

J. O. Combs Middle School

Vision Statement

"Cougars Connecting with Character"

The desire within the middle school community is for students to connect with one another, with their teachers, and with the content that they are learning remembering to always do so with character.

Mission Statement

Combs Middle School creates motivated life-long learners and socially responsible individuals.

Core Philosophies

- Students strive to grow academically, socially, and personally.
- Students have the right to learn, and teachers have the right to teach; therefore, no student should keep students from learning or teachers from teaching.
- Students shall do no harm and be respectful of themselves, others, and their school at all times.
- Students are responsible for the decisions they make, should enjoy the experience of making appropriate decisions, and must accept the consequences of making inappropriate decisions.

Academic Responsibilities: 3R's – Record, Retain, and Recall

Students will work to...

- Record information accurately and completely so that it may be understood
- Retain information by being prepared for class, completing all academic work as assigned, producing high quality work, participating in class, asking questions, studying daily, and seeking help when needed
- Recall information in various settings in order to demonstrate the ability to apply, comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what is being learned. All of this happens when a student strives to do his /her best at all times.

School Values

- Trustworthiness: Demonstrate courage, honesty and loyalty to support family, friends, and school.
- Respect: Recognize the dignity and worth of each individual with acceptance of the diverse cultures, talents, and skills that each person brings to the school community.
- Responsibility: Acknowledge, accept, and meet one's obligations in an environment dedicated to life-long learning, accountability, and perseverance.
- Fairness: Treat people equally without prejudice or favoritism.
- Caring: Demonstrate concern for others, show empathy and compassion for all, and communicate with a school staff member anytime someone may be a danger to himself/herself or someone else or may make an inappropriate decision that will impact the school or community.
- Citizenship: Work for the common good by volunteering, protecting, and participating in the school community while respecting authority and the law.

School Pledge

"Today I will do more than I have to do; I will treat others as I want to be treated, and I will become a better person."

School Information

Address: 37611 N. Pecan Creek Dr
San Tan Valley, AZ 85140

Phone: (480) 882-3510

Fax: (480) 888-8049

Web Site: www.combsms.jocombs.org or www.jocombs.org

Campus Hours

Office Hours: 8:15 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Campus Opens: 8:25 a.m.

Class Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:55 p.m. (note: Students are dismissed at 3:10 p.m. every Wednesday.)

NOTE: Nothing in this handbook is intended to restrict school administration from amending this handbook at any time or imposing more or less severe consequences on a student.

Academics

Academic Integrity

Honesty is a foundation value for success in life. Each student has an obligation to think and act with honesty/integrity and respect the desires of teachers and others in carrying out academic assignments. Academic integrity encompasses any academic project, paper, performance, quiz, exam, or any other work assigned by a teacher.

Cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism are forms of academic dishonesty.

- Cheating – providing, using, or attempting to use unauthorized materials, technology, group work, information, or study aids for anything academic.
- Fabrication- falsification or invention of any information or citation in anything academic.
- Plagiarism -using another's words, ideas, materials, or work without acknowledging and documenting the source.

Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work and for acknowledging/documenting the source appropriately. Violations may result in the following consequences: attending a conference/meeting with a staff member, losing all points awarded for the assignment/assessment, receiving a failing grade for the quarter/semester, or being suspended from school.

Academic Probation

Combs Middle School places a high value on the academic standing and progress of students. Any student who is deficient (fails one or more classes) may be placed on Academic Probation. Students on Academic Probation may be placed on an academic contract which is an individualized plan developed for the student in order to correct his/her academic deficiencies in a timely manner. Students who do not respond to the conditions of Academic Probation may be asked to meet with a school official to determine whether or not the student and his/her parents are willing to accept all academic responsibilities in order to remain enrolled as a student.

Grading Policy

Letter Grade	Corresponding Percentage	Letter Grade	Corresponding Percentage
A	93% - 100%	D+	67%-69%
A-	90% - 92%	D	63%-66%
B+	87% - 89%	D-	60%-62%
B	83% - 86%	F	59% and below
B-	80% - 82%	I	Incomplete
C+	77% - 79%	P/F	Pass/Fail
C	73% - 76%		
C-	70% - 72%		

A 4.0 grading scale is used for regular classes, and a 5.0 grading scale is used for honors classes.

Honors Program

The Combs Middle School Honors Program is designed to provide enrichment opportunities for students who have demonstrated high achievement and/or who have been recognized as being gifted. The following criteria may be used in the selection process for this: standardized tests (AIMS, Galileo, STAR, etc.), teacher recommendations, previous placement in an advanced/honors class, previous grades from last year's classes, and placement testing

The program functions in the areas of language arts, social studies, science, and math. Teachers work to develop activities that encompass the skills required in the four disciplines. Activities are designed to aid students in working on the advanced development of higher-level thinking skills, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving techniques.

Schedule Change Procedures

A schedule change must be requested within the first five (5) days of the semester. If the change is approved, the student will receive a copy of the new schedule. Until that time, the student is expected to attend classes as they are posted on the student's current schedule. Changing from an advanced class to a regular level class (or vice versa) may occur at any time. The change requires the Principal's approval and is dependent upon space being available in the requested class.

Teacher Change Requests

One aspect of the educational/maturation process for students is to develop skills to be able to be successful in classes with a wide variety of teaching styles. Administration does not believe in making teacher changes when challenges surface between a student/teacher. Great lessons can occur for students who work through this type of situation with a teacher.

If a student finds that he/she is having challenges with a teacher, the following two-step process exists to resolve the problem:

- Outside of class time, the student meets with the teacher to discuss the challenges that exist. The student is encouraged to include one or both parents in that discussion. As a general rule, most challenges can be resolved once they are openly discussed in this type of conference.
- If the student/parent doesn't feel the problem has been remedied after talking with the teacher, the student may contact a school administrator to request a conference. The purpose of the conference would be to develop a plan for success in the class (that does not consist of making a teacher change).

If an administrator ever determines (for a very special or serious reason) that a teacher change is warranted and recommended, the administrator will make the teacher change assignment that is the least disruptive to both the student's schedule and to the balancing of class sizes.

Animals

Students may not bring animals (real, stuffed, or fake) to school without prior approval of an administrator. Likewise, school community members may not bring animals on campus at any time.

Assemblies

Assemblies are held for a variety of purposes: to teach, to entertain, to display school spirit, to celebrate, and to honor various members of our school community. Members of the audience should respect and display courtesy towards the performer(s) or speaker(s). All assemblies are considered part of the regular school day. Students are required to attend assemblies. Parents and visitors are welcome to attend all of the school assemblies and must check-in at the receptionist's desk for a visitor's pass.

Athletics, Clubs, & Extra-Curricular Activities

Any student who participates in any extra-curricular activity is expected to uphold the honor and pride of our school. To participate in athletics, a student/athlete must submit each of the following: permission slip (signed by student and parent/guardian), insurance and emergency contact information, physical examination by a physician (new one required each year), and participation fee (\$25).

To participate in any extra-curricular activity, the student must earn at least a 70%/C- in all classes and display appropriate effort/attitude/behavior (when a student is not meeting these expectations, he/she may be declared ineligible and may regain eligibility after a period of time as determined by school administration), attend at least a half day (minimum of three class periods and CSS) of school that day, and have no unexcused absences in any classes that day.

Attendance Policy

It is important that parents and students recognize the direct relationship that exists between academic success and regular school attendance. Students should miss school only when absolutely necessary. Much classroom activity cannot be replicated; class discussion and participation is lost to those who are absent. The right and privilege of attending public school carries with it certain responsibilities on the part of students and their parents.

Please call 480-882-3510 extension 1402 (available 24 hours a day) to report an absence.

- Definitions:

- Absence - A student who arrives to class more than 15 minutes late is considered absent.
- Excused Absence – An absence is excused when a parent notifies the school with the reason for the absence.
- School-Related Absence - A student misses class due to a pre-approved school-related activity.
- Suspension – A student is suspended (in-school or out-of-school) from attending class for disciplinary reasons.
- Tardy - A tardy occurs when a student is not through the threshold of the door entry before the tardy bell completes ringing.
- Unexcused Absence - Any absence that is not excused by a parent/guardian or staff member.

- Makeup Work:

It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact to obtain makeup work from his/her teachers.

- Excused Absence - Students are allowed the equivalent of the number of days absent to make up all missed assignments, quizzes, and tests.
- Unexcused Absence - Students are accountable for information missed but may not receive credit for work assigned or quizzes/tests taken during the unexcused absence.
- Suspension - Students are accountable to get all missed work and schedule a time to take any missed quiz/test the first day he/she returns to class.

- Excessive and Unexcused Absences:

Students will be held accountable for excessive and unexcused absences. Consequences may include any of the following depending on the severity of non-compliance: writing assignment, lunch-detention, in-school suspension, off-campus suspension, and/or withdrawal from school.

- Excessive Tardies:

Any student who is habitually tardy (4 or more tardies in a quarter) may receive one of the following consequences: writing assignment, lunch-detention, in-school to suspension, or off-campus suspension.

- Parent Notification:

Automated phone calls occur daily to parents/guardians for students who are absent. Letter communication may be sent to parents when students have excessive numbers of absences or tardies. When a student is absent for ten (10) consecutive days, he/she may be automatically withdrawn from school.

- Ditching:

If a student is ditching (willfully chooses not to attend class without prior adult permission), he/she will receive an unexcused absence and may lose his/her opportunity to make up the missed work, quiz, or test.

- Parent Calls:

Only the parent/legal guardian of the student can notify the school of an absence. When a parent/legal guardian calls to excuse their student, the absence is listed as excused and the reason given is documented.

Parent or legal guardian must call on the same day of the absence before 4:00 p.m. If a parent/guardian does not call, the absence may be recorded as unexcused.

Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation

The Governing Board believes it is the right of every student to be educated in a positive, safe, caring, and respectful environment. The district in partnership with parents, guardians, and students shall establish and maintain a school environment based on these beliefs.

A student who is experiencing bullying or believes another student is experiencing bullying (or the parent/guardian of such student) should report the situation to school administration or the school counselor.

Reprisal by any student or staff member directed toward a student or employee related to the reporting of a case shall not be tolerated and will be subject to potential consequences. Knowingly submitting a false report under this policy shall subject the student to discipline up to and including expulsion. Policies for this were developed under the 2011 Arizona School Boards Association protocol. See JICK-EB on pages 16-17.

Cafeteria

The district participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast program. All meals served meet guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. If you have any questions, please contact 480-987-5312.

Free/Reduced Applications:

One application per household is needed each year. Applications are accepted anytime during the year. Applications may be submitted in hard copy format or on line. Please allow 10 school days for a response. Families are notified in writing of the status of a request. Qualifying students receive one breakfast meal and one lunch meal daily.

Management of Lunch Accounts:

Students are notified at least three (3) meals before they run out of money because each time they purchase a meal the computer will alert them they will need money. Please talk to your child about remembering to let you know when accounts get low.

EzSchoolpay.com:

On-line payment option. You need to call 480-987-5312 for your student's ID number to begin. Checking account balance is a great benefit on-line.

Candy and Caffeinated Beverages:

Drinking of caffeinated beverages is not allowed when purchasing a school lunch as mandated by the U.S.D.A. Students should refrain from bringing candy or caffeinated beverages to school.

Sharing of Food:

Any food brought to school by a parent may only be consumed by that parent's child. When a parent brings food for his/her child, the food will remain in the front office until lunch. Communication will be sent to the parent's child so that he/she may retrieve the lunch to eat at the appropriate time.

Policy for Forgotten Lunch:

A cheese sandwich, fruit, and milk are given for students who forget their lunch or lunch money.

Food Allergies:

Students with food allergies that affect a vital life function are permitted to request meal modifications when a medical authority completes a USDA required form. Forms are available from the school cafeteria manager, school nurse, or district office. They must be completed and signed by a physician. A new form is required each year. Parents and nutrition service staff are encouraged to make the school office aware of all students' allergies.

Student Prices:

Lunch: Day - \$ 2.75 Breakfast: Day - \$ 1.25 Drinks: Milk - \$.50/Water - \$.75
Reduced: Breakfast - \$.30 Lunch - \$.40

Menus:

Menus are available at your student's school at the front office or from the cafeteria. You can also find the menu each month by visiting our website at www.jocombs.org

Returned Checks:

A \$25.00 fee is charged for each returned check. The students account will be affected if fees are not paid.

Cell Phones, Electronic/Digital Devices

In order to keep the classroom a place of rigor and relevance, the following items are not allowed for use during the school day from the time the student arrives on campus property until the end of the school day:

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| iPods | portable DVD players | personal laptops |
| cameras or video recorders | mp3 players | laser pointers |
| recorders | paging devices | CD players |
| any game playing device | electronic or digital music devices | ear buds and head phones |

These items are unnecessary to the educational process and are potentially disruptive at school. In addition, cell phones may not be seen, heard, or used during the school day (from the time the student arrives on campus property until the end of the school day) including passing times, lunch, and riding the school bus to/from school.

Students may possess cell phones for use after the school day, but their use during the school day is strictly prohibited. Cell phones must be turned off and kept out of sight. The student bears total responsibility for safeguarding their cell phone.

Lost or stolen devices are the responsibility of the student. Bringing the item to school is at the student's own risk for loss/theft. Combs Middle School is not responsible for stolen or missing equipment and strongly recommends these types of items not be brought to campus.

If a student violates the guidelines of this policy, a staff member may confiscate the device and turn it in to the office. The device may be held until the end of that school day; a parent may have to retrieve the device from the school, and/or the student may be suspended from school. The use of any electronic device for the purpose of cheating or for the purpose of inappropriately video-taping/taking pictures is strictly forbidden. Such use may result in severe consequences and a police referral.

Closed Campus

Combs Middle School is a closed campus. All students will remain on campus during normal school hours. Parents/Guardians or their emergency designees as recorded in Schoolmaster are the only people allowed to sign out students from school. Any authorized person signing out a student from school must show an ID for identification purposes. All students leaving campus must be signed out in the front office.

Cougar Skills for Success (CSS)

The purpose of Cougar Skills for Success (CSS) is to provide students with a setting where they can focus on their reading skills through the Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) program. Students are required to have two books for reading at all times. Additionally, teachers may monitor academic progress, allow for make-up/retake quizzes/tests, create opportunities for interventions/enrichment, and interact with students on various school community issues.

CSS may also be used as a vehicle for announcements, videos, assemblies, and activities (such as student voting).

Dances

Dances may be sponsored during the school year. Students who come to the dances must obey the following rules:

1. Appropriate conduct and adherence to the standard dress code must be maintained at all times.
2. Transportation home after the dance must be arranged prior to the dance so that students may be picked up promptly when the dance ends.
3. Once at the dance, no student will be allowed to leave early unless accompanied by a parent/guardian.
4. Only students who attend CMS may attend. Visitors are not permitted to attend dances.
5. On the day of the dance, students must attend at least one half of the day (three class periods and CSS).
6. Students on suspension may not attend the dance.

Deliveries/Messages

Packages, flowers, balloons, or other personal items/gifts for students are not allowed on campus. Students may not bring balloons and/or flowers to classes because of potential student allergies. Phone messages will be delivered between class periods except when an emergency exists. These guidelines exist to minimize school day and classroom disruptions.

Dress Code

Combs Middle School establishes a dress code to maintain a proper academic environment within the school community, to support the dignity of the individual, and to instill good grooming habits in appearance. Each student's dress and personal appearance should be of such character so as not to disrupt or distract the educational environment of the school.

School pride, morale, and image are influenced by the general appearance of our students. Additionally, Combs Middle School expects student dress and grooming to reflect high standards of personal conduct so that each student's attire promotes a positive, safe, and healthy atmosphere within our school.

- Combs administration reserves the right to insist that the dress and grooming of students are within the limits of generally accepted good taste in school as well as at all school-sponsored events. Any hairstyle, mode of dress, or ornamentation that is outlandish, inappropriate, or gang-related is prohibited. If there is doubt as to the appropriateness of some attire, it should not be worn until it has been approved by an administrator.
- Students and their parents/guardians have the responsibility to be aware of the school's specific dress code and to conform to these requirements. If a student or parent/guardian has any questions about whether specific attire or accessories are in compliance with the dress code, he/she should contact an administrator prior to the student wearing such attire/accessory.
- Administration retains the discretion to determine whether or not the garment or accessory meets the dress code.
- Each student's clothing must fit appropriately as determined by school administration. Clothing may not be too tight, too baggy, too revealing, too short, too long, or hang too low.

Pants, Skirts, Shorts, etc.:

- * Sagging is not allowed. The waistband of the pants, shorts or skirt must meet the bottom of the shirt or top at all times (i.e. standing, sitting, raising his/her hand, etc.). Pants should not drag excessively on the ground.
- * Shorts and skirts must maintain a length of 2 inches from the top of the knee.
- * Pants, shorts or skirts must cover underwear at all times.
- * Wallet chains may be a maximum length of 10 inches.

Physical Education

- * Physical Education students must wear athletic t-shirt, athletic shorts, and tennis shoes. There will not be a PE uniform.

Shirts, Tops, Blouses, etc.:

- * No midriff, back skin or side skin may show. In other words, shirts and other tops must meet the pants/slacks/skirts with no exposure of abdomen, back or side.
- * Tank tops, basketball uniform tops, strapless tops, tube tops, racer backs, halter tops, or one-strap tops are not permitted. No bustier or tops with spaghetti straps. Straps must be at least 3 inches wide covering all undergarments. No see-through shirts or necklines that expose any cleavage. Students may not layer inappropriate shirts to attempt to make an appropriate one (strapless top over men's undershirt top, camisole over a racer back top, unbuttoned long sleeve shirt over men's undershirt, etc.).

Head Coverings:

* No head or hair coverings may be worn in school buildings without prior administrator approval.

Inappropriate Dress/Items:

- * Attire or accessories which advertise, display, and/or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gang activity, violence, sexual activity, disrespect, lewd, vulgar, or obscene language, and/or bigotry toward any group or person.
- * Underwear may not show (boxers, briefs, thongs, bras, etc.) and underwear and sleepwear worn as outerwear (i.e. camisoles, men's undershirts, slippers, or pajama pants) is not permitted.
- * Body piercing that is a safety hazard and/or hinders classroom performance. Students may not wear jewelry during PE.
- * Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes must have an outdoor sole. Shoes must be worn in accordance with how they were intended for wear. It is highly recommended that students not wear flip-flops for safety reasons.
- * Students may not write on themselves, anyone else, any clothing, or any back-pack with any type of writing utensil.
- * Sunglasses may not be worn in school buildings.
- * Clothing may not have excessive tears or holes; non-see-through leggings/tights must be worn under a garment when the tear/hole is in violation of other areas of the dress code.
- * A jacket/sweatshirt may not be the only outer clothing worn as appropriate top attire. An appropriate top must be worn underneath the sweatshirt/jacket.
- * Slippers, pajamas, and moccasins are not allowed. Students may not bring blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals to school.

Consequences:

- * Parents may be contacted either to assist in correcting the violation or to pick-up the student from school.
- * Any student violating this policy is subject to disciplinary action including parent conference, detention, or suspension.
- * In addition, the student may be required to remove the garment or accessory and replace it with an appropriate alternative provided by the school or parent. When this occurs, the inappropriate attire will remain in the front office until the end of the school day when it may be picked up by the student or parent as determined by school administration.

Emergency Procedures

Drills: State law requires all schools to practice lockdown and fire drills. The purpose of these drills is to acquaint all students with the different strategies and exits depending on the area he/she may be in at the time of the drill. In any drill situation, students shall follow staff directions and exit in an orderly efficient manner. When a drill is taking place, parents must abide by the procedures of the drill and must wait until the drill has ended when requesting to excuse their child from school.

False Alarms: Anyone who is found to be guilty of turning in a false fire alarm or bomb report will be subject to prosecution. Students found guilty are subject to disciplinary action. Emergency protocols are published and made available to all staff. Staff is trained and both personnel and students practice drills on a regularly scheduled basis.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. & 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U. S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are eligible students.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distances, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. A school may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parents or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parents or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR & 99,31): school officials with legitimate educational interests; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; accrediting organization; complying with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state/local authorities within a juvenile justice system pursuant to specific state law.

Fees

The following fees exist at the middle school:

\$30 – fee for each elective course (students pay a total of \$60 for two elective courses for the entire year)

\$25 – activity fee covers the cost of student ID, student planner, and a variety of activities occurring during the year

\$30 – yearbook purchase cost (\$35 after January 1st) – this fee is optional

\$25 – fee for participating in a given intramural athletic program offered on campus

Food and Drink

Food (including candy) and drinks (except capped bottled water) are not allowed in classrooms or on any carpeted areas. Gum is not allowed on campus for any circumstances at any time. Students caught with food, gum, or drink in any of these areas will be subject to disciplinary action.

Gangs

A gang is two or more people whose activities violate the law or school rules. Gangs that initiate, advocate or promote activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds or disrupt the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of dress (sagging) or grooming that, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a group is prohibited because of the disruption to educational activities that results from such activities or dress. It is the school's position that such activities and dress present a clear and present danger to the students at J.O. Combs Middle School.

Consequences:

1. Informal talk with a staff member who will attempt to reach agreement with the student as to acceptable behavior.
Parental involvement by telephone, letter, or personal conference
2. Suspension and/or off-campus police referral.
3. Long-term suspension or expulsion (continued and serious violations).

Grievance/Issue/Concern Process

Any grievance/issue/concern within the Combs Middle School community should be resolved by first communicating with the person with whom the grievance/issue/concern exists. If the grievance/issue/concern cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the people involved, the grievance/issue/concern can be brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor in that area. This step may be repeated until the immediate supervisor is the principal.

Any grievance/issue/concern brought to the attention of the principal shall be submitted in writing along with proposed ideas to solve the grievance/issue/concern.

When a parent wishes to appeal the decision of the principal in policy matters, the parent needs to submit the appeal in writing to the superintendent. That appeal information should include the following information:

- * The subject of the appeal.
- * Any factual data, other than hearsay, the person considers appropriate.
- * The efforts that have been made to resolve the issue.

The superintendent may designate another person to hear the appeal. Arizona School Boards Association Policy J-3632 describes the district's policy on student concerns, complaints, and grievances.

Hall Passes

All students must have a pass from a staff member to be in the halls. Students caught out of class without an official hall pass may be charged with ditching and may receive a day of suspension. It is the student's responsibility to secure a pass prior to leaving. Students are responsible for returning the pass undamaged.

Hallway and Sidewalk Rules

While classes are changing, many students are moving through the school hallways and sidewalks. While classes are in session, the hallways and sidewalks should be empty except for those students with a pass. The rules of conduct set forth below are established not only for instructional reasons, but for reasons of safety, cleanliness, comfort and convenience. The need to be considerate of other people and to respect their "space" is essential. Students should never use profane or vulgar language, should never run, yell, scream, or make excessive noise while in the halls.

Health Services

A full time Medical Assistant (MA) is available to students during the school day. Students who need to see the MA must have a written pass from their teacher, even during passing periods. Students must sign in as they enter the MA's office on the sign in log. Students who are ill and need to be picked up by their parents or designee must sign out with the front office. Any student with a medical problem (i.e. seizures, asthma, diabetes, or heart problems) should report the problem to the MA. Students who require medication during the school day must have their medication brought in by a parent/guardian in the original current prescription bottle and must have a parental medication release signed by their parent/guardian and the prescribing physician.

The MA is not responsible for assuring that students take their medication while at school and is not responsible to call students down that miss doses. Students may not carry medications while on campus; they must be kept at the MA's Office. Remaining medication must be picked up at the end of the school year by a parent or guardian, or it will be disposed. Students may carry inhalers at any time, but a signed parental/guardian medication release must be on file in the MA's office. All medication releases are good for the school year only and must be renewed annually.

Students with diabetes will be permitted to have immediate access to blood glucose testing equipment with them at all times if those accommodations are medically based upon appropriate documentation. Diabetic students should carry snacks and juice with them at all times and are encouraged to keep a supply of snacks at the MA's office.

In order to be excused from Physical Education (PE), the student must bring a signed note from their parent/guardian to the MA. If there are more than three consecutive absences, a signed Physician's excuse must be given to the MA that states how long the absence will remain in effect.

Students who have an accident or injury at school need to report it to the MA immediately.

Immunization Requirements:

Arizona law requires documentary proof of immunity against certain childhood diseases for students entering Arizona schools for the first time. With some exceptions, students subject to this requirement who lack documentary proof may enroll but not attend school until proof is provided.

Homework & Note Taking Policy

Homework is designed to be appropriate practice of the specific pieces of information taught during the lesson. Completion of homework by the student reinforces the skills and information presented in the classroom. Note taking during class allows the student to record the information taught during the lesson in a manner so that the student can recall the information and address questions that arise outside of the classroom. Both completion of homework and note taking during class are required of all students at all times.

Identification Cards

All students are provided identification cards which must be carried at all times during the school day. ID photos are taken for students. Students must have a current ID to check out library materials. In addition, an ID must be shown to gain entrance to all extracurricular activities including school dances. IDs are the property of the school. If defaced or lost, students must pay for the cost of a replacement ID which is \$5.00.

Leaving Campus

Parents/Guardians are expected to check in with the front office and produce a photo ID prior to signing out a student to leave campus.

Library Media Center

The Library/Media Center opens at 8:25 a.m. and closes at 4:00 p.m. On early dismissal days, the library will close at the end of the scheduled school day.

Checking Out Materials:

A CMS Student ID card must be shown; books can be checked out for two (2) weeks and can be renewed; students are limited to two (2) checkout items that are not textbooks. No fines are assessed; however, the student will not be allowed to check-out other materials until overdue issues are resolved, and students must pay for lost or damaged items.

Library Computers:

Staff members reserve the right to ask student users to relinquish use as warranted, especially if the student is in violation of the JO Combs District Technology Agreement.

Expected Behavior in the Library:

The rules of behavior are designed to protect the rights and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. Use the Library to study, to read, or to do research for class assignments. Each student is responsible for the proper treatment and return of all library materials. Work in a manner that allows others to concentrate; disruptive behavior may result in the loss of library privileges or expulsion from the library. Follow school policies – especially no use of cell phones or other electronic devices. Leave your food and drink outside the library. Respect not only the staff and other students, but also the library materials and furnishings.

Lost and Found

All lost or found articles should be reported and turned in to the front office. All unclaimed articles will be given to charity at the end of each semester. Please see administration immediately and fill out a report for any lost items presumed to be stolen.

Off-Campus Jurisdiction

In accordance with state law, violations in conduct by students going to and from school functions could result in disciplinary action. School rules and other reasonable expectations of acceptable student behavior are extended to include student conduct while off campus during the regular school day. This includes the student's conduct while going to and from school and release periods. A student may be disciplined by the school for any misconduct under these circumstances.

Parent Communication Tools

Faculty members have implemented websites. To locate a particular site go to the "Contact Us" section of the middle school web site and click on *Staff Listing & Teacher Web Sites*. Once there, scroll down to the section labeled *Teachers* and click on a teacher's site. One of the features of the page will allow you to see your child's assignments.

The district has implemented a program and process by which parents may check their child's academic progress. The service for doing this is called JupiterGrades. Using JupiterGrades, family members can access academic progress and other important information via the Internet. After parents have entered into the system, they are able to view student attendance and current grades. This tool can be accessed from any computer that has Internet access. Please be confident that this information is secure and confidential.

Staff members may be contacted through e-mail. In general, all staff has the same ending address. Simply insert the staff member's first initial and entire last name before @jocombs.k12.az.us.

Pedestrian Safety

Students are expected to cross streets at the crosswalks. Concern for the safety of students while walking as well as driving requires that this procedure be followed.

Planners

All students will be issued a planner. They will be expected to have their planner for each class. Students are responsible for writing the daily assignments for each class in their planner. Students must have a way to keep track of homework/project assignments and upcoming quiz/test dates. If lost, students may purchase a replacement planner for \$5.00.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Combs Middle School evaluates student progress every nine weeks. In addition, a progress report is communicated midway through the nine week period. Quarter (first and third) report cards, and first semester report cards are dispersed to students in CSS. Second semester report cards are mailed home.

Searches

School officials may search students, lockers, desks, backpacks, vehicles, and other belongings whenever reasonable suspicion exists that the health, safety, or welfare of students/staff may be in danger or that a rule/law has been broken.

Skateboards, Bicycles, Scooters, Razors, and Shoes with Wheels

Bicycles may be ridden to or from school as a form of transportation but must be parked in the bike rack area throughout the entire school day. Skateboards, scooters, razors, and shoes with wheels are not allowed on campus at any time.

Sportsmanship

The following actions constitute good sportsmanship from students, staff, parents and community members:

1. Provide positive cheering and other moral support for our team members.
2. Show respect for game officials and refrain from any unsportsmanlike act directed toward them.
3. Refrain from applauding errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.
4. Refrain from criticizing players or coaches for loss of a game.

The following actions shall constitute grounds for removal from the particular event and/or restriction from attendance at further events: disrespect to either home or visiting participants and spectators, disrespect to school, security officials and game officials, throwing of any objects at any time, use of radios or CD/tape players in the gym during play, use of profane language or obscene gestures, being under the influence of alcohol/drugs, damage/abuse of school property, actions which are a potential hazard to health/safety/well-being of spectators or participants, horse play and other inappropriate behavior deemed sufficiently severe by the staff.

Students, staff members, parents and community members should remember that all school rules and regulations are in effect at all school events.

Student Council

Student Council is a positive activity in which students develop leadership, responsibility, and pride in themselves and their school. Students serve as officers. All student council members must meet set academic and behavioral standards. These standards are explained to the students and their parents before they run for office. The school administration and student council sponsors reserve the right to remove students from office if these standards are not maintained.

Student Records

1. Parents or guardians have the legal right to examine the records of their student(s). If parents or guardians wish, they may be accompanied by one other person of their choosing at the time the student's records are reviewed. Parents or guardians have the right to question, in writing, the accuracy of any item in the student's records; this written response shall be attached to the disputed item. Parents/Guardians must give 24 hours written notice to the school when requesting to review records to allow staff to have all records ready/available for review.
2. JOCUSD will provide a hearing to challenge information in education records to ensure that such information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student.
3. Any hearings held will be conducted according to JOCUSD policy, which is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Of 1974 and the implementing regulations.

Supplies

Students are expected to have the necessary supplies (notebooks, folders, paper, pencil, pens, highlighters, etc.) needed to complete assignments/projects and prepare for quizzes/tests in order to be successful in their classes.

Technology Use Agreement

The J.O. Combs Unified School District requires that all students and a parent/guardian sign a district technology use agreement before using school computers. Students who violate the technology use agreement will lose computer privileges.

The purpose of school computers and equipment is for educational use only. Student use of computers and equipment is a privilege, not a right. Any other use of school computers will result in loss of computer use privileges for an entire school year. A second offense will result in loss of computer use privileges for the remainder of your high school years.

Personal laptops are not allowed on campus.

Inappropriate technology use may consist of, but is not limited to the following: printing more than one copy of work, unplugging peripherals, trying to access inappropriate websites, attempting to access the district network, making/using/distributing pirated copies of software, changing folder names or file names, sending inappropriate messages or graphics, negligently handling video/audio/other electronic equipment, theft and vandalizing of hardware/software/equipment, loading any files or software on a school computer, saving on the hard drive, playing CD music on computers without teacher permission, playing games (including website based games), entering chat rooms, sending instant messages, logging into or attempting to access another person's account, giving your password to other students, using another student's password, and Internet bullying.

Telephone Usage and Messages

Only in the case of an emergency, and with a pass from a teacher, may a student receive permission to use an office phone. Due to our busy days, only emergency incoming telephone messages will be taken for a student. Messages will be given at a time when classes are not in session. Students may call from the classroom if they have after school detention or activities.

Textbooks

Textbooks are loaned to the student. Students are responsible for the care of each book. Students will be charged the cost of the book if it is lost or damaged.

Title IX

The JO Combs School District will take all steps necessary to insure that, "The right of a student to participate fully in classroom instruction shall not be abridged or impaired because of age, sex, race, color, religion, national origin, handicap, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, or any other reason not related to the student's individual capabilities."

Transportation

Students who walk, ride a bicycle, ride with another student, or ride a school bus to/from school are expected to exhibit good behavior when traveling to/from school. Misbehavior for this will be addressed and consequences may be assigned.

Bus transportation is available to students living outside the approved district radius of the school but is not available to students out-of-boundary. For a student (who does not normally do so) to ride the bus or for a student (who normally rides the bus) to ride a different bus, a written note from a parent/guardian must be brought to the front office that same day. A fax or e-mail is acceptable; verbal communication via phone is not. Bus riding is a privilege. Suspension and/or loss of bus riding privileges may occur if inappropriate conduct takes place walking to/from the bus stop, at the bus stop, on the bus, and/or when entering/exiting the bus. Students who are bus riders will be required to show their ID upon request. Failure to do so may result in consequences ranging from a warning to suspension. Bus information may be obtained by calling 480-987-5309.

Vandalism

Defacement of any school property will require repair of the damage and/or monetary restitution to the school district by the parent or guardian of the student, in accordance with Arizona State Law.

Visitor Information

All visitors must receive permission to be on campus. Visitors must report to the main office upon arrival on campus and receive a visitor pass. All visitors who wish to visit a classroom must meet with the academic counselor (for regular education students) or the special education program specialist (for special education students) to discuss the purpose for visiting the classroom. The principal must give prior permission for any classroom visit. Visitors other than parents/guardians who are on campus for this reason will be asked to leave. In order to preserve the learning environment, students are not to bring visitors to school. Visitors at athletic events, club activities, and any other school-sponsored event who do not behave appropriately may be asked to leave that event activity.

Voice Mail

J. O. Combs Middle School has a voice mail system with which to communicate with parents, students and community members. To access the system, dial 480-882-3510 and follow the tutorial message. Please listen to the entire message before making your selection. If at any time you have trouble or need to speak with a "live" person, simply dial 0. Comb's voice mail system includes an attendance line and faculty/staff voice mailboxes.

Volunteers

The middle school volunteer program utilizes the donated time and energy of parents and community members. Volunteers can be seen helping out as clerical aides, nurse's aides, classroom aides and a variety of other capacities around campus. If a parent wishes to volunteer to assist in a classroom setting where his/her child is in class, the parent must sign in at the front office upon arrival and sign out in the front office before leaving.

If a parents wishes to volunteer in other settings in which he/she will be interacting with students on a regular basis, the parent must complete the district volunteer application form and submit for fingerprint clearance. Information for completing the paper work and specific steps for these tasks may be obtained by contacting the school secretary.

Code of Student Discipline

Minimum – Suspension

Maximum – Expulsion

Disruptive Behavior: Behavior that disrupts the normal operation of the school both inside and/or outside the classroom

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Suspension

Dress Code: The failure to follow the dress code guidelines

Minimum – Change of Clothes

Maximum – Suspension

Drugs (Use, Possession, Distribution, Purchase, Sale, Paraphernalia)

Minimum – Suspension (police referral)

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Electronics: The improper use of electronic devices in the school setting

Minimum – Confiscation

Maximum – Suspension

Endangerment: Recklessly endangering another person with a substantial risk of injury

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Fighting: Mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence where there is no major injury

Minimum – Suspension

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Fire Alarm Misuse: Intentionally ringing the fire alarm when there is no fire

Minimum – Suspension

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Firearm (Use, Possession, Distribution, Purchase): Weapon that expels a projectile by act of an explosive

Minimum – Suspension (police referral)

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Forgery: Falsely and/or fraudulently making or altering a document

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Suspension

Gambling: Participating in games of chance for the purpose of exchanging money or goods

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Suspension

Gangs/Negative Group Affiliation: A group whose members engage in violent and/or other forms of illegal behavior

Minimum – Suspension

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Harassment: Discriminatory conduct towards another with respect to/but not limited to one's size, physical appearance, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, cultural background, economic status, or disability

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Hazing: Any inappropriate act committed by a student towards another student in connection with an educational organization that creates a risk for potential physical injury, mental harm, or degradation

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Indecent Exposure: Inappropriate exposure of oneself to another

Minimum – Suspension (police referral)

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Intimidation/Threat: Indicating by word/conduct the intent to cause physical injury to a person or serious damage to property

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Pornographic, Profane, and/or Violent Material (Use, Possession, Distribution, Purchase): The possession of sexually explicit or graphically violent materials

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Profanity: Swearing and/or use of vulgar language directed towards a person or non-directed towards anyone

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Suspension

Public Display of Affection: Any intimate physical contact (holding hands, kissing, prolonged hugging, etc.)

Minimum – Conference

Maximum – Suspension

Robbery: Using force or threatening to use force to commit a theft

Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

School Threat: Any verbal/written threat to cause damage to school property or harm any student or staff member
Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Sexual Abuse: Intentionally or knowingly engaging in sexual contact with a minor
Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Sexual Assault: Intentionally or knowingly engaging in sexual contact without consent
Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Sexual Harassment: Discriminatory conduct towards another with respect to one's gender
Minimum – Suspension Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Simulated Weapon: Any simulated firearm which is a replica of a firearm being portrayed as a firearm
Minimum – Conference Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Tardy: A student is not completely through the threshold of the door entry before the tardy bell completes ringing
Minimum – Conference Maximum – Suspension

Technology Misuse: Use of technology in a manner that is inappropriate or causes disruption to the campus in any way
Minimum – Loss of Rights Maximum – Suspension

Theft/Extortion: The inappropriate asking/taking/demanding of money or something of value from another person
Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Tobacco (Use, Possession, Distribution, Purchase, Sale, Paraphernalia)
Minimum – Suspension Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Trespassing: The entering or remaining on school grounds or facilities without authorization or invitation
Minimum – Conference Maximum – Suspension (police referral)

Vandalism: The willful destruction or defacement of school or personal property
Minimum – Conference Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Weapon: Any instrument or object that is possessed or used to inflict harm or intimidate another person
Minimum – Suspension (police referral) Maximum – Expulsion (police referral)

Student Removal from Class

In some situations teachers may temporarily remove a student from a class. A teacher may temporarily remove a student to the principal, or to a person designated by the school administrator, in accord with rules established for the referral of students and under the conditions of A.R.S. 15-841, when applicable. Under A.R.S. 15-843, disciplinary policies involving the confinement of students will require prior written parental notification. If applicable the prior written notice will occur either in the I.E.P. process or in a written student behavior contract. The School is exempt from prior written parental consent if a school principal or teacher determines that the student poses imminent physical harm to self or others. The school principal or teacher shall make reasonable attempts to notify the pupil's parent or guardian by the end of the same day that confinement was used (Policy JK, Student Discipline).

**STUDENT VIOLENCE / HARASSMENT /
INTIMIDATION / BULLYING**

The Governing Board of the J.O. Combs Unified School District believes it is the right of every student to be educated in a positive, safe, caring, and respectful learning environment. The Governing Board further believes a school environment that is inclusive of these traits maximizes student achievement, fosters student personal growth, and helps a student build a sense of community that promotes positive participation as citizens in society.

To assist in achieving a school environment based on the beliefs of the Governing Board, bullying in any form will not be tolerated.

Bullying: Bullying may occur when a student or group of students engages in any form of behavior that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that

- has the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property,
- is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the action, behavior, or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional harm,

- occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength, or
- may constitute a violation of law.

Bullying of a student or group of students can be manifested through written, verbal, physical, or emotional means and may occur in a variety of forms including, but not limited to

- verbal, written/printed or graphic exposure to derogatory comments, extortion, exploitation, name calling, or rumor spreading either directly through another person or group or through cyber bullying,
- exposure to social exclusion or ostracism,
- physical contact including but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, or spitting, and
- damage to or theft of personal property.

Cyber Bullying: Cyber bullying is, but not limited to, any act of bullying committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking and other Internet communications, on school computers, networks, forums and mailing lists, or other District-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

Harassment: Harassment is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that is disturbing or threatening to another student or group of students. Intentional behaviors that characterize harassment include, but are not limited to, stalking, hazing, social exclusion, name calling, unwanted physical contact and unwelcome verbal or written comments, photographs and graphics. Harassment may be related, but not limited to, race, religious orientation, sexual preference, cultural background, economic status, size or personal appearance. Harassing behaviors can be direct or indirect and by use of social media.

Intimidation: Intimidation is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm of person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

Students are prohibited from bullying on school grounds, school property, school buses, at school bus stops, at school sponsored events and activities, and through the use of electronic technology or electronic communication equipment on school computers, networks, forums, or mailing lists.

Disciplinary action may result for bullying which occurs outside of the school and the school day when such acts result in a substantial physical, mental, or emotional negative effect on the victim, while on school grounds, school property, school buses, at school bus stops, or at school sponsored events and activities, or when such act(s) interfere with the authority of the school system to maintain order. All suspected violations of law will be reported to local law enforcement.

Students who believe they are experiencing being bullied or suspect another student is bullied should report their concern to any staff member of the School District. School personnel are to maintain appropriate confidentiality of the reported information.

Reprisal by any student directed toward a student or employee related to the reporting of a case or a suspected case of bullying shall not be tolerated, and the individual(s) will be subject to the disciplines set out in applicable District policies and administrative regulations.

Students found to be bullying others will be disciplined up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

Knowingly submitting a false report under Policy JICK or this exhibit shall subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion. Where disciplinary action is necessary pursuant to any part of this policy, relevant District policies shall be followed.

Law enforcement authorities shall be notified any time District officials have a reasonable belief that an incidence of bullying is a violation of the law.

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