaint that was submitted to the incorrect Title IX Coordinator.

All District employees are expected to promptly report sexual harassment and sexual assault that they observe or hear about to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator.

Any complaints involving employment issues, involving employees and students or involving third parties (whether adult or non-student minors) should be reported to the Director of Human Resources, Dr. Cherie Horner (Phone No. (616) 784-2511, Email chorner@khps.org), who is the Title IX Coordinator responsible for Title IX complaints involving staff members and third parties.

Reports can be made both orally or in writing and should be as specific as possible. The person making the report should identify the alleged victim, perpetrator(s) and witness(es), and describe in detail what occurred, including date(s), time(s) and location(s). The District, however, will investigate and address all reports.

The complainant has the right to simultaneously file a criminal, administrative, or civil complaint. The complainant's decision to file criminal charges or another complaint does not diminish the District's obligation to investigate a complaint made by the complainant to the District.

Any incidents of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault that come to the District's attention through means other than a formal complaint will also be promptly reported to a Title IX Coordinator, promptly investigated and appropriately addressed.

2. Examples of Title IX Violations

Title IX protects students and staff from harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex during educational or extracurricular programs and activities, whether they take place at school or elsewhere. Sex discrimination usually involves unequal treatment on the basis of sex and can be perpetrated by students, staff members or employees, volunteers, vendors, contractors or visitors to the school. Title IX protects employees from sex discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it denies or limits an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's programs and activities. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances;
- Unwelcome sexual verbal expressions, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; unwelcome sexually degrading language, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome sexually degrading language or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls, text messages or email;
- Requests for sexual favors and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature;
- Verbal harassment or abuse;
- Pressure to engage in sexual activity;
- Repeated remarks with sexual implications;
- Unwelcome touching; and/or
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

In the case of employees, sexual harassment includes any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that creates a hostile work environment or adversely affects the employee's working conditions.

Conduct is considered unwelcome if the person did not request or invite it and/or regards the conduct as undesirable or offensive.

Sexual violence refers to physical sexual activity perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (*e.g.*, due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). Sexual violence includes, but is not limited to, conduct that is criminal in nature, such as rape, sexual assault, dating violence and sexually motivated stalking.

Gender-based harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a person's actual or perceived sex or sexual orientation. It includes slurs, taunts, stereotypes or name-calling, as well as gender-motivated physical threats, attacks or other hateful conduct based on a person's sex or failure to conform to sex stereotypes. Sexual orientation and sexual identity are protected categories under Michigan Civil Rights Act which applies to public educational institutes, including public school districts. MCL 37.2401.

3. Informal Resolution Process

If appropriate as determined by the Title IX Coordinator, the complaining party and the respondent may voluntarily agree to participate in an informal resolution process that does not involve a full investigation and determination. Prior to the informal resolution process commencing, both parties will receive written notice of the charges and allegations and will be advised of their option to engage in a formal resolution process. The complainant will not be required to resolve the problem directly with the respondent, and either party has the right to end the informal process at any time and begin the formal process for investigating the complaint. The District reserves the right to prohibit the informal resolution process for complaints involving an employee and a student. The informal process should be completed on or before thirty (30) days after the complaint is filed.

4. Formal Resolution Process

If the parties choose not to engage in the informal resolution process, or choose to stop the informal resolution process at any time, the District will conduct a prompt and full investigation into any Title IX complaint. An investigation will afford both the complaining party and the respondent a full and fair opportunity to be heard, submit documentation and evidence supporting or refuting the allegation(s), and identify witnesses. All parties involved in the investigation will be provided with a copy of this Title IX Statement and Grievance Procedures.

Investigations may be conducted by the appropriate Title IX Coordinator or designee, such as a building administrator or other administrator, who has been trained in Title IX procedures. The District reserves the right to obtain or consult with a third party investigator or resource at any time during the complaint, investigation, or determination process.

Prior to and during the investigation process, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will meet independently with the complaining party and with the respondent and discuss, where appropriate, any supportive and/or remedial measures imposed during the investigation.

Confidentiality

- All complaints, interviews and investigations will be treated with confidentiality as allowed under the law. Only those employees or students whose participation in the investigation is required, or those individuals with a legitimate reason to know, will be informed. During the course of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will instruct all interviewees about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Interviewees will be directed not to disclose any information that the interviewee learns or provides during the course of the investigation to third parties. At times, the complainant or, where applicable, the complainant's parent may request that the complainant's name or the alleged victim's name not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator or that no investigation or disciplinary action be pursued. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will endeavor to balance the privacy request with the District's obligation to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment and the Respondent's due process rights. If appropriate, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will advise that honoring a confidentiality request may limit the District's ability to fully respond to the complaint, including pursuing disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator.

Retaliation Prohibited

- At the beginning of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will explain that Title IX includes protections against retaliation and that the school will take steps to prevent retaliation and that the District will strongly react to any retaliatory actions, including any acts of retaliatory

harassment, should they occur. No student, parent/guardian, employee, or member of the public shall be retaliated against for filing a complaint of discrimination or participating in the investigation of the complaint.

- Any person can report a claim of retaliation verbally or in writing to a Title IX Coordinator or school building principal (who in turn will report the complaint of retaliation to the Title IX Coordinator). Should the District receive a retaliation complaint, the District will promptly investigate and take all necessary steps within its control to stop any confirmed retaliatory acts/behavior.

Investigation Procedure

- Investigations must begin promptly, proceed impartially, and treat all parties equitably. This includes providing both parties an opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence. The investigation will be concluded within thirty (30) calendar days but no more than sixty (60) days after a complaint is filed, unless there is good cause to continue the investigation beyond sixty (60) days.

- For complaints involving an alleged hostile environment based on sex, in determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the harassment, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred will be investigated.

- All documentation regarding the complaint and the investigation will be stored in a separate confidential file maintained by the Title IX Coordinator.

- A prompt and thorough investigation of the complaint shall be conducted as follows:

    - Obtain complainant's and respondent's statements (clear, concise, with as much detail as possible).
    - Notify complainant, victim (if other than complainant), respondent, and the parent/guardian of each, if minor students, that they have the right to provide witnesses and other evidence.
    - Question any witnesses who are involved in or have knowledge of the incident, and document accordingly.
    - Review the student records/files applicable to the complaint.
    - Keep complainant, or victim (if other than complainant), and any minor student's parent/guardian apprised in writing of the progress of the investigation if it cannot be concluded within ten (10) business days and provide an estimated timeline for the investigation.
    - The Title IX Coordinator who is the Director of Human Resources will lead the investigation if a staff member or a third party, such as a contractor assigned to work at the school, is a party to the complaint.

Supportive Measures

- During the course of its investigation, upon request of a party, or on its own initiative, the District may implement supportive measures prior to or during the investigation of a complaint. A party can submit requests for supportive measures, either verbally or in writing, to the investigator and/or to the Title IX Coordinator. (The investigator will notify the Title IX Coordinator of any request for supportive measures.) Supportive measures are individualized services offered as appropriate to either the complainant or responding party. Supportive measures include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of time, modifications of work or class schedules, appropriate emotional and/or academic support, restrictions on contact between the parties, leaves of absences, and increased monitoring and support. In fairly assessing the need for either party to receive supportive measures, the District will not rely on fixed rules or any assumptions that favor one party over another. Supportive measures will be made available to both parties, as appropriate. In imposing supportive measures, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will make every effort to avoid depriving any student of his/her education. The

District will take steps to ensure that any supportive measure minimizes the burden on the parties, and that the Title IX Coordinator or designee will communicate with the parties throughout the investigation to ensure any supportive measures are necessary and effective based on the parties' needs.

Resolution of Investigation

On or before sixty (60) days after the complaint is filed:

A. If the investigation reveals that the formal complaint is supported by the preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not), the following action should be taken:

1. For cases **involving only students**, the investigator will confer with the Director of Student Services, and if appropriate with the building administrator to determine what action is necessary to resolve the complaint and prevent recurrence.

2. For cases **involving staff members or a third party, such as a contractor assigned to work within the District**, the investigator will confer with the Director of Human Resources.

3. The District shall take reasonable, timely, age-appropriate and effective corrective action based upon the situation and nature of the complaint. Appropriate corrective action may include classroom reassignment, increased staff supervision, counseling, academic support services, additional training for students and staff, and reporting procedures, safety plan, behavioral support plan and/or disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct or under the District's policies and procedures.

4. In employee cases involving an employment discrimination claim or a claim of sexual harassment, the District shall take appropriate corrective actions, including but not limited to, make-whole remedies, reassignment or transfers, no-contact order, counseling, safety plans and/or disciplinary action against the perpetrator.

5. The Title IX Coordinator's findings will be documented in a final report and summarized in writing to the complainant, victim (if other than complainant), respondent and minor students' parents/guardians, and any other necessary parties.

6. If a student, appropriate discipline for students will be imposed according to the Student Code of Conduct, depending upon the evidence presented and the severity of the incident.

7. Student findings and corrective actions will be documented in the student or employee record of the accused.

8. After each investigation, the Title IX Coordinator will reiterate to all individuals involved in the investigation the Board's policy regarding sex discrimination, sexual harassment and prohibition against retaliation.

9. The principal or his/her designee will periodically check in with the complainant, or victim (if other than complainant), and, as appropriate, parents/guardians to ensure that no further acts of discrimination are occurring.

B. If the investigation shows that the complaint **is without merit**, the following action will be taken:

1. The Title IX Coordinator's findings will be documented in a final report and summarized in writing to the complainant, victim (if other than complainant), respondent, minor students' parents/guardians, and any other necessary parties.

2. After each investigation, the Title IX Coordinator will reiterate to all individuals involved in the investigation the Board's policy regarding sex discrimination, sexual harassment and prohibition against retaliation.

6.0 POLICIES

6.1 Statement of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Kenowa Hills Public School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination during any program or activity or in employment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies:
Luke Scholten, Director of Student Services, 3971 Richmond Ct. NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49534, Phone: (616) 647-0910.