



# **Parent/Guardian & Student Handbook**

2025-2026

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### **Note:**

The information and guidelines included in the MTSD Student Handbook are for reference only and shall not be interpreted as policy. All processes and procedures regarding student behavior, responsibilities, expectations, and rights are governed by policies adopted and approved by the Millcreek School Board of Directors. For specific information about all district policies, please go to [mtsd.org](http://mtsd.org) -> **Quick Links** -> **School Board Meetings** -> **School Board Policies**.

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# WELCOME

Dear Parents,

The Millcreek Township School District (MTSD) provides a world-class education that prepares students to reach their potential as life-long learners and responsible citizens. The District's guiding beliefs and values are:

- Families play a critical role in student success.
- Each student is important and should be treated with dignity and respect.
- All students should have the opportunity to participate in academic programs that are relevant and rigorous.
- A learning community embraces diversity and allows individuals to achieve their maximum potential.
- Learning is a life-long experience and does require different approaches.

The information contained in this student handbook pertains to your son/daughter enrolled in the Millcreek Township School District. Additionally, District expectations for ensuring a safe learning environment are articulated in this handbook. It is important that you read and understand this entire document. If you have any questions, contact your child's school.

Asbury Elementary School  
814-836-6100

James S. Wilson Middle School  
814-835-5500

Belle Valley Elementary School  
814-835-5600

Walnut Creek Middle School  
814-835-5700

Chestnut Hill Elementary School  
814-835-5550

Westlake Middle School  
814-835-5750

Grandview Elementary School  
814-836-6300

McDowell Intermediate High School  
814-835-5487

Tracy Elementary School  
814-835-5800

McDowell High School  
814-835-5403

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## SECTION A: ACADEMICS

The Millcreek Township School District offers rigorous curricula aligned to state and national standards. The curriculum is the framework that prescribes the scope and sequence of desired results and related learning experiences. The curriculum must be responsive to a changing society and the world environment in which we live. Curriculum renewal efforts will be ongoing and involve MTSD professional staff, other education experts, and relevant stakeholders. The key mechanisms of the process are planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and improving.

### **Advanced Placement® (AP®) Courses:**

Taking AP® is a sign that you are up for the most rigorous classes your high school has to offer. Taking an AP® course builds the skills you will need throughout your college years. By taking an AP® course and scoring successfully on the related AP® Exam, you can save on college expenses.

For more information on Advanced Placement® courses, visit the College Board site:

<https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/exploreap>

### **AP Capstone™:**

According to College Board, AP Capstone™ is a College Board program that equips students with the independent research, collaborative teamwork, and communication skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. It cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical evidence-based decisions.

AP Capstone™ is comprised of two AP courses – AP Seminar and AP Research – and is designed to complement and enhance the discipline-specific study in other AP courses. Students typically take AP Seminar in grade 10 or 11, followed by AP Research. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on four additional AP Exams of their choosing receive the AP Capstone Diploma™. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research, but not on four additional AP Exams receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™. Additional info may be retrieved from <http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone>.

### **AFJROTC:**

AFJROTC is open to all students. The program consists of up to four years of classroom instruction in Aerospace Science, leadership education, physical wellness, and drill and ceremony. Students are required to wear the uniform on a designated day of each week and conform to grooming and ROTC standards. The Air Force supplies uniforms at no cost to the students.

**Center for the Performing Arts:**

The Millcreek School District Center for the Performing Arts has the most comprehensive course of study in Northwest PA for students interested in music, drama, and dance. Numerous instrumental ensembles include a marching band, jazz band, two concert bands, orchestra, and a wind ensemble for students interested in playing one or more instruments. Choral ensembles include two concert choirs, a mixed chorus, and a vocal ensemble. Performing Arts courses are offered for students who are interested in drama, musical theatre, and technical theatre. In addition, several levels of dance classes are provided in a variety of disciplines. Elective courses in piano and guitar are available for students who wish to learn theory and fundamental music skills while playing an instrument.

Students who successfully complete the following course selection and performance requirements will receive a Performing Arts Certificate upon graduation. Students must complete the following:

- Minimum of three years involvement with Performance Arts curriculum
- Minimum of six credits in Performance Arts courses
- Performs a minimum of three major productions (performer, technical, or musician)
- Work in a minimum of two community productions (community theatre, church productions, etc.)
- Member of the International Thespian Society
- Recommended by Performance Arts Department

**Cyber Course Offerings:**

MTSD provides a quality education that encompasses the skills necessary to be successful in post-high school training and careers. Realizing some students may have unique academic needs, MTSD offers a comprehensive cyber program for students in all grades, encompassing core classes, electives, accelerated, and remedial opportunities. More information can be found on the District website at: <https://www.mtsd.org/academics/cyber-academy>.

**Distinctive Scholar Program:**

The Distinctive Scholar Program (DSP) is a more selective and rigorous pathway for high ability and motivated students encompassing current Honors College requirements plus additional requirements, including specific courses, service hours, and mentorships. Students who meet the criteria will receive an invitation to apply for the program.

Distinctive Scholar Program Scheduling Requirements:

- Full enrollment in all honors and/or AP courses
- AP Seminar & AP Research courses
- At least four additional AP courses
- Works towards Capstone Diploma
- Must complete at least three (3) credits of a world language

**Dual Enrollment:**

This grouping of programs provides eligible students with the opportunity to enroll in college courses offered off the campus of McDowell High School. Students begin academic studies through a local university and earn college credits while still completing a high school diploma. Credits earned may count toward high school elective credits or credit requirements for

graduation. These college credits are offered to high school students at a greatly reduced cost. General eligibility for the dual enrollment programs requires that seniors have an unweighted GPA of at least 3.25 and juniors have an unweighted GPA of at least 3.5.

### **Education Profession Pathway Certificate Program:**

The goal of this program is to provide direct instruction related to the early childhood education field. Students will learn through hands-on experiences and internship opportunities in various educational settings to better prepare for future educational and career opportunities.

Students who successfully complete the program will be awarded an Education Profession Pathway Certificate at graduation from Millcreek Township School District, as well as the possibility to earn college credits or course waivers from partnering Universities. \*

\* Certain requirements must be met

#### **Required Courses (4.5 Credits)**

Education Profession Level 1 (1.0)
Education Profession Level 2 (1.0)
Education Profession Level 3 (1.0)
Career Exploration (0.5)
Internship (1.0)

### **Erie County Technical School (ECTS):**

Erie County Technical School (ECTS) offers a wide variety of career, trade, and technical opportunities leading to a career or collegiate study or directly to employment. Students entering grades 10 through 12 may attend ECTS for a half-day and take their remaining academics at McDowell. Students may apply to programs of interest by completing an application through the Guidance Office.

To be eligible, all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass their academic and elective courses or complete them in summer school. Programs are designed to be completed in 3 years (grades 10, 11, and 12). For each successful year, students will earn four (4) credits toward graduation. Senior students who have attained the appropriate skill level are afforded the opportunity to participate in Co-Op Programs that provide valuable work experience with on the job training and the opportunity to earn wages. Students within many programs have the opportunity to earn post-high school credits due to established articulation agreements with several colleges and trade/technical schools. These schools may offer preferred admission, award credit(s), and/or advanced standing to students who have successfully completed the technical program.

**McDowell Manufacturing Academy:** McDowell Senior High School's Manufacturing Academy began in 2019, offering credited courses in technology, design, engineering, CNC machining, safety, and use of manufacturing equipment and software. NWIRC introduced the concept of the student-run manufacturing enterprise—McDowell Manufacturing—to put the coursework to practical use; the students producing actual parts, delivering services, and adding value as part of the supply chain for the local manufacturers.

At the same time, this work readiness is occurring, capacity for local manufacturers is advancing, a short-term solution to job placement is underway, future talent pipeline issues are being addressed, and the next generation of manufacturing business leaders is being cultivated.

The goal of this program is to provide employment opportunities for students graduating high school or students entering a technical training program. Students who successfully complete the program will be awarded a Manufacturing Academy Certificate at graduation along with their OSHA 10—hour Safety Certification Card.

Students must complete:

- 4.0 Credits of Required Course Work (see scheduling guide)
- 1.5 Credits of Elective Course Work (see scheduling guide)
- At least .5 credit of internship in the Manufacturing Academy

## **Grading**

### **Secondary Grading Procedures:**

1. In grades 6-8, a student's quarter grade will consist of 60% summative assessments and 40% formative assessments. In grades 9-12, a student's final course grade will consist of 65% summative assessments, 25% formative assessments, and 10% final exam. Summative assessments are a measure of progress at the end of a defined period of time whereas formative assessments are progress checks such as classroom work and homework.
2. For summative assessments, students may request (and shall be granted) up to two (2) retakes per quarter. Nothing prohibits teachers from offering additional retakes. The student must request a retake within one week of receiving the score from the initial assessment. If the average of these two tests is lower than the initial assessment grade, the teacher will record the higher grade in the gradebook. A retake will not be offered if a student refuses to complete the assessment.
3. 50% is the lowest percentage a student may receive on a failing summative assessment if they have actively participated in the learning process, demonstrated effort, and engaged in opportunities for improvement. Students may earn 0% or less than 50% if any of the following conditions apply:
  - a. The student refuses to complete the assessment.
  - b. The student refuses to demonstrate effort in completing the assessment.
  - c. The student refuses to participate in the retake policy.
4. If a student has missed/not completed a summative assessment and the conditions in #3 a,b,c do not apply, the teacher shall consider it to be "incomplete."
5. **Missing/Incomplete Summative Assessments:**
  - a. If a student is not present to take a summative assessment, a "missing" will be placed in the gradebook along with a comment notating the make-up window. If the assessment is made up during this time, the grade will be recorded. If the assessment is still missing at the end of the make-up window, a 0% will be recorded.

- b. An incomplete should be used for a summative assignment when:
    - Extenuating Circumstances – A student has a valid reason for not completing the assignment on time (e.g. illness, family emergency, or other approved absences).
    - Extended Time Granted – The student has been given additional time to complete the assignment due to an IEP, 504 Plan, or other accommodations.
    - Work in Progress – The student has made a reasonable effort but needs more time to fully complete the work.
    - Teacher Discretion – If a student demonstrates effort and communication regarding their inability to complete the assignment, an “incomplete” may be given temporarily instead of a zero.
6. Incomplete course grades:
- a. A student who receives an “incomplete” course grade has a maximum of two (2) weeks after the last day of the course to fulfill the class requirements.
  - b. Notice of the “incomplete” shall be communicated by the teacher to the student and parent/guardian and guidance counselor after the course.
  - c. If the student does fulfill the class requirements, the earned grade will be recorded.

**Note:** All high school departments will administer a common final assessment. There are no retakes for midterms or finals and the lowest grade is 50% if the conditions in #3 a,b,c do not apply.

#### **Final Grade Calculations for Grades 9-12:**

There is no calculation needed with the adoption of the running grade. Whether the course is a quarter long, semester long, or a full year course, the final grade will be based on the 65% summative, 25% formative, and 10% final exam. For students taking Algebra I in 8th grade the final grade calculation will be changed so that each quarter is 22.5% and the final exam is 10% to be in line with the final exam at the high school.

#### **Grading Scale:**

Percent	Grade	Point Value
90-100	A	4.0
87-89	B+	3.5
80-86	B	3.0
77-79	C+	2.5
70-76	C	2.0
67-69	D+	1.5



60-66	D	1.0
50-59	F	0.0

### **Graduation Credit Requirements:**

Mathematics	4
English	4
Social Studies	4
Science	3.5
Physical Education	2
Health	1
Electives	9.5

### **Elementary Grading Procedures**

#### **Grades 3-5:**

A percentage/letter grade will be assigned to a student's quarterly performance in the following core subject areas:

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Science (Grades 4-5 only)
- Social Studies (Grades 4-5 only)

Grades will be assigned using the District Grading Scale.

**Grades K-2** Use a standards-based grading system.

Unlawful/unexcused absences and skips:

"it is the policy of the board that any student whose absence is unlawful/unexcused or who cuts a class shall forfeit the right to make up work, tests, or other academic assignments that were due during the period of unlawful absences and earn a zero (0) on any formative or summative Assignment" (MTSD policy 204)

**High School Scheduling Guide:**

The McDowell HS Scheduling Guide (released annually) is available on the District website. It provides the following information:

- A. High school student course request process
- B. General information about academic programming and extracurricular activities
- C. Focused programs of study
- D. Course offerings
- E. NCAA eligibility

**McDowell Honors College of Leadership and Service:**

Selection for the Honors College is based on an application process and a thorough review of each student's academic record. The mission of the Honors College is to provide the most dedicated high-achieving students with a small learning community that provides a structure for superior performance, leadership experiences, and community service opportunities. Honors College students demonstrate a commitment to a pursuit of rigorous and challenging coursework, a commitment to physical and mental health through exercise and a drug-free lifestyle, and a participation in a variety of school-based and community-based activities. Students accepted into the program will be placed in common homerooms, led by Honors College Advisors. Advisors will serve as mentors to students as they guide them through the students' independent service projects, monitor their accumulation of community service hours, and ensure proper completion of Honors College program requirements. This mentoring relationship assists the students in making decisions about choosing a college and setting goals for professional careers of interest. For more information about the Honors College program, visit <http://www.mtsd.org/district/activities-programs/honors-college>

**Infinite Campus:**

The Infinite Campus parent portal is a centralized location to access real-time student information including, but not limited to: schedules, transportation, attendance, discipline, grades, the ability to update contact information, payment of invoices, deposit funds for student meals, view food service transactions, notices, and news items from your principal.

**Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) Certificate:**

The MTSD Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Certificate recognizes students who have demonstrated their success as critical thinkers and problem-solvers and are prepared to reach their fullest potential in a STEM field. Through their coursework and extracurricular activities, STEM-certificated students have dedicated themselves to preparing for the challenges of a dynamic world. Interested students should see their guidance counselor.

**State Assessments:**

The annual Pennsylvania System School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment that provides students, parents, educators, and citizens with an understanding of student and school performance related to the attainment of proficiency of the academic standards. These standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science identify what a student should know and be able to do at varying grade levels. School districts possess the freedom to design curriculum and instruction to ensure that students meet or exceed the standards' expectations.

Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 is assessed in English Language Arts and Math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 5 and 8 is assessed in Science.

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in selected core subject areas (e.g., Literature, Algebra 1, and Biology). A student's schedule determines when s/he participates in the Keystone Exams. There will be two assessment windows during the academic school year. Beginning with the class of 2023, students must demonstrate proficiency in the Literature, Algebra 1, and Biology Keystone Exams to graduate. Please contact your student's guidance counselor for more specific information regarding Keystone Exams and graduation requirements.

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## **SECTION B: ACTIVITIES & SCHOOL SERVICE**

Activities, school service organizations, publications, and musical groups play a leading role in the life of the Millcreek Township School District students. There is no limitation on the number of organizations to which one student may belong. Any group interested in starting a new club or activity should secure a faculty sponsor and receive approval from the administration with procedures to follow.

**School Dances:**

- All School Dances must be approved by the office.
- The dances are open ONLY to students from that particular school. At certain dances, a McDowell student may bring a date from another school, with prior approval from the office, and assume responsibility for his/her behavior. Attendance at dances may be prohibited due to infractions of the school discipline guidelines.
- "Wandering" will take place at all dances for security reasons.
- Tickets may be sold in advance for each dance.
- The sponsoring organization must provide ticket takers.
- All school dances end promptly at the scheduled time unless otherwise approved by the office.
- A student leaving the dance may not return.
- All school regulations shall be in effect at all school dances.

- Attendance in school is mandatory on the day of any activity for a student to be permitted to participate in such activity.
- Attendance at the Prom is limited to juniors and seniors and other guests. Guests must be in 9th grade or above to attend. The administration must approve guests who are not McDowell students.
- Students may be excluded from Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-curricular Activities, Sports, Non-curricular Field Trips, etc. for accumulation of 15 unlawful or unexcused absences, or violations of the Code of Conduct.

### **Spectator Rules:**

Student spectators at athletic contests should be aware that these games are an important part of their school life, and those spectators have a duty to perform for the school and the team. Students should support the team with pep and enthusiasm even in defeat, for it is then the players need to feel the force of loyal support and continued school spirit. Spectators should be courteous to the visitors and officials, and when they are members of the audience at games away from home, they should conduct themselves in a manner becoming Millcreek Township School District.

All spectators are expected to keep the following rules in mind while attending athletic events:

- Keep the ends of the field or court clear.
- Throwing objects is absolutely forbidden.
- The use of tobacco on school property/grounds is strictly forbidden.

Students in violation of the above rules will be ejected from the event and will be subject to school rules and regulations. Students who choose to attend or participate in extracurricular activities must be willing to adhere to the rules and guidelines approved by the Board of Directors and are subject to disciplinary action.

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## **SECTION C: ATHLETICS**

### **Philosophy of Athletics:**

Athletics is considered an integral part of the District's education program, which provides experiences to help develop boys and girls physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. The element of competition and winning, though it exists, should be controlled to the point that it does not determine the nature of the program. Students are stimulated to want to win and excel, but the principle of good sportsmanship must prevail at all times to enhance the educational values of contests.

The athletic program is a broad-based program providing opportunities for many different students to develop skills, coordination, strength, endurance, and attitudes, which are necessary for a happy, active life. It is believed that participation is not only an integral part of the student's educational experience but is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the team, to the student body, and to the community. The athlete is representing all of these groups

and should always reflect the best of conduct and the best of play. Participation in athletics, both as a player and spectator, contributes toward developing a better person and citizen.

### **Specific Goals of the Athletic Program:**

- To provide a learning environment necessary for all athletes to achieve to the highest level they are capable of individually and as a team.
- To enhance the academic program of the school.
- To make an effort to win. Athletes will learn from success and failure. They will also understand the reasons for success and seek the cause of failure.
- To provide a learning experience that will be a carry-over to life, including:
  - Discipline
  - Respect for authority, rules, officials, and coaches
- To foster participation in the sports program by as many students as possible. Participation will be measured by the number of athletes who complete the season.
- To develop a coaching philosophy that will stress the teaching of fundamental skills.
- To develop a commitment toward excellence in regards to the team's mental preparation and physical conditioning.

### **Athletic Teams – High School:**

McDowell High School is represented by 29 athletic programs and holds membership in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Fall	Middle School	Freshmen	Junior Varsity	Varsity
Girls' Golf				X
Boys' Golf				X
Girls' Volleyball			X	X
Girls' Cross Country	X		X	X
Boys' Cross Country	X		X	X
Girls' Soccer			X	X
Boys' Soccer			X	X
Girls' Tennis				X
Cheer	X	X	X	X
Football	X	X	X	X
Girls' Water Polo			X	X

Boys' Water Polo			X	X
Girls' Basketball	X			
Winter	Middle School	Freshmen	Junior Varsity	Varsity
Girls' Basketball		X	X	X
Boys' Basketball	X	X	X	X
Wrestling	X		X	X
Girls' Swimming and Diving				X
Boys' Swimming and Diving				X
Girls' Bowling				X
Girls' Indoor Track and Field				X
Boy's Indoor Track and Field				X
Hockey	X		X	X
Spring	Middle School	Freshmen	Junior Varsity	Varsity
Softball			X	X
Baseball			X	X
Girls' Track and Field	X			X
Boys' Track and Field	X			X
Girls' Lacrosse			X	X
Boys' Lacrosse			X	X
Boys' Volleyball	X		X	X
Girls' Volleyball	X		X	X
Boys' Tennis				X
Girls' Soccer	X			
Boys' Soccer	X			

**Trojan Ice Hockey:**

This club has a unique status. Ice Hockey is an independent team not affiliated with the school district. However, since this club represents Millcreek Township School District, all-district policies about student participation in this club do apply. Please see our website for Policy 123, Interscholastic Athletics Policy 123.

**Eligibility Regulations for Sports:**

1. Students shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition upon attaining the age of nineteen years, with the following exception: If the age of nineteen is attained on or after July 1, the student shall be eligible to compete through that school year.
2. No student shall be eligible to represent the schools in any interscholastic athletic contest unless a physician has examined him/her.
3. No student shall be eligible if he/she has been in attendance more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade.
4. Each student participating in one of the school's interscholastic sports must provide written approval by his/her parent or guardian.
5. Each school year, prior to participation in an athletic activity, every student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian shall sign and return the acknowledgment of receipt and review of the following: a) Concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury Information Sheet and b) Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet. For more information, see MTSD Policy 122 – Extracurricular Activities, MTSD Policy 123.1 – Concussion Management, and 123.2 – Sudden Cardiac Arrest on our website.
6. To be eligible for interscholastic competition, a student must pursue a curriculum approved by the District; and must be passing in at least five full-credit courses or the equivalent approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
7. For more specific information regarding athletics, please see the following policies on our website: 122 – Extracurricular Activities, 123 – Interscholastic Athletics, 123.1 – Concussion Management, and 123.2 – Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Depending on the sport, pre-injury baseline testing (concussion protocol) may be required.

**Care and Treatment of Athletic Injuries:**

The School Board advocates guidelines and measures that promote high-quality, safe care of students participating in athletics who suffer serious injury. Any athlete who has suffered a serious injury requiring diagnosis and treatment by the team physician or an appropriate medical professional shall not participate in any sport or school-sponsored activity until s/he is released by the team physician or an appropriate medical professional using the PIAA's Section 8: Certification by Licensed Physician of Medicine or Osteopathic Medicine.

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## **SECTION D: ATTENDANCE**

### **Attendance - Policy 204:**

The Board requires that school-aged students enrolled in the district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the state. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and participation in well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. The Board believes there is an educational nexus between classroom presence and achievement, and that class attendance is relevant to the students' overall performance, achievement, and academic success. It is the policy of the Board that students who are unlawfully absent or have missed class due to unexcused days of absence and class participation is a component in determining a final grade shall receive no credit for class participation missed on the unlawful or unexcused days. Any student whose absence is unlawful/unexcused, or who cuts a class, shall forfeit the right to make up work, tests, or other academic assignments that were due during the period of unlawful absence and receive a zero (0) on any formative or summative assignment. A student that accumulates fifteen (15) unlawful or unexcused absences, or ten (10) unexcused tardies per quarter or twenty (20) unexcused tardies in a school year, may be excluded from Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-curricular Activities, Sports, Parking Privileges, and Non-Curricular Field Trips, etc. A maximum of fifteen (15) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond fifteen (15) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with their teachers within two days of their return to establish a make-up schedule. Students can meet with the teacher in person or via electronic communication. If the student does not communicate with the teacher within two days, the teacher is not required to accept missed work.

Please see Policy 204 for more details on our website at [mtsd.org](http://mtsd.org).

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## **SECTION E: EMERGENCY DRILLS**

### **Evacuation Drills:**

Evacuation drills will be conducted during the school year. Such drills will be conducted to prepare students for an unexpected emergency or situation that would require them to be transported to an off-campus location. The location of this designated site will be established prior to the start of the school year. Procedures will be reviewed and established in advance of the drill to ensure that students are transported safely, efficiently, and timely to their new venue.



**Fire Drills:**

The fire drill is carried out so that students will be able to leave the building quietly and orderly in case of necessity. There is an instruction card with procedures posted in each room near the door. This provides information on the exit students are to utilize. NOTE: Fire drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. Staff and students are to consider each fire alarm signal as an emergency situation. Our goal will be to evacuate the building in TWO (2) minutes, which can only be accomplished with everyone's cooperation.

**Tornado Drills:**

Tornado drills will be conducted during the school year to prepare students in case of a severe weather emergency. Procedures for the drills will be posted in all classrooms and reviewed with students by the teachers.

**Lock Down Drills:**

Lock Down Drills will be conducted during the school year to prepare students in case of an unlawful intruder. Established procedures will be practiced to ensure students will know how to keep safe in the event of an unlawful intruder.

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## **SECTION F: GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources – Policy 815:**

The Board supports use of the computers, Internet and other network resources, including generative artificial intelligence, in the district's instructional and operational programs in order to facilitate learning, teaching, and daily operations through interpersonal communications and access to information, research, and collaboration. For instructional purposes, the use of network facilities shall be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the district as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of students.

The availability of access to electronic information does not imply endorsement by the district of the content, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of information received. The district shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved via the Internet.

Please refer to MTSD Policy 815 for more information regarding Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources.

**Activity Fee:**

Membership in certain school-sponsored activities and athletics will require the payment of an activity fee to help defray that activity's costs. This fee is assessed for each activity in which the student participates. Fees must be paid before a student is permitted to participate in any such activity. (Consult your sponsor or coach to find out if a fee is required and the amount of your activity fee.)

**Bicycles and Skateboards:**

Elementary students are not permitted to ride bicycles or skateboards to school.

**Bullying / Cyberbullying – Policy 249:**

All forms of bullying are prohibited in the school setting.

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying. Please see Policy 249 for more details on our website.

**Cafeteria System**

In all Millcreek Schools, students are issued an ID card with a student ID #. This number will be their own from the time they start school until they graduate. This ID card can be used in several places: the library, school activities, and the cafeteria. In the cafeteria, this ID card enables the students to access their meal accounts. This account acts as a debit account that deducts monies from the student's prepaid account balance when the student uses his/her card (pin pad) at the register. Prepaid accounts can be used for purchasing lunch and ala carte items, which includes milk.

- Parents can add money to their child/ren's cafeteria account through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Within Infinite Campus, parents can also see purchase history.
- Parents can also send cash or check payments with their student to be deposited into their student's meal account. Checks must be made payable to MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT and have the student's name on the memo line.
- The student or parent can deposit money into an account anytime.
  - **If you send your student in with cash, it is not the responsibility of the cafeteria if the cash is lost or stolen.** Cash must be sent in an envelope with the student's name.
- Parents can restrict what their child is allowed to purchase on their account by emailing [foodservice@mtsd.org](mailto:foodservice@mtsd.org). Include your student's name and the restriction to be placed on their account. Restrictions are general (snacks, second meals, milk) and cannot be specific to a day or item.

- If your student does not have enough money in his/her account, s/he may charge only one full lunch per day. Ala Carte snack items or an individual milk purchase cannot be charged.
- If you do not want your child to be able to charge a lunch to their account when they run out of funds, you must send an email to [foodservice@mtsd.org](mailto:foodservice@mtsd.org).
  - The law does not permit the district to deny students a meal, (unless there is written documentation from the parent/guardian), so if they run out of money in their account, meals will still be charged to their account, and they will be sent a bill.
  - **Please note that restricting meal charges to the account will result in your student being denied a meal in the cafeteria.**
- If a student transfers to another MTSD school, the balance transfers along with him/her. The district will bill negative balances. Paid, free, or reduced eligibility status also transfers.

### **Cafeteria Behavior Guidelines:**

While in the cafeteria, students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible way using good manners and judgment in accordance with their grade level. Additionally:

- Students are to be in the cafeteria when the lunch period starts.
- Students are to be sitting at a table when eating.
- Students are to return all trays to the tray area.
- Leaving the cafeteria for any reason without permission from the monitors is forbidden.
- Throwing objects or food and/or leaving the tables or floor messy is not acceptable behavior.
- When the student finishes his/her lunch, all recyclable materials should be recycled. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until they are dismissed.

Violating these standards in any unacceptable manner may result in students being assigned clean-up duty, or suspension, depending upon the severity of the offense.

### **Change of Address:**

It is necessary for the school to have an accurate record of the home address of all students. We ask that you accept the responsibility for reporting any change of address in a timely manner.

All address changes need to be reported to Central Registration – Millcreek Education Center (835-5312).

### **Child Find Notification:**

The Millcreek Township School District is obligated under state and federal law to identify children who may qualify as protected handicapped students. If a parent or guardian believes that their child may have a disability or be in need of special education support or accommodations, they should contact the principal at their local school or the department of student services (835-5334). The Millcreek Township School District also is similarly obligated to identify students who are intellectually gifted. If a parent or guardian believes that their child

is intellectually gifted, they should contact their principal or the student services department (835-5334). Please refer to policies 113 (Special Education) and 114 (Gifted Education) for more information.

#### **Evaluation: Special Education and Gifted Education:**

To qualify as a student in need of special education, accommodations, or gifted support, MTSD will conduct a comprehensive evaluation once parental consent is granted. A certified school psychologist will be the chair of the evaluation team with teachers, parents, and other related service providers who will be included as needed. If a child is found to be eligible and in need of a special education program, a 504 plan (accommodations), or a gifted support plan, parents will be invited to participate in a planning meeting. Once an individualized program is developed, the team (school staff and parents/guardians) will determine an appropriate program and location (school building) for implementation. Most specialized programs are offered at all buildings. Some specialized programs are offered at designated buildings. The team must consider various factors when determining placement, one of which is the least restrictive alternative (this means that students will be placed in general education programs in their neighborhood school building whenever possible). Once the program has been developed and a location determined, the plan will then be implemented. Parents must give consent to the initial implementation of an individualized education plan (IEP), 504 plan, or gifted individualized education plan (GIEP). Parents also have the ability to revoke consent for specialized programming at any time should they wish to do so. All revocations must be provided in writing and submitted to the building principal. Any questions regarding specialized programs for students with disabilities, mental or physical impairments, or giftedness should be directed to your building principal or the student services department (835-5334). Please refer to policies 113 (Special Education) and 114 (Gifted Education) for more information.

#### **Collection of Financial Obligations:**

Parents will be informed of any obligations incurred under Care of School Property - Policy #224 or participation in activities. If, after two written notifications, the obligation has not been satisfied, a proceeding may be instituted with a local magistrate to recover the costs. As well, the student may be barred from school activities including Graduation Ceremony, Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-curricular Activities, Sports, Non-Curricular Field Trips, etc. Within thirty (30) days of the second written notification, all delinquent obligations, including fees, will be referred to a local magistrate for collection. The school district will also bar students obligated from all school activities including Graduation Ceremony, Homecoming, Prom, Dances, Extra-curricular Activities, Sports, Non-Curricular Field Trips, etc. The school district reserves the right to waive the fee if the obligation is met before the matter is scheduled for disposition by the magistrate. The obligation, including any student fees as well as the court costs, will be the obligation of the student and/or his/her parents. Please see Policy 224 or Policy 627 for more details on our website at [mtsd.org](http://mtsd.org).

#### **Student Discipline - Policy 218:**

The Board finds that student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment. As such, MTSD has established and

utilizes a standard set of approved consequences for unacceptable student behaviors and actions, including teacher and office detentions, Saturday detention, in-school and out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, and alternative placements. Additional information is available in the Student Code of Conduct, available on our website. Please visit our website to review Policy 218, Student Discipline.

**District Fees:**

See the District website for information relative to district fees. These fees are reviewed and updated as needed annually.

**Dress and Grooming - Policy 221:**

An individual's dress is a matter of personal preference and choice. However, students should remember that certain styles of dress are not appropriate for school wear. While a student's right to dress as s/he chooses may not be arbitrarily limited, school officials do have the right to prohibit attire which is disruptive to the educational process, or which constitutes a health or safety hazard. Please visit our website to review Policy 221, Dress and Grooming.

No attire with lettering or drawings which depict sexually suggestive expressions or actions, profanity, obscenity, drugs, alcohol or tobacco shall be worn. No attire that would be disruptive to the educational environment, cause harm to others, or damage property shall be worn. The Millcreek Township School District has established the following minimal guidelines for the appearance and dress of students. This information should be used as a guide: Tops shall not be excessively revealing and must be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Undergarments and the buttocks must remain entirely covered even while seated.

<b>Head:</b> No hats, caps, visors, hoods, or headgear, except with administrative permission.
<b>Upper Garments:</b> Tops shall not be excessively revealing and must be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.
<b>Lower Garments:</b> Undergarments and the buttocks must remain entirely covered even while seated.

**Use of Electronic Devices - Policy 237:**

The Board recognizes the significant role that technology plays in the lives of MTSD students and the impact it has on education, the workplace, and everyday life. However, the Board also recognizes that the unrestricted use of personal electronic devices can lead to the disruption of instructional and learning process and has the potential to compromise the safety of the educational environment. As such, Policy 237 – Use of Electronic Devices is designed to maintain a stable educational environment that is safe and secure for district students and employees while advocating the appropriate use of 21st Century technology. Please visit our website to review Policy 237, Use of Electronic Devices.

In all school buildings, personal electronic devices are required to be turned off and stored in lockers during the instructional day, i.e. from the start of classes until student dismissal.

**Employment Certificates / Working Papers:**

The Child Labor Act of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that all minors under 18 years of age, regardless of whether they are students or not, must secure employment certificates before engaging in gainful employment. Therefore, it is imperative that all minors become acquainted with the procedure to obtain certificates. The Child Labor Law is administered by the Superintendent of Schools, and all certificates are issued at the Millcreek Education Center. Please visit the Millcreek Education Center to complete an application and obtain your work permit.

**Entry into Elementary School Buildings / Student Drop-Off Area:**

The Board recognizes it has the responsibility to supervise public school children of the district while present in the schools during the academic day. The Board further affirms appropriate supervision requires that children not be permitted into the individual elementary school buildings before designated entry times.

The Board directs elementary school principals to communicate individual elementary school entry times to parents. No child is permitted into elementary school buildings before the designated entry times unless they are under the district personnel's direct supervision or enrolled in a Board-approved program.

The Board further directs elementary school principals to give written notification to the parent(s) upon first violation of this policy, and a report filed on the parent(s) with Children Services upon a second violation of this policy.

The student drop-off area at Elementary Schools is posted at each school.

**Hazing – Policy 247:**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times. Please refer to the MTSD website for further clarification regarding hazing. This includes definition, authority, the delegation of responsibility, and complaint procedure.

**Homelessness and Other Educational Instability (MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT)– Policy 251:**

Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program was established to make sure homeless youth have access to a free and appropriate public education while removing barriers that homeless children face. Its goal is to have the educational process continue as uninterrupted as possible while the children are in homeless situations. Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act<sup>10</sup> defines “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youths who are: sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”); living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; living in emergency or transitional shelters; or abandoned in hospitals.

- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above. If you are aware of any children in the school district who may possibly fit the above criteria, please contact a school principal or the school district's McKinney-Vento liaison, The Director of Student Services, at (814) 835-5335. Services and support are available for these students.

### **Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness**

This resource is intended for parents/guardians/staff/community members to utilize if experiencing homelessness or in crisis. This resource also provides guidance and training and is updated annually. If you or someone you know needs assistance — please reach out to the school district homeless liaison, The Director of Student Services, at (814) 835-5335.

### **Liaison Responsibilities:**

The district's liaison shall coordinate with:

1. Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children, youth, and families.
2. Other school districts on issues of records transfer and transportation.
3. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Individuals with Disabilities Act.
4. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The district's liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters, soup kitchens, public libraries, and locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children. The district liaison shall provide reliable, valid, and comprehensive data to the coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children/Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state law regulations.

**Definition of Homelessness:** Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence, which include the following conditions:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Living in emergency, transitional, or domestic violence shelters.
4. Abandoned in hospitals.
5. Whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
7. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
8. Living as run-away children.
9. Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers.

10. Living as school-aged parents in houses for parents if they have no other living accommodations.

**School of origin** is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including pre-school. When the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

**Unaccompanied youth** is defined as a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

**Enrollment/Placement:**

To the extent feasible and, in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his or her school of origin while he or she remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which he or she obtains permanent housing.

Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the district liaison will assist the student with placement and enrollment decisions and give priority to the views of the student in determining where he or she will be enrolled. If after such consideration, the district determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the district shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall include information regarding the right to appeal. The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to district policies. However, the district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The district liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous district, pursuant to Board policy. Homeless families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment.

**School/Health Records:**

The receiving school district may contact the district of origin for oral confirmation that the student has been immunized but must not be a barrier to enrollment. Oral confirmation between professionals is a sufficient basis to verify immunization with written confirmation to follow within thirty (30) days. The instructional program should begin without delay after the enrollment process is initiated and should not be delayed until the procedure is completed. The enrolling district's liaison will assist the parent/guardian/student in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records. The district will support families with accessibility to health-related resources — not limited to access to a physician, dentist, and other specialty doctors. The district may assist with transportation for access to medical providers as well as assist with overcoming barriers related to insurance.



**Placement/Disputes/Complaints:**

If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent/guardian/student will be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal. The parent/guardian/student will be referred to the district liaison, who will carry out the state's grievance procedure as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied student, the district liaison shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute. If disputes or complaints of noncompliance rise regarding the education of homeless students, the following steps shall be taken:

1. The person filing the complaint shall first contact the school or district through the district liaison, the principal, or Superintendent to present their concerns to the people closest to the situation and, most likely, to be able to resolve it quickly.
2. If Step 1 is not successful or is not possible under the circumstances, contact should be made with the Homeless Project Education Liaison, or the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will accept complaints directly through the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.
3. Individual cases may be referred to the PDE's Office of Chief Counsel and the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, as needed, by the State Homeless Coordinator.

PDE will deliver a response within fifteen (15) business days of the receipt of the complaint. The complaint may arrive in the form of a copy of the school district letter or on the Dispute Letter Form, if given directly to a Liaison of the Homeless Initiative.

**Education Records:**

Information about a homeless student's living situation shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) and shall not be deemed to be directory information. Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to transportation services, school nutrition programs, vocational programs and technical education, preschool programs, programs for students with limited English proficiency, and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students.

**Transportation:**

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the school district. If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation. The district transportation coordinator can be reached at (814) 838-1602.

**Fiscal Responsibilities:**

The following guidelines will be followed in cases when the education of the student is provided by the district where the homeless student is temporarily living. The guidelines shall also apply in cases when the district of prior attendance, where that is not the district the student attended when permanently housed, will educate the student:

1. Homeless individuals not in facilities (shelters) or institutions, as well as homeless individuals living in hotels, motels, cars, tents, or doubled-up with a resident family, shall be reported and reimbursed as resident students.
2. For homeless individuals in temporary shelters, the educating school district will send a form for the determination of district residence for students in facilities or institutions to the presumed district of residence.
3. If the form is acknowledged by the resident district, the educating district will enter the student on its rolls as a nonresident student from the acknowledging resident school district. The educating district will bill the resident district for tuition and will report membership data according to state child accounting procedures.
4. If the form is disclaimed and a district of residence cannot be determined, the student will be considered a ward of the state. The educating district will enter the student on its rolls as a nonresident ward of the state and will report membership according to state child accounting procedures. The Department of Education will pay tuition to the educating district based on membership reported to child accounting.

In cases when the education of the student is provided by the district of origin, where that is the district, the student attended when permanently housed, the district will continue to educate a homeless student for the period of temporary displacement and should maintain the student on its rolls as a resident student. In cases when the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year and continues in the school of origin, which is not the district of new residence, the educating district will continue to educate the formerly homeless student on its rolls as a nonresident student.

**Training:**

Offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program. The district's liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff. School personnel providing services to homeless students, including enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:

1. Improve the identification of homeless students.
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation, and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

**Free and Reduced Meals:** All MTSD students identified as homeless will immediately receive free meals (breakfast and lunch).

**Family Engagement:**

Families are a valued member of our community and an essential part of a child's success. Opportunities for participation in school and building sponsored events are communicated in a variety of ways throughout the school year. If you need assistance to participate, please contact your building principal.

**Community Partnerships:**

The district partners with community agencies to support families through collaboration. Some community partnerships include but are not limited to: Erie County Care Management, Erie County Office of Children and Youth, Attorneys and Kids Together, Kiwanis Club, and Millcreek Education Foundation.

**Academic Supports:**

Students have access to numerous academic supports — based on the need of each individual student. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Title 1 services
- Multi Tiered Intervention Supports
- School Tutoring High
- School Credit Recovery
- McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act: more information can be found at: <https://nche.ed.gov/legislation/mckinney-vento/>
- PA specific information can be found at the Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homeless Program: [Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program – Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness \(center-school.org\)](#)

**MTSD Homeless Liaison:**

- Director of Student Services
- (814) 835-5335
- [mtsdpupilsrv@mtsd.org](mailto:mtsdpupilsrv@mtsd.org)

**Library:**

The purpose of the library is to widen, deepen, and intensify learning. The library contains a wide range of reference and circulating materials selected to meet the curricular and recreational needs of students.

Each elementary school has a schedule as to when students have access to the library's resources.

There are no fines for overdue materials. The date due is noted on the book card in the back of the book. Overdue notices will be sent to the student via the homeroom teacher the first two (2) days the book is overdue.

Students are responsible for all library materials in their possession. Any materials deliberately or accidentally damaged or lost MUST be replaced and/or paid for.

Respect for others governs students' behavior using the library to protect library materials and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. Inappropriate behavior in the Library will not be tolerated and may result in a suspension of Library privileges and/or office detention. This will be determined by the Librarian/or Principal.

### **Lockers & Backpacks:**

Every student will be assigned a locker and a lock. Students are not to change locks or share/reveal locker combinations to any other student. The student is responsible for the locks and lockers assigned. Damaged or lost locks must be paid for at the replacement cost. Misuse will result in a minimum of one (1) hour of office detention up to Saturday detention.

School officials may conduct random locker searches at their discretion; therefore, students cannot expect a right to privacy relative to their use of a school locker. Prior to an individual locker search, the student shall be notified and allowed to be present whenever possible. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that threaten the students' health, welfare, and safety in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.

### **Backpacks: Elementary School and Middle School**

Students are not permitted to carry backpacks during the school day. Backpacks must be kept in the student's designated area.

### **Backpacks: High School**

Students are not permitted to carry backpacks during the school day. Administrator discretion will be used in allowing students to carry bags with respect to traveling between the high school buildings, limited time to change classes, and limited space in some classrooms.

### **Lost & Found:**

Items found in and around the buildings should be turned in to the secretary at the front office. Any person who has lost an article may make inquiries at the school office.

**WARNING: DO NOT LEAVE MONEY OR OTHER VALUABLES IN DESKS, LOCKERS, CLASSROOMS, OR PHYSICAL EDUCATION LOCKER ROOMS OR OTHERWISE UNATTENDED.**

### **Nondiscrimination – Qualified Students with Disabilities – Policy 103.1:**

The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide academic and nonacademic services and programs equally to students with and without disabilities. The Board encourages students and parents/guardians who believe they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment to promptly report such incidents to designated employees. The Board also directs that complaints of discrimination or harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective or preventative

action be taken for substantiated allegations. Please review MTSD Policy 103.1 for more information regarding nondiscrimination.

### **Parent Teacher (Student) Association:**

The Parent Teacher (Student) Association (PTSA/PTA) is an organization made up of interested parents, teachers, and students. These organizations perform many services for the school. Newsletters are mailed to homes periodically throughout the year to keep parents informed of the schools' events.

### **Policies for Review:**

A list of important policies for your review include:

- **Policy 103** – Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students
- **Policy 103.1** – Nondiscrimination – Qualified Students with Disabilities
- **Policy 113** – Special Education
- **Policy 114** – Gifted Education
- **Policy 204** – Attendance
- **Policy 208** – Withdrawal from School
- **Policy 209.1** – Food Allergy Management
- **Policy 220** – Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials
- **Policy 222** – Tobacco and Vaping Products
- **Policy 226** – Searches
- **Policy 236.1** – Threat Assessment
- **Policy 247** – Hazing
- **Policy 249** – Bullying/Cyberbullying
- **Policy 251** – Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care, & Other Educational Instability
- **Policy 815** – Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources

A comprehensive list of the Millcreek Township School District policies can be found at <https://www.mtsd.org/>. Please go to mtsd.org -> Quick Links -> School Board Meetings -> School Board Policies.

### **Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials – Policy 220:**

Students have the responsibility to act in accordance with Board Policy 220. The Board respects the right of students to express themselves in word or symbol and to distribute and post materials in areas designated for posting as part of that expression. The Board also recognizes that the exercise of that right must be limited by the district's responsibility to maintain a safe and orderly school environment and to protect the rights of all members of the school community.

This policy addresses student expression in general and distribution and posting of materials that are not part of district-sponsored activities. Materials sought to be distributed or posted as part of the curricular or extracurricular programs of the district shall be regulated as part of the school district's education program.

The district has no responsibility to assist students in or to provide facilities for the distribution or posting of non-school materials.

Please visit the MTSD website to review Policy 220.

**Student Parking:**

A parking permit is required for a student to park in designated areas on school property during the school day. Permits can be purchased in the main office of each high school. Students will receive a copy of guidelines regarding motor vehicle violations with their permits. Motor vehicle violations may result in the loss of parking privileges and/or towing of said vehicle at the owner's expense.

**Student Photo ID:**

Millcreek Township School District students are required to have a school photo ID Card. This card will contain the student's picture and a bar code of the student ID number and be multi-functional.

**Student Support Team:**

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) exists in each school and serves to assist students. The team is composed of school professionals and qualified counselors contracted from outside agencies. The group serves to identify, assess, and prescribe intervention measures for academic or behavioral health issues. The team will convey recommendations to the students and their families when appropriate.

**Threat Assessment - Policy 236.1:**

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to establish a threat assessment team and develop procedures for assessing and intervening with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others. Please visit the MTSD website to review Policy 236.1.

**Tobacco and Vaping Products – Policy 222:**

The Board recognizes that tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes, present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers and the school environment. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit student possession, use, purchase and sale of tobacco and vaping products, including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes. Please visit the MTSD website to review Policy 222.

**Visitors:**

All school visitors must check in with the school's main office and use the Raptor Security Software to gain entrance by providing a photo ID.

**Volunteers:**

Persons interested in volunteering within the Millcreek Township School District are required to adhere to state and federal regulations. Changes to the PA Child Protective Services Law have resulted in increased background check requirements for anyone working with or in contact with students, including volunteers. More information about volunteering can be found on the District's website at [mtsd.org](http://mtsd.org).

**Weather Cancellations / Delays:**

The decision to close schools or delay the start of the school day will be based primarily on the condition of district roads or other weather conditions that would jeopardize children's safety. The decision to cancel or delay school is made in as timely a manner as possible.

Notifications will be provided via the school district's mass notification system. Additionally, the District will continue to share this information with the local news and radio outlets.

When the delayed start is initiated, all starting times will be delayed by exactly two hours, and schedules can be found on the District website. The school day will end at the regularly scheduled time, and cafeterias will operate as usual. In addition, when a delayed start is initiated, the parent/guardian cannot drop off students prior to the delayed starting time.

**Website:**

District and school information can be accessed via the Millcreek Township School District website at <https://www.mtsd.org/>.

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## SECTION G: HEALTH SERVICES

**Health Office:**

The school health program is designed to give first aid and medical care for injuries and illnesses that occur during school hours. In addition to providing emergency care, school nurses provide support for students with health conditions necessitating care during the school day. School nurses provide education and wellness information to students in all buildings.

**Please remember that the health office is not a primary care facility. School nurses cannot diagnose, prescribe treatment, or give medications without a physician's order.**

The Certified School Nurse shall collaborate as needed with parents/guardians, the student's private physician, district administration, faculty, and staff to develop an individualized healthcare plan best to meet the needs of students with chronic health conditions.

Annual Health Authorization Forms **MUST BE** submitted through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal at the beginning of each school year for the nurse to see/treat your student. Forms can be found at [www.mtsd.org/parents/required-forms](http://www.mtsd.org/parents/required-forms).

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify First Student/Bus Drivers of student(s) medical information/conditions.

**Exclusion Rules – Policy 203:**

Students are generally excluded from school if they have a temperature that exceeds 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Students are also excluded at the discretion of the school nurse for illness or injury. In addition, students are excluded from school for these diseases and duration:

- Chicken Pox – excluded until 5 days after the appearance of the last crop of vesicles.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) – excluded until 24 hours after the start of the appropriate medication.
- Strep infections / scarlet fever – excluded until 24 hours after the start of appropriate medication.
- Pediculosis (head lice) – Students with live head lice will be sent home from school (for treatment) at the school nurse's direction. Once the student has been appropriately treated, s/he may return to class. Students should be checked by the school nurse upon return to school and should be free from live lice. Students may attend school even if Nits persist.
- Shingles – may attend school at the discretion of the school nurse if vesicles can be covered.
- Impetigo – excluded until 24 hours after the start of appropriate medication.
- Ringworm – excluded until immediately after the first treatment and if rash can be covered.
- Scabies – after completion of appropriate treatment
- Fever (>100 degrees F), vomiting, or diarrhea – excluded from school until fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication (Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen) for 24 hours or 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
- This is not exclusive; other diseases may also require exclusion. Students will be readmitted at the discretion of the school nurse.

**Health Examinations/Screenings – Policy 209:**

Annual screenings for vision, height, weight, and body mass index are state-mandated for all students. In addition, hearing screenings are mandated annually for all students in Kindergarten through third grade and seventh and eleventh grades. BMI results will be released to parents electronically through the Infinite Campus portal.

**Immunizations and Communicable Diseases – Policy 203:**

The Pennsylvania Department of Health oversees school immunization regulations. All completed immunizations must be on file with the school within the first 5 days of school attendance. Any student with incomplete immunizations for their grade level on the first day of school will be excluded from school until their immunizations are caught up. The immunization requirements are listed below:



**Children in ALL grades (K-12) need the following:**

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of measles
- 2 doses of mumps
- 2 doses of rubella (German measles)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

**7th Grade ADDITIONAL immunization requirements for entry:**

- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) (if five years have elapsed since last tetanus immunization)

**12th Grade ADDITIONAL immunization requirements for entry:**

- Second dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) required for entry into 12th grade and/or before 18 years of age. If the first dose was given at 16 years of age or older, only one dose is required.

**Medications - Policy 210:**

If possible, medication should be administered at home. Medications will be administered during school hours only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the student's health, and the student would be unable to attend school if the medicine were not made available. All medications are dispensed from the health office and must be given to the school/staff nurse by the parent/guardian or designated responsible adult. Students are not permitted to transport medication to and from school.

All over-the-counter medications must be in the original container and provided by the parent. The school does not have stock pain reliever/fever reducing medications on hand. Only 14 doses of an over-the-counter medication can be given by the school nurse before a physician prescription must be provided.

Prescription medication must be in a current and properly labeled prescription bottle, including the student's name, doctor, medicine name, dosage, and time it is to be given, please request an empty labeled bottle from your pharmacy for school use.

For Nurses to dispense any prescribed or over-the-counter medication, a medication authorization form signed by both the parent/guardian and physician must be submitted. Medication Authorization forms must be submitted each school year and with change in medication (dosage, time, type of medication, etc.). Medication Authorization forms can be found on the district website at [www.mtsd.org/who-we-are/district-offices/health-service/health-service](http://www.mtsd.org/who-we-are/district-offices/health-service/health-service) under the procedure tab.

Please see Policy 210, Medications, for additional information regarding medication administration during field trips and self-administration by the student for emergency medications. Family members may be asked to accompany student on field trips for medication administration or based on student's current health status needs. Parents should coordinate with building nurses for medication and field trip considerations.

**Other Medical Procedures:**

Students who require medical procedures at school, i.e., catheterization, blood sugar testing, blood pressure, tube feedings, etc., must have a signed authorization form from both the prescribing physician and the parent/guardian. Parents must provide all necessary supplies for treatments/procedures to be carried out.

**Assistive Devices:**

Any student presenting to school with medical assistive devices (crutches, walking boots, casts, splints, etc.) should present to nurse office with physician orders for activity accommodations, weight bearing status, restrictions, etc. Parents should call school nurse and update as to treatment plan, activities allowed, and accommodations needed. Parents must coordinate with building nurses for paperwork.

**Possession/Administration of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors Policy – Policy 210.1:**

Before a student may self-carry or administer an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in the school setting, the following is required:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian that the school complies with the order of the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring the medication is taken and relieving the district and its employees of responsibility for the benefits or consequences of the prescribed medication.
3. A written statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant that states:
  - a. Name of the drug.
  - b. Prescribed dosage.
  - c. Times medication is to be taken.
  - d. Length of time medication is prescribed.
  - e. Diagnosis or reason medication is needed.
  - f. Potential serious reaction or side effects of medication.
  - g. Emergency response.
  - h. If a child is qualified and able to self-administer the medication.

Please see our website for Policy 210.1, Possession/Administration of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors, for additional information.

**Diabetes Management – Policy 209.3:**

Student Possession and Use of Diabetes Medication and Monitoring Equipment Requirements: A written request from the parent/guardian that the school complies with the instructions of the student's health care practitioner must be provided. The parent/guardian request shall include a statement relieving the district and its employees of responsibility for the prescribed medication or monitoring equipment and acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring that the medication is taken, or the monitoring equipment is used.

Students wanting to self-manage their diabetic care must provide appropriate physician scripts and sign off on management competencies with school nurse. Parents must sign off approval for student to self-manage diabetes at school. Parents/Students will keep school nurse updated on all current orders/changes in condition. Parents must coordinate with building nurses for paperwork.

Please see additional important information regarding Diabetes Management by reviewing Policy 209.3, Diabetes Management.

**Food Allergy Management – Policy 209.1:**

The school nurse will develop an individualized healthcare plan best to meet the needs of students with food allergies. The care plan shall include provided information to the school nutrition service regarding each student with documented severe or life-threatening food allergies.

Please see additional important information regarding definitions of food allergy, guidelines, and delegation of responsibility by reviewing Policy 209.1, Food Allergy Management.

**Physical/Dental Exams – Policy 209:**

Physicals are required upon entrance to school (kindergarten), grades 6 and 11. Private physicals are preferred. If parents/guardians do not provide a private physical, a school physical (at no cost) will be scheduled with parent permission. Parents can request to be present at school physical by sending a note to the school nurse.

Dentals are required upon entrance to school (kindergarten), grades 3 and 7. Private dentals are preferred. If parents/guardians do not provide a private dental, a school dental (at no cost) will be scheduled with parent permission. Parents can request to be present at school dental by sending a note to the school nurse.

**Severe Allergic Reaction and Fragrance Sensitivity – Policy 209.2:**

Because of fragrance sensitivities, allergies, and indoor air quality, MTSD monitors the use of highly fragrant personal care products and environmental products that may adversely affect the health of the staff and students. Please see additional important information by reviewing Policy 209.2, Severe Allergic Reaction and Fragrance Sensitivity

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## SECTION H: TRANSPORTATION

The following section outlines what is expected of students who ride a school bus contracted by the Millcreek Township School District. Failure to follow the rules of conduct may result in loss of transportation.

### **Behavior on School Buses / Vans:**

Because the driver must keep his/her attention upon the highway and the operation of his/her bus, s/he cannot jeopardize the safety of all students because of the behavior of a few.

Therefore, the following regulations shall be strictly enforced.

1. No student shall throw, shoot squirt guns, or otherwise propel any paper, metal, or other substance in or around the school bus.
2. No student shall use loud or profane language in or around the school bus.
3. No student shall indulge in pushing, fighting, or other unruly behavior in or around the school bus.
4. No student shall deliberately disobey, abuse, or otherwise show disrespect for the driver of the vehicle.
5. All students shall remain seated at all times while on the bus. Keep the aisle clear.
6. All students shall not raise or lower the windows at any time without first receiving permission from the driver. Do not throw anything out of the bus window. Keep hands, head, and arms inside the bus.
7. No student shall deliberately mar, deface, or tamper with any part of the vehicle. The damage will be paid for by the individual.
8. There shall be no smoking or vaping in or around the vehicle at any time. The lighting of matches in or around the bus is prohibited.
9. There shall be no eating or drinking on the bus.
10. There shall be no littering from the vehicle or in the vehicle. Students are not to throw paper or debris on the floor of the vehicle.
11. Spitting is prohibited on the bus.
12. Students shall be courteous to fellow pupils, the driver, and the bus monitor.
13. The driver has a similar authority on the bus as the teacher in the classroom.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities for Transportation:**

While the law permits the school district to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents of students from exercising responsibility and supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day.

### **Regulations:**

1. Waiting:
  - Pupils must be at the bus stop no less than five (5) minutes and no more than ten (10) minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time. If the school bus does not arrive at the bus stop on time because of mechanical failure, road, or weather

conditions, the pupil is expected to wait a reasonable length of time (at least 1/2 hour in inclement weather) then return to his/her home.

- During the dismissal process, buses will depart once the parking lots have cleared, and teachers have returned to the building or have given permission for dismissal at some schools. At the high school, we adhere to a specific schedule coordinated with law enforcement for our departure. After the buses have left, they will not return to the schools unless there was a delay attributed to a district employee.

2. Behavior at Bus Stop:

- Students should go directly from home to the bus stop using good safety practices when walking in areas where sidewalks are not provided.
- Students should remain in the designated waiting areas, paying very special attention to property owners' rights in the vicinity.
- As they arrive at the stop, students should get in line, wait for a reasonable and safe distance from the roadway, and use the concept of a good school and community citizenship while waiting for the bus.
- Students should board and leave the bus in a quiet, orderly manner.
- Students will be picked up at AUTHORIZED bus stops only. Students will be dropped off at AUTHORIZED bus stops only.

3. Video Monitoring:

- The District shall permit the use of video cameras capable of recording audio and video on school buses to aid in student discipline control.

4. Responsibility of Students to the Bus Driver:

- The bus driver is responsible for the student's safety on his/her bus, and as such, deserves the same respect and cooperation as the teacher in the classroom.
- Requests from the bus driver are to be honored by the students without question.
- In considering the bus to be an extension of the classroom, the board shall require students to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.
- Students who become a serious disciplinary problem on the bus may have their riding privileges suspended by the responsible principal. In such cases, the children's parents become responsible for seeing that their children get to and from school safely.