

# Niagara Falls High School



## 2023-24 Parent-Student Handbook

<https://www.nfschools.net/nfhs>

### **Administrative Team:**

**Cheryl Vilardo  
Edward Ventry  
Bryan Rotella  
Valerie Rotella-Zafuto  
Nicholas Ruffolo**

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**Mark R. Laurrie**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Members of the Board of Education**

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Robert Bilson  
Vincent Cancemi  
Mike Capizzi  
Clara Dunn

Paul Kudela  
Anthony Paretto  
Russell J. Petrozzi  
Nicholas Vilardo

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Learning for all . . . whatever it takes

**Belief Statements**

- ❖ We believe that all people have unique skills and talents.
- ❖ We believe every person can learn.
- ❖ We believe the rate at which people acquire skills varies.
- ❖ We believe people must be given unlimited opportunity to progress.
- ❖ We believe in the inherent dignity, goodness, and worth of each individual in the learning community.
- ❖ We believe our strength is in our diversity; which is honored, addressed, and incorporated in all we do.
- ❖ We believe the quality of life for the community of Niagara Falls will be enhanced through learning.
- ❖ We believe learning is a life-long process.
- ❖ We believe the central part of the learning process is a trusting relationship among everyone in the community.
- ❖ We believe every member of the community can learn from each other.
- ❖ We believe learning must be useful and relevant.
- ❖ We believe it is the role of the community to provide the necessary resources to learn.
- ❖ We believe learning requires a safe, supportive, and orderly environment.
- ❖ We believe the learner is ultimately responsible for his/her own learning.
- ❖ We believe personal wellness promotes learning.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK, DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, OR HANDICAP IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES, WHICH IT OPERATES.**

The Harry F. Abate Elementary School, Gaskill Prep School, Cataract Elementary School and Niagara Falls High School have been designated as accessible for mobility-impaired persons.

The Title IX and 504 Compliance Coordinator is:

Maria A. Massaro, Administrator for Human Resources  
School District of the City of Niagara Falls, New York  
630 – 66<sup>th</sup> Street  
Niagara Falls, New York 14304  
Telephone: (716) 286-4225

## **ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL INFORMATION**

Cheryl Vilardo, Principal – 286-7950  
Main Office Phone 278-5800 Fax 286-7964

**Ed Ventry – Administrator for Counselors – 716-286-7918**  
**Gold Student Support Center Counselors**

Office Phone – 716-286-7915  
Kim Bradberry – Clerical Support  
Nicole Gall – Counselor - Last Name (A-B)  
Julianna Jacoby-Patronski – Counselor - Last Name (C-Den)  
Ethan Duncan – Counselor - Last Name (Deo-G)  
Adam Bianco – Counselor - Last Name (H-Ji)

### **Blue Student Support Center Counselors**

Office Phone – 716-286-7905  
Rosa Strangio – Clerical Support  
Tiffany Bradberry – Counselor - Last Name (Jo-Martelli)  
Tammy Novak – Counselor Last Name (Martin-O)  
Rachel Rotella – Counselor - Last Name (P-R)  
Carleen Krysa – Counselor - Last Name (S-Ta)  
Terrell Rodgers – Counselor - Last Name (Te-Z)

**Val Rotella-Zafuto – Administrator for Deans – 716-286-7902**

### **Deans**

Office Phone - 286-7928  
Ramona Sims – Clerical Support  
Marc Catanzaro – Tier 3  
Mia Bianco – Last Name A-G  
Don Bass – Last Name H-O  
Fredia Cowart – Tier 2  
Ricco Slaiman – Last Name P-Z  
Cori Cuddahee – Tier 2

**Bryan Rotella – Administrator for Social Workers and Psychs – 286-7903**

### **Social Workers**

### **Psychologists**

Office Phone – 278-5811	Office Phone – 286-7922/286-7921
Jamaal Hackett	Deanne Giambra – Last Name A - K
Ka-Shara Jordon	Jackie Tedesco – Last Name L - Z
Emily Sacco	

**Nicholas Ruffolo – Administrator for Pathways to Excellence – 286-7905**

Office Phone – 286-7413  
Ebony Rose  
Michelle Hudson

**Cheryl Vilardo – Administrator for Health Clinics – 286-7950**

### **School Nurses**

Kelly Cook - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Clinic – Last Name M - Z – 286-7909  
Monica Petrishin - 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Clinic – Last Name A – L – 286-7940

## **ENTRANCES TO NIAGARA FALLS HIGH SCHOOL**

All Students	All Students may enter through the Main Entrance. Bus students enter through Door 9.
Student Drivers	Students must park in the Student Parking Lot between the yellow lines in the front parking lot.
Visitors	Enter Main Entrance (Porter Road) and park in the designated visitor parking lot near the Performing Arts Center between the white lines. All Visitors must show government ID and be cleared by the Raptor system prior to entering the building.

### **Visitors**

1. NFHS will limit visitors inside the building. All visitors will need to call the Main Office and state their purpose before being allowed into the building. If possible, visitors will be asked to wait outside.
2. Students from schools outside our district will not be allowed to visit the school. Exceptions to the visitation policy must be cleared through Niagara Falls High School Administration.
3. No uninvited visitors will be allowed during school hours. Invited visitors must have an appointment and permission from NFHS Administration at least 24 hours in advance.

## **INFORMATION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

### ***Where do I go for?***

BOCES Problems	Student Support Center
Career Information	Student Support Center
Locker Trouble	Control Room (room #153)
Lost and Found	Control Room (room #153)
Lost ID (Identification Card)	Main Office
Lost Laptop Computer	Main Office
Lost Schedule	Student Support Center
Hall Passes (SmartPass)	Your Teacher
Peer Conflicts	Dean's Office
Academic Problems in Class	Teacher or Student Support Center
Illness or Injury	Clinic
Social or Personal Problems	Student Support Center
Tardy to School	Front Desk
Working Papers	Student Support Center

### **Emergency School Closing**

If school must be closed because of bad weather or other emergencies, parents and students will be notified in the early morning, or if possible, the evening before by an all call, radio and television announcements. Notified stations are: WHLD, WBEN, WECK, WBLK, WEBR, WGR, WKSE, WUFO, AND WYRK; and OSC 21 television. If schools are closed in the morning, they are closed all day for all activities including sports practices and games, evening classes or special evening programs unless otherwise announced. It should not be necessary to call the school for this information.

### **Student ID's**

To ensure a safe and orderly educational environment, each student will be issued a picture identification badge to be used for attendance purposes, bus pass and admission to school activities.

**Failure to present student ID will be considered insubordination and will result in disciplinary action. Replacement IDs are available in the Main Office.**

### **Student Locks And Lockers**

Only locks assigned by the school are allowed on school lockers. Unauthorized locks will be removed. Each student must assume responsibility for his locker and its contents. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. Lockers should be kept locked at all times when not in use. Students are advised not to share their locker or lock combination with friends. The district has the right to inspect all lockers.

### **Hallway Passes**

Students should have a SmartPass anytime they leave a classroom during the class period. Students should use passes responsibly by only traveling to their assigned designation and staying out the assigned time period. The teacher has the right to deny the use of passes if they feel it is not appropriate for the student to leave class. Students may be put on a "No Pass List" if pass abuse becomes chronic. Passes will not be issued for the first five or last five minutes of each class. In addition, students will not be issued passes to go to the cafeteria at times other than their lunch period to get snacks or food.

### **Fire Drills/Evacuation Drills**

In compliance with the law, 8 fire drills and 4 lockdown drills will be held in order to provide instruction for evacuation of the building. Signs are posted in each room denoting the direction of the appropriate exit and staff members are informed of emergency procedures.

### **Clinic**

There are two health offices at NFHS, each staffed with a Registered Nurse. The main focus of the health office is to support an optimal level of wellness for the students and staff.

The health offices provide many services including:

- Care of ill/injured students. Please be sure the Health Office has updated phone numbers on file in the event of an emergency.

- New York State mandated screenings that include height, weight, and vision for all students, and scoliosis and hearing for selected grades.
- Physicals are done regularly for interscholastic sports, working papers and NYS mandates, which include new students and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Dispensing of medication, prescription and over the counter, require written permission from a licensed health care provider that includes name of medication, dosage and frequency. The medication must be brought to the health office in the original container clearly labeled with the student's name. Parent/guardian written permission is also required.
- If your child is injured and/or requires crutches, a cast, cane, wheelchair, and/or use of the elevator, written permission is required by a licensed health care provider for your child to attend school. No student will be allowed to remain in school without appropriate documentation from their physician.
- Physical Education excuses and clearances written by a health care provider must be processed through the health office.

The Health Services policy states that each student must have a pass from their teacher to come to the Health Office. The Nurse will have them sign in and assess their needs. A call to the parent will be made if they have a temperature over 100 or are vomiting. If it is an emergency situation, immediate care will be provided, emergency procedures will be followed and parents will be notified. It is **very important that we have all parent information and correct telephone numbers**. It is also extremely important that the Nurses have correct and up-to-date medical information regarding your child. Students that do not have a temperature of 100 or greater, are not vomiting, and do not request to call home may rest in the Nurse's Office for approximately 15 minutes and will then be sent back to class.

Health records are kept as follows:

Students Last Name Letters M – Z: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Health Office – Phone: 286-7909 - Fax: 278-5809  
 Students Last Name Letters A – L: 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Health Office – Phone: 286-7940 - Fax: 286-7034

### **Cafeteria Services**

The weekly school lunch menu is published on the NFCSD website. The cafeteria serves a wholesome and balanced breakfast and lunch program based on completion and submission of the Household Income Eligibility form distributed by NFHS. A la carte items such as white milk and chocolate milk may also be purchased.

#### **Breakfast Schedule:**

Students have two options for eating breakfast at school:

1. Arrive between 7:30 – 7:50 and eat in Cafeteria 1.
2. Get a Grab and Go Breakfast Bag as they enter the school and eat in their classrooms during Roll Call.

## **Student Expectations for the Cafeteria**

- Report to lunch as any other class. Arrive on time.
- Only report to the cafeteria during your assigned lunch. Students may not enter the cafeterias at any other times during lunch periods.
- Sit on a chair. Do not move chairs from one area to another.
- Be courteous and respectful to friends, faculty and staff. Cafeteria staff has the authority to remove you from the lunch line and the cafeteria and assign you to an alternative location for your lunch.
- Do not sell or solicit anything unless approved by the school.
- No food or drinks “ordered in” from outside the school building are allowed.
- Before leaving, clean up and push in chairs. All students seated at their table are responsible for the cleanliness of that table or area at dismissal time. Deposit lunch litter in garbage cans.
- You may not leave the cafeteria without a pass. Arrange for passes prior to reporting to the cafeteria.

## **Household Income Eligibility Form**

All students are required to have an application on file, regardless of income eligibility. **A new application must be filed during the month of September 2023 or all students!** Applications for the 2022-2023 school year are available from your first period teacher.

## **School Bus Information**

**Safety is a paramount consideration in school transportation. Distracting a bus driver can seriously endanger the lives of all who are riding on the bus. The regulations governing student bus conduct are as follows:**

- Students must live 1-1/2 miles from their school and qualify through the District Transportation Office to ride the bus.
- Students must remain in their assigned seats while the bus is in motion.
- Hands, feet, etc., are to be kept to you and inside the bus.
- All food and beverages must remain in closed containers.
- Vapes, cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs are prohibited.
- Only appropriate and respectful language and gestures are acceptable on the bus.
- Glass objects cannot be transported.
- Only safe objects, which can be held on one’s lap, are permissible on the bus.
- Students must always wait for the driver’s signal before crossing approximately fifteen feet in front of the bus.
- Excessive noise is distracting to the driver, and will not be tolerated.
- Damages resulting from vandalism will be charged to the students involved.

Failure to comply with bus regulations may result in the loss of transportation privileges or other disciplinary actions.



## **STUDENT DRIVERS**

### **PERMISSION TO DRIVE TO SCHOOL AND USE OF THE STUDENT PARKING LOT IS A PRIVILEGE.**

- Students must park in the assigned student lot.
- Students may not drive to BOCES unless BOCES, NFHS, and parents grant permission in advance.
- Students should follow the speed limit and drive carefully on school grounds; any student speeding or driving recklessly may have their parking privileges revoked.
- The speed limit at NFHS is 5 MPH.
- The parking facilities at NFHS are an extension of the school.
- Student vehicles may be subject to search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that drugs, alcohol, stolen property or other contraband might be present in that vehicle.
- Truancy related to driving may result in suspension of driving privileges.
- Under the vehicle and traffic law, Section 1670, all rules and regulations governing school grounds is entirely under the discretion of the school officials.

### **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE ABOVE REGULATIONS COULD IMMEDIATELY RESULT IN REMOVAL OF STUDENT DRIVING PRIVILEGE, ISSUANCE OF A TICKET OR TOWING AT OWNER'S EXPENSE.**

## **Schedule Changes**

Students and parents have the opportunity to review course requests prior to the scheduling of students. Further, staffing is limited and determined based on course requests. Therefore, schedule change requests will be limited once the school year begins. Class changes will be approved by an administrator and be limited to students who were scheduled incorrectly.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are available electronically at the end of each quarter (10 weeks) of the school year via the PowerSchool Student and Parent Portal. You should receive report cards during the months of November, February, April, and June. Progress reports will be available at the following intervals: 10, 15, 25 and 35 weeks. A grade of 65% or better is considered passing. Final grades are determined by averaging each quarterly mark.

## **Parent Portal**

The District utilizes PowerSchool, a software application that tracks students' schedules, grades, attendance, and other records. PowerSchool contains a feature called "Parent Portal" that allows a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) to view the student's school information from any computer with internet access. Parent Portal also allows parents or guardians to view grades to date (report cards and progress reports), schedules, assignments and messages from teachers and school bulletins. Students will also be able to view their records. The system is very easy to use for persons of average technology ability. If you can shop on-line, you can use this system!

In order to use Parent Portal, you must first create one account for your use. The only requirement is that you have an e-mail account, through any provider you choose. During the creation process, add all your children to that account. (Parents can create accounts for their individual use). Directions to create an account are below. If you need your student's Access ID and Access Password, you can contact our helpdesk at 286-4212.

### **Directions to Access Parent Portal**

We are pleased to introduce you to the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Parents and guardians can have one login to access all of their student's grades and attendance in one place. Also, parents and guardians will not have to share logins as each parent or guardian can set up his or her own unique login and password. Please follow the directions below to get started using the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

1. Go to the "PowerSchool Parent Portal" log in page:

**<https://ps.nfschools.net/public>**

2. Choose Create Account
3. At the top of the screen fill in your information including new password, which must be at least 6 characters.

**First Name** – Enter your first name.

**Last Name** – Enter your last name.

**Email** – Enter your email address.

**Desired User Name** – Enter the user name you would like to use when logging into the PowerSchool Parent Portal. The user name must be unique. If you enter a user name that is already in use, you will be prompted to select or enter another user name.

**Password** – Must be a minimum of 6 characters. When entering your password a colored bar will appear to the right – this indicates the strength of the password. The more color that fills up the bar, the stronger the password.

**Re-enter Password** – Re-enter your password. The password you enter must match the Password field.

4. At the bottom of the screen enter the Student Name, Access ID, Access Password, and choose a relationship to link your student(s) to your new login. If you have more than one student you can enter all of their names, Access IDs, and Access Passwords on this page. Once all information has been entered click enter.

Once you click enter you will be taken to the Parent Portal log in screen and should see the following:  
 You can now log into the Parent Portal using the User Name and Password you created. Once you are logged into the Parent Portal you can manage your account by clicking the Account Preferences button. If you have more than one student, you will see buttons to switch between your student's information.

## **Niagara Falls City School District Graduation Requirements**

Students must complete and pass the following courses:

- English 4 credits
- Social Studies 4 credits
- Mathematics 3 credits
- Science 3 credits
- Art or Music 1 credit
- Physical Education 2 credits (.5 unit each year for 4 years)
- Second Language 1 credit
- Health 0.5 credit
- Electives 3.5 credits

**22 total credits**

## **REGENTS/LOCAL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the 22 credits required, students will earn a Niagara Falls City School District Regents Diploma by attaining a passing grade on the following **5 Required Regents Examinations:**

<b>Traditional Pathway</b>	<b>Alternative Option</b>
Algebra 1/Common Core	One Math (e.g. Algebra 1/Common Core)
Living Environment	One Science (e.g. Living Environment)
Global History and Geography	One Social Studies (e.g. Global History and Geography)
U.S. History and Government	
English Language Arts/Common Core	English Language Arts/Common Core
	One Pathway Assessment: (Sequence examination in: Science (Earth Science), Math (Geometry) or Social Studies (US History))

## **REGENTS DIPLOMA WITH ADVANCED DESIGNATION**

Students must complete 22 credits AND earn a 65% or higher on the following **Regents Examinations**:

<p><b><u>Traditional Combination:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living Environment*</li> <li>• Algebra 1/Common Core**</li> <li>• Geometry/Common Core**</li> <li>• Global History and Geography</li> <li>• Earth Science*</li> <li>• English Language Arts/Common Core</li> <li>• US History and Government</li> <li>• Algebra 2/Common Core**</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">= 8 RE Assessments</p> <p>*2 sciences (1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science)</p> <p>**3 mathematics</p>	<p><b><u>Alternative Option:</u></b></p> <p><b>STEM (Mathematics) Pathway Combination:</b> ELA, 1 social studies 4 mathematics, 2 science (1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments</p> <p><b>STEM (Science) Pathway Combination:</b> ELA, 1 social studies, 3 mathematics, 3 science (1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments</p> <p><b>Pathway Combination</b> (other than STEM): ELA, 1 social studies, 3 mathematics, 2 science (1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science), 1 Pathway (other than science or mathematics such as a 5 credit sequence in Music, Art or CTE) = 8 Assessments</p>
<p>In addition to each of these combinations a student must pass a Foreign Language locally developed LOTE (Spanish 3) examination.</p>	

\* For more specific information on Diploma types, please contact the student's counselor.

### **NFHS Counselors**

Every student in grades 9 – 12 are assigned to a counselor by last name. When a student is having a problem in school, the counselor is responsible for meeting with the student in order to identify the problem, and develop a plan to resolve the problem.

#### **Counselors will:**

- help students learn about themselves and their relationships with others,
- assist students in planning their school program, and
- provide information about careers and/or colleges.

Students are encouraged to see their counselor on a regular basis. Appointments are needed and should be made by contacting the Student Support Office.

The following services and information are available through the student's Counselor:

Consultations and Individual Counseling  
 Student Orientation  
 College Catalogs, Files and Handbooks  
 Career Information/Financial Aid  
 Program Development  
 Aptitude Testing and Interpretation  
 Vocational Interest Surveys

### **Make-Up Work Policy**

Schoolwork must be made up whenever a student is absent from school or from a class. A zero is assigned until the work is made up. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO ASK TEACHERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS, TESTS AND CLASSWORK THAT WAS MISSED DUE**

**TO AN ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL.** Students have up to one week to make-up work after returning to school. At the discretion of the administration, the period of time allotted for make-up work may be extended.

### **Extra Credit Work**

Teachers are not required to assign extra credit work. If extra work is assigned, it must be in accordance with the following:

- all required class work must be complete,
- extra credit work must be related to the course and unit under study.

### **Summer School**

Summer school is provided to students who failed courses. Students must be recommended for summer school by the Administrator of Niagara Falls High School. Students who have poor attendance records during the regular school year may not be recommended for summer school.

### **Standards for Academic Eligibility to Participate in Extra-Curricular Activities**

**The following guidelines have been established for NFHS students:**

1. All students are required to pass four credit bearing classes, plus physical education, at the 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 week marking periods and final grade in order to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.
2. If a student is ineligible at the beginning of a 10-week marking period, they will be on probation for five weeks. They will be re-evaluated at the end of the five-week period. If the student continues to be ineligible at that time, they will not be able to participate until they meet eligibility requirements until the next ten week marking period. (Fall sports begin in the summer and therefore have unique requirements. A student can become eligible 5 weeks after the Fall season begins.)
3. Students are only allowed to practice during the probationary period; they cannot play in competitions. Students are allowed multiple (**non-consecutive**) probationary periods during the year. Weekly progress reports to the Athletic Director will be used to monitor work for students who are on probation. A student would need a parent signature to acknowledge the plan.

4. All students must be present a minimum of three full consecutive class periods on the day of activity to participate in the activity.
5. Students participating in extracurricular activities must maintain an 85% attendance rate for the 10, 20, 30 week and the final grade marking periods in order to be eligible to participate in activities.

Note: An appeal process will be put in place for extenuating circumstances. The appeal will require appropriate documentation. The advisors of the extracurricular activities program will be responsible to monitor the eligibility of the activity that he/she advises. At the end of each marking period, the academic records of each student (marks, attendance and work habits) will be reviewed by the advisor of each activity in each school to determine the eligibility of the student. The advisor will submit to the respective building principal the names of the eligible students in his/her program.

## **ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

### **Attendance Policy**

Every student has the right to the educational opportunities that will enable the student to develop to his or her fullest potential. To maximize these opportunities, it is the responsibility of the student to attend every class every day. Regular attendance and promptness are expected in all classes and are essential for student success.

### **Dual Attendance Reporting**

Attendance is reported to you in two (2) ways. First, the report card provides you with attendance information recorded in roll call. Secondly, the report card also provides you with the total number of absences, year-to-date, from each class. When the numbers for roll call and each class do not agree, it is recommended that you contact your child's teacher(s) to discuss the discrepancy.

### **Procedures for Attendance**

- Step 1:* Attendance is taken by teachers during Roll Call in Powerschool in a traditional manner when students are in school (assigned days of the week.)
- Step 2:* All students will be monitored for attendance at the classroom level by the instructor.
- Step 3:* Students who are absent may be contacted by the school through an automated dialing system, or a phone call from school staff.
- Step 4:* After a student has repeatedly missed school illegally, the Deans of Students or counselor will notify the Pupil Service Team who may contact the parent or guardian.

### **Attendance/Tardies**

#### **IN-PERSON**

It is extremely important that both parents or guardians and students cooperate in order that accurate information is kept regarding student attendance.

Students not in their classroom are considered either absent or tardy. If students arrive to school late they should:

1. Report to the Front Desk at the Door #1.
2. Bring an excuse explaining why they are late.
3. If students do not have a note, they should submit one from a parent or guardian to their roll call teacher the following day explaining the tardiness.
4. Excessive tardiness to school may result in disciplinary action.

Any student not following the procedures listed above will be considered truant, and will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Students who arrive to class after the late bell;

- Should be allowed into class
- Teacher will conference with student on importance of being on time to class
- If the student is chronically tardy to class, a referral should be submitted to the dean

**If students are absent, a written note signed by parent or guardian should be provided to the student's roll call teacher. Failure to do so within 5 days constitutes an illegal absence.**

**The Following Are Considered Legal Absences:**

- sickness of student
- serious sickness or death in the immediate family
- impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
- religious observance days (state approved)
- quarantine
- court appearances

**Examples Of Illegal Absence:**

- visiting
- hunting
- vacation
- missed the bus
- needed at home
- caring for baby or sibling

**Permission To Leave School**

- The office staff will complete the paperwork for early dismissal. After following all necessary procedures, if the dismissal is in order, the parent/guardian will not need to come into the building to sign the documentation.
- If a student brings in a written excuse for early dismissal, that excuse will be verified with a phone call to a parent/guardian. If the note is authentic, the student will receive a pass from the Attendance Secretary to leave class early and will use that pass to be excused from class and the building. The parent/guardian will wait outside for the student to exit the building.

**NO STUDENT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, IS TO LEAVE SCHOOL OR SCHOOL GROUNDS WITHOUT BEING OFFICIALLY EXCUSED. THE ONLY PERSONS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL AUTHORIZED TO OFFICIALLY EXCUSE STUDENTS ARE THE BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS AND/OR THE SCHOOL NURSES.**

**\*FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE ABOVE PROCEDURES WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**



## **Emergencies**

It is required that a current emergency telephone number be on file with the school where parents or guardians may be reached during school hours. Providing a current working phone number is the parent's or guardian's responsibility.

## **Transfer to Another School**

When a student transfers from NFHS to another school, these procedures are to be followed:

1. The student registers at the new school.
2. The new school sends records requests to NFHS.
  3. All school books, locks, etc., must be turned in before the transfer is complete.
  4. NFHS will send all requested records and transfer the student to the new school .

## **Administrative Disciplinary Procedures**

In accordance with the NFCSD Code of Conduct, each student is responsible for exercising self-discipline and control in all actions. In accordance with school regulations, ALL personnel employed by the Niagara Falls School District are responsible for maintaining student discipline.

Zero Tolerance, Metal Detector and Canine Narcotic Search Policies have been adopted by the Niagara Falls Board of Education. **The following paragraphs are only abbreviated versions of these policies.** The full version of the NFCSD Code of Conduct is available at the Main Office or [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net).

### **Zero Tolerance**

The Board of Education has determined that the tolerance level for misconduct of any nature that threatens the safe and orderly environment of our schools is zero. The Board expects that appropriate disciplinary action will be taken should such misconduct arise, to the extent that any student, found to be acting in a violent or threatening manner, to staff or other students, on or near school property, will be immediately subjected to disciplinary action.

### **Metal Detector**

The Metal Detector Policy expressly forbids all employees, students, non-employee volunteers or any other persons who work subject to the control of school authorities as well as all visitors to school buildings, from carrying weapons either on their person or in their bags, backpacks, parcels or lockers on school property or in school buildings.

### **Canine Narcotics Searches**

The Board of Education expressly forbids all employees, students, non-employee volunteers or any other persons who work subject to the control of school authorities as well as all visitors to school

buildings, from using, possessing, selling or distributing alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia in any form on school property, in school buildings, or at school sponsored events, except drugs as prescribed by a physician.

The Board of Education will implement the procedures put forth in this policy when, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Schools or designee, the procedures are necessary for the maintenance of a safe and drug free environment in the schools.

### **Smoking/Vaping**

Many reliable studies over the years have shown that there are health hazards associated with smoking and vaping. These health hazards include lung cancer, respiratory infection, decreased exercise tolerance, decreased respiratory function, bronchoconstriction and bronchospasm. Additionally, many studies have shown that breathing second-hand smoke is a significant health hazard.

The State of New York, in recognition of the health hazards associated with the use of tobacco, has amended Education Law and Public Health Law in Chapter 565 of the Laws of 1994 to prohibit the use of tobacco in schools. The Federal Government has likewise prohibited smoking in schools with the passage of the Pro-Children Act of 1994, part of the Title X of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act Public Law 103-227.

Students are not allowed to bring tobacco into the building or use tobacco in the building or on school grounds. Students with tobacco will have to turn it over to a staff member and it will not be returned. Students caught smoking may be suspended. Students, faculty, staff, and visitors are not permitted to use electronic cigarettes, personal vaporizers, or electronic nicotine delivery systems on school property.

### **Student Responsibilities**

All Niagara Falls High School students have the responsibility to:

- Understand and be responsible for their actions.
- Contribute to establishing and maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and generates mutual respect and dignity for all.
- React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner recognizing that the school staff may discipline students for inappropriate behavior from the time of departure from home until arrival at home as well as during any school function.

The Board of Education recognizes the need to make its' expectations for student conduct clear while students are on school property or engaged in a school function. The Board of Education, therefore, hereby establishes the following categories of misconduct as those which may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension from the Niagara Falls City Schools. The examples listed are generally descriptive of the most obvious types of misconduct falling within the categories of disorderly conduct, insubordination, disruptive conduct, violent conduct, and endangerment. Students who violate these school rules will be subject to consequences and penalties for their conduct.

The following are examples of conduct that interferes with the good order of the school or the proper functioning of the education process. These are general guidelines for Niagara Falls High School. **Additional policy and/or procedures can be found in the NFCSO Code of Conduct, Summary Document, updated June 2023.**

- A. Disorderly Conduct
- B. Insubordination
- C. Endangerment
- D. Disruptive Conduct
- E. Violence
- F. Truancy
- G. Use/Abuse of Alcohol and/or Other substances by Students
- H. Sexual Harassment/Misconduct
- I. Bus Conduct
- J. Academic Misconduct
- K. Bullying
- L. Cyberbullying

## **Bullying**

### **1. DEFINITION**

Bullying may be a single act or repeated act of aggressive behavior by one or more students in order to intentionally hurt another person, physically or emotionally.

### **2. CHARACTERISTICS**

Characteristics of bullying may include but are not limited to:

- Intentional harm-doing
- Repeated over time
- A relationship in which there is an imbalance of power or a perceived imbalance of power

### **3. POSSIBLE EXAMPLES**

Direct Bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting
- Taunting, teasing, racial slurs, verbal harassment
- Threatening, obscene gestures

Indirect Bullying:

- Spreading rumors
- Defamation of character
- Cyberbullying

The examples above are not meant to be an all inclusive list.

The Niagara Falls Board of Education is committed to provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment. Alleged incidents involving possible student bullying are to be reported to those in charge, such as teachers or administrators.

## **Cyberbullying**

### 1. **DEFINITION**

Cyberbullying is willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones and other electronic devices.

### 2. **FORMS OF CYBERBULLYING**

Possible forms of cyberbullying include:

- Emails or Instant Messages at a specific person
- Websites/Social Network Sites
- Cell phones/text messages
- Chat rooms

### 3. **INTERVENTION**

The Niagara Falls Board of Education is committed to provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment. Alleged incidents involving possible cyberbullying are to be reported to those in charge, such as teachers or administrators.

The Commissioner of Education has held that a school district can discipline a student for off-campus conduct that “adversely affects the educative process or endangers the health, safety or morals of students.”

School Officials can generally intervene/discipline if conduct/speech:

- Substantially or materially disrupts learning
- Interferes with the educational process or school discipline
- Utilizes school technology to harass
- Threatens other students or infringes on their civil rights

## **The New York State Dignity for All Students Act (Dignity Act)**

Effective July 1, 2012

The goal of the Dignity Act is to create a safe and supportive school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against and/or verbally and/or physically harassed.

- The Dignity Act states that **NO** student shall be subjected to harassment or discrimination by employees or students on school property or at a school function based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.
- The Dignity Act amended Section 801-a of New York State Education Law regarding instruction in civility, citizenship and character education by expanding the concepts of tolerance, respect for others, and dignity.
- The Dignity Act also amended Section 2801 of the Education Law, instructing

Boards of Education to include language in the codes of conduct to comply with the Dignity Act.

To learn more about the Dignity for All Students Act, visit: [www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact)

### **Alternative Learning Center (ALC)**

An Administrator or Dean may assign students to ALC. The ALC Room is designed to be an educational alternative to out-of-school suspension. The amount of time a student is assigned to ALC will vary according to the frequency and seriousness of their behavior. Students are required to complete daily assignments. The goal of the ALC is to assist the student in adjusting to acceptable school behavior, and to return the student to class as soon as possible with a solution to the situation

### **General Student Expectations**

- GYM BAGS and BACKPACKS - Students may bring gym bags and back packs to school to carry their books and materials to their lockers. Back packs are not allowed to be carried through the school during the day. Note: All backpack/bags are subject to search and seizure at any time.
- All coats, jackets, hats, scarves, bandanas, and headbands must be kept in your locker. **Any of the above equipment may be confiscated if displayed during the school day. All items will be returned only as outlined in the Code of Conduct.**

### **Student Appearance Code**

The Niagara Falls School Community believes that the students' appearance should at all times be appropriate for school and school functions. The student's individual dress and appearance is primarily the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. The student's appearance should be clean and neat and should not be distracting to other members of the school community or a safety or health risk to the student or others. All District personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

The following minimal standards are enforced:

1. Headgear should not be worn in the building or classroom except for a medical or religious purpose. All hoods should be down during school day.
2. Footwear must be worn at all times. Certain footwear that poses a hazard will not be allowed.
3. All underwear must be completely covered with outer clothing and all apparel should be fastened appropriately.
4. Above the waist apparel must cover all of one's person except the arms and a modest opening at the neck and may not be of transparent materials. Blouses, shirts and sweaters are to cover shoulders, back, chest and stomach.
5. Extremely brief garments such as tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps and plunging necklines are not appropriate and may not be worn.
6. Sleeveless team jerseys cannot be worn without a tee-shirt with arms worn under it.
7. All fashions should be no more than three inches above the top of the knee

- when the student is in a standing position.
8. If a student chooses to wear layered fashions, each and all layers shall comply with the student appearance code.
  9. All articles which advertise, display or represent items depicting such themes as alcoholic beverages, tobacco, items with abusive, suggestive, controversial or gang-related themes or colors are prohibited.
  10. Bandanas are not to be worn/displayed on any part of the body including head, neck, wrist, leg or worn hanging from a pocket or attached to any object.
  11. All articles that carry messages that are suggestive, vulgar, obscene, libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability are prohibited.
  12. Any other mode of dress or personal appearance not covered by the above, which is dangerous, disruptive, distracting and/or disturbing to the progress of the educational program or activity, is prohibited.

***Each Administrator shall be responsible for informing students and their parents of the Student Appearance Code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the Appearance Code made during the school year.***

Students who violate the Student Appearance Code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item. Students who are unable to do so shall be retained until the end of the day or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school.

Students who refuse to comply with the Student Appearance Code shall be subject to discipline up to and including the Alternative Learning Center for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the appearance code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

### **Cell Phones** **High School Level (Grades 9-12)**

#### **Disciplinary Procedures for Unauthorized Use of Cellular Telephone, Wireless Communication Device or any other Electronic Devices**

Students are permitted to possess cellular devices, wireless communication devices or any other electronic device. These devices may be utilized on a limited basis in the following areas of the school: Cafeteria, Hallways, Library and Study Hall (only with permission of teacher). Electronic devices are not to be used in classrooms without the specific permission of the teacher.

Headphones are permitted in the hallways and cafeterias. However, a “one-ear bud” policy will be implemented. For safety purposes, students are required to have the ability to hear directions or instructions from staff.

If the use of the device is deemed to be dangerous, disruptive, and/or hindering to the progress of the educational program or school environment by teachers, school administrators or other school employees responsible for students, disciplinary action may be taken against the student.

**Using recording devices (including but not limited to cameras, video cameras, tape recorders, cell phones or i-pods) to record incidents or individuals while anywhere in the school**

**building or on school grounds without authorization is prohibited. Irrespective of authorization, it is never permissible to use such devices in lavatories, locker rooms or changing rooms.**

### **Disciplinary Procedures:**

**First Infraction** – Immediate confiscation of the cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device from the student. Device to be returned to identified owner by the main office and/or dean's office at the conclusion of the school day. Parent/guardian to be notified and informed regarding penalties for repeat offenses.

**Second Infraction** – Immediate confiscation of the cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device from the student. Parent/guardian to be notified and informed regarding penalty for repeated offense. Device to be returned to the parent/guardian of the student upon their request and retrieval.

**Third Infraction or Repeated Infractions** – Immediate confiscation of the cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device from the student. At the discretion of the Administrator, student is subject to TOSH or a short-term suspension not to exceed 5 days. Device to be returned to the parent/guardian of the student upon their request and retrieval. Parent/guardian to again be notified and informed regarding penalty for the repeat offense.

### **Telephones**

If a student needs to use a telephone during the school day for an emergency only, he or she must obtain the teacher's permission, and under the teacher's supervision, use the classroom telephone. Calls will be limited and screened.

### **Care Of School Property**

Students are expected to take pride in their school. For health, safety, and general cleanliness reasons, proper maintenance of the school building, grounds and all school property by students is expected. (This includes the cafeteria, classrooms, lavatories, locker rooms, hallways, student lockers and textbooks.). Littering and graffiti are not allowed. Lockers assigned to students are school property. There is to be no writing on the inside or outside of school lockers. The same rules apply to lockers assigned in Physical Education Class.

### **LAPTOP COMPUTER DISTRIBUTION, USE, AND COLLECTION**

The Niagara Falls City School District believes the primary purpose of the public schools of Niagara Falls is to educate children. Basic to the education process is the ability of all children to communicate easily and accurately to the best of their ability. The school district further believes that an important ingredient of the instructional program is for all students to receive and have equal access

to technology hardware that is essential to the development of lifelong communication skills necessary for success in the global community.

The following procedures are recommended with respect to laptop distribution, use and collection:

#### **A. Terms and conditions of acceptance**

Students are bound by the terms and conditions of the Computer Agreement Form which they and their parents sign prior to receiving the computer and further by the Niagara Falls City School District Telecommunications Acceptable Use of On-Line Services Policy IFAC, IFAC-R, a full version of which may be viewed from the District web site, [www.nfschools.net](http://www.nfschools.net).

**Use of the School District issued laptop computer is a privilege, which may be revoked as a result of unacceptable or inappropriate use by a student.** Students who violate the terms and conditions of acceptance may be subject to the following:

1. Suspension if determined appropriate by school administration.

Loss of laptop computer privileges for a period of time to be determined by:

- a. School administration and/or
- b. Superintendent after hearing in the case of long-term suspension.

2. The following list is meant to supplement Telecommunications Acceptable Use of On-Line Services Policy IFAC, IFAC-R.

Unacceptable use shall include but not be limited to:

- a. Intentional breakage
- b. Installation of pornographic material and/or viewing/visiting a pornographic website
- c. Installation of games and non-educational material
- d. Initiating a virus
- e. Fraudulent, illegal or criminal activity
- f. Theft of another laptop or laptop parts
- g. Racist materials as may be destructive to other members of the school environment
- h. Changing the configuration or the computer and/or initiating any type of software
- i. Hacking – breaking entering and/or tampering with a computer system without permission of the owner
- j. Libel – publicly defaming people as may be destructive to other members of the school community, or disrupt the orderly school environment
- k. Copyright violations – illegal duplication or distribution of commercial software and/or using another’s ideas as your own
- l. Such other activities that may reasonably be determined by the school administration and/or superintendent after hearing as unacceptable or inappropriate

#### **B. Broken or Damaged Laptop/Laptop Parts**

Students who report and/or bring in broken or damaged laptops or laptop parts will be subject to the following:



Determination by school administration regarding whether damage was caused by the intentional misuse of equipment.

- a. If it is determined that the damage was intentional, the student will be required to pay to have the laptop and/or the part(s) repaired or replaced.
- b. If it is determined that the damage was unintentional or occurred as a result of a defect in the equipment, the student will have the laptop and/or the part(s) replaced by the school at no cost to the student.

### **C. Lost or Stolen Laptops**

Students who report theft of the laptop computer will be subject to the following:

Determination by school administration regarding whether laptop was stolen due to student carelessness.

- a. If it is determined that the theft was a result of the student's carelessness, the student will not receive another laptop for the balance of the school year. The student will be expected to complete assignments using equipment located in the school when his/her schedule allows.
- b. In cases where theft was not the result of student carelessness (ie. theft from home, school, etc.) the student and/or parent must produce a police report and/or insurance report to be considered for a replacement/loaner laptop, if available. If a replacement/loaner is not available, the student will be expected to complete assignments using equipment located in the school when his/her schedule allows.

### **D. Sign-out and Return Procedures for students who are no longer attending Niagara Falls City School District.**

1. Students who require a district-issued laptop to complete work from home should report to the main office during study hall or lunch. Parental permission will be obtained and the laptop issued to the student.
2. All students borrowing a district laptop must return them to the main office by the end of the school year. A student who is leaving the district must return the laptop prior to their records being transferred.

## **DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE**

### **WE HAVE AN A/B DAY ROTATION**

**First Bell – 8:00 a.m.**

**Late Bell – 8:10 a.m.**

### **2023-24 NFHS DAILY CLASS BELL SCHEUDLE**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
<b>1</b>	8:10 AM	8:59 AM
<b>2</b>	9:03 AM	9:41 AM
<b>3</b>	9:45 AM	10:23 AM
<b>4 Lunch</b>	10:27 AM	11:05 AM
<b>5 Lunch</b>	11:09 AM	11:47 AM
<b>6 Lunch</b>	11:51 AM	12:29 PM
<b>7 Lunch</b>	12:33 PM	1:11 PM
<b>8</b>	1:15 PM	1:53 PM
<b>9</b>	1:57 PM	2:35 PM

Student Schedules contain room numbers, which are broken down as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> number = the floor

2<sup>nd</sup> number = the tower

3<sup>rd</sup> number = the room

Example: Room 222 is located on the second floor, in Tower 2, Room 2 as you proceed down the hallway.