

**SANDHILLS  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

582 Meadowfield Road  
Gaston, South Carolina 29053  
Office: (803) 490-7005  
Nurse: (803) 399-7995  
Fax: (803) 926-1910  
<http://sms.lexington4.net>

***“Where TIGERS DARE  
to be EXTRAORDINARY!”***

## **Discipline**

- I am prepared to learn.
- I do what is right, not what I feel.

- I take responsibility for my actions.

## Attitude

- I choose to be positive.
- I choose to encourage others.
- I choose to find solutions.

## Respect

- I respect myself and my family.
- I value the rights of others.
- I protect our learning environment.

## Effort

- I always do my best.
- I seek assistance when I need help.

I never, never, never give up.

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## **SMS Student Bill of Rights**

- I. I have the right to be respected by my classmates and teachers.
- II. I have the right to be challenged academically.
- III. I have the right to learn without disruption.
- IV. I have the right to be able to do my best as I prepare for high school.
- V. I have the right to additional assistance if I am struggling with my learning.
- VI. I have the right to my personal space.
- VII. I have the right to eat lunch in a safe and respectful environment.
- VIII. I have the right to be able to transition through the hallways and to use the restroom in a safe and respectful environment.
- IX. I have the right to attend a school that is safe and law-abiding.
- X. I have the right to due process.

**SANDHILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

*“Being and creating life-long learners in a safe and supportive environment.”*

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

582 Meadowfield Road  
Gaston, South Carolina 29053  
803-490-7005

### **Our Vision**

Sandhills Middle School,  
*a school...*

- **where student results drive instruction**
- **where timely interventions / accelerations based on data and student needs are provided**
- **where collaboration is organized toward targeted goals that result in improved student performance.**

*a community...*

- **where teachers, students, staff and community combine resources to provide whatever it takes to ensure student performance at the highest level.**

### **SMS Mission Statement**

*Sandhills Middle School will establish high standards by creating a learning environment which ensures student performance at the highest level.*

## **General School Information**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Daily announcements are made during first period and as needed prior to afternoon dismissal. Instructional time is not interrupted for announcements throughout the school day.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE SCHEDULE**

7:30 – First Bell / Students are not allowed on campus before 7:30 a.m.

7:50 – Tardy bell (first period begins)

2:55 – Afternoon Dismissal

3:25 – All car riders must be picked up.

**Students arriving to school after 7:50 a.m. must report to the main office with a parent or adult for a pass to class.** Because tardiness impacts instruction, habitual tardiness to school or class will result in disciplinary action and truancy proceedings.

**Early dismissal of students is not permitted after 2:30 p.m. per Lexington 4 District Policy.** Cars should not enter the teacher parking lot to pick up students.

Per Lexington 4 District Policy, late car riders receive two warnings. On the third offense, the parent is charged \$5.00. After 3:25 p.m. parents will be charged \$1.00 per minute.

### **ATTENDANCE**

The State Compulsory Attendance Law requires parents to ensure their children attend school every day. The law allows each student 10 LAWFUL days (Parent Notes) during one school year. Attending school and being on time is an important lesson for students to learn at an early age. Students are forming habits that will carry

over to their careers and personal lives. Perfect attendance awards will be presented at the end of each school year to reward students who have not missed any school days.

Absences are considered LAWFUL if the school is provided with an excuse from a doctor, the court, and/or a parent in cases of (1) personal illness, (2) serious illness or death in the immediate family (3) recognized religious holiday of the student's faith and (4) absences for activities approved in advance by the principal are also considered lawful. **However, parent notes are limited to 10 absences per school year.** After the 10<sup>th</sup> parent note all absences without an excuse from a licensed medical provider are considered unlawful. Medical excuses from a licensed medical provider are unlimited. In terms of critical, extended illness, the principal or her designee may waive absences beyond the 10 day parent note limit. All absences are kept in strict confidence within the staff of the school. A phone call CANNOT replace the written excuse.

### **Policy JH Student Absences and Excuses**

Any student who misses school must present a written excuse, signed by his/her parent/legal guardian. The excuse will contain such other information as directed by the administration. Excuses must be presented to school officials no later than the student's third day back at school.

Upon a child's accumulation of more than 10 unlawful absences, a referral will be made to the appropriate agency unless circumstances warrant a waiver.

### **FOR STUDENTS AGES 12 – 17 – Our district requires the following action:**

1. After three consecutive or a total of five **unlawful** absences, the principal or her designee will notify the parent/guardian of the absences in writing and set up a conference time to develop a TRUANT Intervention Plan.
2. After the fifth consecutive or a total of 7 **unlawful** absences, the principal or her designee will notify the parent/guardian of the absences in writing and set up a conference time to develop a HABITUAL Intervention Plan and clarify the consequences of continued absences. ***A court petition for a 'School Attendance Order' may be filed at this time or school officials may decide to wait until the student accumulates two additional unlawful absences.***
3. If two or more additional absences occur after family court has placed the student on a 'School Attendance Order', the principal or her designee will notify the parent/guardian of the absences in writing and set up a conference time to develop a CHRONIC Intervention Plan and clarify the consequences of continued absences.
4. A petition for 'Contempt of Court' will be filed if the student accumulates two or more **unlawful** absences after the Chronic Intervention Plan is developed. The student is usually placed in a DJJ facility for up to 90 days.

### **Reasons for lawful (excused) absences:**

- **Illness of the student**
- **Illness or death in the immediate family**
- **Recognized religious holidays**
- **Reasons deemed lawful in accordance with local board policies**

Absences from school for reasons other than those listed above must have prior approval in order for schoolwork to be made up.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The school office must have a current address and telephone number for all students. Correct information is particularly important in cases of emergency. **If the school does not have a current address and telephone number, administration may suspend the student until a current address and telephone number are received.** Parents should notify the school in writing of a new address and/or phone numbers.

### **COURSE CHANGES**

Since schedules and course loads were finalized in the summer, it is difficult to accommodate change requests after schedules and teacher allocations have been set. **Requests for a class change must be submitted to the Guidance Department for review before the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the course.**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

A parent/guardian must sign the student out in the office prior to the student being allowed to leave the campus. **\*2:30 p.m. is the latest that office personnel will call students for early dismissals per Lexington 4 policy. After 2:30, parents will have to wait until school dismissal at 2:55 p.m..**

### **ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

The parent/legal guardian must be present to enroll a student and complete the registration form. The following documents are necessary for enrollment:

1. Copy of the student's birth certificate
2. South Carolina Immunization Form
3. Copy of the student's Social Security Card
4. Two (2) proofs of residence in Lexington District 4. Acceptable proofs of residence include one proof from each of the following categories:  
Category A: Tax receipt showing that both property and dwelling are in Lexington 4; mortgage statement or receipt; rental or lease agreement showing the address of the dwelling and the landlord's name, address, and telephone number.  
Category B: Cable television, telephone, electric, gas, or water bill.
5. Withdrawal form from the student's previous school.

Only the parent/legal guardian on record as enrolling the student will be able to withdraw the student from school. The parent/legal guardian must also accompany a student withdrawing from school. All textbooks must be returned and all financial obligations including school fees, cafeteria debts, and library

### **MAKE UP WORK**

Parents are asked to call the main office to request assignments if a student has been absent for two or more consecutive days. Teachers will have assignments in the office at least 24 hours after a parent request. Teachers will permit students to make up work missed during an absence as long as the student makes appropriate arrangements with the teacher no later than the student's third day back at school. The student must complete the work within ten days after his/her return to school. It is the student's responsibility to secure and complete all assignments within this period.

### **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

The school recognizes there are situations in which students must receive medications during the school day. There is also a need for specific procedures for disbursement of medications in order to insure students are receiving the proper medications and dosage. The following procedures must be followed or medications will not be given out at school:

- Medications must be labeled with the name of the student, name of the medication, dosage to be given, and time to be given.
- The nurse must receive a note signed by the parent/guardian giving the school permission to dispense medicine.
- The school does not provide aspirin, Tylenol, or Benadryl for students. If students have a need to take these types of medication, a doctor's note must be provided.
- All medication should be in the original container with proper identification. If this is not possible, medications should be placed in an envelope with the student's name and directions and the envelope must be delivered to the nurse upon arrival to school.

### **Chronic Illness**

Students who suffer from a chronic illness or medical condition that is being treated by a doctor should provide a physician's note advising the school of the student's condition, i.e., asthma, diabetes, extra bathroom privileges, etc.

The note will be placed in the student's attendance file, and a copy will be provided to each teacher.

All absences still require normal documentation.

The chronic illness verification note must be updated annually.

#### **FIELD TRIPS**

The administration must approve all school-sponsored trips. The student must provide a permission form signed by a parent/guardian to the teacher in charge of the field trip prior to being allowed to participate in the field trip. Refunds are not given for field trips.

#### **FOOD SERVICE**

#### **NATIONAL LUNCH/BREAKFAST SCHOOL PROGRAM**

We take part in the National School Lunch /Breakfast program. Meals are served each school day and are available for free or reduced prices if students qualify. Students are encouraged to pick up applications from the front office and have parents complete the application.

SMS offers universal breakfast. **All students can eat breakfast free of charge between 7:30 a.m. – 7:45 a.m. Car riders must enter the cafeteria by 7:45 a.m. in order to eat breakfast.**

All meals served must meet lunch and breakfast requirements established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. However, if a child has been determined by a doctor to be handicapped and the handicap would prevent the child from eating the regular school meal, our school will make the necessary substitution prescribed by the doctor without an extra charge.

#### **INSURANCE FEE**

The school offers two accident insurance policies to parents and students. One policy for 24-hour coverage is available for \$85.00. A limited policy for school day coverage is available for \$17.00. Any student that participates on the B-team or Junior Varsity athletics (including cheerleading) must be covered under a parent's insurance policy or by school insurance in order to participate. **The school/district is not responsible for medical expenses and/or personal property loss.**

#### **STUDENT FEES**

Student fees are assessed at \$25.00 per year. Any student who enrolls after the first day of school will be charged a pro-rated amount. All fees or obligations owed to the middle school must be paid before a student can transfer to another school or register at the high school. This includes textbook fees, library fees, lunch fees, and ID badge fees.

Parents may request a fee waiver if their child qualifies for free or reduced lunch, but must present their request in writing.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

**A Transportation Declaration must be completed for each student attending Lexington Four Schools.** Each student's parent or guardian must declare whether their child will be transported by personal car, day-care van, or ride a school bus. A specific address for bus pickup and drop-off must be provided. For safety reasons and overcrowding, **temporary transportation changes or requests to go to a different location cannot be accommodated.** If family circumstances change during the school year, which require a permanent change for transportation, you must file a new Transportation Declaration.

Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned. In the event that a bus breaks down or is running late, students will be kept on the bus and leave only with the instructions of the bus driver. If parents become concerned and need information concerning a late bus, please call:

**Lexington District 4 Transportation:  
(803) 490-7033**

## **Grading/Assessment**

### **GRADING SCALE**

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

### **GRADING POLICY AND REPORTS**

Students at Sandhills Middle School receive interim reports at mid-term and report cards at the end of each nine weeks. The purpose is to keep parents informed of the student's progress. **Grades and attendance can also be accessed using the Power School Parent Portal:**

**<https://ps.lexington4.net/public/>**



### **HONOR ROLL**

The Honor Roll is used to recognize students for academic achievement. Students will be recognized each nine weeks for excellence in the academic arena in two categories: Principal's Honor Roll (all A's) and A-B Honor Roll (all A's and B's).

Students who achieve these honor rolls for their cumulative work throughout the year or have perfect attendance for the year will be honored at our end of the year awards program.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are loaned by the state of South Carolina and are issued electronically at the beginning of the year to students. Students are required to return the textbooks issued to them at the completion of the year (or upon withdrawal from school). Any student who returns a textbook with unreasonable "wear and tear" will be charged a damage fee per South Carolina state guidelines. If a student loses a textbook, a replacement fee will be applied per state guidelines.

## STUDENT CONDUCT SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR

### DRESS CODE

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for determining appropriate dress standards for students at school and at school-related activities.

It is the responsibility of the board to provide an educational atmosphere conducive to learning. With this responsibility in mind, the Lexington 4 School Board adopts a dress code that meets the following criteria.

- Adheres to applicable legal standards
- Is appropriate from preschool through twelfth year of school
- Promotes an educational atmosphere conducive to learning

The basic responsibility for the appearance of students rests with the parents and the students themselves.

Parents have the obligation and, within certain prescribed bounds, the right to determine their children's dress; however, they must follow these guidelines.

- Attire that could pose a safety threat or could be destructive to school property is prohibited.
- Dress or grooming that could cause distractions or interference with the educational process or the rights of others is prohibited.
- Extraneous articles hanging from clothing, jewelry or personal belongings, such as chains, are prohibited.
- For health reasons, shoes must be worn. Bedroom shoes are not allowed.
- Pajamas, lingerie and items designed to be worn as sleepwear or underclothing may not be worn alone or over other clothing.
- Headwear, sunglasses, hair rollers, bandannas, picks/combs, etc. are prohibited inside school buildings. Hoods are not to be worn in the building. Hats are not to be worn in the building except on designated hat days.
- Obscene, suggestive, inflammatory, racial, profane, and inappropriate writing on clothing or jewelry, as well as provocative pictures and advertisement of drugs and alcohol on clothing or jewelry is prohibited.
- Clothing or other articles that indicate membership in a gang are prohibited.
- No tank tops, halter-tops, spaghetti strap tops, fish-net shirts, low-cut shirts, cut-off shirts, sheer/see-through material, or bare mid-drifts are permitted.
- Shorts, mini-skirts, etc. are allowed with the following restrictions:
  - When the student stands straight and the garment is worn at the natural waistline, the garment can be no shorter than where the student's longest fingertip rests with arms naturally by the side.
  - The garment may not be made of clinging or form-fitting materials, such as but not limited to, bike shorts and pants, surfer pants, etc.
- Skin tight clinging pants, leggings, or jeggings are not allowed unless under a dress/skirt that meets length requirements.
- Pants must be worn at the natural waist line. Gym shorts may not be worn under jeans or pants.
- Holes in Jeans / Pants: No holes are allowed from the waist to the knees which are large enough for skin to show through the pants.
  - Tears/frays are permissible as long as they do not show skin.
  - Tights can be worn under jeans if holes are questionable and not large or extensive.

The administration reserves the right to make a final determination regarding the appropriateness of any attire. The administration may make an exception to these guidelines for medical or religious requirements where appropriate documentation of the requirement is provided by a parent or guardian.

Habitual violations of the SMS Dress Code will result in disciplinary action.

### Dress Code Violations

**1<sup>st</sup> offense: Parent contacted. If possible, violation addressed and student returned to class.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Parent contacted to bring appropriate clothing to school for the student to change into or the student will be sent home to change into appropriate attire. SMS Dress Code is provided to student and parent.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> & further offenses: Parent contacted to bring appropriate clothing to school for the student to change into or the student will be sent home to change into appropriate attire. Student discipline offense is recorded and consequence administered.**

## **SMS CODE OF CONDUCT**

All members of the SMS family including administration, teachers, staff, students, and parents are expected to demonstrate their Tiger Pride by accepting the DARE to be EXTRAORDINARY every day through positive practice of our Tiger Traits:

### **II. Discipline**

- I am prepared to learn.
- I do what is right, not what I feel.
- I take responsibility for my actions.

### **III. Attitude**

- I choose to be positive.
- I choose to encourage others.
- I choose to find solutions.

### **IV. Respect**

- I respect myself and my family.
- I value the rights of others.
- I protect our learning environment.

### **V. Effort**

- I always do my best.
- I seek assistance when I need help.
- I never, never, never give up.

**Lexington 4 Board Policy JK** states: The school is a community. It is responsible for educating the children who attend and, therefore, it must establish and enforce guidelines and procedures that provide for reasonable order, safety, and an atmosphere where learning can take place.

**Lexington 4 Board Policy JIC** states: The board expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified and respectful manner. This requirement refers to their actions toward other students and teachers, their language, their dress and their manners. Students have a responsibility to know and respect the policies of the school and district. Violations of such policies will result in disciplinary actions.

## SMS DISCIPLINE POLICY

The provisions of this policy apply to conduct during the normal school day, on school owned vehicles, and during school-sponsored activities that take place after normal school hours.

**\*\*Admin Notes:**

OSS = Parent Conference upon return

### **Level I Offenses:**

Level I offenses are defined as those activities, which tend to impede orderly classroom procedures, instructional activities, or orderly operation of the school.

1. Tardy to Class
2. Failure to Properly Wear Student ID

1 – 3: Lunch Detention

4: ISS

5: ISS w/ Parent Conference

6+: OSS

**The following Level I offenses result in consequences as listed below:**

3. Misbehavior/Disturbance of Class
4. Cheating on Tests, Exams, Classroom Assignments or Plagiarism
5. Abusive Language, Verbal Harassment, Profanity, or Obscene Gestures towards another student
6. In “Off Limits” Area / Leaving Class
7. Failure to complete teacher detention
8. Student Public Display of Affection
9. Disorderly Conduct
10. Non-compliance of School Official
11. Disrespectful Actions
12. Wrongful Use of Internet/Network

#### **Consequences: Offenses 3-12**

1<sup>st</sup> offense: Administrative Conference / ISS **\*\* (for the offending period(s) only)**

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: ISS

3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 1 day OSS

4<sup>th</sup> offense: 2 days OSS (ISS on return) **\*\* (to catch up on missed school work)**

5<sup>th</sup> offense: 5 days OSS - Referral for expulsion

13. Providing false information to school officials during an investigation of student conduct.

Consequences as determined by administration.

### **Level II Offenses:**

Level II offenses are defined as major disruptions of the school’s educational environment or significant violations of the rights of others.

**Level II offenses result in consequences listed below and notification of law enforcement.**

1. **Act of Aggression I:** Verbal or physical action that provokes misbehavior.
2. **Bullying:** Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.
3. **Tobacco:** Students shall not be permitted to use or possess tobacco products or paraphernalia while on school grounds, in the school building, or buses, bus stops, during any other time that the student is under the direct administrative jurisdiction of the school, whether on or off the school grounds.
4. **Threat Against Other Students**
5. **Pornographic Material**
6. **Cutting School or Class**

**Consequences: Offenses 1-6**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: ISS
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 1 day OSS
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 2 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense: 5 days OSS - Referral for expulsion

**7. Act of Aggression II (Fighting):**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 1-3 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 3-5 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 5 days OSS – Referral for expulsion

**8. Blatant Disrespect towards school officials:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 1 day OSS
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 3 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 5 days OSS – Referral for expulsion

**9. Vandalism or Theft (Below \$50.00):** Restitution required – Minimum \$20 charge

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 1 day OSS
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 3 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 5 days OSS - Referral for expulsion

**10. Sexual Harassment**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: 1-3 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 3-5 days OSS (ISS on return)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 5 days OSS – Referral for expulsion

**11. Disruption of School: Failure to follow direct request by administration. Any behavior that disrupts the school environment but does not fit into another category.**

Consequences as deemed appropriate by the administration (minimum 1 day OSS).

**LEVEL III Violation – Criminal Conduct**

Criminal conduct is defined as any activity engaged in by a student or students in which, violence to oneself, or another person's property or which poses a direct and/or serious threat to the safety of oneself or others in the school is the result. These types of activities usually require administrative action, which results in the immediate removal of the student from the school and requires the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the local school board.

Level III offenses will result in:

- 5 days OSS – Referral for expulsion
- Notification of Law Enforcement

Acts of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:

1. Assault and battery
2. Bomb threat
3. Possession, use, or transfer of dangerous weapons (knife, blackjack, gun, dog chains, chain, etc.) or any instrument which may be used as a weapon. (This includes look-alikes.)
4. Sexual Misconduct
5. Vandalism or theft (over \$50.00). Student will be responsible for restoring the property.
6. Arson
7. Possession of or igniting fireworks on school grounds
8. Pulling of fire alarm
9. Furnishing or selling unauthorized substances, as defined by school board policy
10. Verbal or physical assault towards a faculty or staff member. This includes threatening.
11. Gang affiliation (paraphernalia, gestures, behavior, or verbal communication)
12. Violation of the District Four Drug Policy.
  - The Board adopts the stipulations of the Drug Act passed by the South Carolina Legislature.
  - Students are not allowed to knowingly possess, use, transmit, or to be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, nor to knowingly possess, use or transmit paraphernalia related to the illegal use of drugs:
    - on the school grounds during and immediately after school hours;
    - on the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
    - OR, off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event.
  - Students are not allowed to portray other substances as illegal drugs and/or attempt to distribute these “look-alike” substances on school grounds.

## **ACCUMULATED SUSPENSIONS**

**A student who is subject to suspension a fifth day or for the third time within the school year will be recommended for expulsion.**

## **ISS**

In-School Suspension is designed as a service for students who are disrupting the learning environment in the classroom setting. The ISS program serves these at-risk students through the use of a behavior interventionist who is able to help them with their academic work in a structured, isolated environment. Character education is also a major part of this program as we attempt to provide rehabilitation for the student and enable him/her to succeed in the regular education environment.

### ***Procedures:***

- Only an administrator may place student in ISS.
- Students report to ISS at the beginning of the class period assigned.
- If a student is absent from school on the day assigned, the student will serve on the next day he/she attends school.
- Students will miss all school activities while serving time in ISS.

### **Consequences for misconduct in ISS**

1<sup>st</sup> offense: Admin Conference / Parent Contact

2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Removal / OSS

3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Loss of use of ISS program

### **OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)**

Students who are suspended from school will not be allowed to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activity on the day/days of the suspension.

#### **Make-up Work for Suspension:**

It is the student's responsibility upon return from a suspension to ask each teacher for the make-up work. Students suspended from school should make-up work within five (5) school days following the last day of suspension.

### **TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINE**

**Riding the bus is a privilege, which may be revoked.** Students are expected to maintain proper school behavior while riding the bus to and from school or on a field trip. Students who do not behave properly jeopardize the safety and well-being of all the students on the bus. Because bus transportation is considered an extension of the regular school program, students who violate behavior expectations while riding the bus will be subject to penalties established for misbehavior while students are on the school premises.

Discipline offenses on the school bus will be addressed using the Lexington District Four School Bus Discipline Report. Consequences for minor offenses can include a warning. Multiple offenses and/or major offenses will result in a suspension of riding privileges from one day to a semester or the remainder of the year. Bus discipline offenses may be reported to the SMS School Resource Officer if the action interferes with the "safe and orderly operation of a school bus" in compliance with state and county code.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Our school district prohibits the sexual harassment of students by other students or school personnel. Any student that feels that he/she has been the object of sexual harassment by another student is encouraged to report the incident to either a teacher or an administrator.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, request of favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which:

- Is made an educational condition so that submissions to such conduct or condition may alter an individual student's education;
- Has an educational consequence, so that submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for educational decisions affecting an individual student;
- **Is offensive school interference, so that such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.**

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to verbal harassment, including sexually offensive comments or slurs; physical harassment, physical interference with movement or work; or visual harassment such as sexually offensive cartoons, drawings, or posters. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex.

### **STUDENT AFFECTION**

Public display of affection (PDA) on school grounds is prohibited. "PDA" includes but is not limited to kissing, hugging, and holding hands. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is appropriate for the school environment.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS**

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students are encouraged to put their full names on all personal items (such as jackets, PE clothes, notebooks, etc.). If items are lost, students should check in Lost and Found before or after school. Any items still unclaimed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month will be donated to charity.

#### **MEDIA CENTER**

The goal of our media center is to reflect the mission statement of Sandhills Middle School. The daily functions of the library/media program are to provide materials and services appropriate to school curriculum; provide materials and services that meet the information and recreational reading needs of our students; to assist learners in becoming effective users of information and to foster the love of reading.

- The media center is opened from 7:40 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.
- Students may have 2 books checked out.
- Books will be checked out for a two-week period and may be renewed.
- Lost books must be paid for no later than the end of each school year.
- Lost books are the responsibility of the student who checked out the book.

#### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students are encouraged not to bring large amounts of money to school and to leave all valuables at homes. **Any electronic devices or toys are not allowed at school and are subject to be confiscated by a school official.**

If a student should bring an item of considerable value to school by mistake, the students should bring the item to the main office for safe keeping until the end of the school day. **The school is not responsible for the loss of valuables.**



Band instruments, which belong to students, are solely the responsibility of the students to whom they belong; school insurance does not cover loss or theft of these instruments. Student-owned instruments should not be left at school.

Student athletes should not bring valuables on athletic trips. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure the safe keeping of all valuables.

## **PARENT INFORMATION/ CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**

### **FUNDRAISERS**

The Lexington 4 Teacher Cabinet must approve all fundraisers. Students are not allowed to sell any items, including candy, at school unless it is part of a school-approved fundraiser.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

We encourage parents to stay in close contact with their child's teachers in order to insure a quality education. If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher(s), please do not hesitate to call Guidance and arrange for a conference.

### **SCHOOL TELEPHONE**

The school phones are for business purposes and are available for students in emergency situations only. Students will not be allowed to call home for forgotten items (band instruments, books, projects, lunch money, etc.) or permission to go home with a friend. Students should arrange with parents for a ride home after school when staying for after school activities.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY/ SCHOOL CLIMATE**

### **BOOKBAGS**

Per Lexington Four guidelines, students are not allowed to carry book bags, bags, or purses to class. All bags should be stored in the student's locker. AM, mid-day, and PM locker breaks are scheduled for students to access books and supplies.

### **COMPUTER NETWORK POLICY**

The Sandhills Middle School computer network system is designed to enhance curriculum and student educational needs. The system serves the computer lab, the media center, and all individual classrooms.

Students, under no condition, are to access the system without permission, tamper with the system, or abuse the system in any manner. The use of the system for obscene, profane, or vulgar purposes is strictly prohibited. Students violating the computer network system policy will be subject to disciplinary action identified in the SMS Code of Conduct.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire, tornado, and earthquake drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. An emergency evacuation map is posted in each classroom and teachers will discuss the emergency route and plan at the beginning of the school year.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to individual students for the entire school year. Sharing of lockers is prohibited. Students are responsible for anything in their locker while it is assigned to them. Students are encouraged to leave valuables at home and not to leave them in a locker. Students should not allow anyone else to have access to their combination. Students are not allowed to place a personal lock on a locker. Failure to follow these regulations can result in losing locker privileges.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION**

A student's name, grade, and school to which they are assigned are designated as directory information by school board policy and may be released upon request. There may be occasions where students will be asked to participate in a news release requiring an interview, photograph, or videotape in connection with a school story. Each parent should complete a Media Release form annually selecting their preference for release of their child's information.

DSS and law enforcement agencies have access to student information upon official request. In matters concerning custody, South Carolina law states, "Each parent, whether the custodial or noncustodial parent of the child, has equal access and the same right to obtain all educational records and medical records of their minor children." Pursuant to this law, Sandhills Middle School will provide academic information to both parents.

### **SEARCH**

Any person entering the premises of any school in this state shall be deemed to have consented to a reasonable search of his person or effect. Notices regarding this law are posted at all entrances of school property.

### **SMOKING POLICY**

Smoking is not allowed on any Lexington Four properties. Visitors to the district will be asked to leave the property to smoke, may forfeit any fee charged for admission to an event, or face prosecution for disorderly conduct after repeated offenses.

Smoking or smoking paraphernalia is not allowed on campus or on a field trip at any time. Smoking paraphernalia includes but is not limited to matches, tobacco, cigarettes, cigars, chewing or smokeless tobacco, lighters, rolling papers, etc.

### **STUDENT ID BADGES**

**Sandhills Middle School students are required to properly display their student ID badges at all times while on school property.** The badge should be worn around the neck with the picture, student name, student identification number, and school name visible at all times.

**ID's cannot be defaced or altered in any manner.** This includes stickers, drawings, or cutting of the ID. Defaced ID's will result in a student being issued a new ID at a charge of \$5.00.

If students do not have their ID, a new ID will be issued and the student will be responsible for the replacement fee of \$5.00.

### **USE OF ELECTRONICS AND CELL PHONES IN SCHOOL**

#### **Lexington 4 Board Policy JICJ - Use of Electronics and Cell Phones in Schools:**

Cell phones are allowed, but must not be audible or visible during the school day. Any phone that rings or is used during the school day will be confiscated. If a cell phone or

electronic device is confiscated on school grounds, a parent/legal guardian must come to school to sign for return of the cell phone or electronic device. The same rule and consequences apply to use of cell phones on school buses. School buses are considered an extension of the school day. If a cell phone is confiscated on a school bus, a parent/legal guardian must come to the transportation office to sign for return of the cell phone.

Students may use their phones once they are outside the building after school dismissal or after they have exited the school bus in the afternoons.

In accordance with Board Policy JICJ, cell phones and unauthorized electronic devices used in violation of this policy will be confiscated and turned in to the school or transportation office.

School/transportation personnel are not responsible for the loss or damage of a phone or electronic device brought on school property while in the possession of a student or school personnel.

### **Cell Phone Violations (per Lexington 4 Policy)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Parent must sign for and pick up.**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Administrative Conference / Parent must sign for and pick up.**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Item is confiscated for the remainder of the year.**

### **VISITORS**

Safety and security at school is a primary concern of the staff and faculty. Due to the need to provide a safe environment, it is always necessary for visitors to sign in the main office and receive a visitor's badge that gives them permission to be in the building. All visitors are subject to be searched by law officials in

accordance with South Carolina state laws and monitored through video surveillance. Visitors are asked to return to the office upon their departure to sign out.

All visitors must be listed as the student's legal guardian or listed on the student's PowerSchool Emergency Contact List. All visitors must present a valid picture ID.

All visitors must be escorted at all times by a district employee. Visitors may not communicate with other students while on school property. The use of cell phones, cameras, and video recording devices are strictly prohibited during the school day with the exception of student performances.

Parents must have an appointment with their child's teacher to observe in a classroom setting.