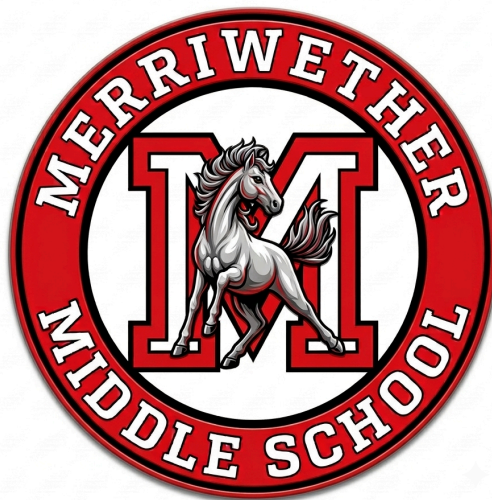


Merriwether Middle School Student Handbook

2026-2027



**430 Murrah Road
North Augusta, SC 29860**

**Telephone: 803- 279-2511
Fax: 803-279-1710**

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

**Sara-Beth Brown
Principal**

**Antwaun Hillary
Assistant Principal**

WELCOME TO MERRIWETHER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dear Mustangs,

At Merriwether Middle School, we are committed to providing each of you with opportunities for success. We understand and appreciate the uniqueness of each of you and work to support your intellectual, emotional, social, and physical growth during middle school. We want our school, with your help, to challenge you, foster positive self esteem, and be a warm, caring environment for all. To help ensure this, we expect all students to contribute to this positive community through appropriate behavior and attitudes, and we invite you to play an active role in making this a successful year.

Thank you for the hard work and dedication you and your families show daily. Becoming active members of our school community is what makes MMS a premier place to be! Please familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. Let us know if we can be of assistance to you. We are looking forward to a wonderful 2026-2027 school year!

Mrs. Brown and Mr. Hillary

Arrival and Dismissal

Doors Open: 7:10
Breakfast Served: 7:10-7:30
First Bell: 7:40
Tardy Bell: 7:45
Dismissal: 3:10

Bus: Arrival of bus students will be through the front doors. Dismissal of bus students will be through the main hallway doors. Students are only allowed to ride the bus to their designated address.

Car: Car riders will enter/dismiss through the canteen entrance and report to the gym to be held until released. Students not picked up by 3:35 will be assigned to the aftercare program at the parent's expense. **Car riders that arrive after 7:40 a.m. must enter through the front entrance. No student should be dropped off in the front of the school prior to 7:40.*

Early Dismissal: Students may only be signed out in the front office by a parent, guardian, or authorized individual presenting a valid ID. If someone not listed is needed to pick up a student, written notification in advance is requested.
****There will be no early dismissals after 2:45 pm.**

Attendance Regulations

Regular attendance at school is necessary if a student is to make satisfactory educational progress. Therefore, students are expected and encouraged to attend school regularly. **Students who are absent from school may not participate in extracurricular or school sponsored activities that day.**

If a student is absent and returns to school without a physician's note, the student must bring a note from their parent/guardian stating why the student was absent from school.

Lawful Absences: Lawful / excusable absences are those necessitated by:

1. Illness of the student to the degree that attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others.
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. Participation in a school-related activity that has received prior approval by the principal.
4. Approved religious holidays.
5. Special circumstances cleared in advance by the administration in accordance with local board policies.

Unlawful Absences: Unlawful absence is defined to mean a student's willful absence from school without the knowledge of a parent, or a student's absence from school without acceptable cause with the knowledge of the parent.

Absence Excuses: A note from a parent/guardian, physician, dentist or other recognized licensed/certified medical practitioner or legal officer is required for each absence. The note shall be dated and shall include the date(s) of absence(s), the reason(s) for the absence(s), telephone number of the parent/guardian and the required signature. Students **are not allowed** to miss more than **ten (10)** days unless there is verifiable documentation for each absence above 10. Verifiable documentation must be received within **three (3) days** from the date of return to school and is defined as a written statement from an appropriate agency, physician or dentist. **The required parent notes are not considered documentation for absences above 10 days.**

Intervention for Unlawful Absences

1. Upon a student accumulating three (3) consecutive or a total of five (5) unexcused absences, the student is considered truant. A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting a meeting. Administration will meet with the parents/guardian and/or student to develop a plan to improve attendance.
2. Upon two or more unexcused absences, the student will then be considered a habitual truant and a *District Attendance Plan* will be implemented with the District Truancy Officer, parent/guardian and student.
3. Upon two or more unexcused absences, the Truancy Officer will schedule a Truancy tribunal meeting to be held at the District Office. Refusal to participate in the tribunal will result in an automatic referral to court.
4. Upon one or more unexcused absence, District/School Administration shall send the student (ages 12-17) to the Edgefield County School District Alternative Program for a minimum of 45 school days. Refusal to attend the Alternative Program will result in the automatic referral to court.
5. Once at the Alternative Program, if a student accumulates an additional unexcused absence, the Truancy Officer will refer parents/guardian and the student to court.

Tardies: When a student reports to school late, **after 7:45** he/she must sign in at the office. A parent/guardian needs to come in with the student and explain the reason for the tardiness. The same excuses used for absences are accepted for tardiness. All other reasons will be credited with an unexcused tardy.

During the school day, tardiness to class interrupts learning time for the entire class. Students should organize their materials and use their time wisely before school, at lunch, and after school to keep trips to lockers and other stops to a minimum. Students tardy to class must get a pass from the teacher. If a student needs to go to the nurse or restroom permission must be obtained from the teacher prior to going to avoid tardiness to class. The office will not write passes except for late arrivals to school. Those late to class without passes will be credited with an unexcused tardy by the teacher and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Bus Guidelines

Students must be registered for ECSD Bus transportation. Registration is completed utilizing Final Forms and is subject to all timelines set forth by the Transportation Office. Some items to note about bus transportation:

- **Students are allowed only 1 pick-up and 1 drop-off address.**
- **No temporary bus changes are allowed.** If you move to a new address, you must update your information in Final Forms and submit it to the school. There will be a 5 day processing time.
- Should you need to make a change, for example, a student now needs to go to daycare, grandmothers, etc...you must complete a caregiver form and submit it to the school. There will be a 5-day processing time (previously 10 days). No one will be allowed to ride the same day the form is received. Also, any change will remain in effect for the remainder of the school year. Only 1 bus change per year is allowed.
- **No student will be allowed to ride the bus if the bus driver does not have the proper paperwork. Even if you rode the bus the previous school term, you must submit new paperwork in order to be eligible to ride the bus.**
- Any student who does not ride the bus for 90 days will be dropped from the route. They will have to reregister, complete registration paperwork, and go through the same 5-day processing time as a new rider.
- Bus routes are constantly changing due to new students added to routes. Your student's stop is subject to change during the school year. In addition to stop changes, time changes could occur as well.
- No driver is allowed to have a conversation about a student at a bus stop. Any questions or concerns you may have need to be addressed in a meeting. Please call the transportation office at 803-275-1776 if you wish to set up a meeting with your student's bus driver.

- In the event of a bus breakdown or accident, no parent will be allowed to come and get their student off the bus. We will assess the situation and if necessary, an administrator will come to the location to release the students. No bus driver is allowed to release students to anyone.
- Students who are in band and play instruments larger than their book bag will need to find alternate transportation on days they need to bring their instrument home. No student will be allowed on the bus with any instrument larger than their book bag. In addition, if a student is on crutches, special transportation arrangements will be made for the student until they are off the crutches.
- There are no flowers, balloons, glass, animals, dirt/plant, etc...allowed on the buses.

Communication

Change of Contact Information: If a student moves during the year, it is imperative that the change of address and telephone number be reported to the guidance and main office. We must have each student's 911 address and emergency contacts on file. If a phone is disconnected or changed, the new number or an alternate emergency contact number **MUST** be given to the attendance clerk.

Emergency School Closings: When inclement weather occurs, district administration will decide if school closings may be necessary. This decision will be broadcast using district communication means such as: ParentSquare, phone and email blast, social media, radio stations, and television stations.

Telephones: Students are not to use the school telephone or cell phones to make calls or send texts from school. Students violating this policy will be disciplined according to the cell phone policy. In the event of an emergency, a school employee will make the necessary calls. In case of illness, the nurse will make the necessary call. Students will not be called to answer the phone during school hours. Emergency messages from the parents or guardian may be left with the school secretary. We strongly encourage that all arrangements be made in advance to avoid the necessity for phone calls.

Cell Phone Policy: Beginning in January of 2025, The state of South Carolina and ECSD adopted and implemented the Free to Focus SC and ECSD Cell Phone Policy. The policy is designed to create a phone-free school environment that fosters a positive learning experience free from electronic distractions. In prohibiting the use of personal electronic devices during the school day, this policy aims to enhance focus and engagement, allowing students to develop the college and career-ready skills outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. Students will have more opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions, collaborate with peers, and cultivate the essential skills necessary for college, career, and life success.

Refusal to turn over a device to an administrator will result in two days of out-of-school suspension, and the student will not be allowed to bring their device on campus for the remainder of the year.

The school district reserves the right to view the contents of electronic devices under certain circumstances, including reasonable suspicion of inappropriate or illegal content or activity.

Offense	Consequences
1st Offense	Verbal warning, device powered off and put away. This will be done at the time of the offense by the staff member present.
2nd Offense	Device confiscated, returned to student at the end of the school day. Only an administrator has the authority to confiscate an electronic device. The administrator will secure the device in a locking pouch or secure area, which will remain in the student's possession until the end of the school day. At dismissal, the student will go to the front office or designated area to get access to the device.
3rd Offense	Device confiscated, parent/guardian must pick up, sign acknowledgment of policy.
4th Offense	Students will no longer be allowed to bring their cell phones or personal electronic devices on campus for the remainder of the school year. Two days of in-school suspension will be assigned. Students and parents will have the option to secure the device in a locking pouch

	each day. This will be the student's responsibility to follow through. Failure to comply will result in refusal to obey.
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Disciplinary Procedures

Students are expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with instruction and maintain a mutual respect for others. The ECSD Discipline Code of Conduct that defines acceptable standards of behavior and the consequences for noncompliance. The entirety of the Code of Conduct for Middle School may be found at the end of this Handbook. Parents and students are expected to comply with all aspects of the discipline code. Parents and students should carefully read this code and return the necessary signed papers to the school showing that they have read and understand it.

At Merriwether Middle School, we do things: **"The Mustang Way"**

- BE ON TIME.
- BE RESPECTFUL.
- DO THE RIGHT THING.
- DO YOUR ABSOLUTE BEST!

*We also believe that there are NO EXCUSES for students to be unkind!

School Wide Expectations of Students:

- Read and follow all handbook regulations and the Code of Conduct for Edgefield County.
- Follow instructions of any teacher or staff member the first time given.
- Be on time and in an assigned area at all times.
- Avoid disorderly conduct that could cause bodily harm or damage to property, or interruptions of instruction.
- Walk quietly on the right side of the hallway at all times, ensuring you do not disrupt others.
- Keep our school and grounds clean and free of litter and graffiti.
- Food and drinks may only be consumed in the cafeteria or canteen unless in a spill-proof water bottle.
- **Leave unnecessary items at home. Students who have unnecessary items at school (electronics, toys, games, etc, will be subject to disciplinary policies as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct).** The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.

Cafeteria Expectations: All students are expected to behave as responsible citizens in the cafeteria. Specifically, students should not:

- Students entering the cafeteria to eat lunch should go directly to the lunch line without breaking or changing lines.
- Students should display appropriate table manners, refraining from playing with or throwing food.
- Inside voices should be maintained.
- Upon finishing lunch, students should clear the table of trays and trash.
- No outside food will be allowed to be delivered to students during school hours.

Dress Code

Appropriate and non-distracting attire shall be worn in the educational setting. This includes off-campus activities such as field trips, performances and school sponsored events. Students are expected to show pride in themselves and their school by having their dress and appearance in accordance with acceptable standards. Our main concern is that students dress so that their appearance will not distract from the learning process in the classroom.

The following items are not permitted:

- Skirts and shorts NOT at least fingertip length when standing (leggings or tights do not substitute for length)
- Leggings and tights worn as pants must have a shirt covering the student's bottom. The shirt should COMPLETELY cover the student's bottom.
- Silk, tight-fitting onesies
- Hats, Head Scarfs, Hoods, and Head Coverings must be removed once a student enters the building
- Tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, tops with string straps and plunging necklines that expose cleavage
- Bare midribs and backs, "racerbacks"

- See-through garments
- Pants with tears/holes exposing skin above mid-thigh
- Excessively long wallet/pocket chains (longer than 6 inches)
- Sagging pants showing undergarments or gym shorts
- Bedroom shoes (slippers), loungewear/pajamas, and blankets
- Clothing that promotes tobacco, alcohol, drugs, violence, gangs, or disrespect to others.

State Health Regulations require that shoes and shirts must be worn at all times in a public building.

The display of obscene or profane language or gestures on clothing may result in an out-of-school suspension. While the displayed message may not be obscene or profane, the message conveyed may still be deemed inappropriate for the high school, and students will be asked not to wear the clothing.

The administration will make the final judgment on the appropriateness of clothing and/or appearance and reserves the right to prohibit students from wearing any articles of clothing or other items which lead to or may foreseeably result in the disruption of or interference with the school environment. The administration reserves the right to require a student to change clothes if what he or she is wearing is deemed to be inappropriate for school. In the event the administration determines a student's dress is inappropriate for school, administration will follow the following procedures:

Consequences

- Offense 1: Verbal Warning and Parent Contact with possible immediate removal from class setting
- Offense 2: Level 1 Consequences with Parent Contact
- Offense 3+: Level 1 Offense and beyond given frequency and severity

Note: When a student violates the dress code, administration will confiscate the inappropriate clothing **and** provide alternative clothing. If a student refuses to wear alternative clothing, the student will be assigned to ISS for the remainder of the day if the parent cannot bring a change of clothing that adheres to the Dress Code.

Enrollment and Withdrawals

New Students: New Students must validate district residence by providing proof of residency upon enrollment. Proofs of residency are: mortgage statement, lease agreement, or tax receipt AND power, gas, or water bill with service address, or homeowners insurance statement. The birth certificate, immunization record, report card and/or withdrawal form from the former school is necessary to register. The school will obtain records regarding testing, etc. from the school once you grant a release of information. ECSD offers tuition free enrollment for students from outside our district as space allows.

Withdrawals or Transfers: Any student withdrawing from school is expected to leave debt free and in good standing. All books, technological devices, chargers, etc must be returned and all fees paid before a student is cleared for withdrawal. The parent or guardian will need to provide the next school of enrollment when signing the withdrawal form. Please allow 24 hours for the preparation of any withdrawal paperwork.

Extracurricular Activities

Participation in extracurricular activities such as dances and sports is a privilege. Participation can be denied if a student is continuously in violation of school/district rules. Field trips provide educational opportunities outside the normal classroom environment. Student attendance at these functions may be denied to those who choose to violate school policies. In such cases, the student will participate in an alternate assignment that would allow the student the opportunity to concentrate on the same or similar content.

All students should be picked up from after-school functions as soon as the dance, field trip, or sporting event is over. Students picked up late from these events may be unable to attend the next after-school function. If a student is left at an after-school function two times, the student may be prohibited from attending all after-school functions for the remainder of the year.

Financial Information

Fees: Locker Rental Fee- \$5.00
Lost/Damaged Locks- \$5.00

- All fees must be paid by the date set for an activity/field trip.
- All checks should be made for the correct amount and made payable to Merriwether Middle School. (Unless specified) Any returned checks will be subject to all applicable fees.
- Parents of any student who has a financial obligation to the school/district (i.e., lost textbooks, library books, damaged technology devices, fees, fundraiser money, etc.) that is not cleared within the prescribed time will be notified. Failure to fulfill this obligation or have a plan approved by the school or district authority will result in sanctions being taken by the school/district to collect the outstanding obligation.

Fundraising: Fundraising is strictly prohibited unless it is a school-sponsored fundraiser.

Instruction

Academic Information: Each student will be assigned to a team of teachers who will instruct him/her in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies. In addition to the core academics, students will be offered exploratory and elective classes. Additional academic assistance for qualifying students is offered through our special services department and computer-assisted instruction.

Band: Band is offered for students who are interested in taking a music course.

Bookbags: Students may have a mesh or solid book bag. No rolling book bags are permitted in middle school. Students are not permitted to have their book bags, duffle bags, or cinch sacks in classrooms. Small purses may be carried.

Comprehensive Health Education: Comprehensive Health Education is optional for students and parents will be notified in advance of when this will occur so that they have the ability to opt out for their child if they so desire.

Grading: The same numerical grading system is consistently used throughout the district.

A= Excellent (90-100)

B= Above Average (80-89)

C= Average (70-79)

D= Passing but needs improvement (60-69)

F= Failing (59- and below)

High School Credit Courses Available: Recommended students (based on data) may take English I, Geometry with Statistics, Spanish, Vet Science and Animal Care, and Honors Art or Drama for high school credit in the 8th grade. Students in 7th or 8th grade may also complete Fundamentals of Computing for high school credit.

Intercession/Summer School: Please encourage your child to do their absolute best academically. Students who are not performing to standard will be invited to attend intercession during breaks. At the end of the year if the student has failed a core subject, the student will be encouraged to attend summer school. Fees for intercession and summer school are as followed:

**\$75 for Intersession
\$200 for Summer School**

iReady My Path: The purpose of iReady My Path is to provide personalized instruction and support for the needs of all learners. The recommended usage is that students pass at least two math and two reading lessons per week, spending around 45-50 minutes utilizing the program. Read 180 students are exempt from the reading requirement as they use a different technology component.

Physical Education: All middle school students are required to take physical education classes each year, except in rare circumstances where scheduling does not permit. In addition to the classroom rules of the physical education classes, students must dress out for class. Athletic shoes must be worn. No street shoes will be allowed on the gymnasium floor. The physical education teachers will give specific guidelines as to the proper type and length of clothes. Failure to dress out may be reflected in a student’s grade and/or result in disciplinary action.

Textbooks: All state adopted textbooks are available to students. Each student is responsible for returning his or her textbooks in that same condition. If the book is returned damaged or with markings not noted at issue, the student must pay a fine. If a book is lost or damaged, the *cost will be determined by the schedule provided by the State Department of Education. Periodic checks will be held throughout the year.* **Students will not be issued another book/devices until the lost book/device has been paid for.** The student is responsible for his/her textbooks even if the books are stolen from a locker or book bag. See the textbook coordinator for textbook concerns or if you have special needs.

Secondary Grading Guidelines: As a district, we believe we should meet students at their instructional levels and move them to the next level through rigorous and challenging coursework aligned with each student's individual needs. Additionally, we want to communicate as clearly and often as possible about how each child is doing and our expectations for student success. Specifically, we believe students, teachers, and parents are partners in the learning process and everyone involved needs to understand where each student is performing academically and how to help them reach their individual goals. In this endeavor to begin the shift to mastery-based assessment practices in order to provide more accurate information (grades) to parents and students about a student’s knowledge/mastery of grade level content, we have developed a set of district-wide assessment and grading practices for students in grades 6-12. Based on research and best practices, mastery has been defined as a grade of 80 or above.

Grade Categories and Weights:

Grading Category	Grading Weights
Check for Understanding/Homework	5% of quarter grade
Formative Assessments	35% of quarter grade
Summative Assessments	60% of quarter grade

Note: At the beginning of the year, a teacher may choose to opt out of the Check for Understanding/HW category, which would result in a grading scale of 40% formative and 60% summative. Teachers will decide this at the beginning of the year and seek administrator approval.

Assessment Definitions & Descriptions:

Check for Understanding/Homework (CFU/HW): 5%

CFU:

- Assignments used to guide instruction and the instructional needs of students (i.e., exit tickets, homework; and/or verbal and written responses, etc.)
- Graded for completion
- Given at the teacher’s discretion

Homework: (Per ECSD School Board Policy IKB) Assigned homework should be a quality learning opportunity that prepares students for engaging learning experiences and provides opportunities for students to practice necessary skills to reinforce learning outside of the classroom. The following practices will be applied to homework assignments:

- Graded for completion;
- A continuation of classwork, unfinished classwork or reinforcement of skills/ content;
- May be assigned at any time based on instructional needs; and
- Assigned homework grades will be included in the CFU/HW category which is weighted 5%;
- The following will be considered when assigning homework:
 - online/offline resources,
 - paper/pencil options,
 - resources at home, and

- support at home.
- Dual Credit courses will follow the homework policy of the host university or technical college.

Formative Assessments: 35%

Formative assessments are defined as assessments for students to practice and to inform instructional steps towards mastery of standards/skills. (i.e., quizzes, initial drafts, minor lab assignments, and other practice assignments, etc.)

- Q1-Q3: Students will have between 6-12 formative assignments per nine weeks
- Q4: Students will have between 4-10 formative assessments

Summative Assessments: 60%

Summative assessments are defined as “end performance” assessments that are used to determine student mastery of a set of standards and/or skills. (i.e., tests, final drafts of writing assignments, projects, major lab assignments, performance assessments, and presentations, etc.)

- Q1-Q3: Students will have between 3-5 summative assessments per nine weeks
- Q4: Students will have between 2-4 summative assessments

Grading Practices:

- All assignments must be converted to a 100 point scale prior to being recorded in the gradebook.
- Assignments will only be entered into Gradebook one time and may not be duplicated or recorded more than once.
- Teachers use professional judgment when designing their assessments in order to effectively promote learning for each student and to determine if reassessment is most appropriate to accurately reflect the student's mastery of the learning objectives.
- Retakes:
 - Any summative may be retaken if the original score is below an 80 **and** the student completes remediation/tutoring.
 - Students can be disqualified from a retake if any of the following occurred:
 - Cheating/Plagiarism (see Academic Integrity Guidelines below for more detail)
 - First attempt was incomplete or unsatisfactory (student left items blank, wrote IDK, etc.)
 - Formatives have been consistently turned in past deadlines
 - Student has not participated in class (sleeping, refusal to complete assignments, etc)
- Students must make arrangements with the teacher within 5 school days of grade being posted in PowerSchool and must retake summative assessment within 10 school days of the grade being posted in PowerSchool. Students maintain eligibility for retakes on assignments and assessments in which grades are not posted by the teacher in the required timeframe. See final bullet of this section for teacher deadlines to post grades.
- The retake should be scored for accuracy. The accurate grade should be recorded. Since research indicates that a minimum score of 80 represents mastery, and in an effort to maintain the integrity of strong work ethic while also checking for mastery, **the maximum grade that can be earned on a retake is an 80**. The retake grade should replace the original grade if it is higher than the original grade. This means that a student scoring anything between 80-100 on the retake would be a final grade of 80.
- High School Credit Final Exams and Major Projects are excluded from retakes.
- Teachers have the discretion on whether or not to offer retakes on any formative assessments, following the same criteria for summative retakes.
- For students with disabilities, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to administer retakes. Retakes should not be given to the Resource/Special Education teacher to administer, as their time **must** be spent providing services outlined in the student's IEP.
- Extra credit and group grades will **not** be given.
- Final grades at the end of quarter, semester, and year should reflect the grade earned.
- Grades/Feedback should be provided to students and entered into Powerschool grade book within **seven** school days of due date or assessment. An exception will be made when a student is absent and **Policy IH** has been applied for makeup work purposes and/or Whole-Class reteaching and reassessment must occur.

Whole-Class Reteaching & Reassessment : If **50% or more** of students in a class section fail a major summative assessment, it is flagged as a *Systemic Instructional Mismatch*, triggering the following action steps:

1. Pause & Reflect

- **Hold Grades:** Delay entering final failing marks into PowerSchool.

- **Alert Administration** per school process
- **Analyze Data:** Pinpoint the specific standards or question types where the breakdown occurred to evaluate instruction (pacing, clarity, or depth).

2. Reteach (In-Class)

- **Tier 1 Time:** Dedicate standard class time to re-teaching the failed concepts. Remediation *cannot* be shifted to before or after school.
- **New Strategies:** incorporate different instructional strategies while maintaining fidelity to rigor of standards and required high quality instructional materials.

3. Reassess & Record

- **Alternative Format:** Administer a new version of the assessment that tests the same standards and rigor using different questions or prompts. This alternate assessment should be collectively developed by teachers of the same course to maximize consistency.
- **Shared Accountability:** The teacher provides the in-class instruction and opportunity; the student is responsible for actively participating and completing the new assessment.
- **Final Grade:** Record the higher of the two scores (up to 100%)
- This Alternative assessment counts as the retake. No additional retakes would be given to individual students who did not pass the alternative.
- If 50% or more of the students continue to fail the summative reassessment, the teacher should reach out to administration.

Deadlines

- If Absent: Students must make arrangements with the teacher within 5 school days of returning to school and complete work within 10 school days.
- If Present and assignment is not submitted (late work):
 - For graded assignments, a grace period of 1 school day will be given (after one day, teacher discretion will apply)
 - If work is not submitted by the teacher's deadline, assignment will drop a letter grade each day after; the highest grade will be a 50;
 - If assignment is still not submitted, the zero stays;
- Grades are final when quarter is locked.

It is the school's responsibility to provide time **within the school day and outside of the school day for remediation and tutoring. Procedures should be in place to notify parents of these opportunities and communicate progress (or concerns) at various times throughout the year including Parent Portal, Interims, Report Cards and individual student notifications as needed (Ex. phone calls or emails). If a student is performing below grade level standards, parents should be informed and kept abreast, prior to the interim and/or report card distribution.*

Academic Integrity Guidelines

Academic Integrity:

- is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and principled practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- is further defined as respect for the intellectual property of others and submission of only authentic pieces of work with the ideas of others fully acknowledged
- supports a school-wide culture of integrity by not aiding or encouraging others to be academically dishonest.

It is absolutely essential that all assignments—written, oral, digital, or artistic—completed by a student for assessment completely and authentically use the student's own language and expression. Any sources used or referred to—whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase—must be fully and appropriately acknowledged or cited. This includes content generated by AI tools. Students must ensure that any AI-generated content is used ethically, with clear

acknowledgment of its use, and not presented as their own original work. There will be a series of consequences for students who are academically dishonest.

In light of the growing role of AI in education, it is equally vital for schools and teachers to continue to educate themselves about AI technologies and their implications. These guidelines will help educators guide students in understanding the ethical use of AI, ensuring that they can navigate these tools responsibly. By fostering an environment of integrity and ethical use of technology, educators can better prepare students for the challenges of the digital age.

The Role of the School

- The school will promote these guidelines through its website and student handbook and will revisit it annually to make sure it is updated and accurate.
- This topic will be addressed in-depth in at least one core academic area at the start of each school year.

Teachers are expected to:

- provide sufficient guidance and instruction for students on what constitutes academic dishonesty in their subject area and how it can be avoided,
- provide guidance about how to conduct research and appropriately cite evidence,
- teach students the difference between collaboration and collusion,
- include subject-specific language about academic dishonesty in their syllabi,
- confirm that, to the best of their knowledge and using available technologies, all students' work accepted or submitted is the authentic work of each student,
- reflect on why students might be tempted to be academically dishonest in their courses and to avoid creating situations that tend to encourage academic dishonesty,
- teach the importance of deadlines and adherence to them
- use provided technologies (i.e. Classwise Focus) during testing situations to lock down devices to minimize temptation for academic dishonesty.

Student Roles and Responsibilities

The academically honest student **DOES:**

- understand the concept of academic honesty, intellectual property and plagiarism,
- ensure that all work submitted for assessment is authentic,
- understand the consequences of committing academic misconduct, regarding both school-based work and external examinations and assessments,
- document source material formally and appropriately
- use direct quotations, paraphrases and summaries in an appropriate manner,
- bring the effort of others who cheat to the attention of school officials; actively support honesty among classmates "if you see something, say something,"
- abide by the rules for technology in the classroom and in examinations,
- contribute equally to the work of a group in collaborative assignments, and
- abide by exam rules.

The academically honest student **DOES NOT:**

- copy another student's work,
- allow another student to copy his/her work and/or submit it,
- use notes during a test unless allowed by the teacher or permitted by the examination rules,
- copy from or communicate with another student during a test,
- disrupt an examination or distract other students,
- impersonate another student,
- write essays for other students,
- do homework for other students,
- steal examination papers
- present material written by another student and/or borrowed from the internet as his/her own,

- purchase and submit pieces written by someone else,
- write down, photograph or record any part of a test or exam.
- use AI beyond the explicit directions from the teacher to create or complete specific assignments

Definitions

Academic Honesty:

- is a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment.
- is further defined as respect for the intellectual property of others and submission of only authentic pieces of work with the ideas of others fully acknowledged
- supports a school-wide culture of integrity by not aiding or encouraging others to be academically dishonest.

Authentic Work - based on a student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged.

Cheating - using unauthorized answers or sources to receive credit for school work.

Collaboration - loosely defined as: working together on a common aim with shared information. This is an open and cooperative behavior that does not result in collusion (see below for definition).

Collusion - defined as supporting academic dishonesty by another student, including allowing one's work to be copied or submitted by another or any cooperative act intended to cheat or deceive others.

Duplication of Work - the presentation of the same work for different assignments, assessment components or other requirements.

Intellectual Property - includes different forms of property rights; such as: patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright. It is important that students understand that all forms of intellectual and creative expression must be respected and are protected by national and international laws. This includes illegal music and video downloads and illegal file sharing.

Misconduct during Examinations

- when a student tries to gain an unfair advantage during an examination that affects the results of that student or another student. Some examples are:
- students have unauthorized materials during exams (cell phones, wearable technology, textbooks, cheat sheets, writing on hands/arms, etc.)
- disobeying any classroom or test room rules during exams
- a student communicates or tries to communicate with another student during an examination
- copying another student's work during an exam

Plagiarism - the representation of the ideas or work of another person as a student's own, including copying text or works of art without proper acknowledgment. This act can be intentional or unintentional. Work is defined as, but not limited to, a quote, a phrase, complex idea, research, table, chart, graphic, text, internet resource, paper or thesis. Paraphrasing any of the above without proper citation is also plagiarism.

- When quoting others, students should develop the habit of using quotation marks to indicate that the wording is not their own, otherwise they will commit plagiarism.
- Some examples are:
 - copying information from a book or website without using quotation marks and without using a bibliography at the end of the assignment listing the sources used,
 - translating text from the internet into another language to use in his/her work without acknowledging the source,
 - copying a work of art or music without acknowledging the source,
 - paraphrasing without citing the source(s).

* subject-specific examples of plagiarism will be supplied by teachers.

Consequences

1st violation: The 1st violation is generally addressed by school staff members when a student has no prior violations. The staff response teaches correct, alternative behavior so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior. Staff members are expected to use a variety of teaching and management strategies. Interventions aim to correct and teach alternative behavior so students can learn and demonstrate safe and respectful behavior.

The Teacher will:

- collect concrete evidence of academic misconduct
- confirm with administrator that this is the student's first academic misconduct violation
- address the misconduct with the student
- speak with the parent/guardian
- refer the student to the proper administrator and indicate if administrative follow-up is needed
- Input "Cheating" in Simpldiscipline as a "note" and give the task a zero with the option to re-do (Excluding Semester and Final Exams). Semester and Final exams will not have the option to re-do for academic misconduct.
 - Re-do Guidelines:
 - Re-do will be a different task covering the same standards
 - Student would earn highest grade of a 60
 - Occur within 5 school days student/parent notification

The Administrator will:

- confirm that this is the student's first instance of academic misconduct
- record the misconduct in the student information system
- if requested by teacher, follow up on the teacher referral and conference with the student

The Student will:

- provide a written reflection/apology to the teacher prior to re-do
- re-do the task, if student chooses to, otherwise be assigned a grade of zero

2nd/3rd violation: Second and subsequent violations will result in interventions and/or disciplinary responses that involve the school administration. These actions aim to correct behavior by stressing the seriousness of the behavior while keeping the student in school.

The Teacher will:

- collect concrete evidence of academic misconduct
- confirm with administrator that this is not the student's first academic misconduct violation
- address the misconduct with the student
- Input a referral for "Cheating" in Simpldiscipline and give the task a zero. **The student may not re-do the task.**
- refer the student to the proper administrator and request follow-up

The Administrator will, due to multiple offenses:

- confirm that this is the student's second or third instance of academic misconduct
- record the misconduct in the student information system
- follow up on the teacher referral and conference with the student
- communicate with parent/guardian and reiterate that the student may not re-do the task.
- assign appropriate consequences according to the ECSD Code of Conduct

The Student will:

- accept that **s/he cannot re-do the task** since this is the repeat violation
- provide a written reflection/apology to the teacher

Legal Documentation

Custoday Agreements: The School District of Edgefield County follows all legal documentation regarding the access and rights to parents regarding their students. Please provide the school with a copy of the most recent custody papers, or other legal documentation regarding any enrolled student. is utilizing the following procedures concerning child custody. Any questions concerning documents need to be directed to administration. Legal opinion states that either parent has equal rights to the child unless legal documentation states otherwise.

Lockers

Use of student lockers is a privilege. It is the responsibility of the student to manage locker time effectively and report to class on time. Only school-owned locks may be used. If you have a problem with your locker or lock, report it promptly to the Assistant Principal. Lost/damaged locks may be replaced for \$5.00 in the office. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items left in a locker. All lockers are school property and may be searched when there is any suspicion that the locker might contain contraband.

- Students should keep their assigned lockers locked at all times.
- Students are not to “pop” locks.
- Students are not to share or trade lockers.
- Students may only go to lockers during assigned times.
- Students are to keep their locker combination confidential.

**Students who violate these conditions will be denied locker use.*

Lost and Found

All personal belongings should be marked for identification. The lost and found area may be found in the front office. At the end of each nine weeks, all items will be donated. The school does not accept responsibility or liability for loss or damages incurred or if a contraband item is stolen, this includes but is not limited to money, electronics, or other inappropriate or unnecessary items for the school setting.

Insurance

The option to purchase school accident insurance is offered from the beginning of school through mid-October. Information will be sent home with each student for parents to review and to make a decision. The insurance policy is an agreement between the insurance company and the parents enrolling. Parents should purchase insurance for proper coverage during school hours.

Media Center

The media center is open 7:30-3:30 daily. Students may come to the media center throughout the day with permission and a SmartPass, including during their lunch and canteen time. Each student may check out up to two library books at a time. Students with overdue or lost library materials will not be allowed to check out additional library materials until the missing material is returned or the fine is paid

Damaged or Lost Books: It is the student's responsibility to return all library books. If a book is badly damaged and cannot be circulated, full replacement costs will be charged for the damaged book. Other damages to a book may result in a fine of varying amounts according to the damage. Any books lost and not returned are the student's responsibility to pay for. Payments may be made in the form of cash, check, or credit card.

Nursing Services

MMS offers a full time registered nurse on staff. After obtaining permission, sick students are to report to the health room for assessment. The nurse, or designee, will contact parents as deemed necessary. Please do not send students to school who are running a fever or who are too ill to function in class. This exposes all students and staff to illness.

Medications: Parents must give permission for the nurse to dispense over the counter medications such as for an upset stomach, headache, or sore throat to help keep students at school. If a student needs to take medication during the school

day, the parent or guardian must give written permission on a form obtained from the nurse, stating the medication, the dosage, and the time that the medicine should be taken. The medicine must be brought to school in the original container and left in the health room with the form. **All medications should be brought to the nurse for dispensing.** No student should give medicine to another student or take any medicine that is given by another student. Any student violating this procedure will be subject to disciplinary action.

Immunizations: As students register, the nurse will verify if they have a valid S. C. Immunization Certificate. If they do, the certificate / copies will be sent to guidance with all other registration materials for the permanent records. Students without documented proof of immunization records will be sent home after **30** days until proof is furnished.

Opportunities for Involvement

At MMS, we love when parents and community members want to join us in our efforts to make MMS the best school possible. We encourage parents to join our PTO and our School Improvement Council (SIC). Please contact the front office for more information on how to get involved. (803-279-2511) A criminal background check and volunteer training is required for anyone who volunteers at MMS.

Chaperones: All chaperones must have participated in the ECSD Volunteer Training, completing all necessary paperwork and background checks. Failure to do so will result in the inability to chaperone field trips.

Visitors: Parents and other members of the community are always welcome. For the security of all, as well as to avoid disturbing the learning environment of the students, we ask that all visitors enter by way of the main office. Visitors will be asked to show their identification to be able to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass before going to any other part of the building. Any visits to a classroom during instructional time, must be scheduled and approved by administration.

Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to mentor and tutor students, speak to classes on your occupation, help copy, laminate, put up displays, etc. Please let us know if you can help. All volunteers must have participated in the ECSD Volunteer Training, completing all necessary paperwork and background checks.

Student Records

The School District of Edgefield County is required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA 34CFR Part 99) to provide annual notice concerning privacy rights in the maintenance of and/or release of student records. The District has a formal policy concerning this activity available to you for inspection upon request. The following is a summary of your rights under this act. If you have questions about this, please contact the principal.

- A student's "educational records" are those records directly related to a student and which the school district or a party acting for the school district maintains.
- "Parent" refers to a parent, a guardian, a person acting as a parent, a surrogate appointed in accordance with policies under Programs for the Handicapped or a student who is 18 years of age or over, or a student who is attending an institution of post secondary education on a full-time basis.
- Whenever a student is eighteen years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the rights accorded to and the consent required of the parent of the students shall thereafter only be accorded to and required of eligible students unless the school district has received notice that a court has awarded legal guardianship beyond the age of majority. The school will document such notice.
- In maintaining student records, the school will follow applicable state and federal regulations.
- Parents of students currently in attendance and eligible students currently in attendance in the School District of Edgefield County have a right to:
 - Inspect and review students' educational records.
 - Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.
 - Consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that federal law and regulations authorize disclosure without consent.
 - File written complaints concerning alleged violations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act to:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office
330 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

- Obtain a copy of the district's policy request may be directed to the Office of the Superintendent.

Edgefield County Schools

P. O. Box 608

Edgefield, SC 29824

- Schools will treat each student's educational records as confidential and primarily for local school use. The district will not release directory information to any person or agency for commercial use. The exception to this rule is for directory information, which includes the following: student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, diploma or certificate and awards received by the student, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student and other similar information.
- If you object to the disclosure of directory information concerning your child's academic records, please notify the principal in writing of your objection within 15 days after receipt of this notice. This will become a part of the student's cumulative folder.
- In compliance with FERPA, we must inform parents that when students move to another school district, we transfer their records to that district **without parental permission**.

Student Support Services

MMS is able to offer many services to support the well being of our students. Please ensure that all necessary information is shared so that we can meet the needs of each of our students.

School Counselor Services: School counselor service is available for all students. Through individual, small group, and classroom counseling services, students are helped to better understand and accept their own individuality in relating to others, both in the classroom and socially. The counselor assists students, teachers, and parents in understanding the student's potential ability and achievement levels. Both students and parents should feel free to consult with the counselor. The counselor can assist parents in arranging conferences with teachers, but we recommend reaching out to the teacher before asking for assistance from the counselor. Parents, teachers, and administrators may make referrals to guidance. Students are encouraged to get acquainted with the counselor.

Individual Health Plans (IHPs): School nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school or those students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self-monitor. The nurse works with the student, parents or legal guardians, health care provider(s), and other school staff to write the plan. To learn more about IHPs, talk with the school nurse or the Director of Special Services at 275-4601.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504): Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make accommodations so that students with identified conditions can learn and participate in settings like typical peers. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team, including the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's needs such as a teacher, a school counselor, a school nurse, or other school staff, determine if a student is eligible. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the student's needs will be met while at school and may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. To learn more about Section 504, contact the Director of Special Services at 275-4601.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Students, ages 3 through 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team, to include but not limited to the student's parent or legal guardian, the student, and any necessary school staff, decides if a student requires a comprehensive evaluation. Following the outcome of the evaluation, if a student meets federal and state requirements/criteria for a disability category, the team would then develop an individualized education program (IEP). The IEP outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team. The IEP may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. Contact the Director of Special Services at 275-4601 to learn more about the IDEA.

Medical Homebound Instruction: Medical homebound instruction is a service available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. The medical homebound form must be completed by a physician and submitted for approval by the district. Length and time of medical homebound services are then determined after consideration of the severity of illness/injury, educational time missed, and impact on student

achievement. To learn more about medical homebound services, contact the Director of Special Services at 803-275-4601.

Technology

Chromebooks: Each student will be assigned and issued a chromebook and charger by the school. These devices are for school instructional purposes. Chromebooks and chargers are housed at school each day and do not go home with students. If a student is absent or needs to take their device home for the day to finish assignments, he or she can check out their device overnight from their homeroom teacher. The student should return the device to school the following day.

Acceptable Use Policy (Revised April 2012)

For the purposes of this document there are two types of persons making use of District Technology; students and users. Users are defined as anyone other than a Student who is granted access to District Technology.

Technology is a vital part of education and the curriculum in the School District of Edgefield County. In an effort to promote learning and expand educational resources for students and employees, the District has made arrangements to provide access to technology for students and staff. Technology includes calculators, any automated audiovisual equipment, any computer/media lab equipment, networking hardware and any computer hardware or software. The technology in the District must be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner to support the mission of the School District of Edgefield County.

Accessing Inappropriate Sites: Student Internet activities will be monitored by the district to ensure students are not accessing inappropriate sites that have visual depictions that include obscenity, child pornography or are harmful to minors. The school district will use technology protection measures to protect students from inappropriate access.

The internet can provide a vast collection of educational resources for students and staff. Internet access is available for students and teachers in the School District of Edgefield County. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The internet is a global network; because information appears, disappears, and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. Furthermore, the District makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Students will be under teacher's supervision while on the Internet.

Social networking sites such as Snapchat, Facebook, Youtube, etc. may have some educational values, but they are also havens for predators and are not controlled and/or monitored sufficiently so as to ensure the safety of the individuals using those sites. Thus, it is the policy of this district to block all such sites to ensure the district remains in compliance with the CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act). If someone requires access to one of these sites, the Technology Department will consider each request to unblock said site on a case by case basis.

Reporting: District and school computer technicians who are working with a computer and come across sexually explicit images of children must report this to local law enforcement. The report must include the name and address of the owner in possession of the computer.

With access to online computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The School District of Edgefield County has taken precautions to block and/or filter controversial materials; however, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the education goals of the District.

Vandalism of any technology will result in cancellation of privileges and possible disciplinary action. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, malicious damage to hardware, another users' data, installation of any software not explicitly approved by the Technology Department to include software intended to bypass any filtering or security systems in use by the School District.

Online Behavior: The district will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response. The superintendent or his/her designee will develop a program to educate students on these issues.

Violation of the Acceptable Use Agreement will result in cancellation of privileges and possible disciplinary action. Malicious Internet immediately revokes any students' rights to technology access for the remainder of the school year. Users will be dealt with on a case by case basis by their supervisor. It should be noted that violations may occur in the spirit as well as in the physical realm.

The effective use of technology requires responsible users to adhere to strict guidelines outlined in this Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology. The signatures at the end of this document are legally binding and indicate the parties have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance. Violation of any of these guidelines will result in termination of accounts and future denial of access.

Students in the School District of Edgefield County, as well as District Personnel, will have access to the Internet and the other forms of technology available only if this Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology is signed by the Student's parent/guardian or District Personnel and is on file at the school. Physical damage to any Technology related equipment (to include software) resulting from willful neglect or negligence may result in the District taking action to recoup the funds necessary to replace and/ or repair said equipment (or software). Such action would only be undertaken after Board approval.

Students from Middle School through High School will be issued individual usernames and passwords in order to log in at school the individual is attending. The generic account named Student will no longer be available for widespread use. By giving students individual accounts, we hope to eliminate many of the problems inherent in using generic account names. This also means each student is responsible for ensuring his or her account information is protected. Students are not to give out their passwords to other students, doing so is in direct violation of this agreement and will be handled just like any other violation.

As necessary, students will be taught how to use the PCs available in each district facility. Each school/facility is responsible for ensuring the students using the PCs understand exactly what each student is doing when using a district PC. If it is found that a significant number of students need assistance that cannot be provided by the school/facility, then the school/facility and the technology department will work together to ensure such assistance is made available. The technology department does not and cannot be the initiator in such cases; it is up to school personnel to identify such issues and contact the technology department in order to begin the process of planning and implementing such training.

As technology advances, this document will be updated to meet the needs of the providers and the users.

Specific Internet Use Rules:

- Students may use the Internet for school assignments and will not upload or download any files, pictures, text, music, or sound not directly related to educational goals or teacher-assigned projects.
- Users will verify permission to use any pictures, files, text, music, or sound taken from Internet sites related to educational goals with a hard copy. Bibliographical information must be cited. Any use of copyrighted sites where permission cannot be obtained (you MUST have attempted to obtain said permission) will be in violation of the District Acceptable Use Agreement (unless said copyrighted information is used for a one-time educational project, and then promptly discarded after the project's completion).
- Only approved list serves or chat rooms with educational value may be accessed by students with direct supervision. A staff member requiring the assignment must also be a member of the list serv or chat room.
- Students and Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops will be monitored.
- Students and Users will not transmit any material in violation of any federal or state laws or regulations to include but not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, material protected by trade secret, sexual harassment or other forms of discrimination.
- Students and Users will not knowingly access pornographic, weapon/bomb-making, or other inappropriate sites on the Internet. Students and users understand there is no guarantee of "privacy" when using any school technology such as e-mail, internet searching, etc.
- Students and Users may not violate the statutes pertaining to students' rights to privacy; neither students nor users may give out home addresses, telephone numbers, pictures, credit card numbers, or any other information deemed personal.
- Students and Users may not make use of software or websites that bypass the District proxy server and/or internet filters. Violators will be identified and dealt with on a case by case basis. Punishment for such

infractions will result in a loss of computer use privileges but may also include civil and/or criminal charges depending on the nature of the violation.

Specific E-mail Use Rules:

- Students are prohibited from accessing personal e-mail accounts. Students will be issued a student e-mail account **only** for approved classes and assignments.
- Students and Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops can be monitored.
- Students and Users will not transmit any material in violation of any federal or state laws or regulations to include, but not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, material protected by trade secret, sexual harassment or other forms of discrimination.
- Users may not violate the statutes pertaining to students' rights to privacy; users may not give out home addresses, telephone numbers, pictures, or credit card numbers.
Students and Users will not use profanity, obscenity, or other language that may be offensive to other students or users.
- Students and Users will report receipt of any inappropriate e-mails or abuse of school technology to the building principal or supervisor.
- Students and Users will adhere to e-mail etiquette and understand that all e-mails reflect the views of the school district as each e-mail carries the district's email address.
Users understand that there is no guarantee of "privacy" when using any school technology such as e-mail, Internet searching, etc.

Specific Network Use Rules:

- Students (where applicable) and Users will accept the responsibility of safeguarding their passwords.
- Students and Users are prohibited from accessing or modifying any network files or programs without appropriate authorization.
- Students and Users will not vandalize the data files belonging to the School District of Edgefield County or to anyone else..
- Students and Users will not alter any network files or jam the network, such as with, but not limited to chain letters, spam mail, viruses, etc.
- All licensing guidelines will be adhered to when loading network software.
- Repair charges will be assessed to anyone who intentionally damages the network or any network hardware or software.

Specific Hardware Use Rules:

- Students and Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops can be monitored.
- Students and Users may not change/rearrange icons, screensavers, setups, and settings.
- Students and Users will adhere to all copyright laws when using a scanner.
Students and Users will not vandalize the physical property belonging to the School District of Edgefield County or to anyone else.
- Students and Users will limit the use of video and digital cameras to only those uses that support the mission of the district.
- Repair charges will be assessed to anyone for damage or intentional misuse of any district equipment to include, but not limited to, computers, scanners, LCD projectors, and digital cameras.
- Vandalism of hardware includes, but is not limited to, removal of the mouse ball and/or mouse, deliberate erasing of files and/or data, placing foreign objects such as paper clips in disk/CD drives, and removing or altering keyboard key(s) is prohibited.

Specific Software Use Rules:

- Removable media (floppy disks, Compact Discs, USB Flash Drives (Thumb drives) not owned by the school/district must be scanned for viruses before they are put in use in school/district owned equipment.
- Students and Users may not copy commercial software and/or violate copyright laws.
- Only legally purchased software with proper licensing documentation on file may be loaded on school computers.

Off-Campus Conduct: Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers and staff members should be aware that the district may take disciplinary actions for conduct initiated and/or created off-campus involving the inappropriate use of the

Internet or web-based resources if such conduct poses a threat or substantially interferes with or disrupts the work and discipline of the schools, including discipline for student harassment and bullying.

All Grades - Technology Violations
Level I – Simple Disorderly Conduct Consequences

Level of Offense	Accidental Device Damage	Malicious or Negligent Damage	Costs **All damages will incur a cost unless it is determined to be a manufacturing defect.
1st Offense	Parent Contact & Verbal Warning	Parent Contact & 1 Week in Penalty Box	Screen Replacement - \$50 Bezel around Screen - \$25 Keyboard Replacement - \$60 Keyboard Maintenance - \$10 Trackpad Replacement - \$30 Charger Replacement - \$25 Replacement - \$250 to \$380, depending on model
2nd Offense	Parent Contact & Reminder of Proper Device Care	Parent Contact & 3 Weeks in Penalty Box	
3rd Offense	Parent Contact & 1 Week in Penalty Box	Parent Conference & 9 Weeks in Penalty Box	

- Questions about cost should be directed to the Technology Department. *(Costs are estimates and subject to change. The age of the Chromebook will also be considered.)*
- The Penalty Box only allows students on i-Ready. All other websites will be blocked.

2026-2027 Edgefield County Schools Discipline Code of Conduct Overview

Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Level I - Simple Disorderly Conduct**
- **Level II - Disruptive Conduct**
- **Level III - Serious and Possibly Criminal Conduct**

Depending on the action of the student, in concert with the level of the offense, administrators should meet with the reporting staff member, and, if necessary, the student and the parent/legal guardian, and impose the appropriate consequence and/or establish an intervention plan and/or behavioral contract. Factors such as the student's understanding of the consequences of their actions, their previous conduct history, and any mitigating circumstances (including the impact to others) will be taken into account. Disciplinary measures should aim to be both corrective and educational, promoting a deeper understanding of acceptable behavior and the impacts of one's actions. Consequences that may be applied in cases of each level of disruptive conduct listed above may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Parent Conference (PC) - A parent conference may be held in person, virtually, or over the phone to discuss the student's actions and appropriate response or consequence. Together, the school and parent, will create a restorative plan to support the student in making positive choices and moving forward from the incident.

Lunch Detention (LD) - Lunch detention will be held in a designated area of the school. During this detention the student and a staff member will have restorative conversations to support the student in making positive choices and moving forward from the incident.

In School Suspension (ISS) - ISS is typically used for offenses that are more serious or when simple disorderly conduct becomes excessive. Students are expected to complete their assignments or any assigned work while in ISS. Students who misbehave during ISS will be referred to administration for further action that may include out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) - OSS is used for serious offenses when a student's presence at school may disrupt the learning process. The decision to use OSS will be at the discretion of an administrator.

Referral to a Hearing Officer (RHO) is a formal procedure that involves submitting a referral to an impartial hearing officer to provide recommendation to more significant violations of the code of conduct. The hearing officer acts as a neutral party who listens to both sides, reviews evidence, and makes a decision based on applicable laws and regulations.

Extenuating, Mitigating, or Aggravating Circumstances

The board may give the appropriate administrator the authority to consider extenuating, mitigating, or aggravating circumstances that may exist in a particular case of misconduct. The administrator should consider such circumstances in determining the most appropriate sanction.

Discipline of Disabled Students

Disciplinary process - Federal and state laws and regulations require the public schools to meet the individual educational needs of disabled children to the extent that current educational expertise permits.

Weapons, Drugs, and Contraband

Dangerous Weapons and Drugs- It is unlawful for a student to possess a dangerous weapon or drugs on school premises. This includes actual possession, as well as constructive possession. Constructive possession would include placing a weapon or drugs in a location on school premises where another student may have access to the weapon. All students must be aware that it is illegal to have a weapon or drugs in their vehicle while it is parked or operated on school premises.

A dangerous weapon is any type of firearm, knife, blackjack, metal pipe, or pole, razor, metal knuckles, or any other type weapon, device, or object that can be used to inflict bodily injury or death. This includes devices capable of firing a projectile using air, gas, or spring action, including but not limited to BB guns, pellet guns, and Airsoft guns.

The Edgefield County School Board will expel any student who brings a weapon to school. For purposes of this policy, a weapon means a firearm. The term firearm is defined extensively in the U.S. Code, but generally means a weapon (gun) or

destructive device (explosive, incendiary). The school board may expel all students who distribute any controlled substance on school grounds. (Board Policy JICH and JICI). In addition to disciplinary action which will be taken, it is the policy of this District to report the possession of a dangerous weapon to the appropriate law enforcement agency for prosecution in the criminal courts.

Suspended or Expelled Students

A student who is suspended or expelled cannot enter the school grounds (except to attend a prearranged conference with an administrator), cannot attend any school functions (regardless of the fact that they are open to the general public), and cannot ride on a school bus (which is seen as an extension of school property). Trespassing violators will have additional days of out-of-school suspension applied to their disciplinary actions and may possibly face criminal charges. Expelled students must reapply in writing for admission to the Principal. (Readmit conferences are held before school starts the following year.)

Students are reminded that any unlawful activity outside of school could result in suspension or expulsion from school.

Students who are guilty of breaches of conduct may be suspended or expelled if the offense does not already carry such punishment. Though not specifically mentioned in this list of breaches of conduct, any act which is detrimental to the good order, best interest, and physical safety of the school may be punished according to its nature and degree at the discretion of the administration.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and/or plagiarism are defined as an effort to claim credit for work that is not one's own, or to assist another person to do so. It includes, but is not limited to the wrongful giving, taking, or presenting of any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another student on any academic work which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade. Any student found to be in violation of this policy will adhere to the consequences listed in the discipline code Level I-C. Students in violation of plagiarism are required to submit a written reflection to the principal and their teacher. More information will be provided during the administrative conference.

Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

Edgefield County School District prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student by students/third parties that interfere with or disrupt a student's ability to learn and the school's responsibility to educate students in a safe and orderly environment. This is true whether that harassment, intimidation or bullying takes place on school grounds, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, at a school-related activity on or off school property, or at a function where the school is responsible for the student.

Harassment is unwanted acts of aggression toward others. Under federal civil rights laws, harassment is unwelcome conduct demonstrated to others that is based on race, national origin, color, sex, disability or religion; that is severe, pervasive or persistent; and that creates a hostile environment or an unsafe environment.

Intimidation is to create fear of harm in individuals for themselves, others or their personal properties.

Bullying is unwanted, mean behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Bullying has four critical elements:

- 1) the behavior must be repetitive;
- 2) it must be intended to harm;
- 3) there must be a difference of power (physical, social or otherwise) between the bully and victim; and
- 4) the bully gains control over the victim. In order to prove bullying, three of the four must be present.

The district defines harassment, intimidation or bullying as a gesture, electronic communication or a written, verbal, physical or sexual act reasonably perceived to have the effect of either of the following:

- ➔ harming a student physically or emotionally, or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or
- ➔ insulting or demeaning a student or group of students, causing substantial disruption in or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.

Edgefield County School District encourages all employees, parents, students and community members to help the district prevent bullying. All school employees must report alleged violations of this policy to the principal.

Students who feel they have been subjected to harassment, intimidation or bullying are encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with district procedures.

Schools will investigate complaints promptly and thoroughly, while protecting the identity of the victim or reporter of bullying or harassment to the extent allowed by law. The district prohibits retaliation or reprisal in any form against any student or employee who files a complaint/report of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The district will not allow anyone to make a false accusation against another person as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A student who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may receive consequences/ appropriate remedial actions that may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement.

Administrators determine the consequences according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance. Remedial measures will be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem and protect the victim of the act.

The district may take disciplinary action if the problem behavior is initiated off-campus through use of electronic methods, the internet or web-based resources.

Self Reporting

A process for self reporting has been established in certain circumstances. That process includes a collaborative decision making process beyond the school level for students who use integrity to report certain items.

- **Incident Reporting by Principal (Self-Reporting)**

When a Principal becomes aware of a violation of the Code of Conduct within their purview related to a possible self reporting scenario,, they shall immediately report the incident, including all pertinent facts and evidence, to the Director of Administration. This immediate self-reporting is a critical component of maintaining transparency and accountability.

- **Review Panel Formation and Confirmation**

Upon receiving the Principal's report, the Director of Administration will promptly convene a two-person Review Panel. This panel will be tasked with the following:

Confirmation of Self-Reporting: The panel will confirm the accuracy and timeliness of the Principal's self-reporting and ensure all relevant information was disclosed.

Fact Review: The panel will review the reported incident, gather evidence, and any relevant documentation.

- **Disciplinary Recommendation**

Following its review, the Panel will formulate a recommendation regarding appropriate disciplinary action. This recommendation, which may include corrective actions, remedial training, or formal disciplinary measures, will be submitted directly to the designated school-based leadership responsible for final disciplinary decisions.

ECSD Middle School Level Classroom-Based Offenses - Infractions

Each middle school will utilize the school-based plan below to address minor classroom-based behaviors and the accumulation, as deemed appropriate by the school-based teacher, staff member, and administration. Please see the school handbook for your child's school for the process for offenses not outlined in this code of conduct.

In cases of those infractions named in the list of Classroom-Based Offenses (Infractions), the following procedure will be applied:

1st Offense - Verbal warning with a parent contact by the staff member observing the behavior document in the appropriate system.

2nd Offense - One Lunch detention assigned by a teacher and/or staff member, with parent contact by that teacher also documented in the appropriate system.

3rd Offenses+ - Administration will then follow the level one matrix for all other classroom-based offenses

☐ Minor disrespect to teachers &/or classmates ☐ Eating without permission ☐ Hallway disruption ☐ Car line disruption ☐ Distraction to instruction	☐ Minor inappropriate language ☐ Minor inappropriate gesture ☐ Not participating in class ☐ Not prepared for class ☐ Minor disrupting class
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Note: The difference between a minor level and level I offenses are subject to the discretion of the teacher and monitored for school wide consistency by school based administration. If there are no classroom-based offenses that occur between an entire quarter (45 school days), the administration has the flexibility to consider a reset for that child's sequential consequence for classroom-based offenses.

Level I – Simple Disorderly Conduct (Grades 6-8)

Disorderly conduct includes any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturbs the classroom or school. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school-sponsored activities.

Consequences may be changed at the discretion of the administration in line with consistent district wide practices.

Code	Infraction	Definition
011	Forgery/tampering	The unauthorized signing of another person's name, the use of an inauthentic signature, or the altering, modifying, or falsifying of any school records or documents by any means.
160	Cutting class	An unauthorized absence from an assigned class or related activity.
630	Gambling	Participation in games of chance for money and/other things of value.
151	Truancy	In accordance with state attendance laws, a student is officially classified as truant upon accumulating three (3) consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five (5) unlawful absences within a single school year. Reaching this threshold of unlawful absences will result in administrative intervention to address and resolve the attendance issue.
017	Inappropriate behavior (mild)	Conduct that is disruptive to the elective harmony of the classroom or school environment but does not pose a direct threat to the safety of others or significantly impede the educational process. These are often "teachable moment" infractions where the student may need redirection or a reminder of community expectations.
017	Inappropriate behavior (moderate)	Conduct that deliberately interferes with the teaching and learning process, shows a marked lack of respect for the rights of others, or involves repeated Level 1 offenses. These infractions typically require a formal disciplinary response and parental notification, as they impact the well-being or productivity of the school community.
320	Leaving class without	The act of exiting a classroom, assigned instructional area, or designated

	permission	school activity without obtaining explicit verbal or written authorization (such as a hall pass) from the teacher or staff member in charge. This infraction applies even if the student remains on school grounds but is not in their scheduled location.
006	Dishonesty	The intentional giving of false information, either verbally or in writing to a school employee.
190	Cheating/Plagiarism	Academic dishonesty involves copying another student's work or allowing a student to copy your own work on homework, classwork, tests, exams, projects. Includes but is not limited to plagiarism, passing another person's work as your own. <i>(Take paper, teacher calls the parent/guardian, and give the lowest recorded grade with Administrative Referral)</i>
330	Phone Violation	Unauthorized use of or display of electronic devices and/or cell phones.
275	Refusal to complete work/assignments	A persistent and intentional failure to engage in required academic tasks, classroom activities, or assessments during designated instructional time. This behavior is characterized by a conscious choice to ignore staff prompts to begin or continue work, despite having the necessary materials and environment to do so.
405	Horseplay	Engaging in rough, rowdy, or boisterous physical behavior. While often lacking a specific intent to harm, such conduct is prohibited as it disrupts the learning environment and creates an unnecessary risk of accidental injury.
420	Disrespectful Language (minor)	Communication that is rude, discourteous, or dismissive in nature. This includes "talking back," mimicking, eye-rolling, or using a sarcastic tone intended to be impolite toward a staff member or peer.
016	Inappropriate Language (minor)	The casual or accidental use of profanity, slang, or vulgarity. This includes "slips of the tongue" or crude language used in general conversation that is not directed at any specific person and does not cause a major disruption.
007	Disrupting Class	Behavior which disrupts the orderly educational process of school. This includes any actions that prevent the teacher from instructing or students from learning, such as making loud noises or engaging in persistent outbursts that interfere with classroom activities and the learning environment.
220	Computer Violation (minor)	Using a device for play when you should be working. This includes visiting unassigned websites, playing games without permission, or being distracted during a lesson.
015	Inappropriate Affection (mild)	Physical contact or displays of intimacy that are unsuitable for school. This includes "hanging" on others, hugging without asking, or physical play that violates the personal space of peers and the social boundaries of the classroom.
023	Property Misuse	The unauthorized or careless use of school equipment or the personal property of others. This involves using items in ways they were not intended to be used, creating safety risks or unnecessary wear and tear, without the intent to destroy or damage them (Vandalism).

Level I – Consequences (Grades 6 - 8)

Level of Offense	Primary Consequence <i>Disciplinary Action</i>	Mandatory Action <i>Required Communication & Documentation</i>	Behavior Intervention <i>Proactive Support and Remediation Strategies</i>
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1st Offense	2 days of Lunch Detention	● Parent Contact from Administration and document in SimplDiscipline	After an accumulation of offenses, the student will be assigned an intervention as deemed necessary by an administrator, including but not limited to: - Verbal warning - Clarify expectations - Reteach expectations - Explicit instruction - Peer buddy/ Peer tutor - Proximity control - Quiet correction - Seat change - Teacher/student conference - Loss of privilege
2nd Offense	1 Day of ISS	● Parent Contact from Administration and document in SimplDiscipline	
3rd Offense	3 Days of ISS	● Parent-Teacher-Student- Admin Conference in SimplDiscipline	
4th Offense	2 Days of OSS	● Parent-Student-Admin Conference to develop an Behavior Support Agreement in the appropriate system	
5th Offense	3 Days of OSS	● Parent-Student-Admin Conference to review the Behavior Support Agreement	
6th Offense	Move to Level 2		

Level II – Disruptive Disorderly Conduct (Grades 6-8)

Disruptive conduct includes those activities in which students engage that are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings. The administration may reclassify disorderly conduct (Level I) as disruptive conduct (Level II) if the student engages in the activity three or more times. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school-sponsored activities. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities.

Consequences may be changed at the discretion of the administration in line with consistent district wide practices.

Code	Infraction	Definition
027	Threat to Students	Threatening of an individual student written/verbal/electronic or assault to other students
760	Vandalism	cutting, defacing, or in any way damaging property (minor) *Also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities.*
230	Tobacco Violation	Smoking/tobacco – use or possession of tobacco products (including electronic cigarettes/vapor pens) on school premises
750	Trespassing	The act of entering or remaining in a restricted area, such as a locked classroom or a prohibited section of the school grounds, without official authorization or after being explicitly directed to leave by a staff member
010	Fireworks	Possession of/or use of fireworks
310	Leaving School	Leaving school without permission
001	Aiding Others	Provoking or instigating a fight
014	Hit/Kick/Push	Unauthorized or inappropriate physical contact that fails to maintain physical boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to, grabbing, pinching, shoving, chasing, or minor striking (such as mild slapping or punching). This classification is reserved for low-impact incidents—such as a brief shoving match—that lack the severity, sustained aggression, or intent to injure required to constitute a formal fight.
013	Sexual harassment	Unwanted or unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, including verbal, written, or physical actions used to torment another person. This includes touching, groping, patting, snapping a bra, or pulling down someone's pants, as well as sexual or derogatory comments, sexually suggestive gestures or sounds, spreading rumors, offensive text messages or emails, or postings to social media.
004	Contraband	Any items that disrupt the educational environment or pose a safety hazard, including but not limited to distracting toys, lighters, matches, ammunition, stink bombs, 3D printed models, foam dart guns, water guns, and non-realistic imitation toy items.
220	Computer Violation (major)	Any use of school technology resources that is unauthorized, illegal, or disruptive to the educational environment
270	Refusal to Obey/Defiant	Defiance/insubordination – refusal to comply with a school personnel request
651/652	Bullying	Any gesture, an electronic communication, or a written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of either of the following: Harming a student physically or emotionally or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage; or Insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school; or Retaliation for direct, indirect, and cyber bullying/false accusations of bullying.

420	Disrespect	Severe disrespect or directing profanity, vulgar language, ethnic/racial slurs, or obscene gestures toward adults, school staff, or visitors
031	District Medication Violation	Possession of over the counter medication
002	Other Offenses Minor	When a student makes a choice that doesn't have its own specific name in the rulebook, but still disrupts the "vibe" of the school or shows a lack of respect for our shared space and materials. These are the small "not-quite-right" actions that keep us from having a calm and focused day
004	Detention Violation	A student's failure to report to an assigned detention (such as lunch or after-school detention) at the designated time and location, or failing to comply with the specific rules and behavioral expectations while serving that detention
012	Harrassment	Any unwelcome and repeated gesture, or any written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for another student or staff member. These behaviors are often based on a person's real or perceived characteristics—such as race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, or disability—and have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's programs
015	Inappropriate Affection (moderate)	Physical contact or displays of intimacy that go beyond minor social boundary crossings and significantly disrupt the school environment or violate the comfort of others
028	Throwing Objects (moderate)	Intentionally throwing an object at a person to cause pain, fear, or injury, or throwing an item that could easily break something or hurt someone
018	Inappropriate Materials	Possession or distribution of items that are not for school or make others feel unsafe. This includes toys and media that distract from learning, as well as pictures or books that are scary, violent, or show private body parts.

Level II – Consequences (Grades 6 - 8)

Level of Offense	Primary Consequence <i>Disciplinary Action</i>	Mandatory Action <i>Required Communication & Documentation</i>	Behavior Intervention <i>Proactive Support and Remediation Strategies</i>
1st Offense	1 day of OSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent-Teacher-Student -Admin Conference to develop Behavior Support Agreement (SimpDiscipline)	<p>After an accumulation of offenses, the student will be assigned an intervention as deemed necessary by an administrator, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Problem-solving sheet● Classroom behavior contract● Alternate assignment● Positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior● Restorative conversation (Can involve a counselor)● Detention (Teacher)● Verbal or written apology● Written or verbal reflection● Modify activity
2nd Offense	3 days of OSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent-Teacher-Student -Admin Conference● Review Behavior Support Agreement & adjust as needed (SimplDiscipline)	
3rd Offense	OSS Pending RHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent Contact from Administration	
4th Offense and Beyond	Move to Level 3		

Level III - Criminal Conduct (Grades 6-8)

Criminal conduct includes those activities in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions that result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the board. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school-sponsored activities. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities.

Consequences may be changed at the discretion of the administration in line with consistent district wide practices.

Code	Infraction	Definition
009	Fighting	Fighting or physical abuse
600	Extortion	Extortion/Coercion/Blackmail – obtaining money or other things of value from an unwilling person, or forcing an individual to act through the use of force or threat of force
260	BombThreat	Any communication—whether spoken, written, or electronic—that claims an explosive device is present on school grounds or at a school event, regardless of whether a device actually exists or if the statement was intended as a joke.
350	Fire Alarm	Intentional false fire alarm
789	Weapon	Possession/Use transfer of dangerous weapons – any weapon, firearm, knife, gun, BB gun, pellet gun, mace, box cutters, instrument or article that might be injurious to a person or property
760	Vandalism	Major vandalism exceeding \$100.00 in damage *Also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities.*
510 520	Assault (Physical)	Simple- An actual offensive and intentional touching or striking of an individual, without use of a dangerous object or weapon, against his or her will, causing or intending to cause bodily harm. An unlawful act of injury to another, unaccompanied by any circumstances of aggravation. Aggravated- An unlawful attack by one person upon another wherein the offender uses a weapon or displays it in a threatening manner or the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness. This category includes attempted murder. A weapon can be a commonly known weapon, such as a gun or knife, or any other item, which, although not usually thought of as a weapon, becomes one when used in a manner that could cause severe bodily injury (e.g., baseball bat, metal chain, large stick). A “severe laceration” is one that should receive medical attention. A “loss of consciousness” must be the direct result of force inflicted on the victim by the offender. This also includes anything related to intentional use of bodily fluids.
500	Arson	The crime of intentionally and maliciously setting fire to a building, vehicle, or any other type of property with the intent to cause damage or destruction. In a school setting, this includes any unauthorized use of fire (such as lighting matches, using a lighter, or igniting paper or trash) that endangers the facility or its occupants.
570	Drugs - Distribution	Possession with intent to distribute/Selling illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or alcoholic beverage, including paraphernalia/ facsimile (materials passed as illegal drugs) and CBD oils and materials

575	Drugs - Usage	Use of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or alcoholic beverage, including paraphernalia/ facsimile (materials passed as illegal drugs) and CBD oils and materials
805	Drugs - Possession	Possession of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or alcoholic beverage, including paraphernalia/ facsimile (materials passed as illegal drugs) and CBD oils and materials
025	Sex Violation	Sexual Offenses - including offenses that could include use of electronic devices and major incidences involving sexual harassment
610	Forced Sex Offense	Any sexual act or contact directed against another person without their consent, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent due to age, fear, or physical helplessness. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual battery, attempted sexual acts by force or threat, and any unwanted touching of a sexual nature that involves physical compulsion.
690	Non Forced Sex Offense	Any unlawful sexual act or behavior that occurs between individuals without the use of physical force, threats, or coercion. This typically refers to situations where the activity is prohibited by law or school policy—such as "statutory" offenses involving a significant age difference or inappropriate consensual behavior in a public school setting—but where both parties appeared to participate without physical resistance or intimidation.
720	Prostitution	The act of engaging in, or offering to engage in, sexual activities in exchange for money, favors, or anything of value.
	Violation of Strict Probation for Repeated and Excessive Offenses	A student's failure to abide by the specific terms of a formal behavioral contract or "last-chance" agreement after they have already committed a high frequency or high volume of prior infractions.
019	Indecent exposure	Indecent exposure is when a student shows private parts of their body (areas normally covered by underwear or a swimsuit) to others while at school, on the bus, or at a school event. This includes "mooning," "flashing," or removing clothes in a way that makes others feel uncomfortable or unsafe intentional act of revealing "private parts" of the body (genitals, buttocks, or female breasts) in a way that is lewd or offensive to others
027	Threat to Staff/School	Threatening staff or the school building, written/verbal/electronic, or assault on other students (beyond simple assault)
020	Major Disruption	Any intentional or grossly negligent action that significantly interferes with the educational process, threatens the safety of the school community, or results in the complete cessation of normal school operations
250	Gang Activity/Signs	Group activity which involves intimidating, threatening, or physical violence. This includes the use of hand signals, gestures, or graffiti, as well as the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming that indicates or implies membership in a group that threatens the safety of the school environment. The district also prohibits any incidents involving initiations or related activities that are likely to cause physical or mental harm to students. (District Policy JICF)

Level III - Consequences (Grades 6 - 8)

Criminal conduct includes those activities in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions that result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the board. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within-school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school-sponsored activities. Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities.

Consequences may be changed at the discretion of the administration.

Level of Offense	Primary Consequence <i>Disciplinary Action</i>	Mandatory Action <i>Required Communication & Documentation</i>
Any Offense	Recommendation to the Hearing Officer	Administrative Parent Contact

Behavioral Review Hearing

Purpose

The purpose of the behavioral review meeting is for students who are exhibiting repeated violations of the code of conduct that impede their ability to access curriculum and keep schools safe. The process will consist of a small group of school-based professionals, not including the principal, who will oversee a meeting where the student and parent will be invited to discuss repeated violations of the code of conduct at a suspendable level.

Process Overview

After the fifth level one and/or level two offense (combined) or significantly disrupts the learning environment, whether in school suspension or out of school suspension, the school will have the option to hold a behavioral review meeting to determine viable options and interventions for the student. Parents and students will be notified of a behavioral review meeting approximately 2 school days before the meeting. Outcomes of the school-based meeting can be appealed to the principal.

*Meetings will be held on Wednesdays after school, as needed.

Positive Referrals

Teachers and staff are allowed to send positive referrals, via Simpldiscipline. A positive referral for students is a way to acknowledge and reward students for exhibiting positive behaviors, academic achievements, or acts of kindness. The idea is to replace the negative stigma associated with referrals, with “positive referrals” for students to anchor positive outcomes from their “above and beyond” behavior choices.

School Bus Transportation Code of Conduct

The following rules and regulations have been adopted by Edgefield County District. It is hoped that these guidelines will help us to provide safe transportation to and from school for your student. Students should be at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time. As per SC law, **“riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right.”**

Bus Discipline Policy

Students who have the opportunity to ride district school buses may do so as long as they display behavior that is reasonable and safe. Choosing to engage in unacceptable behavior may result in loss of bus service. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and discipline of students on the bus. The school administrators are available to give assistance to the driver and will determine the consequences of misbehavior and the reinstatement of bus service for the offending students should a suspension become necessary. A suspension applies to all buses unless otherwise designated by school officials. The responsibility for student supervision by the District shall begin when the lights are activated on the bus in the morning and is retained until the child leaves the bus at the end of the day; or until released to the parent/guardian in a manner consistent with guidelines on release of students.

Transportation Of School Related/ Non Related Items

Under the Laws and Rules for the Operation of School Buses in the State of South Carolina, band instruments that will be allowed on the bus are those that are small enough to be held on the student’s lap. Instruments may not be in the aisle or take the space of a student. No rolling book bags that are larger than 24”s in height or 12”s in width will be allowed. No animals or any other objects of a dangerous or objectionable nature are transported in the school bus when children are being transported. All items carried on should be small enough in size to fit on the student’s lap. This is necessary to ensure that all items are kept under the control of the student at all times in case of an accident or an emergency.

Assigned Buses Only

Students are assigned to buses and bus stops. No change in either bus or stop is permitted without the Transportation Dept. authorization. Temporary changes may be made by school administrators for authorized emergencies only.

Level I - Behavioral Misconduct

Behavioral misconduct is defined as those activities which tend to impede orderly operation of a school vehicle. Repeated violations may lead to more serious disciplinary actions including suspension from the bus for an extended period of time including the remainder of the school year. Discipline records of violations are cumulative. Acts of behavioral misconduct with enforcement procedures or sanctions to be applied shall include, but are not limited to, the following **depending upon severity. All final disciplinary actions are left to the discretion of the administration.**

Level I Infractions and Consequences

Code	Infraction
340	Getting on or off bus at other than the designated stop
	Eating and/or drinking on the bus
	Littering on the bus
	Minor violation of any safety procedures (standing, sitting improperly, etc.)
	Riding a different bus without permission from administration
	Making loud noises - yelling, etc.
	Pushing, tripping, or general horseplay

	Encouraging misbehavior
	Using unauthorized electronic devices

Level of Offense	Primary Consequence
1 st referral	Warning and contacting parents.
2 nd referral	Suspended from the bus for up to three days and contact parents
3 rd referral	Suspended from the bus for up to five days and contact parents.
4 th referral	Suspended from the bus for up to ten days and contact parents.
5 th referral or more	Suspended from the bus for ten or more days.

Level II - Disruptive Conduct

Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities directed against persons or property, which tend to endanger the health or safety of oneself or others on a school vehicle. Disruptive records of violations are cumulative. Acts of disruptive conduct with enforcement procedures or sanctions to be applied shall include, but are not limited to, the following. **All final disciplinary actions are left to the discretion of the administration.**

Level II Infractions and Consequences

Code	Infraction
340	Possession and/or using any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vapors, etc on the bus
	Throwing objects on or out of the bus
	Refusing to sit in assigned seat
	Using profanity, abusive language, or obscene gestures towards others
	Using profanity, abusive language, or obscene gestures towards others
	Severe violation of safety procedures (having head, arms, hands, extended from the bus etc.)
	Vandalism (minor) - writing or marking seats, etc.
	Disrespect/refusal to obey bus driver (depending on severity)
	Harassing, threatening, or intimidating another passenger
	Pushing, tripping, or general horseplay (depending of severity)

Level of Offense	Primary Consequence
1 st referral	Suspended from the bus for up to three days and contact parents
2 nd referral	Suspended from the bus for up to five days and contact parents

3 rd referral	Suspended from the bus for up to ten days
4 th referral	Suspended from the bus for up to thirty days and parent conference
5 th referral or more	Suspended from the bus for the remainder of the school year

****Transportation Supervisor be involved in conference that result in suspensions of 30 days or longer ****
Level II violations may also result in out-of-school suspensions and/or restitution of property.

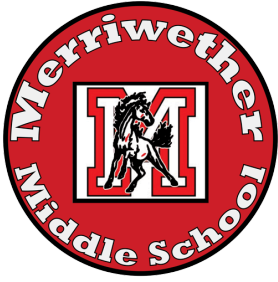
Level III - Serious and Possibly Criminal Conduct

Criminal Conduct is defined as those activities that result in violence to oneself, another person, or destruction of property. These actions pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others on a school vehicle. Criminal conduct usually requires administrative actions, which could result in the immediate removal of the student from school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board of Trustees. Level III violations may lead to a student's immediate removal from the bus at the school or bus transportation office. Acts of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:

Level III Infractions and Consequences

A student, who commits any level III offense as listed in the code of conduct in previous sections, will receive a consequence aligned with the level III offenses in the child's grade level and may be subjected to a district level hearing that may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

****Transportation Supervisor must be involved in conferences for bus suspensions of 30 days or longer.***
Level III violations may also result in out-of-school suspension, recommendation of expulsion, notification of law enforcement authorities, and/or restitution of property.



Merriwether Middle School 26-27 Student Handbook Signature Page

**Please sign and return to your child's 1st Period Teacher.*

I have received and read the Merriwether Middle School Student Handbook for the 2026-2027 school year. I understand the information contained in the handbook and the consequences for not adhering to the rules and procedures set forth by Merriwether Middle School and the School District of Edgefield County.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____