

ZBTHS 2025-26 Student Handbook Changes

The following changes to Zion Benton Township High School student handbook are recommended following discussions and appropriate input from parents, staff, and administration. The student handbooks are Board policy and therefore the following changes require School Board approval.

(Note: underscored text is new or modified verbiage; strikethrough indicates deleted verbiage.)

1) Revised Verbiage - “Forms Of Discipline” Section (Page 45)

~~I. Peace Room (Room 205)~~

- ~~A. The goals of the Peace Room are to provide a space to assist students and staff in de-escalating and diffusing conflicts, violence, and challenging behavior while repairing relationships through restorative justice.~~
- ~~B. The Peace Room provides a variety of services which include, create and implement conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, address staff/student conflicts that impede classroom functions, prevention of student conflict that could become destructive and impact learning, or provide a space for students to reflect and heal through the interactive processes of restorative justice.~~
- ~~C. Students can ONLY access the Peace Room with a pass from their Dean, school counselor, or a social worker.~~

***Remove all mention of Peace Room and SSX and replace with SSC**

***Remove all mention SSX and replace with SSC**

VI. Teen Court

Excessive disciplinary referrals or suspensions may result in a student being referred to Teen Court. Teen Court is a non-punitive option for students with discipline infractions that could lead to criminal charges. In this process students have the opportunity to have their case heard before a jury of their peers who will issue a “constructive sentence” tailored to the student’s infraction. Successful completion of Teen Court dismisses the original case, and provides the student with a “clean slate” moving forward. Students and families work with the school and local law enforcement to utilize the Teen Court option in place of the traditional court system. Below is a list of possible infractions that may cause a student to be referred to Teen Court.

Possible infractions may include*:

- Alcohol (possession/consumption)
- Assault
- Criminal damage to property/vehicle
- Criminal trespass to property/vehicle
- Disorderly Conduct
- Illegal possession of fireworks
- Possession/Use of cannabis
- Possession/Use of drug paraphernalia
- Reckless conduct
- Simple battery Telephone and email harassment, to include texting, Facebook, Instagram, sexting, etc.
- Truancy
- Unlawful possession/use of weapon (i.e. knife, blades, BB guns, air pistols and rifles, paintball guns)

*This list is not all encompassing and may include infractions not specifically included here.

2) Revised Verbiage - “Chronic Truancy” Section (Page 52)

Hall Gatherings

~~It is the school's top priority to maximize classroom instruction time and teach the importance of being on time to class every day. Being prompt to each class is teaching our students a life-skill that will carry over in their lives after high school.~~

~~Hall gatherings will be performed daily during a randomly selected class period. If students are found in violation of a hall gathering they will be escorted to a designated location and receive a short announcement from an administrator on the importance of being to class on time.~~

~~Once a student has been in a hall gathering, the following actions will be taken:~~

- ~~● 1st offense - After School Detention (ASD)~~
- ~~● 2nd offense - Suspension Pending Conference (SPC)~~
- ~~● 3rd offense - Student Support Center (SSC) Periods 1-4 or 5-8~~
- ~~● 4th offense - Student Support Center Extended (SSX) Periods 1-8 (all day)~~
- ~~● Continued hall gathering offenses may include but not limited to: ASD, SSC, SSX and can involve multiple consequences listed above.~~

***Remove all mention of Hall Gatherings**

3) Revised Verbiage - “Tardy/Late To Class, Study Hall Or Advisory” Section (Page 53)

Definition: Not present in class when the bell rings for the start of class.

1. All tardies will be counted unless a student satisfactorily accounts to the teacher for the lateness to the class.
2. Students should explain their reason for tardiness. If a student has been with a teacher or other staff member, a pass should be presented explaining that tardiness.

The total or cumulative number of tardies for all classes will reset after each quarter semester.

An example would be as follows: A student is late for gym, the next day he/she is late for English and a week later he/she is late for History. The student has been late three times for the semester.

Students will be seen by their Dean based on the following steps:

- ~~● 8 Tardies/Lates during the semester: Warning w/Parent Contact~~
- ~~● 12 or 16 Tardies/Lates during the semester: After School Detention (ASD) 45 minutes or Lunch/Advisory (LAD) or Student Support Center (SSC) and Parent Communication.~~
- ~~● 20 Tardies/Lates during the semester: After School Detention (ASD) 45 minutes or Lunch/Advisory (LAD) or Student Support Center (SSC) and Parent Conference.~~
- ~~● 24 or more Tardies/Lates during the semester: Student Support Center (SSC) Periods 1-4 or periods 5-8 or Student Support Center Extended (SSX) Periods 1-8 (all day) or combination of disciplinary actions~~
- 6 tardies / parent contacted / Warning
- 9 tardies/ parent contacted / Detention
- 12 tardies/ SSC and SPC required parent conference
- Additional tardies will result in a parent/ administrator conference which may result in a tardy contract for the remainder of the year.

4) Revised Verbiage - "ID Cards" Section (Page 66)

1. ~~Students MUST always wear a current Zion-Benton ID card on a lanyard, which is to be worn around the neck and not tied to book bags. IDs (regular and temporary) will be visible as soon as the student enters the building and must only be worn on the front chest of the top layer of clothing. If a student forgets their ID, they must go immediately to the Attendance Office to get a temporary ID.~~ Students MUST present a valid student ID daily upon entry to the school building. If a student does not have their ID, they must obtain a temporary ID for entry to the building and carry the temp for the entire day. The school ID will be needed for morning entry, lunch, bus riding and extracurricular / athletic events. They MUST present their School ID at the request of any school official or staff member.
2. Any student defacing his/her ID will need to secure a replacement ID.
3. Students may not give their ID to any other person (unless requested by a staff member).
4. No student may be in possession of any other student's ID.
5. If a student loses his/her ID card, he/she must get a replacement.
6. If a student has a schedule change, he/she must get a replacement ID card (at no charge).
7. ~~The lanyard must be of breakaway material in order to ensure student safety and must be worn as-is without any knots. No clip-ons or any other display holders are to be used.~~
8. ~~Using more than three replacement IDs in one semester will result in a referral to the Dean's Office.~~
9. ~~Students will be allowed two IDs in their possession, one in their locker and one worn by the student.~~
10. Temporary IDs are only good for the day they are issued. If too many temporary IDs are issued, the student will need to obtain a new permanent replacement ID and lanyard.

5) Revised Verbiage – "Guidelines For Use Of Electronic Devices" Section (Page 70)

~~Students are extended the privilege of possessing personal electronic devices, e.g. cell phones, while on school grounds. These devices must be set on silent. Responsible use of personal electronic devices such as cell phones are allowed with teacher permission for relevant educational activities within the classroom. Students who do not have permission from their teachers to use their electronic devices during classroom time will be sent to the Dean's Office to turn in their device. Teachers will follow up with a referral. Failure to follow the above will result in the following consequences:~~

~~1st Offense —~~

~~May result in confiscation for 1 period, warning, and call to Parent~~

~~2nd Offense —~~

~~May result in confiscation for the rest of the day, Parent/Guardian pick-up, and Student Support Center (SSC)~~

~~3rd Offense —~~

~~Confiscation for the rest of the day, Student Support Center (SSC), and/or Parent Phone Conference~~

~~4th+ Offense(s)~~

~~Confiscation for the rest of the day, Student Support Center (SSC), or Student Support Center Extended (SSX), Suspension Pending Conference, and Parent must come in to sign for the phone.~~

During instructional time and advisory, students are not permitted to use electronic devices.

Instructional time is defined as any time designated for teaching, learning, assessment activities. All electronic devices must be silenced and stored out of sight for the entire duration of each instructional period.

Headsets (earbuds, headphones, etc), smartwatches, and other ancillary electronic devices may not be used during instructional time as defined above. Headsets MAY be used to connect to **school-issued** devices during instructional time if and only if the classroom teacher explicitly gives permission.

It is recommended that items of value be left at home. If students choose to bring these items to school, it is their responsibility to keep the item secure, as the district will not be responsible.

If a student has an electronic device out during instructional time, **they will be asked by the classroom teacher to put their device in the secure classroom lockbox where it will remain until the end of the class period.**

Repeated classroom electronic device violations will result in teacher contacting parent and may result in a Dean's Office Referral.*

Dean's Office Action Items:

1st offense: The electronic devices will be locked up for the remainder of the school day. The student may pick it up after school and it will be logged as their 1st offense.

2nd offense: The electronic devices will be locked up until the end of the school day and will require a parent pick-up. The student may be assigned time in the Student Support Center. This will be logged as the 2nd offense.

3rd offense: The electronic devices will be locked up until the end of the school day and will require a parent pick-up in addition to an SSC and SPC.

Additional violations will result in an Administrator/Parent conference in which an Individualized Electronic Device Plan (IEDP) will be developed and implemented as determined by the Administration.

The total number of electronic device offenses will reset after each semester.

*Students who are insubordinate and/or refuse to place their devices in the classroom lockbox will be sent to the Dean's Office with a referral and must surrender their devices. Teachers will notify parents of the referral. Student's may be issued SSC or suspension for failure to follow school-wide directive.

Revised Verbiage - "Problems Causing Disciplinary Action" Section (Page 64)

Examples of misconduct (it is understood that these are not the only examples):

1. **Students may not move through the corridors, lobbies, etc., without a pass except during passing time.** Students will not be allowed to wander the halls. A student caught wandering the halls may receive LAD, ASD, SSC, ~~SSX~~ or further disciplinary action.
2. Forgery of passes, fake telephone calls.
3. Objectionable language, racial slurs, etc. may not be used or worn.
4. Students may not be in any unauthorized area unless they have official business there and receive pre-approval from their Dean.
5. Students may not play cards, use dice, or use any kind of gambling system at school. Cards, dice, or gambling paraphernalia will be confiscated.
6. Students may not consume food or beverage, anywhere in the building other than in the cafeteria during authorized times. Students are allowed to carry water bottles in their book bags.

7. ~~Electronic devices, e.g. cell phones, must be set on silent. Responsible use of such devices is allowed with teacher permission for relevant educational activities within the classroom. Use is also allowed before and after school, during passing period, and during lunch time in the cafeteria. Students who do not have permission from their teachers to use their electronic devices during classroom time will be sent to the Dean's Office to turn in their device. Progressive discipline will be followed.~~ During instructional time, students are not permitted to use electronic devices. Instructional time is defined as any time designated for teaching, learning, assessment activities. All electronic devices must be silenced and stored out of sight for the entire duration of each instructional period.
8. Acronyms (abbreviations of the names of clubs, organizations, mottos, symbols, etc.) which are objectionable, offensive, or in bad taste, may not be used, publicly displayed or worn.
9. Skateboards/Roller Blades are not permitted on or about school property.
10. Unauthorized use of telephone and other electronic devices.
11. Participation in pranks/vandalism may result in loss of privileges up to and including prom and graduation in addition to appropriate disciplinary action(s).

6) Revised Verbiage - "Dress Code Policy" Section (Page 74)

District 126 believes that its high schools should prepare students for success both in and beyond high school, whether that be college, the military, or the world of work. District 126's dress code is designed to ensure that students demonstrate dignity and respect for themselves and others and promote genuine pride in our schools.

Dress code must meet reasonable standards of safety, modesty, decency, must be appropriate to the school setting, and must not be disturbing or disruptive to the educational atmosphere of the school.

Examples of unacceptable dress, including but not limited to clothing, hats and or masks with alcohol, tobacco, vaping, marijuana, drugs, gangs, guns, satanism, cults, obscenities, sex and or violence in its messaging or graphics.

~~Head coverings will not be worn in the building and should be in the student's locker upon arrival to school. No sunglasses, or full-face coverings (full face masks, ex: ski masks or gators, full face paint, etc.) No hoods/hoodies, hats, doo rags, or other forms of head cover, hair picks, or combs are allowed. Scarves may be worn as long as some of the hair is showing. Students must be recognizable at all times. Exceptions will apply at administration's discretion. This includes religious and or medical reasons.~~ Students may not wear any head covering that obstructs the face, prevents one from being identified or poses a safety threat. Students must be recognizable at all times.