

**JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT—PARENT
HANDBOOK**

STUDENT

PARENT



SCHOOL

WORKING TOGETHER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

**TACONIC HILLS
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

TACONIC HILLS JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Message to Students

Welcome to the Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School. We encompass grades *seven - twelve*. This handbook has been prepared to assist you in learning what you need to know about your school. We hope that you will take part in many of the various opportunities available. Remember that your success in school will be directly related to your effort.

Message to Parents

We encourage your support and cooperation in this most important endeavor, the education of your child. By working together, we can provide the foundation necessary to make our school a productive and exciting place. Please review this handbook with your child so that you can help in making sure your child is successful in school. If we can be of any assistance, please call your child's teacher first. If he/she is unable to satisfactorily answer your question or concern, the School Counselor is likely to be the best second call to make.

On behalf of all of us at Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School, we wish you the best for a safe, productive, and excellent school year.

Sincerely,

Marie Digirolamo
Principal

Sincerely,

James Buhrmaster
Assistant Principal

For more information regarding Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School or the Taconic Hills Central School District, please visit our website at:
www.taconichills.k12.ny.us

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The district's aim is to provide an environment in which a student's rights and freedoms are respected, and to provide opportunities which stimulate and challenge the student's interests and abilities to his or her highest potential. These opportunities will be available as long as the student pursues these interests and studies in an appropriate manner, and does not infringe upon the rights of others.

The Board of Education assures district students that they shall have the rights afforded them by federal and state constitutions and statutes. The District recognizes all federal, state and local laws in connection with these rights, and reminds students that certain responsibilities accompany these rights.

The Taconic Hills Central School District is committed to creating a working and learning environment which is free of discrimination and intimidation. For more information on the district policy, please contact the superintendent's office or visit our website at: www.taconichills.k12.ny.us

RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

Each student has a right to an education. He or she also has the responsibility not to interfere with or threaten the education of others by his or her actions. Each student has the responsibility to attend school regularly and to abide by the policies and regulations of the school. Students have the right to seek changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly manner by utilizing those channels provided for this purpose.

Further, it shall be the right of each student in the district:

- to have a safe, healthy, orderly, and courteous school environment
- to take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, sex, national origin, or handicapping condition
- to attend school and participate in school programs, unless suspended from instruction and participation for legally sufficient cause, as determined in accordance with due process of law
- to have school rules and conditions available for review and, whenever necessary, explanation by school personnel
- to be suspended from instruction only after his or her rights, pursuant to Education Law 3214, have been observed
- in all disciplinary matters, to have the opportunity to present his or her version of the facts and circumstances leading to imposition of disciplinary sanctions to the professional staff member imposing such sanction
- to follow personal standards of dress and grooming
- to express his/her opinions verbally as long as his/her expression does not interfere with the rights of others or disrupt normal school operations

It shall be the responsibility of each student in the district:

- to be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules, and regulations pertaining to student conduct
- to work to the best of his or her ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward the highest level of achievement possible
- to conduct him or herself, when participating in or attending school-sponsored, extracurricular events, as a representative of the district and, as such, hold him or herself to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship, and accept responsibility for his or her actions
- to seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline procedures

- to be in regular attendance at school and in class
- to contribute to the maintenance of an environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property
- to dress in accordance with standards promulgated by the Board and the Superintendent
- to make constructive contributions to the school, and to report the circumstances of school-related issues

Students may not be denied participation in any activity for any reason other than those established by state, county, or school eligibility requirements and those regulations related to the purpose of the activity.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Students are entitled to express their opinions verbally. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves.

Student speech may be subject to disciplinary action or restrictions imposed by school officials, if such speech:

- is slanderous, i.e., spoken maliciously, without regard to the truth of the assertion
- clearly and immediately incites others to damage property or physically harm others
- materially and substantially interferes with the normal operation of the school
- is obscene

Students are entitled to express in writing their personal opinions. Such written expression must be signed by the author (s). Libelous statements, obscene statements, and personal attacks are prohibited in all publications.

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE

School authorities may regulate the time, manner, place, and duration of student distribution of literature on school grounds. They may regulate the content of literature to be distributed on school grounds only to the extent necessary to comply with the standards of "Freedom of Speech" set forth in this policy.

A student may not produce and/or distribute petitions or other printed documents of any kind that are disruptive to the conduct of school activities.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Federal Equal Access Act allows student organizations to operate on public secondary premises to the same extent as other non-curricular student activities. Student groups must be approved by the principal and the Board of Education.

*If you have built castles in the air,
your work need not be lost; that is where
they should be. Now put the foundations
under them.*

Henry David Thoreau, Walden

DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY

SUMMARY

- While the policy applies to all students PK-12, it has special significance for senior high school students given that at the senior high school level any student with 12 absences in a ½ year course or 24 absences in a full year course, may not receive credit for the course pending a Faculty Council review.
- Absences, tardiness, and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused based on the following standards:
 - a) **Excused:** An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, illness, or death in the immediate family, impassable roads due to inclement weather (per police ban), religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at medical appointments, school approved college visits, school approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, or other such reasons as may be approved by the Board of Education.
 - b) **Unexcused:** An absence, tardiness or early departure is considered unexcused if the reason given does not fall into the above categories (e.g., family vacation, hunting, babysitting, haircut, obtaining learner's permit, road test, oversleeping).
- Notes explaining the reason for an absence (s) must be in written form from parents/guardians. If no written documentation is provided within three (3) school days of the student's return to school, such absence will be recorded as unexcused.
- School staff will notify, by telephone, the parent/guardian of a student who is absent, tardy, or departs early without proper excuse. At periodic intervals, school staff will contact parents/guardians whose children have accumulated a number of absences, tardiness, or early departures to stress the importance of class attendance and appropriate interventions/strategies.
- A parent/guardian may request a review of their child's attendance record at any time.
- In order to encourage good attendance, the District will develop and implement grade-appropriate/ building-level strategies and programs such as posting attendance honor rolls, offering rewards and prizes for good attendance, holding poster/essay contests on the importance of good attendance, etc.
- Each principal, working with other appropriate school staff, will conduct a year-end review of attendance data to identify individual and group attendance patterns and to initiate appropriate action to address the problem of unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departures.

SUMMARY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Taconic Hills Central School District Board of Education has adopted a code of conduct for students and all those who are present on school district property. The Code of Conduct is set up so that all members of the school community can help promote a safe and positive environment of dignity and respect for all, which is free of harassment, discrimination, bullying and any other threats to the physical and emotional safety of all. Copies of the full text of the code of conduct are available upon request to parents and are also available on line.

Student Rights: Students are entitled to: pursue their education in an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning - free from bullying, intimidation and any form of discrimination, harassment or threats; a course of study that responds to their educational needs; respect from all members of the school community; procedural due process provided by Law; freedom of speech and expression that does not disrupt the educational process or infringe upon the rights of others; a clear description of the rules that apply to them in school; and freedom from unreasonable search and seizure. Students with special needs are entitled to have their educational needs and behavior evaluated on the basis of those needs.

Student Responsibilities: Student responsibilities include: contributing to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and property; being familiar with and abiding by school rules; working to the best of their ability; following the directions of school staff, faculty and administration; dressing appropriately for school; modeling good conduct during extra-curricular activities; accepting responsibility for their actions; respecting and treating each other fairly and civilly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act.

Prohibited Behavior: The behavior prohibited by the student code of conduct includes: disorderly and disruptive conduct; insubordination; truancy; violent or threatening behavior; possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs; possession or use of a weapon; destruction of property; harassment of any kind, including bullying of other students; selling or possessing obscene material; use of any tobacco products; misconduct on school busses; reckless driving; academic misconduct (cheating or plagiarism); Engaging in off-campus misconduct that endangers the health and safety of students or staff within the school or adversely affects the educational process including cyber-bullying or threats made through text messages or over the internet.

Student Dress Code: The code of conduct contains a dress code applicable to all students. Students are expected to dress in a manner that is safe, appropriate and not disruptive. Clothing that is vulgar, promotes drug, tobacco or alcohol use, is revealing or disrupts the educational process in any manner is prohibited. Additionally, wearing hats, coats, backpacks, bookbags or purses big enough to carry books or the use of electronic devices in a potentially disruptive way is prohibited.

School Response to Violations: As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. There is a wide range of responses that are permitted when students violate the code of conduct. These include warnings, reprimands, probation, loss of privileges, Alternative School Placement (In-School Suspension), Out of School Suspension, and long-term Out of School Suspension. In all cases where a student is accused of a violation of the code of conduct, s/he is entitled to notice of the violation and an opportunity to explain. The code of conduct includes provisions for consideration of special needs students.

Code of Conduct for All Individuals On School Property: All of those who use or occupy school property are expected to follow the District Code of Conduct. This includes parents, staff, members of the Board of Education and all visitors to school. Those in violation of the following code of conduct will be asked to leave school premises; or may be subject to action by law enforcement agencies. Employees of the school district may be subject to applicable employee disciplinary proceedings.

BUS CONDUCT

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Taconic Hills Central School District provides transportation to students in grades PK through 12 within the guidelines established in the Board of Education Policy. Every student eligible for transportation is entitled to be safely transported to and from school on a daily basis. Students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations for appropriate school bus conduct at all times.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide transportation during any period of bus suspension. Failure to provide transportation will be considered grounds for referral to family court pursuant to the Education Law.

AT THE BUS STOP, STUDENTS SHOULD:

- remain on the side of the road and be careful of approaching traffic
- refrain from pushing or shoving
- stay off private property

UPON ENTERING THE BUS, STUDENTS SHOULD:

- take seats promptly and
- remain seated until the bus arrives at its destination
- keep their feet under the seat
- keep their hands off other students and the property of others
- keep their books, lunch boxes, etc. out of the aisle
- avoid loud talk and other noises which might distract the driver
- refrain from tampering with the emergency door
- observe all rules and respond promptly to the driver's instructions

Please note: Personal-use portable audio cassette players, radios, etc. are permitted on buses provided that students wear headphones.

Students must turn off musical devices and remove headphones when crossing in front of the bus.

BUS DRILL

Drills will be conducted periodically throughout the year. The following procedures must be followed and it is essential that they are to be completed in a quiet and orderly manner.

When the buzzer is activated:

- listen carefully to the instructions from the bus driver
- remain quiet and orderly
- leave all personal belongings on the bus
- proceed, when requested, to the emergency exit in an orderly manner
- accept the assistance of the two student helpers stationed on the ground when stepping from the bus
- after disembarking, form a line on the entrance side of the bus. The driver will give instructions when to board the bus to pick up personal belongings
- do not hurry or push

STUDENT MISBEHAVIOR RULES:

If a student misbehaves on a bus, it is the primary responsibility of the bus driver to talk to the student, pointing out student behavior rules. The driver may submit a discipline referral to the grade level principal or dean.

The following acts of misconduct will prompt an immediate review by the school principal or assistant principal:

- opening emergency windows and doors
- damaging or defacing the bus
- lighting matches on the bus
- smoking on the bus
- putting arms or head out of the bus window
- fighting or wrestling on the bus
- throwing objects on, at, or from the bus
- insubordination
- drug and/or alcohol use
- use of profanity or profane gestures
- possession of a weapon, such as a knife, gun, sword, etc.
- conduct or action determined to be irresponsible that could jeopardize the safety and well-being of others

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Upon completion of a transportation disciplinary referral, an administrator will promptly notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) by forwarding a copy of the referral form.

An administrator may impose an appropriate disciplinary measure proportionate to the offense, including but not limited to:

- verbal and/or written warning of the potential suspension of transportation privileges if the student misbehaves on the bus again
- detention
- in-school suspension
- out of school suspension
- short or long-term suspension from transportation privileges
- a superintendent's hearing with possible indefinite suspension from the bus, or other action at the discretion of the superintendent

BUS DRIVER PARTICIPATION

Upon an administrator's request, a bus driver may be expected to participate in a parent(s)/guardian(s), student conference to resolve a student's misconduct. These discipline procedures are designed to support the driver in a discharge of his or her duties and will occasionally require involvement beyond the actual driving of the bus route.

BUS NOTES

Students must provide a written note from their parent/guardian granting permission for their child to ride another bus home. Parents may also drop off a bus note, send an email or fax (325-2845) a note to the office.

Students who stay after school for academic or disciplinary reasons will receive a note from the teacher they stayed after with. Students who remain after school to use the fitness center or pool will receive a pass from the supervisors of those areas.

BELL SCHEDULES

JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE	
8:00 AM	Students Depart Busses
8:07-8:50 am	Period 1
8:53-9:33 am	Period 2
9:36-10:16 am	Period 3
10:19-10:59 am	Period 4
11:02-11:42 am	Period 5 Lunch / Study Hall
11:45-12:25 pm	Period 6 Lunch / Study Hall
12:28-1:08 pm	Period 7 Lunch / Study Hall
1:11-1:51 pm	Period 8
1:54-2:36 pm	Period 9
2:40 PM	All Busses Leave
3:45 PM	Late Activities Bus (M-F)
5:15 PM	Final Bus Leaves- Drop-off points only (M-F)

ONE HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE FULL ROTATION				
	1st Delay	2nd Delay	3rd Delay	4th Delay
9:00	Depart Busses	Depart Busses	Depart Busses	Depart Busses
9:07-9:33	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
9:36-10:16	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 1
10:19-10:59	Period 3	Period 4	Period 1	Period 2
11:02-11:42	Period 5 Lunch/ SH	Period 5 Lunch/ SH	Period 5 Lunch/ SH	Period 5 Lunch/SH
11:45-12:25	Period 6 Lunch/ SH	Period 6 Lunch/ SH	Period 6 Lunch/ SH	Period 6 Lunch/SH
12:28-1:08	Period 7 Lunch/ SH	Period 7 Lunch/ SH	Period 7 Lunch/ SH	Period 7 Lunch/SH
1:11-1:51	Period 8	Period 8	Period 8	Period 8
1:54-2:36	Period 9	Period 9	Period 9	Period 9

TWO HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE FULL ROTATION				
	1st Delay	2nd Delay	3rd Delay	4th Delay
10:00	Depart Busses	Depart Busses	Depart Busses	Depart Busses
10:07-10:59	Period 1*	Period 2*	Period 3*	Period 4*
11:02-11:42	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
11:45-12:25	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6
12:28-1:08	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7
1:11-1:51	Period 8	Period 8	Period 8	Period 8
1:54-2:36	Period 9	Period 9	Period 9	Period 9

DETAILS

3 MINUTE HOLD-BACK

Students who are repeatedly disruptive in the hall during passing periods may be placed on a three minute hold-back in which the student is held back after class until the bell rings to signal the start of the next class. The student is then given a pass or has a permanent pass that he or she carries.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (AIS)

Academic Intervention Services help students who are struggling to achieve the learning standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics in grades PK-12, and Social Studies and Science in grades 4 -12. These additional general education services include extra instructional time to help students achieve the learning standards in the subject areas requiring AIS, and support services to help students overcome barriers that are impacting their ability to learn, such as, attendance problems, family-related issues, discipline problems, and health related issues. Support services could include school guidance and counseling services to improve attendance and coordination of services provided by other agencies. Copies of the District Academic Intervention Services Plan are available from the Junior/Senior High School office.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Though not required to, Taconic Hills Central School District carries student accident insurance on its students. The District's insurance is supplemental to the student's primary insurance. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should understand that this is not health insurance, but rather it is supplemental coverage. It does not provide basic hospital, basic medical, or major medical insurance as defined by the New York State Insurance Department. For a schedule of benefits, please contact: the District Office, 325-2890.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

This is a program sponsored by the College Board consisting of college level courses and exams that give high school students the opportunity to receive advanced placement and/or credit in college. Courses offered include:

- AP English Literature & Composition
- AP United States History
- AP Calculus (AB)
- AP Biology
- AP Physics
- AP Chemistry
- AP Composition and Language
- AP English Language and Composition

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

Alternative School Placement is a disciplinary consequence intended to deny students the social aspects of interacting with their classmates, and (in some cases) to remove them from being a disruptive influence in the classroom. Instead of moving from class to class, students assigned to A.S.P. remain in the A.S.P. room throughout the day. Teachers send assignments for their students to the A.S.P. room. Students work silently on their assignments throughout the day. Parents/guardians are notified both by phone (when reachable) and in writing when a student is assigned to A.S.P.

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

All students who remain in school for Period 10 must obtain a late bus pass (from their teacher) in order to board the bus. Late buses will be used for authorized activities only. Students may stay to watch a sports activity only if they: 1.) obtain permission to stay with an adult until the event begins; 2.) bring written parent permission note to school; and 3.) have transportation home after the event. Unsupervised students are not allowed in the building after school hours. Also, students who are absent from school may not attend any after school events.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held at various times throughout the year. The purpose of these assemblies is to add variety and enrichment to the regular educational program. It is important that the students attending assemblies be courteous to the performers, special guests, faculty, and students. Rules of classroom demeanor also apply to assemblies. Classes will arrive to the Auditorium escorted by their teacher.

ATHLETICS

Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School offers a wide variety of athletic activities at the modified, junior varsity and varsity level. Involvement in athletics generally results in a deeper commitment to the school, greater enjoyment of the overall school program, and often higher academic achievement as well. All students are encouraged to participate in the following sports.

- JV/Varsity & Modified Baseball
- JV/Varsity & Modified Basketball
- JV/Varsity & Modified Field Hockey
- JV/Varsity & Modified Football
- JV/Varsity & Modified Soccer
- JV/Varsity & Modified Softball
- JV/Varsity Cheerleading
- JV/Varsity Volleyball
- JV/Varsity & Modified Track
- Varsity Golf & Cross Country
- Varsity Bowling, Swimming & Wrestling
- Varsity Tennis

ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education adopted a Comprehensive District Attendance Policy in June, 2002, reflecting changes that occurred in the State Education Law with respect to student attendance. A summary of this policy may be found on page 4. All students are required by State law to attend school every day unless they have an excused absence. According to the school attendance law of New York State, parents/guardians are responsible for a child's school attendance and punctuality. Excessive absences or lateness may result in the filing of Educational Neglect charges with Child Protective Services or a Person In Need of Supervision (PINS) petition in Family Court. Upon returning to school after an absence, students must present a written excuse, signed by the parent or guardian, stating the date (s) and reason for the absence. A doctor's note may be required, at the discretion of the principal for students with excessive absences.

AWARDS

The administration and staff at Taconic Hills believes that students should always strive to do their best. In an effort to encourage excellence, awards are given for perfect attendance, academic and athletic excellence, and individual accomplishments.

BACKPACKS, COATS, and JACKETS

Students may carry their coats, headgear, sunglasses, iPods, cell phones, hand-held electronic games, and backpacks, book bags, or briefcases to and from school; however, these items must be kept in the student's locker during the school day. This regulation is imposed for a number of reasons, including the safety interests presented by, for example, backpacks blocking walkways in classrooms and unintentionally bumping people in crowded hallways. Purses, handbags, and "fanny packs" are permitted during the school day; however, any such item containing books will be considered a book bag and the student will be required to place it in his or her locker. Repeated offenses will result in disciplinary action.

DETAILS

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

By appointment or with notification, students may arrive early or stay after school for extra help, extracurricular activities, athletic events, or detention. **Students should not arrive early or stay after school unless they are under the direct supervision of a teacher, administrator, or other staff member.** Once students arrive to school, they should enter the building. Students should not loiter in the parking lot or other areas of the building.

All students are required to leave the school building/campus at the 2:36 pm dismissal unless they are engaged in an authorized school activity.

BICYCLES

Riders must obtain permission from the principal and have a note from home before bringing their bikes to school.

BULLETIN BOARDS/SIGNS

Posting of materials on bulletin boards and elsewhere throughout the school must be pre-approved by the office and in compliance with fire codes.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

To make the lunch room a safe and pleasant area, students must:

- Take a seat upon entering the cafeteria.
- Sit quietly when the lights are out.
- Be polite and courteous to cafeteria staff.
- Eat neatly and keep the noise level down.
- Clean their table before leaving the lunchroom.
- Obtain a hall pass before leaving the cafeteria.
- Not leave the cafeteria without being dismissed.
- Not leave the cafeteria with food or drink.

CELL PHONES

Use of a cell phone by students should not be a regular activity during the school day. School phones are for business or student emergencies. Students will be allowed to call home from the office if they are required to stay late unexpectedly.

CHANGE OF CLASS SCHEDULE

Changes in class schedule will be made during the week prior to school opening and then again beginning two weeks after the start of school. Students are reminded that programs must include a minimum of 6.5 classes per day, including physical education.

CHILD STUDY TEAM (CST)

The Child Study Team (CST) is a multidisciplinary team of professionals who meet on a regular basis to assist the classroom teacher and ensure that all children meet academic and behavioral expectations. The team addresses high incidences of academic, behavioral, and social/emotional difficulties that occur over a period of time. Core team members include an administrator, a teacher (s), a school nurse, a school counselor (s), and a psychologist. Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) are valued team participants and are invited to attend the meetings.

CLASS RINGS

Students may order class rings in the spring of their sophomore year (students must have earned enough credits to be classified as a sophomore). Students will receive their class rings in the fall of their junior year.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Students must:

- Attend all classes.
- Arrive on time.
- Bring required materials to class and dress for physical education.
- Complete all assignments.
- Follow directions of administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, student teachers, teacher assistants, and all other school personnel.
- Do not leave the classroom without permission and a pass.
- Respect others and be courteous.
- Cover textbooks and care for all school material.
- Leave outdoor garments and book bags in lockers.

COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT EDUCATION PLAN

The CDEP, also known as the Unitary Plan, was created by district stakeholders and is revised periodically, specifying instructional goals and action plans for the year. Copies of the district Comprehensive Education Plan are available from the office of the Director of Instruction and Staff Development.

DANCES

Dances are occasionally held at the Junior/Senior High School. Senior High School dances usually start at 7:30 p.m. and end at 10:30 p.m. while Junior High School dances run from 7:00—9:00 p.m.. Students must be in the dance at least one hour after it starts unless they have the principal's permission to arrive late. All school rules are in effect during the dance. If students have to leave the dance before it is over, they will not be permitted to return.

DETENTION

The Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students may assign a student to lunch detention or after school detention as a consequence for behavioral misconduct.

Students are expected to:

- Report to detention on time
- Report to detention prepared to complete school work
- Work quietly and independently for the duration of the period
- Follow the directions of the assigned teacher

After school detention takes place after Period 9 and is supervised by a teacher or monitor. Students who miss detention without prior approval and do not supply a note from their parent/guardian will be given one warning (for the school year). Failure to attend detention may result in Alternative School Placement (ASP) or Out-of-School-Suspension (OSS).

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT

The Taconic Hills Central School District is committed to creating a school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The District is committed to providing all its students with an environment free from discrimination and harassment and shall take steps to prevent harassment and discriminatory behaviors through educational measures designed to promote tolerance, respect for others and to promote awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment to encourage civility and a climate of mutual respect, equality and dignity for all students on school grounds and at all school sponsored activities, programs or events.

Harassment against any student by any student or employee that creates a hostile environment by conduct will not be tolerated. The district will promptly investigate all complaints of harassment and discrimination. If, after appropriate investigation, the district finds that a student, an employee or a third party has violated this policy, prompt corrective action will be taken. A complaint form to document any harassment or discrimination can be obtained at the Junior/Senior High School Office.

DETAILS

DISCIPLINARY RESTRICTION

To encourage good student behavior, students who frequently violate the Conduct Code may be restricted from participating in certain activities.

Students placed on Disciplinary Restriction will remain on restriction 20 school days. Students who commit offenses while on restriction will have their time on restriction extended. Students may reduce their time on restriction one day for every half hour by performing and documenting volunteer community service.

Students placed on Disciplinary Restriction may lose privileges and may be prohibited from participating in school activities such as dances, field trips, athletics, plays, pool, and fitness room. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled at or toward the end of the 20 days to assess student progress.

DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Students will dress and groom themselves neatly in clothes that are suitable for school functions. Students and their parents shall have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance.

Students will wear footwear at all times. Students will refrain from wearing hats, coats, and book bags in school, unless for a medical or religious purpose, except upon entering or exiting of the premises. Clothing and accessories which interfere with the learning process, are not compatible with safety, or interfere with the ability to engage in educational activities, are prohibited.

Specifically, students shall refrain from clothing, accessories or appearance that: is sexually suggestive or provocative; does not provide appropriate coverage of the body, including the torso and undergarments worn on the torso; is vulgar, obscene or libelous; is denigrating to the race, color, creed, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or physical condition of another; promotes or encourages violent behavior or use of guns, knives or other instruments of violence; endorses or promotes the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco or violence.

DRIVING PRIVILEGES

Driving privileges are extended to juniors and seniors. Freshman may not drive to school. Registration forms must be completed by students and signed by parents/guardians. Students who arrive late to school, leave school without permission, fail to display their parking tag, drive recklessly, park in unauthorized areas, skip detention, or drive to Votech without authorization may lose their driving privileges.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The use, possession, distribution, and/or sale of drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia while under the jurisdiction of school personnel, on or off school property, is expressly prohibited. The term "drug," includes any substance not expressly prescribed by a physician for the specific individual.

It is the responsibility of all school personnel to report to the principal any knowledge of, or suspicion of, drug use. Students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and others are also encouraged to report such knowledge or suspicions.

EARLY GRADUATION

An early graduation option is available to students who qualify. Interested students must apply to the high school principal at least one semester prior to the semester in which he/she plans to accelerate their program. This option should be discussed with a counselor well in advance, certainly *not later than mid-year of the sophomore year*.

EARLY STUDENT ARRIVAL

Students are not permitted to enter the building prior to 7:55 a.m., unless registered in the before school program. Parents who would like more information about the before and after school program should contact the elementary office.

EXTRA HELP/ENRICHMENT

Throughout the school day students may use passes to leave study halls and lunch to get academic help and enrichment from teachers. Students are also encouraged to seek extra-help after school with teachers. A teacher will sometimes request a student to stay after school (period 10) if it is apparent that the student is having difficulty with his or her work. This is not to be thought of as punishment, but rather as the desire of the teacher to provide supplementary, enrichment activities for learners.

FIRE/EVACUATION DRILLS

Drills will be conducted throughout the school year. These drills prepare students for real emergencies which may occur at any moment. Complete cooperation and proper behavior are essential. Students should follow all instructions given by their teacher and remain silent while exiting and returning in the building, as well as during the entire drill.

FOOD/DRINKS/GUM

Food, drink and chewing gum are not permitted in classes or hallways with the following exceptions:

- Students may purchase breakfast from the cafeteria between 7:55 a.m. and 8:05 a.m. and eat their purchases at their desk during first period.
- Students may bring a snack from home to eat in class during period four.
- Students may bring their lunch from home or purchase lunch in the cafeteria and eat in a supervised classroom during the lunch period.
- Students may chew gum in cafeteria or classroom if teacher permits.

FUND RAISING

Students must have prior approval by a school administrator for all fundraising activities, including drives announced at school. Selling items of any kind is not allowed without the permission of the principal.

DETAILS

GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

Grading is considered to be a positive tool to measure growth, progress, achievement, and development of a student in the educational setting. Properly used, grades should reflect educational growth and achievement. They should help motivate and generate feelings of success and progress as well as provide necessary information for developing the best possible educational program for each student. The report card is one instrument used to communicate this progress and development to students and parent(s)/guardian(s). Report cards are issued quarterly. In addition to grades, a section is set aside on report cards for teachers to comment on a student's attitude, work habits, etc. To determine a student's grade, teachers adhere to the following district regulations:

- there is a minimum of five major grades per marking period
- no single activity (test, report, etc.) will count for more than 20% of a marking period grade. (Teachers of project based courses may assign partial credit for each stage of the project.)
- ten-week averages are based on more than one type of activity—tests, quizzes, reports, homework assignments, etc
- all grading is based on accepted principles of assessment;
- incompletes must be made up within two weeks of the end of the marking period

A student who has failed a required course must repeat that course. Since a student is considered to have passed the course when four quarterly grades plus the final exam average 65, the student may repeat only half of the course if the substitution of two new quarterly grades results in a passing average. If it will contribute to passing the course, a student may also retake a final exam after completing the half year.

GUIDANCE

Students are assigned to a specific counselor, who will be available to assist them. Students consult with counselors for a variety of reasons:

- to select courses
- to explore/discuss career options
- to select and apply to college (s)
- to discuss behavioral or academic concerns
- to seek assistance with personal matters

The guidance staff includes school counselors and a psychologist who serve students and their parents in a variety of ways. In addition to maintaining student files, the school counselors assist with scheduling and orientation. All students meet with a counselor at least once a year, and more often if warranted. Students and parents are encouraged to contact the guidance staff any time they have questions about scheduling and/or placement, or if they are concerned about academic performance, psychological or social issues.

The guidance office can also provide parents with information about resources for a variety of special needs. Decisions made during the middle school years often affect a student's high school scheduling. Parents, students and the school personnel should be partners when these decisions are being made. The guidance staff is available to help students sort through the many options and pressures of the modern world. They are here to help students learn how to be good decision-makers, how to communicate, how to solve problems and to value their individual skills and abilities.

School counselors will also discuss the option of the work-study program with seniors who qualify. It is also possible to combine the senior year at Taconic Hills High School with class time at local colleges. Students should explore this option with their school counselor and receive approval before commencing with this program.

HELPLINES AND HOTLINES

Alcoholics Anonymous (Greene Co.)	625-2002
Al-Anon, Alateen	1-800-245-4656
Drug & Cocaine Hotline	1-800-662-HELP
New York State Police	518-851-3111
Columbia County Sheriff	828-3344
Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention	1-800-342-7472/ 1-800-342-3720
Rape Crisis (Columbia/Greene)	828-5556/943-4482
Suicide Hotline	1-800-342-5767/ 1-800-784-2433
Columbia County Office of Mental Health	
24-Hour Crisis Hotline	518-828-9446
Hudson Valley Poison Control /Help Hotline	1-800-336-6997/ 1-800-222-12222

GUESTS

Students not enrolled in Taconic Hills generally may not visit during the regular school day. If a student brings a guest without permission, their parent will be called and asked to take the guest home.

HALL PASSES

Students must have a pass whenever they are in the corridor while classes are in session and must show the pass when requested by school personnel. To ensure a safe school environment, shouting, loitering, running and physical contact are not allowed in the hallways.

Visitors to the school building during class hours must possess and prominently display an identification pass issued by the Junior/Senior High School Office.

HALL RESTRICTION

Students who are chronically late for class or repeatedly disruptive in the hallway are placed on hall restriction. Students on hall restriction cannot receive a pass to leave class except in the case of an emergency, in which case the student would receive a pass to the office and the teacher would call down to alert the office that the student is coming. The emergency will be handled from the office (i.e., the student will be given the pass to, for example, the bathroom or the nurse's office *from the office*).

HEADWEAR

Students are required to remove their headwear upon entering the building and to keep all headwear in their locker throughout the day.

HONORS – REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Taconic Hills has three honor rolls, recognizing outstanding academic achievement. Students who achieve an overall average of 80 to 84 are eligible for the MERIT HONOR ROLL. Students who achieve an overall average of 85 to 89 are eligible for the HONOR ROLL. Students who earn an overall average of 90 to 100 are eligible for the HIGH HONOR ROLL. Honor roll students are listed in the newspaper and participate in occasional celebratory functions sponsored by the Student Council. Parents and guardians are notified when awards ceremonies are conducted and are invited if their child is receiving an award.

HOMEWORK

The staff at Taconic Hills recognizes homework as an extremely valuable activity and an appropriate extension of activities begun in school. It is a means of reinforcing and reviewing lessons taught in school and a way for students to develop good work and study habits. Any assignment given by a teacher merits the student's attention and the teacher's evaluation. Parental involvement with a student's homework will help ensure academic success. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should monitor homework assignments and, to the extent possible, provide conditions that are conducive to their successful completion.

DETAILS

HOMEWORK REQUEST

Anyone requesting homework for their child should call 325-2800. A voice mail is available 24 hours a day. Homework requests should be made if a student is going to be out for two or more consecutive days. [Requests will be sent to teachers and parents will be notified when assignments are available in the Junior/Senior High School office.]

INTERNET ACCESS

All students have access to the Internet through computers in the library, in computer labs and in individual classrooms. Taconic Hills Central School District owns Internet filtering software to prevent students from accessing objectionable material. Students, who abuse network privileges by attempting to access restricted sites or by violating any of the other terms and conditions specified in the Information Technology Use Regulations reprinted in this Handbook, are subject to having their privileges curtailed, suspended or revoked.

LATE ARRIVALS

Students who arrive late to school should report immediately to the Junior/Senior High School office and sign in. Students who are late to school may lose their driving/parking privileges and face additional consequences per the discipline code and attendance policy.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Taconic Hills is a closed campus. Students may not leave the school without parent/guardian permission and the principal's approval. Requests for early dismissal must be verified before students can leave. Students returning to school after being dismissed early must sign back in and obtain a pass to return to class.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the Library Media Center during the school day as well as after school. Check with the library staff to learn of access times. Library books may be borrowed or returned during non-class times, and before or after school. When a library book is not returned, the student must pay for the book. When requesting to use the library during the school day, the student must have a pass. Library privileges may be suspended for inappropriate library behavior.

7th & 8th grade students who need to use the library during 10th period must sign up to do so in the library during lunch. Individuals who desire specific materials that are not available on site are encouraged to speak to the library staff regarding an inter-library loan request.

LOCKERS

Each student will have a locker assigned to them. Students should use the lock provided to secure their belongings. Combinations should not be shared with other students and lockers should not be rigged for easy access. Students are responsible for their own personal property and for keeping their locker clean and damage free. Students may not write on their locker, or paste/hang objects that are not easily removed. Broken or inoperative lockers should be reported to the homeroom teacher or physical education teacher. Private locks may not be used on lockers. Unauthorized locks will be removed. **Remember that the lockers are the property of the school and can, therefore, be searched by school authorities without notifying students or receiving their permission.**

LOST ITEMS

Students who find jewelry, money, books, electronic devices, etc. should bring the item(s) to the Junior/Senior High School office. If students lose an item they should report it to the high school office immediately.

Students should not bring large amounts of money, cell phones, electronic devices (I-pods, MP3 players), or video games to school!

LUNCH DETENTION

Students who are assigned lunch detention as the result of a disciplinary referral are expected to know the dates of their detention and to arrive at the lunch detention room punctually. Detention lists are located in the Junior/Senior High School office and the student will sign the list indicating they are aware of the detention. The lunch detention supervisor escorts the students to lunch. Students who have lunch detention will return to the detention room to eat.

MEDICINE, ILLNESS, SCHOOL NURSE

A nurse is on duty during school hours each scheduled school day. The nurse is responsible for all situations concerning a student's health. Any accident or illness should be reported to the nurse immediately. All medication prescribed or otherwise must be brought directly to the school nurse who will dispense any prescribed medication to the student as directed by written order of a physician. Prescription medications should be delivered to the school nurse in their original prescription containers. Non-prescription drugs can only be dispensed by the school nurse with written authorization from a doctor; parental authorization will not suffice. The school nurse is not permitted to administer medication, other than that prescribed by a doctor, except in a medical emergency.

PARTNERSHIP

A good partnership between school, students, and parents is essential. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to call the school with questions and concerns. Teachers are encouraged to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) with concerns and compliments regarding a student's academic progress or behavior. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are also encouraged to meet with teachers, administrators, and counselors to share concerns and ensure that the needs of their children are being met.

PERIOD 10

Students may always seek extra help from teachers. A teacher will sometimes request a student stay after school (period 10) if it is apparent that the student is having difficulty with his or her work. Period 10 may also be used for teachers to provide supplementary, enrichment activities for more able learners. Both teacher detention and office detention are held during period 10.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This class requires appropriate clothing for participation. Physical education teachers will explain clothing requirements to students on the first day of class. Notes excusing students from class must be approved by the school nurse. A doctor's note may be required. Repeated failure to arrive prepared for class will result in disciplinary action.

PRIVILEGES FOR SENIORS

In honor and recognition of the years of hard work our students put in over the course of their educational career, the senior class is awarded certain privileges: senior trip, prom, senior breakfast, parking/driving privileges, senior lunch, etc. Students and parents are reminded that these may be put at risk based on a student's poor behavior or poor academic performance.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are usually sent home around the mid-point of each quarter, but can be issued whenever teachers feel the need to communicate with parent(s)/guardian(s) during the marking period.

These reports are intended to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student's progress, or lack thereof. Teachers are encouraged to telephone or otherwise contact parent(s)/guardian(s) when problems first arise.

DETAILS

PUBLICATIONS

All student publications will comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscene statements, false statements, materials advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process, will not be permitted. Expressions of personal opinion must be clearly defined as such, and bear the name of the author. Opportunity for the expression of opinions differing from those of the student publishers must be provided.

In addition, student newspapers and/or publications which are paid for by the school district and/or produced under the direction of a teacher as part of the school curriculum are not considered a public forum. In such cases, the school reserves the right to edit or delete such student speech, which it feels is inconsistent with the district's basic educational mission.

REGENTS DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met by students.

Successful completion of 22 units of credit, including the following:

A. Core Requirements:

English	4 credits
Social Studies	
U. S. History	1 credit
Global History	2 credits
Economics	1/2 credit
Participation in Government	1/2 credit
Mathematics	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Music or Art	1 credit
Health	1/2 credit
French or Spanish	1 credit
Physical Education	2 credits

B. Testing Requirements:

Exam	Passing Grade
Regents Comprehensive English	65
United States History & Gov.	65
Global History	65
Integrated Algebra	65
Science	65
(Earth Science, Living Environment, Chemistry, or Physics)	

REGENTS DIPLOMA WITH ADVANCED DESIGNATION

In addition to the requirements for a regents diploma, a student must pass:

- two additional Regents exams in Integrated Geometry, Algebra 2, and Trigonometry
- an additional Regents examination in Science
- two additional credits in LOTE (Languages Other Than English)
- a Regents exam in LOTE or other 5 credit sequence, including Questar

SCHOOL CLOSINGS / DELAYED OPENINGS

Please listen to one of the stations below and do not call the school or the radio station. If you do not hear Taconic Hills mentioned on one of these stations, you should assume that school is open for the day. In the event of an emergency closing during the day, we will notify WHUC and WSBS.

The following radio stations will be notified if school is delayed in opening or closed for the day:

WCKL 560 AM	WPTR 96.3 FM
WCTW 98.5 FM	WRGB Channel 6 TV/87.7 FM
WDST 100.1 FM	WRNN Channel 62 TV
WELV 1370 AM	WRWO 590 AM
WFLT 92.3 FM	WRVE 99.5 FM
WGNA 1460 AM / 107.7 FM	WSBS 860 AM
WHUC 1230 AM	WTEN Channel 10 TV
WKZE 1020 AM / 98.1 FM	WTHK 93.5 / 96.1 / 99.3 FM
WNYT Channel 13 TV	WYJB 95.5 FM

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are financially responsible for textbooks, calculators, tools, locks or any other Taconic Hills Central School District property or equipment provided to them.

Textbooks and materials are provided on loan to students at Taconic Hills. Students are expected to treat their textbooks and school materials with care. Lost or damaged books and/or materials must be replaced by the student at his or her own expense.

SCHOOL STORE

The school store is operated within the school and sells school materials and items of interest to students. The store is open to students during their non-instructional time.

SECTION 504 ACCOMMODATION PLANS

“Section 504” refers to a section of federal law dealing with Civil Rights. It prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in programs receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against anyone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, etc.). Section 504 is separate and distinct from Special Education protections established under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Principals have the responsibility of ensuring that Section 504 accommodations are afforded to all students who qualify. Section 504 accommodation plans are developed by a 504 team. This team is chaired by the person in charge of the Committee on Special Education and includes the student's teachers and other school personnel. Special Education students receive Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) developed by the Committee on Special Education.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Board of Education recognizes that harassment of students and staff on the basis of sex, gender and/or sexual orientation is abusive and illegal behavior that harms targets and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, intimidation and intolerance. The Board further recognizes that preventing and remedying such harassment in schools is essential to ensure a healthy, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can learn and employees can work productively. A copy of Board Policy 0110, addressing Sexual Harassment, can be found on the Districts website.

SMOKING / TOBACCO

The Taconic Hills Central School District and grounds are “smoke free”. Smoking and the use of tobacco and tobacco products by students and adults are expressly prohibited at any time in the school building or on school grounds. State law also prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products within 100 feet of school property, including roadways. Students found to be involved in the use of tobacco and tobacco products on school property or during school sponsored activities will face disciplinary action. Adult smoking at school functions is also prohibited both inside and outside the school building.

DETAILS

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Taconic Hills offers a wide variety of intellectually stimulating and fun activities. The following is a list of examples of extracurricular activities and clubs previously offered. The availability of particular activities depends on the willingness of a faculty member, other employee, or parent to facilitate and supervise:

- Drama Club 9th - 12th and 7th - 8th
- Student Council 9th - 12th and 7th - 8th
- Art Club 9th - 12th and 7th - 8th
- SADD 9th - 12th and 7th - 8th
- Shakespeare & Co. 9th - 12th
- National Honor Society 11th - 12th
- Model U.N. 9th - 12th
- Euro Challenge 9th - 10th
- Newspaper & Yearbook 7th - 8th
- Odyssey of the Mind 7th - 8th
- Ski Club 7th - 8th
- Morning News 7th - 8th
- Peer Mediation 7th - 8th
- Study Skills Group 7th - 8th

Additional activities will be offered if sufficient interest is demonstrated and an advisor is available. Students should ask their teacher or listen for announcements about activities available.

STUDENT PROTECTION

The administration and staff at Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School tries to protect students from negative “outside” influences. Unknown individuals are not allowed to have contact with students during the course of the school day. If a student is leaving school early, parents must come in to the high school office and sign their child out.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ON BOARD OF EDUCATION

Each school year one Senior High School Student will be chosen to serve as a non-voting member of the Taconic Hills Central School District Board of Education. This seat on the Board will be offered to the Senior Class President. If he/she declines, the Principal will consult with the Senior Class officers to find a suitable student for this position.

STUDENT SIGN-OUTS (Pick Ups)

In order to ensure the safety of our students, parents or guardians who pick up a student before the end of the day are required to enter the Junior/Senior High School Office and sign the student out. Parents are strongly urged to schedule doctor or dentist appointments, etc., after the school day and to avoid picking up students before dismissal.

SUBSTITUTES

Taconic Hills is fortunate to have a number of capable individuals who assist us whenever regular staff members are absent due to illness, training or other reasons. Students are expected to behave respectfully toward substitutes and to follow their instructions just as they would follow the instructions of regular staff members. Students who misbehave for substitutes may receive more severe disciplinary consequences than would otherwise be the case.

TEACHER DETENTION

A teacher may require that a student return to class for Period 10 for the purpose of detention (for misbehavior) or to complete or review schoolwork. Teachers must notify the parent / guardian by phone that the student will be staying for period 10 that day or assign this duty to the student on the following (or subsequent) day(s). Any student who fails to fulfill this obligation will be subject to receive a misbehavior referral. Students may also be required by a teacher to remain in school for extra help or remediation during period 10.

TELEPHONES/PERSONAL MESSAGES

Parents are strongly urged to exchange information with their children before and after school and not to contact a child’s cell phone or leave messages while the child is in school. In the case of an emergency, parents may contact the office and we will communicate with your child.

The staff will not interrupt classes to deliver messages to students except in the case of an emergency. Non-emergency messages will be given to students during lunch or the end of the day. The office staff will not interrupt a class to deliver a message to teachers. Messages will be placed in the teacher’s mailbox or transferred to their voice mail and teachers will return calls as soon as possible.

Students should handle personal matters before or after school. Students may not use the office phones without permission.

TESTING PROGRAM

A variety of tests are administered during a student’s six years at Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School. The main purposes of these tests are to show how a student compares in various abilities to other students, both in New York State and nationwide, identification of students who are at risk of not meeting Regents diploma standards in high school and to help students choose among many possible educational and/or occupational goals.

Students are encouraged to visit the College Boards website to obtain further information regarding testing. www.collegeboards.com

TRANSCRIPTS AND RECORDS

Students may obtain transcripts for college or work applications from the guidance department. Graduates must make such requests in writing.

UNAUTHORIZED ITEMS

Items that should not be brought to school are “unauthorized items”. They include fireworks, laser pointers, skateboards, squirt guns, knives, chains or other distracting and/or dangerous items. These items may be subject to confiscation by an administrator. Open drink containers are not permitted in the hallways. The school is not responsible for the damage or loss of unauthorized items.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school must report to the Junior/Senior High School Office. **Students from other school districts are not allowed to visit during the school day except to keep appointments with school officials.** Authorized visitors will be given a visitor’s tag. A driver’s license, or other photo ID, must be given to the greeter and will be returned when the visitor’s pass is returned.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A variety of vocational and technical programs are available to juniors and seniors at Taconic Hills who wish to pursue training in one of these areas. The programs are offered at the Columbia-Greene Educational Center in Hudson. Students usually spend half their day at Taconic Hills Junior/Senior High School and the other half at the Center. Students may contact their school counselors for further information.

WORKING PAPERS

Working papers are issued in the main office. Students between the ages of 14 and 17 must have working papers in order to work. Students must have a copy of their birth certificate, know their social security number, and had a physical within the past year. Working papers require a parent/guardian signature and a student must be present to sign for their working card in the Junior/Senior High School office.

Taconic Hills School District Internet Guidelines for User Accounts

Taconic Hills School offers the students access to the internet via the district computer network. The Internet is an extremely valuable educational tool which allows students access to material from millions of databases and libraries from all corners of the world. In Taconic Hills School, our intent is to use this access to achieve educational objectives for your student. Parents, however, should be aware some sites may include illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive material. In accordance with federal law, appropriate measures, including the use of Internet filters and the monitoring of students' online activities will be taken in an effort to block language and visual depictions that are obscene, offensive, lewd or pornographic.

The Board of Education believes that Internet access brings benefits to the educational program that exceed any disadvantage. Ultimately, parents and guardians are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using any media and information sources, including the Internet. Taconic Hills School respects each family's right to decide whether to permit a student to apply for Internet access. To gain Internet access, all users must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement indicating their understanding of and agreement to abide by Board policy. Students under the age of 18 must also obtain parental permission. Agreements shall be returned to the school office or classroom teacher.

Guidelines and Responsibilities

Internet access is available to THCS students and staff for educational purposes.

Users are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in any other school-sponsored activity. Use of these resources in violation of Board policy may result in loss of access, disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

Access to the Internet is a privilege – not a right. This privilege entails responsibility on the part of the users.

Users accept the responsibility for all material received and/or stored in their user accounts.

Users have the responsibility to report inappropriate use of the network and violations of privacy by others to the teacher.

Users will not download or copy copy-righted software, inappropriate text and graphic files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network.

Users will not copy or download any other software or files without permission.

Users will not employ the network for commercial purposes.

Users should not expect that files stored on school system servers and work stations will be private. The school system may monitor access to equipment networking structures and systems, and all data stored or transmitted on school computers in order to ensure the security and performance of its equipment, systems, and networks and to enforce applicable laws and policies.

Users will not use a computer account, ID, or password other than their own.

Users will not intentionally access, produce, post, send, display, and/or retrieve vulgar, obscene, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate materials.

Users will not damage or alter computers, computer systems, or computing networks.

Users will not access chat rooms, e-mail, list-servs or other electronic communication methods.

Users will not disclose, use, or disseminate personally identifiable information without permission to do as part of a classroom activity.

Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access (i.e. hacking) into any network, system, program, account, etc.