Clifford Pierce Middle School

2026-2027

This Handbook Belongs to:

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Pierce Middle School Daily Schedule

1st Period-Class begins at 7:30 am (All students are expected to be in their classrooms.)

Passing Period: Students will have four (4) minutes between classes.

School Ends at 2:15 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS MATRIX

	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be Safe
Before/ After School/Bus	• Use appropriate language • Enter and leave the building in an orderly manner • Follow all instructions of the bus driver	• Report to designated areas on time • Remain seated in your assigned area • Pay attention to arrival of bus	• Follow directions given by school and bus staff • Walk at all times • Remain seated while bus is in motion • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
Lockers/ Hallways/ Stairwells	• Be mindful of classes in session; keep voices down • Keep cell phones and other electronic devices turned off or silenced in lockers during the school day	• Keep locker organized • Use only YOUR locker • Visit at appropriate times • Use passing periods wisely • Have your ID	• Keep combination private • Have a pass signed by a teacher when out of the classroom during class • Walk on right side of hall
Classroom	• Wait to be acknowledged • Value the opinions and rights of others • Follow directions given by the adult in charge • Treat classroom materials carefully	• Stay on task and participate • Have materials and homework • Be prepared to learn • Be on time	• Follow directions in the classroom • Sit in assigned areas • Follow directions during drills • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
Restroom	• Use the restroom for the purpose intended • Respect the privacy of others • Wait your turn	• Use the restroom during the designated times • Use and dispose of supplies correctly • Clean up after yourself	• Wash hands with soap and water • Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself • Notify staff if there is a safety issue
Cafeteria	• Walk and move carefully • Practice good table manners • Wait your turn in line • Be kind and courteous to cafeteria staff	• Return trays to the proper location • Follow cafeteria supervisor's directions • Clean up after yourself	• Remain seated until dismissal • Walk at all times • Report any safety issues to staff
Media Center	• Whisper • Be kind and courteous to media center staff • Wait your turn	• Have your ID and pass • Return materials promptly • Pay your fines should you have any	• Walk at all times • Report any safety issues

SECTION I INTRODUCTION

MERRILLVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION MISSION STATEMENT

- Creates quality learning experiences by setting standards that engage students to reach their highest potential
- Provides learning environments that are enhanced through meaningful relationships that give students a global perspective
- Empowers students to believe they can be successful

VISION STATEMENT-GOALS FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY

STUDENTS:

1) Communicate effectively utilizing the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2) Understand and apply both practical and analytical concepts and skills in mathematics and science.
3) Demonstrate higher order thinking, goal setting and problem solving skills through analysis, synthesis, conceptual application and evaluation.
4) Demonstrate honesty, respect for others, respect for property and respect for our environment.
5) Demonstrate work habits such as punctuality, reliability, perseverance and good conduct essential for academic and employment success.
6) Develop a positive self-image.
7) Engage in independent and cooperative learning activities.
8) Understand and apply the rights and responsibilities associated with citizenship in a democracy.
9) Understand and appreciate the importance of fine and practical arts.
10) Exhibit a positive attitude toward lifetime fitness and wellness.
11) Understand other cultures, both past and present, and the growing interdependence of all nations.
12) Explore basic career processes involving aptitude/ability assessments; demonstrate skills necessary in utilization of career information services.
13) Know and comprehend significant people, places, events and concepts associated with the development of the American political and economic system.
14) Demonstrate proficiency in the use of research technology.
15) Develop the ability to manage time effectively.
16) Understand diversity and respect individual differences.

PARENTS:

1. Participate in programs designed to help parents support the intellectual, emotional, and physical development of their children.
2. Provide a home environment which encourages student academic effort and achievement.

COMMUNITY:

1. Utilize school system resources for educational, vocational and recreational needs.
2. Support school activities and provide assistance where needed in both academic and extracurricular areas.

SCHOOL COLORS AND NICKNAME

The nickname for Merrillville Community School Corporation athletic teams is **'Pirates'.** Merrillville Community School Corporation school colors are purple and white.

ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

In addition to academic excellence, high standards of behavior are encouraged. All students are expected to treat each other with kindness, understanding, and respect. Students are required to adhere to an explicit behavior code.

Students with parents who show an active and supportive interest in their child's schoolwork are more likely to achieve success at school and as an effective, happy adult in the future. The Instructional Program will foster this belief by actively seeking the support of parents. We believe the educational process can only be successful when the process is not confined within the school walls, but is extended to include the home and its environment.

We strongly believe that school attire affects attitudes toward learning. Proper school dress and personal grooming should be emphasized in the home and at school.

We believe good citizenship should be emphasized and that a student's behavior is an extension of his/her home environment. It is our belief that one of our main objectives with the support and cooperation of the home is to develop a thorough understanding of "responsibility" within our students. This would include recognizing right from wrong and understanding that we are all responsible for our actions and will be held accountable for them.

It is within this set of expectations, that we will provide learning in the following ways:

1. A structured classroom environment maintained through teacher facilitated learning activities;
2. Academics such as reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, grammar, listening, and speaking are emphasized within each department;
3. The skills of logic, reasoning, inquiry, and analysis;
4. Traditional concepts of patriotism, courtesy, honesty, integrity, and respect for individual and property rights;
5. Personal health and physical fitness; clearly established codes of school conduct and school dress; the assignment of homework on a regular basis; grades awarded on the basis of achievement; high academic expectation of all students.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PBIS is a systems approach to preventing and responding to school and classroom discipline problems. PBIS develops school-wide systems that support staff to teach and promote positive behavior in all students. By reducing behavioral problems, PBIS creates and maintains safe learning environments where teachers can teach and students can learn.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Pierce Middle School has an organization called Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Listed below are the PTO's mission statement, beliefs and requirements of parents while their child attends Pierce Middle School:

PTO MISSION STATEMENT:

The Pierce Parent/Teacher Organization provides parent awareness, open discussion, physical presence, and financial support towards enhancement of the education, growth, and development of our students.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT BELIEFS:

Parents demonstrate their commitment to support their child's learning by –

- Adhering to parent commitment in helping to secure the Merrillville Community School Corporation guarantees that your child will graduate possessing the basic skills needed for initial employment.
- Ensuring that their child has breakfast, is dressed according to the school dress code, has their homework done, has school supplies, and is rested.
- Being aware of Indiana Academic Standards that their child must learn.

- Seek academic help for their child if needed.

Parents work with the school by following requested procedures including-

- Notifying school of absences
- Reading all communications from school
- Keeping emergency and enrollment information up-to-date
- Scheduling visits with staff
- Making payments and fundraising payments on time

DEFINITION OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Parent involvement at Pierce is defined at the middle school level as being a volunteer in the building, serving on a school committee, and attending parent events.

Each parent is asked to make a commitment to be involved in at least one of the following activities one time this year:

Volunteering	Serving on a Committee	Attending Parent Events
Chaperoning dances/field trips	Career Day	Parent Workshops
Helping in the concession stand	Fundraising	PTO/Parent Meetings
Sharing knowledge as a presenter	JA Chambertown	
	Teacher/Staff Appreciation Days	

PARENT CONFERENCES

We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with our parents. Should any parent request for a conference, it may be arranged by calling the teacher or staff involved. **At least 24-hours of notification must be given** prior to any conferencing.

The following procedures should be followed before making a conference with the teacher:

- The use of tape recorder, videotape machines or other recording equipment to record meetings at which a teacher is present or to record a teacher during the discharge of his/her duties **is prohibited** without the prior written consent of each teacher who will be included in the recording.
- All visitors must register in the main office, present a valid picture ID, and wait in the office for the meeting. No visitors are allowed in any classrooms during the school day.

CIVILITY POLICY

8.95 MERRILLVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION CIVILITY POLICIES

(To be considered inclusive for harassment, bullying and use of profane language)

This policy requires mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among MCSC students, parents, employees and the public. Civility does not deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression, but serves only to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for students and staff.

In the interest of presenting adults as positive role models to the children of this school corporation, as well as the community. MCSC encourages positive communication and will not tolerate volatile or hostile actions and/or abusive language by any student, parent, guardian, employee or patron (hereafter known as “person”).

Any person who disrupts or threatens to disrupt normal school and/or office operations (either in person or through electronic means); threatens the health and safety of anyone through harassment or bullying (in person or electronically); willfully causes property damage; uses offensive language; or who otherwise establishes a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be dealt with either according to student disciplinary procedures, or if an adult, will be asked to cease such behavior or be directed to leave school property.

If any person uses obscenities or speaks in an abusive manner, the administrator or employee to whom the remarks are directed will politely request that person to communicate in a courteous manner.

If corrective action is not taken by the person, the employee will verbally notify him/her that the meeting, conference or telephone conversation is terminated and will refer the person to the building principal or designee. For students, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken according to the school handbook. For adults, the Superintendent or designee

will inform the person that he/she will not be allowed on school property for an amount of time commensurate with the violation of this policy. Verbal harassment or disrespect targeting a student or employee (in person or electronically) on the basis of race, religion or handicap will not be tolerated. Any person claiming to have experienced such harassment shall follow the same reporting procedures set apart for sexual harassment (School Board Policy 3.42III).

Bullying of students, either verbal or physical, shall not be tolerated. Any report of bullying shall be reported to a school administrator and investigated. Student disciplinary procedures shall be enforced. Any employee or student who knowingly files false charges against an employee or a student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse or embarrass that individual shall be subject to sanctions for misconduct set forth in paragraph 5 of this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT FOR SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

It is the policy of the Merrillville Community School Corporation to provide a free and appropriate public education to each student with a disability within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

It is the intent of the school corporation to ensure that students who have a disability within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate services. Students may be disabled under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Due process rights of the students with disabilities and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced. The Superintendent or designee is the coordinator of Section 504 activities. The Superintendent or designee can be reached at 219-650-5300 or 6701 Delaware Street, Merrillville, IN 46410.

For this policy, a student who may need special services or programs within the intent of Section 504 is one who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity; or
- Has a record of such impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

1. Compliance Plan for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

   The Compliance Plan serves students, parents, employees, applicants for employment and programs within the Merrillville Community School Corporation.

   1. Merrillville Community School Corporation assures students, parents, applicants for employment, and employees that it will not discriminate against any individual.
   2. The Superintendent or designee is the Section 504 compliance coordinator.
   3. Parents are provided procedural safeguards which are included in the *Notice of Parental Rights*.
   4. An impartial hearing and appeal are provided upon request. Procedures are detailed in the *Notice of Parental Rights*.
   5. Notice to students, parents, employees, and general public of nondiscrimination assurances and parent/student rights and identification, evaluation and placement will be disseminated annually in the following manner:
      a. Public Service announcement in local newspapers;
      b. Announcement in local school system; and
      c. Posted notice in each public school building

      Additionally, the notice will be included in the Merrillville Community School Corporation professional handbook and disseminated to each principal. Notice of non-discrimination assurances in accordance with Section 504 shall be included in student/parent handbooks.
   6. Merrillville Community School Corporation will conduct an extensive annual “child find” campaign with the goal to locate and identify all Section 504 qualified individuals with disabilities (ages 0 to 21) who reside within the participating school district boundaries.
   7. Merrillville Community School Corporation will inform all students with disabilities or some other limitation and their parents or guardians of the district’s responsibilities and procedural safeguards under Section 504, as well as those under Indiana Special Education Regulations (Article 7) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

2. Grievance Procedure for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

   Merrillville Community School Corporation has established the following local grievance procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination arising under Section 504:

   1. An alleged grievance under Section 504 must be filed in writing setting out the circumstances giving rise to such grievance.
   2. Such claims must be made in writing and filed with the Superintendent or designee.

Merrillville Community School Corporation
6701 Delaware Street, Merrillville, IN 46410
PH: 219-650-5300 FX: 219-650-5320
Email: superintendent@mvsc.k12.in.us

3. A hearing will be conducted according to the procedures outlined in the regulations based upon the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and due process rights that are afforded to the student and family who filed the grievance.
4. The Coordinator will appoint an impartial hearing officer who will conduct the hearing within a reasonable time after the request was received.
5. The coordinator shall give the parent, student, or employee reasonable advance notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.
6. The hearing must be conducted by any impartial individual who is knowledgeable about Section 504 and who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing.
7. Merrillville Community School Corporation shall give the parent, student or employee full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised. The parent, student, or employee may, at their own expense, be assisted or represented by individuals of their choice, including an attorney.
8. The impartial individual shall make his/her decision in writing within fifteen (15) days after the hearing.
9. The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and shall include a summary of the evidence and reasons for the decision.

Adopted: 02/21/2017

NOTICE OF PARENTAL RIGHTS REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

The following rights are those afforded to the parent/guardian of a student who is believed to be disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

1. Your child will be evaluated before any decision is made regarding the initial placement or a subsequent significant change in placement in a regular or special education program. You have the right to an independent evaluation at your expense.
2. Any placement decision will be made by a group of persons who are knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options within the school corporation.
3. In addition to any evaluation data, the group will consider such other information as aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior when making any placement decision.
4. Any placement of the student will be with persons who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of your student.
5. You have the right to examine your child's education records and to exercise all other rights granted to you in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Your child will not be suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) days unless a group of persons knowledgeable about your child and meaning of evaluation data meet to determine that the behavior is not a manifestation of your child's disability.
6. You have the right to request a hearing regarding any decision made by the school corporation with respect to the identified disability, evaluation, or educational placement of your child.
7. Upon receipt of a request for a hearing, the school corporation will appoint an impartial hearing officer (one who is knowledgeable about Section 504 and who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing). The hearing officer will advise you within a reasonable period of time of the date, time, and place for the hearing. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel or any other representative at this hearing at your expense. A copy of the Section 504 regulations will be given to you along with this notice. Any questions regarding your rights should be directed to the Superintendent or designee of this school corporation:

   Merrillville Community School Corporation
   6701 Delaware Street, Merrillville, IN 46410
   PH: 219-650-5300 FX: 219-650-5320
   Email: superintendent@mvsc.k12.in.us

Before a Section 504 placement can be considered, the student must be evaluated. A full evaluation is not required when neither the school corporation nor the parents believe that the child is in need of special education or related services.

In interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions, the school corporation must draw upon information from a variety of sources; assure that all information is documented and considered; ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons including those who are knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data and placement options; ensure that the student is educated with his/her non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

1. General education interventions should be the first alternative for students suspected of having academic or behavioral difficulties. A referral should be made to the Teacher Assistance Team and the General Education Intervention Plan followed. If general education interventions are not effective, the team will determine whether additional evaluations should be pursued.
2. An evaluation referral is to be completed and submitted to the building principal. The principal will ensure that an evaluation is completed and if necessary involve the Northwest Indiana Special Education Cooperative diagnostic team.
3. The parent will sign permission for an evaluation. The parent's rights will be explained at that time.
4. A team or persons who have knowledge of the child's physical and/or mental condition will participate in the evaluation of the student. The team will determine the extent of testing that needs to be completed in order to establish eligibility for services.
5. After completing the evaluation, the team will establish:
   a. Whether the physical or mental impairment substantially limits one of the major life activities, such as:

Caring for oneself	Speaking	Concentrating
Performing manual tasks	Breathing	Thinking
Seeing	Learning	Communicating
Hearing	Reading	Working
Eating	Sleeping	

   b. The list of major bodily functions that are now considered major life activities includes, but is not limited to: functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.
   c. If there is a history of such an impairment; or
   d. If the child is regarded as having such an impairment.
6. The parents will be notified and a Section 504 committee conference will be held to review the evaluation results and discuss possible programming options.
   a. If the child qualifies for IDEA services under Indiana Article 7, a placement in special education will be discussed and procedures for placement in special education programs will be followed.
   b. If the child does not qualify for IDEA services, the conference committee will determine if the child qualifies for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
      i. The Section 504 committee will outline the intervention plan on the form provided, listing the strategies, the chief implementers, and showing the monitoring dates.
      ii. The Section 504 Parents' Rights will be explained and a copy given to the parents.
7. Each case for students eligible for services under Section 504 should be reviewed annually to ensure implementation and needs for alternation. Students should be re-evaluated every three (3) years or if there is any significant change in placement (i.e. suspension for more than 10 days or expulsion).
8. Students reentering school after having been temporarily placed in a private setting (medical facility, rehabilitation center, clinic) will have a referral initiated for Section 504 eligibility.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974

On August 21, 1974, the United States Congress adopted an amendment to the General Education Provision Act called "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974" to deal with student records. In a broad outline, this Act provides for the following:

1. The Act concerns the student records of both elementary and secondary schools.
2. The parent's rights under this Act extend until the student is 18 years of age, or is enrolled in a post-high school institution; thereafter, only the student himself may exercise the rights.
3. Parents have a right to examine their children's records at reasonable times.
4. The parent has a right to have a record corrected if it "is inaccurate, misleading, or is otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of students."
5. A record must be kept with each student record showing who examined it, the date on which it was examined, and the purpose of the examination.
6. Certain persons may examine student records without a parent's consent. These include school officials, including teachers who have "legitimate educational interests," officials of other schools or school systems where a transfer is made, and certain representatives of the state and federal government with various limitations.
7. Any person may receive the records if the parents execute a written consent specifying the records to be released, the reasons for such release, and the person to whom they are to be released. A copy will be sent to the parents in such case, if requested. The parents may also request and receive a copy of any student record forwarded to another school or school system with a transfer.
8. A copy may also be furnished pursuant to a court order or subpoena, but only if the parents are given advance notice. The Board of School Trustees has adopted a policy implementing the provisions of this Act. A copy of this policy and the Act 54 are on file and available for inspection at the office of the Superintendent of Schools and the principal's office of all school corporation schools.
9. This federal law requires strict confidentiality of students' privacy which will not allow us to share video images from our school video cameras with parents/or guardians.

TITLE ONE PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS

As a parent/guardian of a Merrillville Community School Corporation student, and in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Section 111(h)(6), you have the right to request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers. This information shall include the following:

- If the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas taught.
- If the teacher is teaching under emergency or temporary status in which Indiana qualifications and licensing criteria are waived.
- The teacher's baccalaureate degree major, graduate certification, and field of discipline.
- Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If at any time your student has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher that is not highly qualified, you will be notified by the school of this information. If you have questions or concerns, please contact your child's school principal.

Merrillville Community School Corporation Responsible Use Policy (RUP)

Purpose

The Responsible Use Policy (RUP) provides students with guidelines for the appropriate use of technology in the Merrillville Community School Corporation (MCSC). MCSC provides technology to its staff and students to develop 21st-century skills, prepare students for college and careers, and enable collaboration and data sharing among students, staff, and the world. The guidelines provided are not all-encompassing, and the expectation is that all users will exhibit good judgment and follow school rules when making decisions. School computers, networks, tablet devices, and other technologies are all covered within the RUP. This policy is reviewed annually and is intended to comply with applicable state and federal law, including the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Indiana law governing student use of wireless communication devices (IC 20-26-5, as amended)

School Technology Prohibited Use Rules

Students may not engage in any of the following. Violations are subject to discipline under the student handbook, up to and including loss of technology privileges, and may be referred to law enforcement where applicable.

● Using computer-related technology with the intent to damage, harm, or render unusable any services, information, data, data storage systems, or computer resources.

● Using technology in any way to bypass MCSC security with the intent of gaining access to any unauthorized system.

● Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, denigrating, impersonating, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Do not send emails, post comments, or send messages through any platform (including social media, gaming, or messaging apps) with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating others. Engaging in these behaviors, or in any online activities intended to harm another person (physically or emotionally), will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime under Indiana law (IC 35-45-2-2 and related statutes). Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

● Deliberately using computer-related technology for any purpose that violates any individual school or MCSC rule or regulation, including any conduct that would result in discipline under the student handbook.

● Using technology off school property for any purpose that would violate the student handbook if it had been committed on school property.

● Unauthorized use of computer-related technology for commercial purposes not specifically authorized by the school board or the superintendent.

● Using computer-related technology and/or MCSC-provided Internet access to transmit,upload, download, view, or distribute any illegal files.

● Using computer-related technology for the purpose of plagiarism, including submitting work generated by another person or by an artificial intelligence (AI) tool as one's own. See the Artificial Intelligence section below.

● Misappropriating, misusing, or wasting consumable supplies.

● Misappropriating, misusing, or wasting any computer-related technology resources.

● Knowingly allowing, promoting, assisting, or causing any other person to violate any provision of this policy.

● Using any computer-related technology for the purposes of gambling.

● Using anonymous proxies, VPNs, or other tools to circumvent content filtering or monitoring.

● Installing or using any Internet-based file-sharing program designed to facilitate the sharing of copyrighted material.

● Reading, altering, changing, blocking, executing, or deleting files, communications, program inventories, or histories belonging to another user.

Personal Wireless Communication Devices (Cell Phones and Similar Devices)

This section is added to comply with Indiana law (IC 20-26-5, as amended by Senate Enrolled Act 78, signed March 5, 2026, effective July 1, 2026), which requires every Indiana school corporation to adopt and enforce a wireless communication device policy. MCSC has adopted a no-device-out policy during the school day (Bell to Bell), as described below. Covered devices. “Wireless communication device” includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, and other wearable devices capable of communication; tablets and laptops not issued by MCSC; gaming devices; and wireless earbuds or headphones. Students may not have personal wireless communication devices out or use them on school property during the school day. The “school day” means the entire time a student is on campus for instruction, from arrival (first bell) to dismissal (last bell), and includes passing periods, lunch, study halls, and any other non-instructional time during the day. Any device a student needs for transportation safety must be powered off and stored out of sight (for example, in a backpack) for the entire school day and may not be accessed at any time during the school day. Permitted exceptions. Use or possession of a personal device may be permitted only in the following circumstances consistent with Indiana law:

● A documented medical or disability-related need identified in a student's individualized education program (IEP), Section 504 plan, or other plan of care, where the device is necessary to monitor or manage a health condition.

● An emergency, when use is expressly authorized by the principal or superintendent (or a designee).

● Language translation for a student with limited English proficiency, provided that MCSC-managed devices are used for this purpose whenever available.

● Other uses expressly directed and supervised by a teacher or administrator for a specific educational purpose, consistent with law and this policy.

Before and after school. This policy applies only during the school day. Personal device use before and after the school day and at before- and after-school activities is governed by the student handbook and the supervising staff member's rules.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

Generative AI tools (for example, chatbots and image, audio, or video generators) may be used by students only when a teacher expressly permits their use for a specific assignment or purpose. When the use of AI is permitted, students must follow the teacher's instructions, including any requirements to cite or disclose AI assistance. Submitting AI-generated work as one's own, without permission and disclosure, constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty and is subject to disciplinary action under this policy and the student handbook. Students must not enter personal, private, or confidential information about themselves or others into AI tools, and must not use AI tools to create content that would otherwise violate this policy (for example, harassing, threatening, or inappropriate content). Teachers and the Technology Department determine which AI tools, if any, are approved for use on MCSC devices and networks.

Digital Citizenship and Responsible Use

Students in the Merrillville Community School Corporation are exposed to technology at all grade levels. With this exposure to technology, we also want students to learn to become good Digital Citizens. Much like we have rules for the way we behave in society, we have rules for how we should behave in our digital society. Student expectations for technology use are in place to help create the best possible technology environment. Students will learn about internet safety, cyberbullying, digital footprint, and other important aspects of digital citizenship. It will be the student's responsibility to report any problems with the device to their teacher. Students will receive instructions on how to use and care for the device. Students misusing their device(s) in any way will face disciplinary consequences in accordance with the student handbook.

Expectations

● Students will receive the device in their classroom and return it to the cart before they leave. Students must report any damage to their device immediately to their teacher. Students and parents will be held financially responsible for any intentional damage to a device.

● All students should recognize and guard their personal and private information. While on the Internet, students shall not reveal personal information, including home address or phone number, or the address or phone numbers of other students.

● The device comes equipped with both a camera and video recording capabilities. Students must request permission before recording an individual or group. Recording must be used appropriately in an educational manner. MCSC reserves all rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. Students must obtain permission from the school to publish a photograph or video of any school-related activity.

● Devices must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not the property of MCSC. District-affixed labels and tags shall not be removed from the Chromebook, written on, or destroyed.

● Inappropriate websites and images, including, but not limited to, guns, weapons, inappropriate language, threatening language, drugs, alcohol, or gang-related images, are not permitted and are subject to disciplinary action.

● The addition or deletion of software, apps, or plug-ins is not permitted by students without the permission of the teacher or the Technology Department. Failure to comply may result in restricted access to the device.

● Social media platforms (such as social networking, video-sharing, and similar sites) are not allowed unless used under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher for a specific project. Students should also be aware that Indiana law now restricts minors' use of certain social media platforms and may require verifiable parental consent to create or maintain an account; see the Social Media section below.

● Students will use the device assigned to them and only that device. Students must not share usernames or passwords with other students. The device should be secured at all times. Never place any objects between the keyboard and screen.

● The device is the property of the Merrillville Community School Corporation. It may be confiscated and inspected at any time. Students do not have any right to privacy of any data found on any device or cloud storage system owned or managed by MCSC.

● Students must follow copyright laws and should store data only on devices where it is legal to do so.

● The device will be used in the classroom or at home to do classwork and other activities approved by the teacher.

Social Media

While social media has its place in society, it needs to be used with respect and with the understanding that everything posted is permanent and may be seen by others. With that in mind, these guidelines suggest proper ways to use social media and how to avoid the pitfalls. Indiana law restricts minors' access to certain social media platforms. Depending on the platform, a Hoosier minor may need verifiable parental or guardian consent to create or maintain an account, and platforms may be required to apply additional protections to minors' accounts. Students and parents are responsible for complying with these requirements; MCSC is not the enforcing party but expects students to follow the law.

- Use proper discretion when posting to any social media platform. Posts are permanent. Do not post anything that you wouldn't want your parents, friends, teachers, future college boards, or future employers to see.
- Never give out personal information about yourself or anyone else when posting.
- Make sure not to violate any copyright laws by posting pictures, videos, etc. that are the intellectual property of someone else.
- Represent yourself with respect when posting; remember that others will be able to read these.
- If you see anything that you feel is inappropriate and may harm others, report it to your school principal. There is no safety in silence.
- Never pretend to be someone else or misrepresent yourself when posting to social media networks.

Internet Access

Internet access is provided to all students and staff at MCSC. MCSC provides filtering of obscene, pornographic, and harmful content on the internet in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). MCSC uses a subscription service to provide daily-updated filter content and also receives input from staff and students about sites that may need to be blocked or recategorized. This, however, does not always prevent determined users from accessing information that may be objectionable. Internet privacy and security are the user's responsibility. Students and staff who choose to work around filters and security are in direct violation of this policy and will face discipline in accordance with the handbook.

Monitoring and privacy.

Students and staff should have no expectation of privacy in their use of MCSC devices, networks, accounts, or storage. MCSC monitors and retains technology activity for safety, security, and compliance purposes, consistent with applicable data privacy law.

If you have any questions about this information please contact the Merrillville Community School Corporation Technology Department.

Consent

Students at MCSC will be given usernames, email addresses, and passwords that will allow them access to the school network and the internet. Access to the network and internet is a privilege, and failure to comply with the responsible use policy will result in the loss of this privilege.

All students are expected to follow the rules and regulations documented in the RUP. Misuse of technology will be reported to the building principals, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Parents/Guardian

I have read and understand the Responsible Use Policy and the rules it lays out. I agree to allow my student access to use technology as stated.

Signature:_____

Merrillville Community School Corporation Student Chromebook Use Policy

Chromebooks will be used in the Merrillville Community School Corporation in grades 3-12 and may be used at school and/or at home. This document will provide parents/guardians with information about policies, procedures, digital citizenship, and care of the device. Also included is information about annual insurance that can be purchased for the Chromebooks. Chromebooks are becoming a necessary part of the education for all of our students in grades 3-12 and are as essential as a classroom textbook. The Merrillville School Corporation will work to make the environment as safe as possible while using the Chromebook at school or at home. All student access to the Internet will be filtered with our filtering product which will be used both at school and for any Chromebook that is taken home. Teachers will also have access to add to the filtering levels in their classrooms and to monitor the use of the Chromebooks during the day. It will be the student's responsibility to report any problems that may occur with the device to their teacher. Students will receive instructions on how to use and care for the device. They will also be taught about positive digital citizenship. Students misusing their Chromebook or anyone else's Chromebook in any way may face disciplinary consequences in accordance with the student handbook.

Policies

1. The Chromebook is the property of the Merrillville Community School Corporation. It may be confiscated and inspected at any time. The student should have NO expectation of privacy of any materials found on any device owned by MCSC.
2. MCSC Chromebooks are provided as an educational tool for school work.
3. The Chromebook comes equipped with both a camera and video capabilities. Students must request permission before recording an individual or group. The recording must be used appropriately in an educational manner. MCSC reserves all rights concerning any recording and/or publishing of any student or staff member's work or image. Students must obtain school permission to publish a photograph or video of any school-related activity.
4. Chromebooks must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not the property of the MCSC. District affixed labels and tags shall not be removed from the Chromebook.
5. The adding or deleting of software is not permitted by students. The software will be installed/deleted through the Technology Department.
6. A student will not access another student's account, device or electronic work.
7. The Chromebook will not be used to access, share, download any documents, images, material that are illegal to possess. Chromebooks will not be used to gain access to restricted network resources or to cause harm or interruption to any and all network services.

Procedures

1. Chromebooks will be assigned to the student at the beginning of the school year. The student is responsible for that device throughout the year.
2. Students and parents will be held financially responsible for any damage to a device. The Merrillville School Corporation will provide an option for parents to purchase a yearly insurance plan for student devices.
3. Student devices staying at school will be picked up in the classroom and returned to the cart before the student leaves for the day. Students must make sure to report any damage to their device immediately to their teacher.
4. Student devices that are taken home will be kept with the student throughout the day and will be taken home when the student leaves.
    a. Device must be brought to school every day
    b. Device must be charged and ready to go when it gets to school
    c. Devices must be kept in the case provided
5. It is the student's responsibility to keep the device secure and follow all policies. Students must report any damage to their device immediately.

Digital Citizenship

Students will receive Digital Citizenship training throughout the school year. It is very important for our students and parents/guardians to understand the importance of being safe on the internet. The goal is that our students will engage in learning in and outside the classroom using technology with the understanding of their digital footprint.

1. Inappropriate web sites and images including but not limited to: guns, weapons, inappropriate language, threatening language, drug, alcohol, or gang-related images are not permitted and subject to classroom/school consequences.
2. All students should recognize and guard their personal and private information. While on the Internet, students shall not reveal personal information, including a home address or phone number, or the address or phone numbers of other students.
3. Social Media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. are not allowed unless being used with direct supervision of a classroom teacher for a specific project.

Care of the Chromebook

1. No food or drink is allowed next to your Chromebooks while it is in use.
2. Cords, cables, and removable storage devices must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook.
3. Students should never carry their Chromebook while the screen is open.
4. Chromebooks should be shut down when not in use to conserve battery life.
5. Chromebooks should never be shoved into a locker or wedged into a book bag as this may break the screen.
6. Do not expose your Chromebook to extreme temperature or direct sunlight for extended periods of time. Extreme heat or cold may cause damage to the laptop.
7. Always bring your laptop to room temperature prior to turning it on.
8. The protective shell of the Chromebook will only provide basic protection from everyday use. It is not designed to prevent damage from drops or abusive handling.
9. Take home devices will be provided a protective cover, this cover must be on the Chromebook at all times.

Screen Care

1. The Chromebook screen can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen.
   a. Do not lean on top of the Chromebook.
   b. Do not place anything near the Chromebook that could put pressure on the screen.
   c. Do not poke the screen.
   d. Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid.
2. Clean the screen with a soft, dry anti-static, or micro-fiber cloth. Do not use window cleaner or any type of liquid or water on the Chromebook. You can also purchase individually packaged pre-moistened eyeglass lens cleaning tissues to clean the screen. These are very convenient and relatively inexpensive.

Repair Costs

For take-home Chromebooks, the pricing list below will be used to bill for repairs caused by misuse of the device. Part Repair/Replacement Pricing:

- Display = $35.00
- Keyboard = $80.00
- AC Adapter = $35.00
- Touchpad = $24.00
- LCD Bezel = $29.00
- LCD Back Cover = $49.00
- New Chromebook = $176.00

Student/Parent Chromebook Acceptance Agreement

After reading the Merrillville Community School Corporation Chromebook Use Policy, please complete this form to indicate that you agree with the terms and conditions as stated.

The signatures of both the student and parent/guardian are mandatory before access may be granted to the Chromebook.

STUDENT

PRINTED NAME: _____GRADE: _____

I have read and hereby agree to comply with the Merrillville Community School Corporation Chromebook Use Policy.

Student Signature _____Date _____

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

PRINTED NAME: _____

Email Address: _____

As the parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access networked computer services such as network file storage and the Internet. I have read and agreed to the Merrillville Community School Corporation Chromebook Use Policy.

Parent Signature _____Date _____

FOOD ALLERGIES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Any parent that has a student with a food allergy **must complete** the **Special Dietary Needs Medical Statement Form** which requires a physician signature. This form will be on file in the nurse's office and the allergy will be listed in Skyward. Any form without a physician signature will not be acknowledged. Any medications required for the allergy, must also have a physician's order.

Any changes in food allergies will require a subsequent note from the student's physician to initiate the change.

Due to students with food allergies, NO homemade snacks will be distributed to Merrillville students. Approved store-bought snacks are allowed and must have ingredients clearly listed on the label in order to be served to students in the Merrillville Community School Corporation. Approved snacks can be found on the school nutrition website.

Any student that needs a special accommodation due to religious or social preferences, should also fill out the **Special Dietary Needs Medical Statement Form**. Under the Disability/Medical Need of Student, write the explanation by the other box. Religious or social preferences DO NOT require a physician signature.

5.49C – ALCOHOL & DRUG TESTING POLICY – REASONABLE SUSPICION (GRADES 6 – 12)

A. **Philosophy**

Merrillville Community School Corporation has a strong commitment to the health, safety, and welfare of its students. Results of studies throughout the United States indicate that education alone, as a preventative measure, is not effective in combating substance abuse. Our commitment to maintaining the Merrillville Community School Corporation as a safe and secure educational environment requires a clear policy and supportive programs relating to detection, treatment, and prevention of substance abuse by students.

B. **Definitions**

As used in this policy: Reasonable suspicion means a belief based upon circumstances which, when taken together in the context of the school building or activity in which they occur, would lead a reasonable person to believe a student has violated a state law, federal law, or student rule. Information provided by other persons may be considered by an administrator as part of the administrator's reasonable suspicion where the administrator has reason to believe the person offering the information is credible.

C. **Scope of Policy**

The provisions of this policy apply in all situations in which a student is subject to school disciplinary rules pursuant to Indiana Code 20-33-8-14(b), including:

- On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.

D. **Reasonable Suspicion Testing**

When a trained administrator, counselor, or school nurse has reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the administrator may require the student to submit to an alcohol or drug test. The physical characteristics that may be grounds for reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs include but are not limited to the following:

- Odor of alcohol or marijuana on breath or clothing - bruises, cuts or needle marks;
- Excessive drowsiness - accelerated heart rate - dilated pupils - bloodshot, watering and or dull looking eyes – decreased heart rate;
- Unsteady gait or loss of balance when walking - rapid, slowed or slurred speech - extreme hyperactivity;
- Manic or hyper behavior - irresponsible, disrespectful or argumentative behavior - fighting or aggressive behavior - emotional instability, especially overreactions to minor provocation - anxiety or depression – euphoria - dysphoria;
- Hallucinations - delusions - tremors - drowsiness or lethargy – confusion - seizures.

E. STEROID TESTING

The Merrillville School Corporation chooses to take a proactive role in combating the use of Anabolic Steroid Abuse. According to the NIDA, National Institute on Drug Abuse, there are numerous consequences of steroid abuse that can have serious effects on an individual's health. According to the NIDA the signs of steroid abuse vary in males and females and athletes may be more prone to steroid abuse in an attempt to enhance strength, muscle tone and body build. Some of the more outward signs of steroid abuse are: aggression, severe acne, oily skin and scalp, jaundice, fluid retention and aggressive growth spurt (e.g. unusual or extraordinary weight gain and/or increase of muscle mass and strength.)

If there is reasonable suspicion that a student-athlete may be using steroids, a student may be asked to take a steroid test administered by an independent testing agency. If the test is negative, the corporation will absorb the cost of the test. If the test is positive, the student or parents/guardians will pay for the test. Failure to comply will be automatically declared a positive test.

F. PROCEDURES

A testing laboratory that is certified pursuant to the regulations of the United States Department of Transportation will provide training and direction to those who supervise the alcohol and drug testing of students. The test sample shall be collected by a person designated by the Superintendent and trained to collect specimens for analysis. The integrity of the test sample shall be carefully preserved at all times through a strict chain of custody maintained with the supervision of the testing laboratory. The sample shall be tested at a certified testing laboratory. Test results shall be reported to the school corporation's Medical Review Officer.

G. CONSEQUENCES OF A POSITIVE TEST

Students who test positive for being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be subject to the provisions of the school corporation's student discipline policy. A refusal to submit to an alcohol or drug test will be treated as a positive test result.

H. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Merrillville Community School Corporation will be responsible for the costs of all initial alcohol and drug tests based on reasonable suspicion. A request for a confirmation test, following a positive test result, will be the financial responsibility of the student or his/her parent or guardian.

I. CONFIDENTIALITY

If the test is positive, the principal or administrative designee will meet with the student and the student's parent or guardian. The student and the student's parent or guardian will be given the names of counseling and assistance agencies that the family may want to contact for help.

Other than when necessary to administer this policy, any employee of the Merrillville Community School Corporation who has knowledge of the test result of an alcohol or drug test shall not divulge to anyone, other than the student or the student's parent or guardian, the results of the alcohol or drug test. Exceptions to this rule may be made in the case of a valid court order.

5.49D - Random Drug Testing Policy

Policy Statement: The Merrillville Community School Board is strongly committed to drug prevention and education to create a safe environment and to provide a climate where all students can reach their potential.

The use of illegal drugs presents a threat to the safety, health and welfare of both our employees and our students. Because of the risks associated with such abuse, the Board is implementing a student testing program for drugs. The program is not intended to be punitive or disciplinary in nature. The purpose of this program is to identify a student with drug residues in his/her body, to provide notification to the custodial parent/guardian, and to educate, help, and direct students away from drug abuse and toward a healthy, safe, and drug free participation in school activities.

Because participation in extracurricular activities at Clifford Pierce Middle School is a privilege, high standards of conduct are expected for students wishing to participate in these types of activities as well as for students who wish to drive to school. The Merrillville Community School Corporation shall conduct a mandatory random drug testing program for all students participating in the following:

DEFINITIONS:

1. All extracurricular activities including; all athletics, clubs, organizations, and activities sponsored by the School Corporation.
2. All students who apply for a driving/parking permit pursuant to rules and regulations as set forth in the Student Handbook.
3. Any students not qualifying in the aforementioned activities, who wish to voluntarily participate in the Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.
4. Student Athlete: Any student who is trying out for or participating in any school-sponsored interscholastic athletic competition, or cheerleading.
5. Extracurricular Activities: Any school sponsored club, organization, activity in which participation is voluntary.
6. Student Drivers: Any student who is issued a driving/parking permit under the rules and regulations of the driving policy in the Student Handbook.

Consent to Testing: Any student who wishes to participate in extracurricular activities or drive to school must consent to participate in the school's random drug testing program and sign a consent form. A student who does not wish to be included in this program shall not be permitted to participate in the above stated activities. Parents may also voluntarily enroll their child even if the student is not involved in extracurricular activities. Once a student consents to participate in the school district's random drug testing program, the student will be part of the program for the remainder of the school year.

Selection Procedure: Students participating in the program will be selected randomly throughout the school year for drug testing. The testing facility shall implement a procedure for the method of random selection of students involved in the program as well as procedures to be used in the collection and testing of samples. The tests themselves will be administered by an independent testing facility using procedures and standards set up by them.

Consequence of a First Time Positive Test Result: A student who tests positive for drugs following the random test, shall be immediately suspended from the extracurricular activities they are currently enrolled in, or future extracurricular activities they wish to enroll in. Students who drive to school will have their driving privileges suspended. The student must immediately enroll in drug counseling, and show documentation of following counseling recommendations in order to be eligible to participate in any further activities or have driving privileges reinstated. During the period of enrollment in a program the student is suspended from all extracurricular activities. The student must provide the school with a drug test result from the counseling service before the school clears the student to return to activities. Within the school year of the first offense, the student may be re-tested at any time. Drug counseling options include: South Lake Mental Health, Physicians, Awakenings, Addiction and Behavior Services, and Porter-Stark. Other options may be approved by the administration. Such counseling will be at the student's/parent's expense.

Consequences of a Second Positive Test Result: A student who tests positive for drugs following the random test, shall be immediately suspended from the extracurricular activities in which they are currently enrolled. ATHLETES IN OR OUT OF SEASON: If a second offense occurs when an athlete is in or out of season, the athlete must immediately enroll in drug counseling and show documentation of following counseling recommendations. The student must provide the school with a drug test result from the counseling service before the school allows the student to return to activities. The athlete will be suspended from their sport for 30% of the season before being allowed to participate. The athlete will be tested prior to the beginning of their next sport season and periodically during the remainder of the school year.

Consequences of a Third Positive Test Result: A student who tests positive for drugs following a random test will be immediately suspended from the extracurricular activity for 365 days.

Parental Notification: When students complete the drug test, the test administrator will give the student a form showing the initial results of the test that can be taken home to give to his/her parent/guardian. Once the school gets the test results from the testing company, if a test is positive, the student's parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. A parent may request a meeting with the athletic director (test supervisor) to discuss the results, the suspension and the counseling procedure.

Length of Results on Record: Positive test results will be removed August 1st of each school year. Students will start every school year without any record of previous test results.

Masked Test: Any attempt to adulterate, mask, or substitute a specimen will be automatically declared a positive test.

Refusal: After a student has been selected to submit to a random test, if the student refuses to submit to a drug test, the refusal will be treated as a drug-positive test. If a student is unable to urinate during the time the testing company person is on site, a school administrator will issue the test during that day.

Retest: A parent may request in writing a retest be taken by an outside agency within 72 hours of first notification. All costs associated with an additional test shall be the responsibility of the student and/or the student's parent or guardian. The retest must be done by a facility that is approved by the school. While the results of such a test are pending, the student's suspension shall be in effect. In the event the additional testing undertaken by the parent and/or guardian is negative no penalty shall be issued. Once the student has attended one of the designated counseling programs the school will retest the student within a two to four week period.

Legitimate Explanation: Within twenty-four (24) hours of being informed of a positive test result, the student may present evidence to the test administrator that the positive test result was caused by the legitimate use of a prescription or non-prescription drug, or an activity other than illegal drug use. The test administrator shall determine whether such reasons would reasonably explain the positive test result. If the test administrator determines the results to have been caused by a legitimate activity, then the test results will be disregarded and any record of the positive result shall be expunged. If the test administrator determines that it was a positive test result the student, at their own expense, may ask that the sample be sent to an independent testing facility approved by the administration.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMNESTY PROGRAM

STUDENT SELF-REFERRAL:

a. If a student discloses to a teacher, counselor, or administrator that he/she uses drugs/alcohol: no expulsion.

b. If a student voluntarily reveals that he/she is in possession or under the influence of drugs/alcohol: expulsion proceedings are suspended on condition that student immediately begins, within 24 hours, substance abuse therapy.

c. Required police report would be held by the police, without processing as long as the student is faithful to the therapy program and no further substance abuse incident occurs.

d. If a student and family refuse treatment, or discontinue treatment prematurely, then expulsion procedures continue and a police report is processed.

TOBACCO POLICY

Tobacco products have been medically diagnosed as cancer causing agents that are life threatening. State law has determined that "A person less than 18 years old commits a Class C Infraction if they purchase, accept or possess tobacco. The fine is up to $500. Selling or distributing tobacco to a person less than 18 years old is a Class C Infraction. The person who sells or distributes the tobacco can be fined up to $500.

Any student under the age of 18 caught in possession of a tobacco product on school grounds will be subject to already existing school disciplinary procedures as well as being subject to being reported to the police as being in violation of the State Tobacco Laws. The police will issue that student a ticket, which will require an appearance with their parent(s) before the Merrillville Town Court and carry with it a possible monetary fine and/or a requirement to attend a smoking cessation clinic.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

I. THE POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Merrillville Community School Corporation to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. The Merrillville Community School Corporation will not tolerate sexual harassment by employees or students. To assure the Merrillville Community School Corporation is free of sexual harassment in work and study, appropriate sanctions will be imposed on offenders over whom the school corporation has jurisdiction.

B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee to harass any student or for any student to harass any other student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined under Section IIA.

II. DEFINITION

A. General Prohibitions

1. Unwelcome Conduct of a Sexual Nature:

(a) Conduct of a sexual nature may include verbal of physical advances and/or comments regarding physical or personality characteristic of a sexual nature.

(b) Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when the allegedly harassed student has indicated, by his/her conduct, that it is unwelcome.

(c) A student who has initially welcomed such conduct by an active participant must give specific notice by his/her conduct to the alleged harassed that such conduct is no longer welcome in order for any such subsequent conduct to be deemed unwelcome.

2. Sexual Harassment

(a) For the purposes of this policy, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or sexual conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation in a school sponsored education program or activity
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basic for academic decisions
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic

performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment

B. Reporting, Investigating, and Sanctions

1. It is the express policy of the Merrillville Community School Corporation to encourage persons who believe that they are victims of a sexual harassment to come forward with such claims. This may be done through the following procedure:

   (a) A student who believes that he/she has been sexually harassed as defined by Section IIA of this policy should report the unwelcome conduct to the principal of the school which he/she attends or if the principal is the offending person, the report should be made to the Superintendent.

   (b) Any student who disagrees with the decision of the building principal (level hearing decision) may file a written request within 30 days of a level I decision with the Superintendent for a level II hearing. The decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee (level II decision) may be appealed to the Board of Trustees. The party who appeals from the level II decision must file a written request for a sharing before the Board of Trustees within 15 days after receipt of the level II decision.

   (c) Confidentiality will be maintained and no reprisals or retaliation will be allowed to occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment.

2. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The Superintendent has the responsibility of investigating and resolving complaints of sexual harassment.

3. Using a cell phone or electronic device to send, share, view, or possess pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Merrillville Community School Corporation not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, limited English proficiency, age, handicap, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the Indiana Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay of 1973, Title IX (1972 Education Amendments), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act and any other applicable Federal or State nondiscrimination law.

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Personnel of the Merrillville Community School Corporation, 650-5300, superintendent@mvsc.k12.in.us or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago IL 60661-4544, telephone 312-730-1560, fax 312-730-1576, TDD 877-521-2172, email OCR.Chicago@ed.gov.

TRESPASS AND VANDALISM

No student is permitted to be on any other Merrillville Community School Corporation property immediately before or after school hours unless approved by administration.

To help eliminate vandalism on school property, the Board of School Trustees has passed a resolution, which states:

"The buildings and their grounds are dedicated to the use and enjoyment of the young people of our community. They are for their use during daylight hours only. And they are closed to all persons from dusk to dawn unless attending an approved program."

Damaged or unauthorized tampering with computers, telephones, or any other technology will be considered vandalism with appropriate disciplinary action applied.

"The use of motorized vehicles on school property is forbidden."

"Persons vandalizing grounds and facilities will be subject to arrest and prosecution."

Any person or persons found on school property during these restricted hours without approval of school officials will be arrested by the Merrillville Police and will be charged with violation of the trespass laws of the State of Indiana.

With respect to those individuals caught engaging in acts of vandalism, school officials will prosecute to the full extent of the

law. In addition, parents are responsible for the intentional or willful or malicious act or acts of a minor in their custody. Indiana Code 315101 provides the following:

"Respecting any minor under the age of eighteen (18) years, the parent or parents with whom such minor is living and having custody of such minor, shall be liable for the actual damages sustained but not exceeding the sum of seven hundred fifty dollars ($750) plus the court costs of the action, to any person, firm, associations, corporation and the State of Indiana and its political subdivisions, including but not limited to cities and towns, for any and all damages purposely caused by the injury to or destruction of any property, real, personal, or mixed by the intentional or willful or malicious act or acts of such minor." (Note: This does not include the liability of a parent or parents as exists under other laws of the State of Indiana.)

In addition, it is a misdemeanor for any person who enters or returns to school property to cause a disturbance or to interfere with school purposes. Law enforcement officials may remove a person who refuses to leave school property upon order of the principal, assistant principal, or teacher. It is also a misdemeanor to counsel or encourage or incite another person or persons to remain on the property for the purpose of interfering with the lawful use of such property.

Citizens of Ross Township are asked to notify the police of any violation or suspected violation of the trespass or vandalism laws. Such information will be kept confidential by the Merrillville Police Department.

SECTION II - ACADEMIC INFORMATION

GRADING POLICY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Assessment of effort and progress is inevitable and essential to growth. Standards of achievement set expectations toward which students can strive. Grades are symbols that indicate to a student and parent(s) how well the student has progressed towards achieving these expectations.

We consider that in the final analysis, each teacher is best able to judge the students' performance in a given subject area. The following grading scale is generally used:

A- 90-100 B- 80-89 C- 70-79 D- 60-69

Less than 60 percent is a failure. Plus and minus may be used.

These are suggested guidelines in an effort to raise and maintain high standards of achievement. We realize there will be times when it will be necessary that the above schedule may be modified. Teachers will discuss their grading and marking system with each of their classes.

5.53 HOMEWORK

Abundant research indicates that effective homework policies can induce higher student achievement at all ability levels if purposes are clear and thoughtful, amounts are reasonable, and responsibilities are shared by students, parents, and teachers. The following policy has been adopted to establish homework as a continuous and systematic part of the school corporation's educational programs.

A. Purposes:

1. *Reinforce Classroom Learning:* Includes independent practice or review of knowledge and concepts introduced during the school day.
2. *Extend the Day's Lesson:* Requires the utilization of newly acquired knowledge to achieve higher levels of understanding. Such utilization often involves the mental processes of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application.
3. *Introduction of New Material:* Involves additional reading or searching for new information as a means of extending the acquisition of new knowledge beyond the confines of the school day.

B. Amount of Homework: The amount of homework should be related to student age and type of program being pursued.

1. *Elementary:* In general, daily minutes of homework should be approximately equal to ten times the grade level. Completion of unfinished daily classroom assignments will be in addition to assigned homework.
2. *Secondary*: Because some courses of study are more appropriate for extension of learning through homework, a range of one to four hours per day is recommended for the day's total assignment. Secondary teaching staff are requested to communicate with students and other staff to avoid excessive homework loads on any given night.

C. Responsibilities for Homework:

1. *Students:* Students are expected to make a good faith effort to complete all assigned homework on time and to the best of their ability.
2. *Parents:* Parents are expected to provide a home environment conducive to the development of reliable and systematic study habits, and to monitor homework to ensure its completion.
3. *Teachers:* Teachers are expected to explain the purpose of homework, to make assignments that are deemed fair and reasonable when compared to homework being assigned by other teachers, to review all completed homework, and to contact parents when assigned homework is not being appropriately completed.

Homework will be assigned on a regular basis. When homework is assigned by the teachers, it will be meaningful and realistic, providing the student the opportunity for creativity. All assignments will be designed to strengthen daily work and they will be made with specific purpose and expectation. Homework aids in learning to work independently and to improve skills taught in the classroom. Homework may be assigned over the weekends.

Students will be held responsible for completion and accuracy of homework assignments. Students will receive disciplinary consequences for failing to complete assigned homework, which may include warnings, detentions, Friday extensions, parent conferences. Most important, student success reflected in grades is affected. All students will be provided with a student assignment book, which should be used as a communication tool for students, parents and teachers.

HONOR ROLL

The Honor rolls for all secondary schools of the Merrillville Community School Corporation are as follows:

- Straight A Honor Roll – (4.0 Grade Point Average) student must make all A's
- High Honors – (3.5 – 3.99 Grade Point Average)
- Honors – (3.0 – 3.49 Grade Point Average)

**Courses that apply include all academic, remediation, and allied arts classes.

AWARDS

Shortly before the completion of the school year, convocation will be scheduled to honor those students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in some area during the school year. The purpose of these awards is to not only recognize individuals, but to develop student morale and pride. Individual awards (trophies, ribbons, certificates, medals) will be awarded for exemplary performance in the areas of academics, athletics, club participation, community service, attendance and citizenship.

*** Merrillville Community School Corporation does not hold a commencement ceremony for the completion of 8th grade**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Indiana State Compulsory education law (IC20-33-2-4) requires all students seventeen years of age or less to attend school. Your child is expected to attend each class period, every school day. Non-attendance, and in particular truancy, is a violation of both Merrillville Community School Corporation and Clifford Pierce Middle School's attendance policy. Regular attendance at school is one of the most important aspects of a student's life. It is imperative that all students be in attendance in order to get the most from class work. It is very important that an accurate record of attendance be kept for each student.

IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

WHEN YOUR CHILD MUST BE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE REQUIRED TO CALL THE MAIN OFFICE <u>PRIOR TO THE START</u> OF THE SCHOOL DAY.

1. More than five (5) days of absences is considered excessive, except in cases of extended illness or extremely unusual circumstances. Days of suspension for disciplinary reasons will not be counted toward the five (5) day total. After 5 parent calls, in order for an absence to be excused it must meet the following criteria:

Excused Absence-A student may have an excused absence, which is not included in the five (5) day limit for the following reasons:

A. Personal illness requiring a physician's statement
B. Death in the immediate family
C. Court appearance required by legal authorities
D. Religious holidays (request verification)
E. Absences due to approved school-related field trips, rehearsals, competitions, etc.
F. Medical and dental appointments (make every effort to schedule after school)
G. Other emergency or unusual circumstances as approved by a building administrator.

2. Students with excessive attendance problems will be referred to the Lake County Prosecutor's Office or Child Protective Services depending on the circumstances. Further, the school principal may refer the student's name to the Indiana Department of Motor Vehicles. The student will meet with a Guidance Counselor or the School Social Worker and a letter will be sent to the parents before any such action is taken.
3. Parents should make every effort to schedule doctor and dental appointments outside the school day. If a student must be absent for such a reason, the appointment must be verified in writing directly from the medical or dental office.
4. Written excuses for an absence due to a death of a member of the immediate family or relative living at home, religious holiday, or family emergency should be provided by parents or legal guardians and will be placed on file at the school.
5. If a student is truant from school, he/she will not be allowed to attend any extracurricular activities that day.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. A notification will be sent to parent/guardian(s) on the 5th unexcused/nonexempt absence with a copy of the Indiana Compulsory Law and information concerning the truancy diversion program, the C.A.P.S. (Consistent Attendance Promotes Success) program; a collaboration between the Merrillville Town Court and Merrillville Schools.
2. A dean of students or administrator will contact the parents/guardian(s) on the 7th absence to address issues that are impacting consistent attendance.
3. Students who have 10 or more unexcused/nonexempt absences are in violation of the Indiana Compulsory Attendance Law and will be referred to the Merrillville Town Truancy Court. Failure to appear could result in a bench warrant for your arrest, as well as educational neglect charges being filed with the Lake County Child Protective Services. Fines may apply.

VACATIONS-Absences due to vacations must be pre-arranged with school officials at least one week prior to the start of the vacation. Failure to do so will result in a student marked truant and the student will receive a "0" for the work missed on those days. Students returning from vacation are expected to turn in assignments on the first day they return to school following vacation. NO vacations will be permitted during standardized testing periods or the weeks of final exams.

** Parents may leave a message at any time. Voice mail is available when the school office is closed.

*** Verify the student's absence whether by telephone, written note from a legal guardian, or with documentation from a medical office.

***** The student shall bear the responsibility for making up all work missed due to any absence. Arrangements must be made with the teacher within a reasonable time (never exceed three days after returning to school).

****** Students who call/text home from their phones and it results in a parent pick-up will be considered unexcused. All ill students are to see the nurse first for determination if they need to be picked-up.

Tardy Policy

It is extremely important for students to arrive at school on time. Late arrival hinders the child's ability to receive instruction at the beginning of the day with the rest of the classmates. Students who arrive after the school day begins will be considered tardy. Students arriving late to school in the morning must check in at the main office. The **school day is 7:30a-2:15p**. Students will be marked tardy to class if they are not in their assigned seat at the beginning of each class.

The following policy will be implemented for excessive tardiness to class/school for each year.

1st Tardy- Warning, noted in Skyward	**5th Tardy** – After-School Detention
2nd Tardy – 2nd Warning, noted in Skyward; Parent Phone Call	**6th Tardy** –After-School Detention
3rd Tardy- Lunch Detention, Parent Phone Call from Teacher	**7th Tardy** – Conference with Parent, Student, and Grade-Level Dean
4th Tardy- Lunch Detention	**8th Tardy +**– Consequences to be determined by administrator, including but not limited to Friday Schools, ISS, or OSS.

Note: Bus service is provided; if you choose other transportation and are late it will be considered unexcused. Students who accrue two tardies will no longer be eligible for perfect attendance recognition. Students who have excessive tardies may lose the privilege of participating in any extracurricular activities.

Truancy Policy

A student is considered truant from school when they are 15 or more minutes late without a legitimate excuse. A student is considered truant from class when they are out of the class without permission for 6 minutes or more. A student is also considered truant when they have an unexcused absence or an absence without a parental call. **Truancy occurs when a student fails to attend a class or classes without a valid reason and without permission from the administration or the student's parents/guardian.**

1st Truancy- Warning	**4th Truancy** – Conference with Parent, Student, and Grade-Level Dean
2nd Truancy – Two After-School Detentions and Parent Phone Call from Grade-Level Dean	**5th Truancy and more**—Consequences to be determined by administrator, including but not limited to Friday Schools, ISS, OSS, and PEP program
3rd Truancy- Friday School and Parent Phone Call from Grade-Level Dean	***See section below on "Habitual Truancy" (10 or more truancies)**

Note: Truancy applies to students who remain in restrooms due to illness without reporting to a teacher, administrator, or nurse.
*Students who accrue one truancy will no longer be eligible for perfect attendance recognition and may lose the privilege to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Habitual Truancy and/or Unexcused Absences

In accordance with Indiana State Law Section 18 IC 20-33-2-11. Any student who has accumulated **ten (10) days** of absences in one (1) school year, which are **either truancies, unexcused absences,** and/or absences without parental phone calls, **will be reported to Truancy Court as a 'habitually truant and/or unexcused absent student.**

According to the state law, students who are identified as 'habitually absent' may also be reported to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and may NOT be issued an operator's license or a learner's permit to drive a motor vehicle under IC 9-24 until the individual is at least eighteen (18) years of age.

MAKE-UP POLICY

It is the student's responsibility to go to the teacher to get assignments after any absence. The teachers will inform the student of the time they have available for all make-up work. The number of days of excused absence plus one will be allowed for make-up work including tests. Parents of students who are out of school due to suspension must obtain work by contacting the Student Services/Guidance Office at 650-5482.

RETENTION & ASSIGNMENT

A. Philosophy and Decision Making and Appellate Process:

The staff of the Merrillville Schools endeavors to provide an optimum education for all students so that they may become productive and effective citizens in our society. Each year, the students are exposed and involved with programs and activities, which enhance their developmental growth and ensure their success in the succeeding years. Most students progress through the curriculum with very little difficulty and continue the challenges of learning. However, there are a few students who need additional time and experience as they would have difficulty achieving at the next level. For these reasons, students may be retained at the direction of the building principal after consultation with the parents and teacher. Retention decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent or Designee. The decision of the Superintendent's Designee may be appealed to the Superintendent, if desired. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of School Trustees.

B. Retention Procedures:

The following procedures will be observed by all principals prior to any retention decision:

1. A minimum of three teacher-parent contacts
2. Accumulation of supportive evidence including unsatisfactory reports
3. A review of achievement test results
4. Parental notification by May 15th
5. Conferences as requested by the parents

C. Assignment:

A student is assigned to the next grade when the teacher(s) do not have enough performance/academic information to recommend promotion to the next grade level for the following school year. It is the expectation that these students will not be considered for return to the previous grade level after the new school year begins. This assignment is to inform the next teacher(s), as well as the parent/guardian, the assigning teacher(s) feel there may be some gaps in the student's preparedness.

D. Additional Information:

The Merrillville Community School Corporation does not allow the retention of any student who has successfully completed any grade, except upon the recommendation of the appropriate school personnel. Under no circumstances may a student be retained for the sole purpose of improving the student's ability to participate in a school corporation athletic program.

Adopted: 02/21/2017

TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM

Merrillville Community School Corporation

The Truancy Prevention Program aims to promote attendance, engage students in learning, help students achieve, intervene early, and provide support where needed. Improving student attendance and truancy prevention have always been areas of concern for educators.

The program will assist parents in gaining an understanding of the truancy policies to improve student attendance, understand the Indiana Department of Education attendance requirements, discuss effective strategies and innovative approaches to truancy prevention.

When a student has 5 or more days of unexcused absence in a 10 week period, an email will be generated through Skyward, guardians will receive a call from a school representative offering resources, attendance contract, and the link to the North American Learning Institute online course will be provided. Link: https://nalearning.org/

All courses provided by North American Learning Institute are 100% online and self-paced, which allows you to start and stop at any time and as often as necessary to accommodate your schedule. The courses can also be taken on any device that has access to the internet, even smart phones. You can even start on one device and continue on another!

Certificates of completion are electronically issued immediately upon course completion and can be emailed directly to the Central Office.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be available on-line every six weeks throughout the school year. Seventh and eighth graders may receive an incomplete grade for a course if there has been an extended illness or for incomplete projects. There will be a two week time limit necessary to make up a grade. If this time limit is passed, the incomplete will become an automatic F unless other arrangements have been made by the teacher. Parents can access student progress and report cards at any time through the Skyward Family Access portal.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students are required to remain in classes and teams to which they are assigned or elect to take. Any possible change will be considered only after teacher, counselor, and parent contacts have occurred. Any changes must be approved by the administration.

WITHDRAWALS & TRANSFERS

In the event that a student is transferring or withdrawing, the parent must come into the Guidance Office to complete and sign withdrawal and transfer forms. A check out form will be given to the student to have all teachers' complete including, library and treasurer. This must be done at least two days in advance before leaving school. All books and equipment are to be returned and all fees paid. Each teacher will initial and enter the up to date grade. Students must then secure a final signature from the treasurer. This being done, the counselor will complete the transfer/withdrawal form. The student must sign out with the principal/designee.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

A. The Merrillville Community School Corporation exists for the education of the resident pupils. It is the policy of the Board not to accept transfer students who reside within the boundaries of other school corporations.
B. Children who enroll in the Merrillville Community School Corporation during the school year shall be in the same grade in which they were previously enrolled unless the principal determines that the child would be inappropriately placed if enrolled at the same grade level.
C. Students who move from the school corporation may, at the election of the parents or at the election of the student (if eighteen years of age) continue attending school corporation schools without charge until the end of the trimester/semester.
D. In the case of a student who has completed the eleventh grade, the parents of such student or the student (if eighteen years of age) may elect to complete the twelfth year of high school in the Merrillville School system without charge if the school corporation is notified prior to relocation from the school district. I.C.20-26-11-2(8) Adopted 8/15/2014
E. House Bill 1056 provides that a student in good standing may transfer to a Merrillville school if the student's parent is an employee of the Merrillville Community School Corporation and the school corporation has the capacity to accept the student.

SECTION III - GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

ASSEMBLIES

We will expect a high standard of conduct and courteous attention given to all programs and performers. Good audience behavior and care of assembly facilities are traditions we will maintain at our middle school. Students who show disinterest in assemblies by displaying unacceptable behavior will be removed and given an appropriate consequence.

Students attending the assemblies will be seated as directed by the principal or assistant principal. No class will leave until it has been dismissed by the principal or assistant principal. All teachers will sit in assigned positions on the bleachers. At the conclusion of the program, students will wait for dismissal by the person in charge and proceed to an exit in an orderly fashion.

ATHLETICS

Below is a complete listing of the sports offered and their respective seasons:

SEASON	BOYS	GIRLS
FALL	Football 7th and 8th	Volleyball
	Cross Country	Cross Country
	Baseball	Gymnastics
		Cheerleading
WINTER	Basketball	Basketball
	Wrestling	Cheerleading
	Volleyball	
SPRING	Track	Track
	Tennis	Tennis
	Soccer	Soccer
	Football (7th)	

CLIFFORD PIERCE MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT RULES AND POLICIES

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

Activities beyond the regular curriculum at Clifford Pierce Middle School are designed to implement their nature and structure the philosophy underlying the school as a whole to provide students with tools of learning that will enable them to continue learning all their lives.

The recognized value of extracurricular participation to student's personal development has given these activities a high priority in the total school program. To ensure this value, it is essential that the goal of the extracurricular program be to encourage individual responsibility and initiative within the established framework of each organization and to allow students to recognize the consequences of their own decisions and actions.

Extracurricular activities at Clifford Pierce Middle School provide scope for a variety of interests and talents through programs in athletics, curriculum-related clubs, student government, honor clubs, intramurals, music and drama organizations, and service clubs.

Each of these groups has been given the responsibility of setting its own standards for participation consistent with the philosophy of the school and the requirements for conduct expected of all students. Within this general framework, the standards of each activity will necessarily vary according to that activities individual purpose and goals as well as overlap in the restatement of school handbook requirements.

The extracurricular program can maintain its credibility only if the organizations within it have the authority to maintain their own goals and standards. Unless otherwise stated, club standards will be enforced during the school year, with the expectation that students will observe these standards at school and uphold them away from school as well. Enforcement of club standards during the summer will be in effect for the athletic program and for those organizations maintaining summer activities.

It should be clearly understood by all students involved in the extracurricular program and by their parents that individual participation must be regarded not as a right but, instead, as a privilege dependent on personal acceptance of the group's common philosophy.

Clifford Pierce Middle School Athletic Department reserves the right to use a variety of methods to investigate potential athletic code of conduct violations. These include, but are not limited to, Legal notification, public records, Internet websites, parent communication and other personnel contacts.

For this reason, the school will endeavor through its Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee to support each organization in maintaining the expectations of membership as these have been developed within the group and as they are set forth in this handbook.

ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS ELIGIBILITY

The Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) has established the following rules for eligibility for both boys and girls. If there is a question concerning your eligibility to participate in athletics, feel free to check with the athletic director.

AGE– The athletic directors of Lake Middle School Athletic Conference have established guidelines for age requirements for the competitions which the group hosts. Athletes may not have reached their 16th birthday on or before the date of the championship date of that sport. For those middle school sports where there is not a championship game held, an athlete must not have reached his/her 16th birthday on or before the date of the last interscholastic competition held in that sport.

Grades-To be eligible scholastically, students must have received passing grades at the end of their last grading period in school in at least seventy percent (70%) of the maximum number of classes/subjects (or equivalent) that a student can take and must be currently enrolled in at least seventy percent (70%) of the maximum number of classes/subjects (or the equivalent) that a student can take. Trimester grades take precedence. CPMS has a maximum class load of seven (7) which means athletes must pass six (6) subjects in order to be academically eligible to participate in athletics. 2 F's in any class/subject = ineligible to participate in athletics.

Fall Sports:

At the end of the school year, if the student's 1 "F" is in Math or English, he/she must take the failed subject in summer school (provided it is offered) and pass to be eligible for the fall athletic season.

Winter and Spring Sports:

At the end of the trimester or 6-week grading period, if the student has 1 "F" is in Math or English, he/she must attend after school tutoring (provided it is offered) for the subject during the season before they can attend practice.

Amateur Standing– Students may lose their amateur standing and their eligibility for interscholastic sports if they accept gifts or prizes for participation on a team or in a tourney other than with a school team. If there is a question, check with the athletic director.

Parent's and Physician's Consent Form/Emergency Medical Treatment Waiver– Before students may practice with any team, they must have on file in the athletic office the IHSAA physical examination and emergency medical treatment forms which have been properly signed by their parents giving permission to participate, and properly completed and signed by a licensed medical physician indicating that the student is physically able to play. This form must be filled out for both boys and girls and must be renewed each year. No physicals are to be taken earlier than April 1 for the following school year. Falsification of these documents can result in suspension or dismissal from a sport.

Participation– Students are encouraged to participate in more than one sport if they are academically secure. A student who quits a sport may not go out for another sport in that same athletic season. Athletes, cheerleaders and dance team members may not participate in more than one activity during the same season. (Exception: A request must be filed with the athletic director to request exemption from this rule.)

Practice Rules– A student must practice the minimum required number of days prior to participation in an interscholastic athletic event. The number of required practices is 10 for all sports. Practices must be under the direct supervision of a member of the coaching staff. Team practice sessions are open to team members and school staff only.

Absence Due To Illness– A member of any team who is unable to practice for five (5) consecutive days due to illness or an injury must present to the athletic director or coach a statement from his/her physician that he/she is physically able to resume practice. **Students must be in attendance at school by 11:30 am and attend all afternoon classes to be eligible for extracurricular activities that day. Special exemptions must be approved by the athletic director prior to the contest day.** (Examples of exemptions: funeral, dental appointment, doctor appointment). **An athlete who is unable to participate in physical education class may not participate in athletics.**

CPMS POLICIES

Citizenship– Good daily citizenship and behavior of a lady or gentleman will do much to prove that you are worthy to wear the purple and white of a Pierce "Pirate".

Drug Testing Policy – Please be familiar with section 5.49C in this student handbook.

Practice Policy – Teams and individuals may practice Monday through Saturday. Coaches may not hold practices on Thanksgiving or Christmas. NO TEAM MAY PRACTICE ON SUNDAY. Practice attendance policies are left up to the head coach and a copy of the policy should be given to each athlete at the beginning of the season.

Vacation Policy – Students who are taking a vacation with their immediate family are excused during this period. When the athlete returns from vacation they will receive NO penalty from the coach for being absent. The student may, however not hold the same position on the team as he/she did prior to the vacation simply because another student may have exceeded their standard of performance during the absence. Students taking vacations with friends, relatives, etc. are unexcused and will accept the rules set by the coach in that sport upon their return. Coaches must have their policies in writing and give each athlete a copy at the beginning of the season.

Personal Appearance – Students who are not dressed in school uniforms for away contests should dress in a fashion which demonstrates self-respect and a respect for school. Coaches who have policies on appearance must have these policies in writing and give each student a copy at the beginning of the season. Coaches are given permission to write team policies with regard to grooming and dress. The athletic director will approve all team policies prior to their implementation. **Athletes and cheerleaders must be clean shaven from the first practice date of the sport until the last contest (no beards and mustaches).** No jewelry may be worn during practices or games.

Hazing – Students hazing is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. Hazing incidents will result in disciplinary action decided upon by the coach and the athletic administration.

Sexual Harassment – The athletic department will adhere to the Sexual Harassment Policy as written in the school student handbook in the general information section.

Insurance – The athletic department or School Corporation does not carry insurance for students. Athletic injuries are not covered under the school corporation policy, Insurance policy information is available on the www.mvsc.k12.in.us site under Parent and Student Accident Insurance.

Team Rules – Specific team rules may be set forth by the coach of each sport. These rules and the penalties for breaking them will be given to the students by the coach at the first meeting or practice of that sport. These written regulations will be on file with the athletic director. Every student and parent must read these team rules and sign the form at the end which states they have read the rules and that they understand the violations for any infraction of the team rules. Coaches are given the right to impose team rules that address dress code, grooming policy, practice policies, academic policies, etc. These team rules are over and above the Student/Athlete Handbook policies with the approval of the Athletic Director and subject to review by the office of the Superintendent.

These policies must be explained to the parents at the pre-season parent meeting.

Dress policies: may include a team travel uniform, no jeans, no gym shoes, etc.

Grooming policies: May include length of hair, wearing earrings, tattoos, etc. Rules must be explicit (example: length of hair, style of hair, etc.)

Practice Policies: May include late for practice policy, no show policy, etc.

Academic Policies: May include policies of students who are struggling academically.

Other Policies: Policies that pertain to the specifics of a sport.

Team Transportation – When a team takes a bus or van to an athletic contest, all students WILL return from the event in the bus or van. Only in the case of emergency, a Travel Release Form can be obtained from the athletic office and must be completed and on file in the athletic office prior to the dismissal of school on the day of the event.

Accidents and Injuries – All accidents or injuries home or away, are to be reported to the coach immediately. An accident report will be filled out and on file in the athletic office. If the injury required medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to activity. The athletic department is not responsible for reimbursement for any medical expenses incurred due to an injury that is sustained during a middle school practice or contest.

Equipment – All students will care for all equipment and uniforms as though it were their own personal property. If equipment or uniforms are damaged or lost the student is responsible for paying for replacement items at the replacement cost. Athletes are not to wear school owned uniforms anytime other than at the contest.

Entrance to the building. Pick up of athletes – All student athletes should use the South Entrance for athletic practice and/or competitions at Pierce. For practices and/or competitions at Merrillville Intermediate School, athletes should use the West gym entrance. Athletes should not be in any other part of the building unless under the direct supervision of a coach. Athletes will not be allowed to return to their academic-area lockers after practices or games.

PARENT AND STUDENT CLARIFICATION

Athletic participation as members of any similar teams in the same sport season, not under the direct supervision and management of their schools, **is strongly discouraged.** Participation in sports while participating on a school team should only be done with the knowledge of the middle school coach. Participation on a Pierce Middle School athletic team will take precedence over a non-school team if conflicts arise during the same sport season. Participation with an out of school team that results in a conflict with any practice, game or scheduled meeting of the school team may result in suspension or removal from the school program upon review of the athletic director and principal. Concurrent participation compromises the student athletes' ability to fully meet the requirements set forth by the coaching staff and school.

CHEERLEADER RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Cheerleaders are under the authority of the athletic department and will abide by the same rules and regulations as the athletes. The training rules and violations listed in this handbook apply to all cheerleaders.

CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR

Clifford Pierce Middle School recognizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. If a conflict persists, the student and/or parent may contact the athletic director for assistance. A commitment to the middle school team indicates that all non-school conflicts be resolved in favor of the school team. This would not, however, include such things as significant religious holidays, family weddings, funerals, etc.

PARENT CONDUCT

Clifford Pierce Middle School has the right to ask any spectator to leave a contest if their behavior is inappropriate in accordance with the MCSC Civility Policy 8.95, which is listed on page 8 of the Clifford Pierce Middle School Handbook. The athletic director, officials or administration would be those assigned to determine whether or not a person's behavior is unsportsmanlike. The person who has been removed must leave the building and grounds. This person may also be banned for the remainder of the season if their behavior warrants it.

VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

Training Violations – Students participating on school teams are required to live according to the rules listed in the **SCHOOL HANDBOOK RULES AND THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT RULES.** School rules and athletic rules may be interrelated and may result in two different penalties since two different codes may have been violated.

Enforcement Procedure – No penalties set forth below shall be imposed until the student is afforded an opportunity for an informal hearing, conducted by the athletic director, which includes:

1. A written or oral statement of the charges against the student.
2. If he/she denies the charge, a summary of the evidence against the student.
3. An opportunity for the student to explain his/her conduct.

If the athletic director decides that a penalty set forth below should be imposed against the student at the conclusion of the informal hearing he/she will, within 24 hours of the informal hearing, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, send a written statement to the students' parents or guardians describing the conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or rules, the reasons for the action taken by the athletic director, and the penalty imposed.

1. Use and/or Possession of Any Form of Tobacco
   a. 1st Offense – The student will miss 10% of their entire season schedule and two hours of school service assigned by the athletic director. If the season is near completion and the suspension cannot be carried out, the suspension will be served in the student's next sport season.
   b. 2nd Offense – The student will miss 40% of their entire season schedule and must attend a workshop on the use of tobacco before returning to any sport. The workshop must be approved by the athletic director prior to attending. If the season is near completion and the suspension cannot be carried out it will be served in the student's next sport season.
   c. 3rd Offense – The student is ineligible to participate in athletic activities for 365 days from the date of the infraction. **(If the athlete joins a new sport just to serve the suspension, they must remain in the new sport the entire season and finish the season in good standing in order for the suspension to have been legally served. If the student does not remain in the sport he/she will serve their suspension in the next sport season.)**
2. Consumption and/or Possession of Alcohol
   a. 1st Offense – The student will miss 30% of their entire season schedule and serve 6 hours of school service assigned by the athletic director.
   b. 2nd Offense – The student is ineligible to participate in athletics for 365 days. The student must attend a workshop on alcohol before returning to athletic activities. The workshop must be approved by the athletic director prior to attending. The athlete must also appear before the Athletic Council.
3. Use and/or Possession of Drugs
   a. 1st Offense – The student may not participate in athletics for 365 days. OPTION: The student has 30 days to enroll in a drug rehab program and upon completion of the program they may ask for a hearing before the Athletic Hearing Committee. (This Committee is made of: 1. a middle school administrator, 2. the athletic director, 3. the head counselor, 4. a coach representative, 5. a faculty representative.) At this hearing the student may ask for reinstatement into the athletic program and must show proof that they have attended the drug rehab program and they are drug free. If the athlete is allowed to return to a sport he/she will serve a 30% suspension before being allowed to participate.
   b. 2nd Offense – The student is ineligible to participate in athletic activities for 365 days. The Athlete must also appear before the Athletic Hearing Committee for possible additional suspension.
4. Breaking the Laws of Indiana

   Minor offenses will be punishable under the discretion of the athletic director. Major offenses will be presented to the Athletic Hearing Committee for a decision on the penalty.

5. Gross Disrespect

   An athlete who displays gross disrespect to an administrator, teacher, coach, parent, adult or other student is subject to suspension from participation for a period of time to be decided upon by the Athletic Administration.

Due Process – The decisions of the athletic director or the Athletic Hearing Committee may be appealed by the student and his/her parents or guardian in writing to the superintendent within five (5) school days.

**When serving a suspension, the student is expected to be present at all athletic contests and practices involving his/her team. The student is a member of the team and expected to fulfill this responsibility. This rule applies when a student will return to that team that season.

ADMISSION TO ATHLETIC CONTESTS

Admission is charged for athletic contests at Pierce Middle School in the following sports: football, volleyball, wrestling, basketball, track, and soccer. The collection of admission serves as the **primary** source of revenue for the athletic department. The state of Indiana provides tax dollars **only** for coaches' stipends, building of facilities, and transportation. **No tax money is used for coordinating any part of the athletic program at Clifford Pierce Middle School. The Clifford Pierce Middle School Athletic Department must generate revenue for uniforms, equipment, and operating equipment through gate receipts, concession sales, and other fund-raising activities.**

It is the sincere hope of Clifford Pierce Middle School that we will never institute a "pay to play" policy for our athletes. We have been able to provide quality equipment and uniforms through the conventional means of raising revenue. Our philosophy remains that by charging admission, selling concessions, and participating in occasional fund-raising activities, we can maintain the quality programs we are offering our students.

We believe that our admission charge of just $4.00 per adult ($5.00 for tournaments) and $2.00 per student ($3 for tournaments) for each event is very reasonable. Although costs of operating the athletic department have increased significantly during the past decade, ticket prices have increased only slightly.

Your paid admission helps to make it possible for us to provide your child the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics at Pierce Middle School. As always, we appreciate the outstanding community support Pierce receives from its patrons.

RANDOM DRUG & ALCOHOL TESTING

According to the drug and alcohol policy previously stated under section 5.49 D on page 20, all students participating in extracurricular activities must provide consent to the Merrillville Community School Corporation random drug testing program. The following form must be signed and on file with the athletic office for a student to be eligible to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities:

DRUG TESTING PROGRAM CONSENT FORM

Merrillville Community School District

As a student participant in any extracurricular activity at Clifford Pierce Middle School, I recognize and accept the fact that my participation is a privilege and an opportunity for me to make a significant contribution to my school, my community, and my personal development. Representing Clifford Pierce Middle School places many responsibilities upon me as an individual. Many people, including fellow students, faculty members, sponsors, coaches, school officials, and parents are giving many hours of time and a great deal of financial support to provide fine programs for me. In consideration of this, I agree to live by and conduct myself in accordance with the following pledge. I have received, read, and understand a copy of the Merrillville "Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy". I also have read and understand the "Pledge" as stated above.

1. I will conduct myself so as to reflect only honor upon myself, my fellow students, my school, my parents, and my community at all times in all places.
2. I will keep myself mentally and physically alert so that I can contribute my best efforts and benefit myself, my fellow participants, my school, and my community.
3. I will not use alcohol or unlawful illicit drugs while a student of Pierce Middle School
4. I will actively discourage the use of alcohol and drugs among youth in order to achieve alcohol and drug-free schools.

Having this information at my disposal, I, _____will participate in this program and do, hereby, voluntarily agree to subject to its terms. In an effort to promote and reserve the educational value of extracurricular activities and to set an example for others in an effort to promote a student environment free of alcohol and drug use, I accept the method of obtaining urine samples, testing, and analysis of such specimen and all other aspects of this program. I also agree to cooperate in furnishing urine specimens that may be required if my name is randomly selected.

I further agree and consent to the disclosure of the sampling, testing, and results provided for in this program. This consent is given pursuant to all state and federal privacy statutes, and is consent to disclosure of such test records and results to the extent of disclosure authorized in the program.

Custodial Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Address

Grade

Date

NOTE: THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE COACH, SPONSOR, OR ADMINISTRATOR BEFORE PARTICIPATING IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND VERIFICATION

I acknowledge and verify that I have received and am aware of the policies, rules, and procedures contained in the Clifford Pierce Middle School Athletic Department Rules and Policies.

Student's Signature: Grade

We as parents or guardians of:_____

(PRINT) Student's Name

I acknowledge and verify that we have received and are aware of the policies, rules, and procedures contained in the Clifford Pierce Middle School Athletic Department Rules and Policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature

BOOK RENTAL AND FEES

Students are supplied all necessary books for a rental charge. They are responsible for all books issued to them and will be subject to a fine should any book be lost or damaged. Charges are also made for workbooks, consumable items, and some course projects. These fees will vary from course to course. Students should not loan books to other students.

UNPAID TEXTBOOK RENTAL AND FEES

The following is the procedure in determining the book fee:

1. The full price of a new book will be charged to the student if it is lost or stolen.
2. If a book has been improperly handled or used and rebinding is necessary, the student will pay the cost of the rebinding.
3. If a book has been improperly handled or misused and is not in usable condition, the full price of a new book will be charged to the student.
4. If the book will not be used again the following year and is lost, stolen, or needs rebinding, a charge equivalent to the cost of rebinding will be made.
5. The original cost of books will be available in the office. **All fees are to be paid by the last day of the first trimester. UNPAID TEXTBOOK RENTAL AND FEES WILL BE TURNED OVER FOR COLLECTION.**

BULLETIN BOARD USE

School bulletin boards are not to be used for the posting of any advertisements or posters of commercial nature. Students or other persons wishing to post announcements on the school's bulletin boards must obtain clearance from a principal. A school's bulletin board may be used to post materials from any other district school (Public or Parochial) or any town or township organization that works with the school system in some way.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

1) School doors open at 7:15am. When students arrive at school they are to go directly into the building to their designated area.
2) After school is dismissed, students who ride the bus must immediately report to their designated area. Students who walk must immediately leave the building. Students being picked up must immediately report to their designated area.
3) There is to be no pushing, hitting, kicking, or cutting lines, neither running to the bus stop nor running at the side of a moving bus. Once on the bus, students must remain there. Students should obey the bus drivers. They are responsible for student safety.
4) Students are to leave the building no later than 3:00pm. Any student remaining in the building after 3:00pm who is not in the company of a supervising adult is considered loitering.
5) If any other arrangements are going to be made, parents must first contact the office.
6) Early Dismissal of Students-Students will be called down to the office once the parent/guardian's ID is checked and they are listed on the Skyward emergency contact. We do not want to disrupt the educational process unless it is necessary.
7) **For student's safety, front doors will be locked promptly from 1:45pm-2:15pm on normal school days.** During this time no parent/guardian can come into the building and sign a student out.

CAFETERIA RULES

Using the facilities of the cafeteria is a privilege given to those students who wish to follow a few simple rules. During the breakfast/lunch period students must remain in the cafeteria unless given permission to go elsewhere. All students, whether purchasing or bringing their own breakfast/lunches, are required to eat in the cafeteria. **It is prohibited to take any type of food or beverage out of the cafeteria.** If a student purchases a breakfast/lunch, he/she will be required to line up as instructed. Cutting/giving cuts and jumping from table to table is prohibited. There are numerous selections from which to make a choice. **Food from restaurants is not to be eaten or brought to school.** Upon finishing breakfast/lunch, STUDENTS MUST THROW AWAY TRASH AND FOAM TRAYS IN THE GARBAGE BINS. IF HARD TRAYS ARE BEING USED, THEY SHOULD BE CLEARED OF FOOD AND PLACED ON THE CLEANING RACK.

Visitors are not allowed to eat breakfast/lunch with students. CPMS has a closed campus: no students are allowed to leave the building.

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires school food authorities to establish written administrative guidelines and policy for meal charges. Merrillville Community School Corporation will adhere to the following meal charge policy:

1. **A student may charge up to three (3) meals maximum (one charge per meal) as long as they establish and maintain a good credit history of making payments on their food service accounts.**
2. **A staff member may charge the total cost of $3.00 as long as they establish and maintain a good credit history of making payments on their food service accounts.**
3. **A student who has charged a meal may not charge or purchase "ala carte" item(s), including extra main entrees.**
4. **If a student repeatedly comes to school with no lunch and no lunch money, food service employees must report this to the building administrator. It could be a sign of abuse or neglect and the proper authorities should be contacted.**
5. **The food service manager or other school personnel will coordinate communication with the parents(s)/guardian(s) to resolve the matter of unpaid charges.**
6. **If food and nutrition services staff suspect that a student may be abusing this policy, written notice will be provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that if he/she continues to abuse this policy, the privilege of charging meals will be refused.**
7. **The food service manager will also send home letters each week to parents of elementary students who carry negative balances $6.00 and above. Parents of secondary students will receive e-mails once a week with negative balance information.**
8. **All accounts must be settled by the last student day as designed on the school calendar. Letters will be sent home mid-March to students who have any negative balances. Negative balances of more than $20.00 not paid in full by the last student day of school will force the District to take action to collect unpaid funds by means of collection agencies, small claims court, or any other legal method deemed necessary by the District. Under the National School Lunch Program, the Food and Nutrition Program is not allowed to write-off debt.**
9. **Students who graduate or withdraw from the district and have $15.00 or more left in the food service account will be notified by mail by the district Food and Nutrition Department Office at the end of the school year and given the option to transfer the funds to another student or to receive a refund. If no response is received within thirty (30) days, the student's food service account will be closed and funds will no longer be available. Adopted 8/1/2017**

CAMERA POLICY

It is the goal of Clifford Pierce Middle School to continue to provide for a safe educational environment to all of its staff and students. The security staff shall be responsible for overseeing and maintaining its digital camera system. This system consists of cameras, which monitor the hallways, common areas, and parking lots. The school buses are also monitored by a camera system. Periodically the security staff and administrators shall be required to review various incidents that occur during the school year. In order to ensure student privacy and confidentiality only administrators and security staff shall be authorized to review and record these incidents.

CARE OF THE BUILDING

The school is the student's home for seven or more hours each day. Students must take pride in their school's appearance; this means that each student must do his/her part. Students may only have this pride if they keep classrooms, corridors, washrooms, and the cafeteria as neat and clean as possible. Gum, candy wrappers, paper, and other debris make for a poor appearance. Gum chewing, eating candy and drinking pop during school hours may result in a detention. DEFACING, STEALING OR DESTROYING SCHOOL PROPERTY WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A parent/guardian is required to inform the school main office immediately, if his/her address or telephone number has been changed. Appropriate documentation (updated lease or mortgage statement) is required for all address changes. Address changes have to be done in person. Telephone numbers and emergency contacts can be done on the Skyward Family Access portal.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Students who come to school late or must leave during the day must sign in or out in the school's main office. Those who must leave during the school day should have a note from their parents stating the reason why and then secure permission from the office personnel or the school nurse. The individual picking up the student must sign in and present a valid picture ID to office personnel.

CLUBS

Academic Super Bowl	National Junior Honor Society	Student Council
Builders Club	PEP Club (Guidance Helpers)	School Newspaper
Culinary Arts Club	Planetarium Club	Science Club
Drama Club	Pirece Dance Team	Spellbowl
Jazz Band/Orchestra	Robotics Club	S.T.A.N.D.
Men on a Mission	Science Olympiad	Yearbook

CORRIDOR COURTESY

Passing through the corridors will be pleasant if students remember to be courteous and cooperate with fellow students. Students will no doubt bump into someone during the course of a school day. Consequently, remember to be apologetic and considerate to everyone. It is the duty of each student to maintain cleanliness in the hall. Each student should not only refrain from dropping things, but should feel enough pride and responsibility in his/her school to pick up and dispose of any debris he/she may find littering the corridors. So that all may be able to use the hallways with the least congestion and incident, remember these suggestions:

1) Keep corridors open to traffic. Do not block traffic by standing or sitting in groups. Walk on the right hand side.
2) Pass through corridors quietly using 6-inch voices always walking on the right hand side. Be considerate of others in the hall and classrooms.
3) Keep corridors open to traffic. Do not block traffic by standing or sitting in groups.
4) Refrain from running, pushing, rough playing, loud talking, and shouting.
5) Avoid loitering at the drinking fountains and restrooms.
6) Use courteous language at all times.
7) Have a pass, signed by a teacher, when in the hall, other than passing time.

DAILY BULLETIN

OUR DAY WILL BEGIN WITH THE PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE, A MOMENT OF SILENCE, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.The announcements are posted in Skyward and emailed to parents and students on a weekly basis in the Pierce Newsletter

DANCES/OTHER SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

1. All students need to be in **good standing** to participate. (Good standing criteria means: No in/out of school suspensions, No Friday schools, No more than four (4) truancies, and No more than five (5) detentions (combination of lunch and after school detentions.) Criteria is subject to change.
2. All students attending the dance are required to attend the FULL day of school that day. Students who are absent from school that day, arrive late, or have an early dismissal will not be allowed admittance to the dance, unless approved by an administrator.
3. Students cannot purchase a ticket without their Student ID's and they cannot enter a dance without their Student ID's and a ticket. **NO Refunds** if students buy a ticket to a dance or other school sponsored activities and then become ineligible due to behavior or other actions.
4. Students are to demonstrate appropriate behavior and adhere to the specific dress code at the dance. Any inappropriate behavior as mentioned below will warrant a parent phone call and dismissal from the dance. School rules apply. Students are at risk of losing dance privileges for the remainder of the year if the rule(s) are broken . This includes inappropriate or suggestive dancing, inappropriate touching, running, or horseplay.
5. Once a student comes to the dance they will not be permitted to leave until the end, unless a parent comes into the school to pick their student up. ***Please note that the office is closed during after school dances.
6. **All students must be picked up in a timely manner. Students not picked up by 15 minutes past the end of the event may not be permitted to attend future dances/other school sponsored activities.**
7. Pierce Middle School has the right to deny admittance to any function to any student who does not comply with the aforementioned rules, the student handbook, or the behavior contract. **Only Pierce Students may attend the dances.**

DRESS CODE

We believe in providing a learning environment that focuses on the education of each student. In order to prevent distractions that may prevent an optimal setting for learning; therefore, we expect students to be covered from neck to knee. We have implemented the following dress code:

- Pants must fit at the waist, or a belt must be worn to keep them from falling. A student's underwear, gym shorts, any other garment worn under his or her pants or shorts, or skin should not be exposed due to the sagging of pants or shorts.
- Clothing should appropriately cover the student. Skirts, shorts, and dresses must be long enough to cover the entire thigh.
- Students may not wear tube tops or shirts that expose the midriff.
- Distressed clothing and clothes that may be sheer must cover the entire thigh, not expose the midriff, not expose cleavage, or expose underwear.
- Leggings, jeggings, biker shorts, and other spandex bottoms must be covered by a top long enough to extend well past the waist.
- Head covering such as hats, caps, bandanas, bonnets, and durags may not be worn. All students must remove hats and other head covering upon entering the building.
- Outdoor apparel such as coats, hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens may not be worn in class and should be kept in the locker.
- Backpacks, large purses, and large tote bags must be kept in lockers and not carried to class. Small purses, totes, and string bags are allowed to be carried around.
- Any clothing/jewelry with words, symbols, or pictures that promote violence, alcohol, drugs, sex, tobacco, or vulgarities is forbidden.

- NO pajamas, slippers/house shoes, or blankets may be worn.
- **Attire considered inappropriate at Building Administrator's discretion.**

Violations of the dress code will result in being required to change clothing. Repeated offenses for dress code violations may result in consequences including but not limited to a parent conference, detention, and/or suspension.

PROHIBITION OF CELLPHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

See Appendix A: MCSC Wireless Communication Electronic Procedure and Expectations for more details

Indiana Senate Bill 78 states that as of July 1, 2026 all cellphones, smartwatches, gaming devices, and any other electronic device is **prohibited from Bell-to-Bell throughout the entire school day**. All devices must be placed in students' lockers upon entry into the building and remain in their lockers until dismissal. Pierce's administration strongly recommends that parents/guardians do not send their students to school with expensive headphones and other electronic devices. **MERRILLVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST AND/OR STOLEN PROPERTY.** Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device, is not permitted and illegal. **Disciplinary consequences will be issued if personal devices are used.**

The Merrillville Community School Corporation is not responsible for lost/stolen property.

- The Child Abuse/Neglect Law requires school personnel to report to law enforcement or child protective services whenever there is reason to believe that any person/student is involved with "child exploitation" or "child pornography" as defined by Indiana Criminal Statutes.
- It is "child exploitation" a Class C felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4(b), for any person/student (1) to exhibit, photograph or create a digitized image of any incident that includes "sexual conduct" by a child under the age of 18; or (2) to disseminate, exhibit to another person, or offer to so disseminate or exhibit, matter that depicts or describes "sexual conduct" by a child under the age of 18.
- It is "child pornography: a Class D felony under I.C. 35-42-4-4-©, for any person/student to possess a photograph, motion picture, digitalized image, or any pictorial representation that depicts or describes "sexual conduct" by a child who the person knows is less than age 16.
- "Sexual conduct" is defined by I.C. 35-42-4-4(a) to include sexual intercourse, exhibition of the uncovered genitals intended to satisfy or arouse the sexual desires of any person, or any fondling or touching of a child by another person or of another person by a child intended to arouse or satisfy the sexual desires of the child or other person.
- The Indiana Sex Offender Registration Statute at I.C. 11-8-8-7 and the Sex Offender Registry Offense Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-11, as of May 2009, require persons convicted of or adjudicated as a juvenile delinquent for violating the Child Exploitation Statute at I.C. 35-42-4-4(b) to register as a sex offender.
- Because student cell phones have been found in a number of Indiana school districts to have contained evidence of "sexual conduct" as defined above, it is important for parents and students to be aware of the legal consequences should this occur in our school system.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE DRILLS

A fire evacuation plan has been given to each teacher and has been posted in each room. Students should study the plan and become familiar with it. When the fire alarm sounds, students will immediately stand and form lines as they leave the room. Running is not permitted. The first students to reach the outside doors are to hold them open until all have left the building. Students are not permitted to talk during a fire drill and are to remain at least 50 feet away from the building until the signal to return is given by the principal or his/her authorized representative.

LOCKDOWN

1) Students in halls and restrooms need to go into the nearest classroom.
2) Everyone is to remain absolutely quiet.
3) Students must follow all directions given by the adult in charge.

POWER FAILURE

In the event there is a power failure, all movement throughout the building will be made in a quiet, orderly manner and the following instructions will be followed:

1. Teachers will remain with their students.
2. Electrical or gas equipment that is being used when the blackout occurs will be shut off immediately.
3. Students will remain in classrooms.
4. In case of complete darkness in an interior room (failure of emergency lighting to work or an absence of emergency lighting), teachers will take the students to exterior classrooms.
5. If a room is vacated, the door to that room will be closed.
6. If the emergency occurs during a class break, teachers will go to the assigned room. Students will go quietly and orderly to the nearest classroom (an outside classroom or one with emergency lighting functioning) or to the gym. Teachers who have a prep period following class break will check restrooms, etc.
7. An injury or unusual happening will be reported to the office immediately.

TORNADO INSTRUCTIONS

1) A tornado evacuation plan will be given to each teacher and posted in each room. Students should study the plan and become familiar with it.
2) All persons in the room will proceed to the designated area when the signal is given over the public address system. They will remain in the crouched position until they receive further instructions or the 'All Clear' signal is given.
3) Everyone is to remain absolutely quiet.
4) All instructions are to be obeyed promptly.
5) Avoid areas where there is any object that could do personal damage i.e., glass laboratory equipment, glass bookcases, etc.
6) Avoid window area and have your back to such areas.
7) In case of a real tornado alert, students will be asked to get down on their knees and cover their heads with their hands to protect themselves from flying debris.
8) It is important that everyone be absolutely quiet so that instructions that are given can be heard by everyone. Also, when there is an excessive amount of commotion and noise, people tend to become very nervous and panicky. The most important thing is to remain calm and follow all instructions.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities at Pierce Middle School are encouraged. Athletics account for a large part of these activities. Academic Teams, National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Builder's Club, Drama Club, Planetarium Aides, Cheerleading, Science Club, Young Men on a Mission, and S.T.A.N.D. (Socially Together and Naturally Diverse) comprise some of the types of activities for student involvement, school newspaper is also available for those interested in this type of activity. Students who do not participate in PE activities will not be allowed to participate in any athletics or cheerleading on the same day.

All students must be picked up in a timely manner. Students not picked up by the 15 minutes past the end of the activity may not be permitted to attend future activities and may be removed from the club.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an essential part of a student's learning experience. All students are encouraged to participate in the opportunities that field trips provide. For this reason, rarely will a student be restricted from attending a field trip. However, there may be circumstances involving behavioral guidelines, unpaid fees, and attendance that may lead to restrictions.

FUNDRAISERS

Corporation Policy requires that all fundraisers be approved by the Superintendent. Students are not allowed to sell any candy or items during the school day. **Students who are caught selling for any other reason, will be assigned consequences and all candy or items will be confiscated and not returned.**

GYMNASIUM BEHAVIOR

When students are in the gymnasium, they are to remain seated unless they are involved in an activity. **Food or drink not permitted in the gymnasium during school hours.**

Please obey the following rules for the gym.

1. Stay out from under the bleachers. (Ask those in charge if you need to retrieve items.)
2. Clean up and dispose of any items brought into the gymnasium.
3. Do not run or play in hall or exit areas.
4. Inappropriate behavior may be dealt with more severely by building administrators.

HALL PASSES

Passes are to be given to all students who are excused from class. It is the student's responsibility to secure a pass before he/she leaves the classroom. A teacher or office personnel indicating time and destination must sign passes. When leaving the class, the student must have their ID displayed by a lanyard around their neck.

All students must have a pass signed by the teacher to be in the halls any time other than regular passing time. Students must use their assignment notebook for passes.

NO student pass(es) will be honored by school employees if:

1. The student name on the label is defaced or illegible.
2. The page on which the passes are located is separated or detached from the Student Handbook.
3. A student attempts to use another student's handbook passes as his/her own.

HEALTH SERVICES

Merrillville Community Schools have a full or part-time Registered Nurse on duty during the school day. Students should report to the main office when a nurse is not present in the health office. No student is to report to the nurse's office without a pass from your teacher, except in the case of an emergency. **Principals, nurses, and office personnel are the only people who have the authority to send students home for apparent sickness and/or injury. Students who call/text home from their phones and it results in a parent pick-up will be considered unexcused. All ill students must see the nurse first for determination if they need to be picked-up. The nurse should not be used as a personal physician and should only be utilized for injury or illness occurring at school.**

Students should report to the Student Service Office when the nurse is not available. NO STUDENT IS TO REPORT TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE WITHOUT THE PROPER PASS, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. The principals, nurse and office personnel are the only people who have the authority to send students home for apparent sickness or injury. THE NURSE SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A PERSONAL PHYSICIAN; SHE SHOULD BE SEEN ONLY FOR INJURY OR ILLNESS OCCURRING AT SCHOOL.

Students may be excluded from school for the following conditions and diseases. A physician's release is

required to return to school for those marked with an asterisk*:

1. Conjunctivitis-bacterial and viral*

Students with conjunctivitis or "pinkeye" may not return to school until the eyes are clear and without drainage or on antibiotics for 24 hours and a doctor's release to return to school is presented in the nurse's office.

2. Diarrhea (exclude until diarrhea is gone)
3. Fifth Disease (may exclude if fever present)
4. Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease*
5. Herpes Zoster (Shingles)*
6. Hepatitis A *
7. Impetigo
8. Infectious Mononucleosis
9. Measles (Rubeola)*
10. Meningitis-bacterial and viral*
11. Mumps (Infectious Parotitis)*
12. Pediculosis Capitis (Lice) students with Pediculosis (head lice) may return to school when the hair is free from active lice
13. Pertussis (whooping cough)
14. Pinworms (Enterobiasis) return after 24 hours of treatment
15. Roseola (Exanthem Subitum)*
16. Rubella (German Measles)*
17. Scabies*
18. Scarlet Fever (may return after 24-48 hours of antibiotic treatment and fever free for 24 hours)
19. Staphylococcal Infections *
20. Streptococcal Infections (may return after 24-48 hours of antibiotic treatment and fever free for 24 hours)
21. Temperature of 100° or above (Student must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. A temperature of 100° Fahrenheit or above is considered a fever. Temperature should be taken without the use of a fever reducing medication).
22. Tinea Capitis (Ringworm of the scalp)*

In addition, a release from the physician will be required for absences due to any extended reason. A physician's release is needed regarding hospitalization for any reason, and any newly diagnosed condition including, but not limited to: cardiac or heart conditions, orthopedic problems, (including conditions involving a splint, cast, crutches, or use of wheelchair or elevator), diabetes and the use of glucometers, asthma, and seizures. If you are in doubt about the length of time to keep children home after the occurrence of other common childhood diseases, please contact your physician. If a child cannot participate in gym class due to physical restrictions per the physician, then he/she may not participate in recess until medically released.

Merrillville Community School Corporation Medication Policy

1. No medication (prescription medications and over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol) cannot be administered to a student without the written and dated consent of the student's parent and physician.
2. The consent of the parent and physician shall be valid only for the current year. (Please see the school nurse for the form).
3. Prescription medication must be in a prescription bottle labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, dosage, and the time to be given. Over-the counter medication must be in the original bottle labeled with the child's name, dosage, and time to be given.
4. If the medication is to be terminated prior to the date on the prescription, the written and dated consent of the withdrawal of consent of the parent is required.
5. The School Nurse, Principal or his/her designee shall cooperate in giving any medication so prescribed. The school

cannot be responsible for the effects of the medication administered as directed or ordered.

6. If students are receiving medication at home, parents are encouraged to contact the school principal or school nurse with such information.
7. No student shall be allowed to keep medication at school. Any medication to be administered to a student shall be brought to either the school nurse's office or principal's office where it will be kept in a secure location. Unused medication by students in kindergarten through grade 8 must be sent home only through the student's parents or an individual who is at least 18 years old and is designated in writing by the student's parent to receive the medication. For grades 9 through 12, unused medication may be sent home with the student only with written permission of the student's parents.
8. Exception to rule: A student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's physician and parent have filed a written authorization with the school nurse or building principal. (Please see the school nurse for the form). The written authorization must be filed annually and must include the following information:
    a. Physician's statement that the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the medication has been prescribed
    b. The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication.
    c. The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication.
    d. The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication.

Food Allergies:

Any student with a food allergy must have a Doctor's note on file with the nurse to support the food allergy. Any changes in food allergies will require a subsequent note from the child's physician to initiate the change. Due to students with food allergies, NO homemade snacks will be distributed to Merrillville students. Store bought snacks are allowed and must have ingredients clearly listed on the label in order to be served to students in the Merrillville Community School Corporation.

Health Screening Procedures:

All screening will be completed in accordance with Indiana state requirements. Vision screening will be completed in 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th grades, on all students new to the Corporation, and any students suspected of having vision problems. Modified Clinical Technique vision screening will be completed on all 1st grade students. Hearing screening will be completed in 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th grades, on all students new to the Corporation, and any students suspected of having a hearing problem. Parents will be notified of any problem identified during the above screenings by a written referral. Please return completed referrals to the child's school nurse as promptly as possible.

Lice Screening Procedures:

Due to the CDC recommendations, Merrillville Community School Corporation will no longer follow a NO nit policy. If a student is found by the school nurse with an active case of live head lice, the parent will be notified to pick the student up from school. Parents will then be instructed on how to treat the Lice, housekeeping details, (according to CDC guidelines). Students will be rechecked by the school nurse one week after treatment. Parents will be informed if live lice have been found upon exam and the process will repeat.

Immunization:

1. Indiana code 20-34-4-2 states: that all students, pre K-12, enrolling in our corporation are required to be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A & B, meningococcal, and varicella. Students in grades 6 through 12 are required to show proof of immunization against meningitis and a booster against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. Below are the current immunization requirements:

2026-2027 School Year Immunization Requirements

Required	Recommended
Pre-K 3 Hepatitis B 1 MMR 4 DTaP 1 Varicella	Annual Influenza
3 Hepatitis B 2 MMR 5 DTaP 2 Varicella 4 Polio 2 Hepatitis A 3 Polio 2 Hepatitis A K-5th Grade 4 OPV or IPV	Annual Influenza COVID (Age 5)
6th11th Grade 3 Hepatitis B 2 MMR 5 DTaP 2 Varicella 4 Polio 1 MCV4 Hepatitis A 4 IPV or OPV	2/3 HPV Annual Influenza COVID
12th Grade 3 Hepatitis B 2 MMR 5 DTaP 2 Varicella 4 Polio 1 Tdap Hepatitis A 2 MCV4 4 IPV or OPV	2/3 HPV Annual Influenza 2 MenB COVID

Indiana Law IC 20-8.1-7-10.1 that a school corporation shall require parents of a child who has enrolled in a school corporation to furnish no later than the first day of school a documented statement of the child's immunization record. The parent/guardian must assume responsibility for obtaining the records. A waiver may be granted in certain circumstances and additional documentation will be required (Please see the school Nurse). Children can and will be excluded from school if proper immunization documentation is not received.

1. Indiana Code 20-34-4-5 states: Parents must provide documented evidence of all immunizations no later than the first day of school. No child will be permitted to attend school unless he/she is fully immunized or has begun his/her immunization schedule. The only exception to these requirements are children whose parents file each year a written objection based upon religious reasons or a medical exemption signed by a physician.
2. Indiana Code 20-34-4-1 states: Students transferring from another school may be granted a waiver to attend school for no more than twenty (20) days. If immunization records or a schedule for these immunizations established by a physician or the Board of health is not received at the end of twenty (20) days, the student will be excluded from school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that a documented record of immunizations is provided to the school.
3. TB skin testing will be requested for any student pre K-12 who demonstrates one or more of the reasons for TB testing recommended by the Centers of Disease Control.

STUDENTS WHO EXHIBIT SUICIDAL/HOMICIDAL IDEATIONS

In accordance with the established school district protocol for addressing students who exhibit suicidal/homicidal ideations, statements made with the intent to do serious bodily harm to self or others will be assessed for the need for disciplinary action(s) and/or mental health/medical assistance. Parents will be immediately notified to pick up the student if it is determined that the student presents a danger to self or others. Parents will be asked to provide a written document indicating that the student has been evaluated by a mental health/medical professional and cleared for return to school.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS (ID CARDS)

All staff members need to know if a young person that is in the school or at a Merrillville activity, is in fact a student at CPMS. The ID card allows the student to identify himself/herself as a Merrillville student. It will also help in an emergency to be able to identify the name of a student.

An ID card will be issued at the beginning of each school year or when he/she becomes a student at CPMS. **All students must wear/display the ID card on school days.** Photo ID must be suspended from the neck, fully visible from a distance. ID's are not to be worn on any other part of the body. Merrillville Pirate breakaway lanyard and photo ID card will be given to students, one per year per student.

Additional lanyards will be available for purchase in the main office. No type of lanyard, used for advertising, will be allowed. Replacement lanyards cost $2 and ID's cost $5.

Consistently forgetting or refusing to wear the ID card or consistently wearing the ID in an inappropriate place, is considered insubordination and will result in a referral for further disciplinary consequences.

LEGAL RESIDENCY

Students who attend Merrillville schools must be legal residents of the school corporation. Legal residency for students requires that parents of students reside in Ross Township. The rare exceptions to this rule involve home construction and incapacitated parents. Issues and special exemptions are granted to some twelfth grade students under limited circumstances. All exception requests must be submitted to and approved by building principals or assistant principals.

LIBRARY AUDIO-VISUAL CENTER

The library is open during the regular school day. Books may be checked out for two weeks and renewed for two weeks. Pamphlets, magazines and reference materials including encyclopedias may be checked out overnight. Audiovisual materials may be checked out by teachers or used in the library by students who have authorization from teachers. Students will be responsible for replacing/paying for lost books/materials.

Book tests can be taken in the library during before/after school and during lunch.

LOCKER REGULATIONS

1) Lockers should contain coats, book bags, lunches, electronic devices, and books only. Students should bring no more money to school than they intend to use on any given day.
2) The school is not responsible for loss or damage of a student's personal property.
3) All books and personal belongings are to be kept in a neat orderly fashion.
4) Locker combinations are strictly private information and must not be given out to anyone.
5) When a student's locker does not function properly, he/she should report this immediately to the Guidance Office.
6) Students are forbidden to share lockers without permission from the office. Students are responsible for all contents in their issued locker.
7) All students are held accountable for the condition of the locker.

8) Any person caught tampering, opening, or removing items from any locker other than his/her own without proper authorization, will face strong disciplinary action.

9) A student should never leave his/her locker without first locking it. The door should be shut to make sure it is locked. Control of lockers According to Indiana State Law is that school lockers remain the property of the school, and the school authorities have a responsibility and a right to examine the contents of those lockers for reasons of health, safety, and security.

Acceptance of a locker by the student is acknowledging this right.

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are found should be turned into the office. Lost items may be claimed only after proper identification. Students should label all personal items, especially outer garments. Unclaimed articles periodically will be given to organizations for the needy. If books are missing, a student should check classrooms and their locker before checking in the office. A student should not be loaning his/her books or placing them or any personal item in any locker but his/her own.

STUDENT SERVICES

Guidance Counselors and the School Social Worker are available to students and parents throughout the day. It is advisable to make an appointment in advance to assure ample conference time. Periodic contacts with students will be made by the Guidance Staff, both on a group and individual basis.

Students who wish to meet with any staff person either in the main office or in the Guidance department must first go to the teacher in their next class and secure a written pass before going to the office. If a student is in the office beyond the tardy bell without a pass, he/she will be counted tardy (unexcused). The only exception would be before and after school.

STUDENT MESSAGES/DELIVERIES

In order to eliminate unnecessary classroom disruption, deliveries and messages for students will NOT be distributed upon receipt. Messages/deliveries to students will only be delivered during their lunch period. Students will be called down to the office at the end of the day for any message or delivery received after lunch. For any deliveries for classes before lunch, teachers will be emailed that the student has something in the office for their class. Any other deliveries will be limited to emergency situations approved by the Administrator. **Messages will not be accepted after 2:30pm on a regular school day and 1:30pm on an early dismissal day. CPMS prohibits the acceptance of deliveries for students from outside sources. This includes flowers, balloons, candy, cupcakes, and stuffed animals. If you want to send your son or daughter any of these items, we ask that you please have them delivered at home. In accordance with the food policy, delivery of outside food is prohibited. DoorDash, Grubhub, Uber Eats, and any other delivery service are prohibited from delivering food to Pierce students before, during, and after the school day on school property. Any food for private celebrations (i.e. birthdays) are not allowed. These should also be limited to outside of the school day.**

TELEPHONE USE (STUDENTS)

Except in the case of an actual emergency (i.e. lunch money, transportation, change of clothes) students are not permitted to place telephone calls using classroom or office telephones. Students needing to make telephone calls to call parents for transportation or other school related issues should utilize the phones in the office with permission from the staff. Students are not permitted to make any calls that incur special charges. Students who call/text home from their phones and it results in a parent pick-up will be considered an unexcused absence and disciplinary consequences will be given. **CELL PHONES ARE TO BE KEPT IN THE STUDENT'S LOCKER DURING THE SCHOOL DAY AND ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE CLASSROOM** (Please read Prohibition of Cellphones & Electronic Devices (pg. 43)

BICYCLES

Riding a bicycle to school is discouraged. If a student chooses to ride a bicycle to school, the following rules should be followed: After a bike is parked, the only time it should be touched is after school. It is strongly recommended that all bikes be locked. All students riding bikes to and from school should adhere to traffic regulations. Students who ignore bicycle and pedestrian regulations could lose the privilege of riding their bicycles to school.

BUSES

Merrillville Community School Corporation provides transportation for its students. All students who avail themselves of this service must remember riding the bus is a **privilege** that should not be abused.

1) All students must ride their assigned bus to and from school.
2) When the bus arrives at school, students are to go directly into the building to the designated area.
3) There is to be no pushing, hitting, kicking, or cutting lines, neither running to the bus stop nor running at the side of a moving bus. Once on the bus, students must remain there. Students should obey the bus drivers. They are responsible for student safety.
4) UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL STUDENTS WHO RIDE BUSES LEAVE SCHOOL GROUNDS BEFORE THEIR BUS ARRIVES. Failure to comply with school rules will result in disciplinary action.
5) Bus service is provided; if you choose other transportation and are late to school, it will be considered unexcused.

CAR RIDERS

Car riders are to be dropped off and picked up at the front of the building, Exit #1.

No students can be picked up by Uber, Lyft, or any other taxi service unless approved by an administrator.

MOTORIZED VEHICLES

Middle school students are not permitted to drive any type of motorized vehicle to school.

WALKERS

Students walking to school is discouraged. If students choose to walk, they should follow the pedestrian rules. Students are required to have a written consent by parent/guardian on file in the school office before they can walk out of the building to head home.

WORK PERMITS

A person is eligible for an employment certificate from age fourteen (14) up to age eighteen (18). Work permits are issued in the Guidance Department at Merrillville High School.

In order to obtain a work permit, students must:

1. Bring a valid birth certificate (or copy) to the MHS Guidance Department.
2. Bring a recent report card to the MHS Guidance Department. Passing grades are required for a permit to be issued. (A minimum of a 1.00 GPA in core academic courses is necessary). Attendance records may also be reviewed.
3. Return the work permit to MHS Guidance Department with signatures from a prospective employer, parent and the student.

After the work permit is issued, the student must continue to maintain passing grades or the work permit may be revoked by school personnel.

SECTION IV

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

CONDUCT CODE ACCORDING TO PUBLIC LAW 162

It is assumed that there are certain types of conduct so removed from accepted practice in a wholesome, teenage school environment that there is only a need to define them once for the sake of formality. Forms of unacceptable conduct are using alcohol and drugs; smoking; using obscene language; defacing both public and private property; stealing; truancy; showing lack of respect for the faculty, administration, and other school personnel; inciting other students or participating in any activity which is disruptive to the normal educational process.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
REGULATIONS CONCERNING
SCHOOL BEHAVIOR FOR STUDENTS

As teachers and students are brought together so that learning may take place in Merrillville classrooms, an environment must be created which permits an orderly and efficient operation of the schools. This environment, most of all, comes through consideration of others and self-discipline so that individuals do not allow themselves to infringe upon the rights of others.

The responsibility for development and maintenance of this self-discipline falls to a combined effort of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and to our community, which established the value system we accept. When self-discipline fails, however, regulations for management of school behavior must be outlined by those responsible for the operation of the schools. The Board of School Trustees of the Merrillville Community School Corporation has legal responsibility for the school in which Merrillville students are enrolled.

The Board, in turn, has adopted the following policies and has appointed administrative officers to carry them out. Authority for such Board responsibility is included in the School Powers Act and Student Due Process Code of the Indiana General Assembly.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

In carrying out the school purposes of the School Corporation, the following grants of authority are hereby made:

1. Each teacher and any of the other school personnel shall, when pupils are under his or her charge, have the right to take any action which is then reasonably necessary to carry out, or to prevent an interference with, the educational function of which he or she is then in charge. Teachers and other school personnel may not suspend students, from school, and removal of a student from any educational function within the supervision of a teacher or any of the other school personnel may not extend for a period of more than (1) day unless the removal is treated as suspension under IC 20-8.1-5.1-12.
2. Each principal (or designee) may take any action concerning his school or any school activity within his jurisdiction, which is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent interference with an educational function or school purposes. Such action may include establishing written rules and standards to govern student conduct. Similarly, the Superintendent, or his administrative staff with his approval, may take any action with respect to all schools within the Superintendent's jurisdiction, which is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent interference with an educational function or school purpose.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The purpose of the Discipline Policy of our school is to ensure a safe and secure environment for members of the school

community.

There are times when it is necessary for school officials to make a decision concerning the acceptability of a student's behavior in school. These decisions are based on the welfare of the total school community and how this behavior problem will affect the learning environment.

A breach of discipline may result in reprimand, probation, after school detention, lunch hour detention, in-school restriction, out of school suspension, community service, placement in PEP (Preventative Expulsion Program), or expulsion.

Referrals and suspensions under our Major and Minor Discipline Policies will remain on a student's discipline record for the current school year, after which, with the exception of expulsion, will be expunged from.

The superintendent, principal, administrative personnel, teachers or the school corporation and others placed in a supervisory capacity shall be authorized to take action in connection with student behavior. In addition to the actions specifically provided in this handbook, reasonably desirable or necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference therewith, such action including such matters as:

1)	Counseling with a student or group of students
2)	Conferences with a parent or group of parents
3)	Restriction of extracurricular activity
4)	Assignment by the Principal of: a) An alternative education program b) An alternative school
5)	Removal of a student from school sponsored transportation
6)	Referral to the juvenile court having jurisdiction over the student
7)	The principal or his/her designee may search a student during school or a school sponsored activity if the principal has reasonable suspicion for a search of that student
8)	In-school restriction

MINOR VIOLATIONS

Minor violations are normally handled by the classroom teacher. Students can receive as punishment any of the following: verbal reprimand, lunch/after-school detention, classroom suspension, ATS (Alternatives to Suspension), or denial of extra privileges. Repeated offenses of minor violations can result in Friday School or suspension; however, this will be at the discretion of the principal and assistant principal. This, by no means, represents the only steps that can be taken.

Any student that has been suspended for any major violation(s) or referred for repeated minor violations may be excluded from field trips and extracurricular activities.

MAJOR VIOLATIONS

Any student that has been suspended for any major violation(s) or referred for repeated minor violations may be excluded from field trips and extracurricular activities. It will be recommended that a student be expelled for the remainder of the trimester when, in a trimester, he/she has been assigned any combination of ten (10) Friday Detention days or in/out of school suspensions.

**Days of suspension will be carried over into the next trimester.*

Grounds for suspension or expulsion are student misconduct or substantial disobedience. The following include examples of student misconduct or substantial disobedience, but are not limited to:

1.	Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with school purpose or an educational function, including but not limited to, the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, engaging in sexual behavior on school property, disobedience of administrative authority, engaging in speech or conduct (including clothing, jewelry, or hair style) which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or offensive to school purposes.
2.	Trespassing, breaking and entering, causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to school property or stealing or attempting to steal school property of small value.
3.	Intentionally causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to valuable private property, stealing or attempting to steal valuable private property, or repeatedly damaging or stealing private property.
4.	Attending school or school sponsored activity, with the odor of alcohol on breath, will be grounds for expulsion. BREATHALYZER TEST CAN BE USED TO CONFIRM THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL.
5.	Repeatedly refusing to follow the directions of supervising school employees; engaging in acts of serious disrespect to school employees.
6.	Being truant from school in accordance with building policy.

7.	Using or possessing tobacco.
8.	Violating or repeatedly violating any rules, standards or policies that have been established by the Superintendent and presented to the Board; or established by the principal of a school, reviewed and approved by the Superintendent, and presented to the Board. The Board may change any such rule, standard or policy in accordance with procedures, which it has adopted.
9.	Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person. Self-defense or reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person does not, however, constitute a violation of this provision.

10.	Using force or the threat of force to take money or something of value from another person, engaging in blackmail, or using coercion to gain something of value or an advantage. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
11.	Bullying by a student or groups of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior is prohibited.
12.	Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
13.	Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or of violating a school rule, and/or a state or federal law.
14.	Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
15.	Possessing, handling, using, transmitting or selling weapons, dangerous instruments or explosives.
16.	Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon.
17.	Violating the gang prevention rules below: Presence of gangs and gang activities can cause a substantial disruption to school and school activities. A "gang" is defined as any group of students who are perceived as a district group (not an approved school organization), which prompts a disruptive response in the school community. The following rules act to prevent disruption and to prohibit gang activities by restricting those actions, which foster such activities or which, because they may be performed in relation to gang activities, endanger even those students who do not intend to show gang membership or affiliation. No student on school property or at any school activity: A. Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, drawing, graffiti, or other item, which may be viewed as evidence of membership or affiliation in a gang. B. Shall commit any act or omission, or use of any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, drawings, graffiti, other written communication, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in a gang. C. Shall use any speech or commit any act or omission in promoting the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to: 1. Soliciting others for membership in any gang 2. Intimidating or threatening any person 3. Violating any other rule as stated in the student handbook D. Knowingly possessing or using on school grounds/during school hours an electronic paging device, cell phone, or other electronic communication device not sanctioned by the school. Violation of the above stated gang prevention rules shall subject the student to suspensions or expulsion.

18.	Knowingly possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, prescription drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant or depressant of any kind, or any paraphernalia used in connection with the listed substances. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the above stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event. Exception to Rule 17: a student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's parent has filed written authorization with the building principal. The written authorization must be filed annually. The written authorization must be done by a physician and must include the following information: 1. That the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication. 2. The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication 3. The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication 4. The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication
19.	Knowingly using or taking a prescription drug that is not prescribed for that person or that exceeds the recommended dosage for the person to whom it is prescribed or a patent drug by exceeding recommended dosage with the purpose of creating an intoxicated or irrational state or of causing physical injury, either to one's self or to other persons. Knowingly transmitting or selling such prescription or patent drugs to aid a person violates this paragraph. Exception to rule: a student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's parent has filed a written authorization with the building principal. The written authorization must be filed annually and must include the following information 1. Physician's statement that the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which medication has been prescribed. 2. The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication. 3. The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication. 4. The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication.
20.	Possessing or providing to any person anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, processing, delivery or consumption of alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants or hallucinogens. Examples of things which are not to be possessed or provided to another person are: pipes, rolling papers, clips, stones and any other device believed to be, by school authorities, used for the storage, processing, delivery or consumption of the above mentioned drugs. Any violation of the above rule will result in a recommendation by the school administration that the student be expelled. Any student who is unsure if possession, use or providing another person with any particular medicine, substance or paraphernalia, would violate the above rule should contact the building principal or his/her designee before possessing, using or providing the medication, substance or paraphernalia.
21.	Knowingly or intentionally delivering any substance that he/she represents to be a controlled substance or commits dealing in a substance represented to be a controlled substance.

22.	Creating a disturbance by displaying or using a substance represented to be a controlled substance.
23.	Impersonating another person over the phone or his/her signature on a note.
24.	Any student engaged in bullying and/or any repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communication transmitted; physical acts committed; or any other behavior committed by a student or group of students against another student(s) with intent to harass, threaten, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, harm the other student or urging others to engage in such conduct.
25.	When a group of two or more students causes or attempts to cause physical injury to another student; these students may be recommended for expulsion
26.	No student shall possess, handle or transmit any firearm or a destructive device on school property. It will be recommended that a student be expelled for one (1) calendar year when, while on school property, the student possesses, handles, uses, or transmits a firearm as defined in IC.35-47-1-**5 or a destructive device**. The student will be allowed to return to school at the beginning of the first school trimester after the end of the one (1) year period.

The following devices are considered to be a firearm under this rule:

- any weapon which will or is designated to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
- the frame or receiver of any weapon described above
- any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
- any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or any similar device
- any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
- any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled
- an antique firearm
- a rifle or shotgun that the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes

For purposes of this rule, a destructive device is:

- an explosive, incendiary, or overpressure device that is configured as a bomb, a grenade, a rocket with a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, a Molotov cocktail or a device that is substantially similar to an item described above,
- a type of weapon that may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant through a barrel that has a bore diameter of more than one-half inch, or
- a combination of parts designed or intended for use in the conversion of a device into a destructive device. A destructive device is NOT a device that although originally designed for use as a weapon, is redesigned for use as a signaling, pyrotechnic, line throwing, safety, or similar device.

The superintendent shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when a student is expelled under this rule.

8.801 POSSESSING FIREARMS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

This policy applies to persons who may legally possess a firearm under Indiana Law. A firearm under this policy is any weapon that is capable of expelling, designed to expel, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by means of an explosion and includes ammunition.

In striving to maintain a safe working and learning environment, the Merrillville Community School Corporation strictly forbids all adults-with the exception of law enforcement officials to possess a weapon in school buildings, on school buses or school vehicles.

No school employee may possess a firearm in a school building or on school property while on duty as a school employee unless the firearm is locked in the trunk of the employee's vehicle, kept in the glove compartment of the employee's locked vehicle or stored out of plain sight in the employee's locked vehicle.

The School Resource Officer (SRO) is authorized to carry a firearm in or on school property.

No person, including School Board members, with the exception of law enforcement officials, may intentionally or openly display a firearm at any public meeting or the School Board.

An adult (employee, parent, or visitor) who possesses a weapon or firearm in violation of this policy shall face police investigation and may face criminal charges. Employees will be subject to corporation investigation and dismissal, as well as any further action needed to protect students, staff, and others. I.C. 35-47-9-1, 35-47-11.1-4(6), I.C. 34-28-7-2. Adopted 7/15/2014

Possessing a Deadly Weapon

It will be recommended that a student be expelled for one (1) calendar year when, while on school property, the student possesses, handles, uses, or transmits a deadly weapon as defined in IC.35-41-1.8.

The following devices are considered to be deadly weapons as defined in I.C. 35-41-1-8:

- A weapon, taser or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substance, or other material that in the manner it is used, or could ordinarily be used, or is intended to be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury.
- An animal readily capable of causing serious bodily injury and used in the commission or attempted commission of a crime

The superintendent shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when a student is expelled under this rule.

Unlawful Activity

A student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria that takes place during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed above apply when a student is:

a. On school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
b. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;
d. During Summer School.

USE OF METAL DETECTORS

Use of Metal Detectors - Reasonable Suspicion

When the school administration has reasonable suspicion to believe that weapons are in the possession of an identified student, students, or group of students, the administration is authorized to use a mobile metal detector to search the student or students. Any search of a student's person as a result of the activation of the detector will be conducted in

private and in accordance with the policy on personal searches. Only school personnel who have been trained in the usage of metal detectors, law enforcement officers assigned to the school corporation, or school resource officers shall operate the metal detectors under the direction of the administration.

Use of Metal Detectors - Administrative Search

In view of the escalating school violence, the potential presence of weapons in our schools, and the school corporation's duty to maintain a safe learning environment, the Merrillville Board of School Trustees authorizes the use of metal detectors to check a student's person or personal effects. Only school personnel who have been trained in the usage of metal detectors, law enforcement officers assigned to the school corporation, or school resource officers shall operate the metal detectors under the direction of the administration.

School officials or law enforcement officers may conduct metal detector checks of groups of individuals if the checks are done in a minimally-intrusive, nondiscriminatory manner. Metal detector checks of groups of individuals may not be used to single out a particular individual or category of individuals.

If a school official or a law enforcement officer has reasonable suspicion to believe that a particular student is in possession of an illegal or unauthorized metal-containing object or weapon, he or she may conduct a metal detector check of the student's person and personal effects.

Notice of the Board policy and procedures on the use of metal detectors will be sent to parents and students and posted on the websites of the school corporation and of each school.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for implementing this policy. The metal detector checks will be done only in accordance with the provisions of the Board policy and procedures by school personnel or law enforcement officers under the supervision of the school administrator.

Procedures for the Use of Metal Detectors

The following procedures for the use of metal detectors in the schools are developed pursuant to Board policy on the Use of Metal Detectors. The Superintendent may modify or expand these procedures in any manner consistent with the Board's policy.

A notice will be posted in a central location at each school stating that weapons are not permitted at school and that students may be required to submit to a metal detector check. In addition, the metal detector policy and these procedures will be included in the student handbooks for each school. Notice of the Board policy and procedures on the use of metal detectors will be sent to parents and students of each school. A notice must be sent out before the beginning of each school year. The superintendent will determine the specific dates when the notice will be sent out.

A. Before conducting the metal detector checks, the participating administrator or law enforcement officer ("officer") will explain the scanning process to students, emphasizing that the checks are intended to maintain safe schools.

B. An administrator or officer will escort each student with his or her personal effects into a designated area to proceed with the metal detector check. An adult will closely observe students to make sure no objects are removed from pockets or personal effects.

C. The administrator or officer will ask the student to remove all metal-containing objects from his or her clothing and personal effects. The administrator or officer will then scan the student without touching his or her body and scan the

outside of the student's personal effects. The metal detector scan of the student's person will be done by an adult who is the same sex as the student. If the student refuses to cooperate, the administrator or officer may proceed with the check in the presence of another adult.

D. If the metal detector is activated during the scanning of the student's effects, the administrator or officer will ask the student to open the bag, purse, etc., and the officer will proceed to look for weapons. If the metal detector is activated during the scanning of the student's person, the student will be given a second opportunity to remove any metal-containing object from his person. A second scan will be conducted and if the metal detector is activated again, an administrator or officer of the same sex will conduct a pat-down search of the student's outer clothing in the area where the metal detector was activated. The pat-down search will be done in a private room or area and in the presence of an adult witness, when feasible. If the administrator or officer feels an object on the student's person, the student will be given an opportunity to remove the object. If he or she refuses, the administrator or officer will remove the object from the student in the presence of an adult witness of the same sex.

Metal Detector Checks of Individual Students

Before conducting a metal detector check of an individual student, the administrator or officer must have individualized reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of an illegal or unauthorized metal-containing object or weapon. The provisions of the Board Policy regarding personal searches and the use of metal detectors shall be followed under these circumstances.

If a properly conducted search yields a weapon or any other illegal material, it shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for disposition.

Legal Settlement

It will be recommended that a student be expelled when a student's legal settlement is not in the attendance area of the Merrillville Community School Corporation.

In most cases, expulsions are used as last resorts at Clifford Pierce Middle School. A student who becomes a distraction to the educational process or breaks a major school board policy will need to be separated from the institutional setting. This does not mean that Merrillville will not assist the student with his/her continued pursuit of an education. Merrillville will offer its guidance and support if the student wishes to continue his/her education through tutoring (paid for by the parents), correspondence courses, etc.

Once a student is expelled from school he/she is not allowed to be on any Merrillville Community School grounds and he/she is not allowed at any Merrillville Community School extracurricular activities.

Once a student is expelled from school a grade of withdrawal will be given to the student in each course he/she is enrolled.

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5.50A Bullying

Bullying is, by definition, overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student(s) with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile environment.

1. This rule applies when a student is:
   a. On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
   b. Off school grounds, at a school activity, function, or event;
   c. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
   d. Using property or equipment provided by the school.
2. Bullying by a student or groups of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior is prohibited.
3. Parents or students who suspect that repeated acts of bullying are taking place should report the matter to the school principal or designee. School personnel will investigate all reports of bullying.
4. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.
5. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention and intervention in bullying.
6. All schools in the corporation are encouraged to engage students, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through parent organizations already in place in each school.

Bullying is not a mutual conflict where two students are arguing and both are equally involved. It is not a one-time incident of classroom meanness or a conflict or troublesome situation where there is no real or perceived power difference. Obviously these situations will be addressed but they do not meet the definition of bullying.

THE FOUR TYPES OF BULLYING ARE;

1. **Physical**- pushing, shoving, pinching, hitting, knocking books, pulling backpack (any physical touching)
2. **Verbal**- name calling, teasing, threats, intimidation.
3. **Social/Relational**- social isolation, intentionally trying to humiliate.
4. **Electronic or Written**- cyber bullying (texts, Facebook, twitter, Snapchat, e-mail).

Students, Parent(s) and/or Guardians are encouraged to report incidents of bullying and have the option of reporting anonymously by calling or by accessing the corporation website.

Refer to the disciplinary section of the student handbook for consequences associated with bullying.

1. Bullying committed by students toward other students is strictly prohibited. Engaging in bullying conduct described in this rule by use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, any computer system, or any computer network is also prohibited.
2. For purposes of this rule, bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:
   - places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
   - has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
   - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
   - has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
3. This rule may be applied regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when a student committing bullying behavior and the targeted student attends a school within the school corporation and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of other students to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
4. Any student or parent who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this rule or any student who feels he/she has been bullied in violation of this rule should immediately report the conduct to the School Principal who has responsibility for all

investigations of student misconduct including bullying. A student or parent may also report the conduct to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the School Principal. This report may be made anonymously.

5. The School Principal shall investigate immediately all reports of bullying made pursuant to the provisions of this rule. Such investigation must include any action or appropriate responses that may be taken immediately to address the bullying conduct wherever it takes place. The parents of the bully and the targeted student(s) shall be notified on a regular, periodic basis of the progress and the findings of the investigation and of any remedial action that has been taken.The School Principal will be responsible for working with the school counselors and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the school administrator and school counselors will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief. Such determination should be made as soon as possible and once this determination is made, the report should be made immediately to law enforcement.
6. False reporting of bullying conduct as defined in this rule by a student shall be considered a violation of this rule and will result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions if the investigation of the report finds it to be false.
7. A violation of this rule prohibiting bullying may result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanction, including suspension and/or expulsion.
8. Failure by a school employee who has a responsibility to report bullying or investigate bullying or any other duty under this rule to carry out such responsibility or duty will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment with the school corporation.
9. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the bullying.
10. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying.
11. All schools in the corporation are encouraged to engage students, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through parent organizations already in place in each school.
12. The superintendent or designee will be responsible for developing detailed administrative procedures consistent with the Indiana Department of Education guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of this rule.

This Board Policy applies when a student is:

A. On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
B. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
C. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
D. Using property or equipment provided by the school.
E. Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the school corporation.

LEGAL REFERENCE: I.C. 20-33-8-0.2
I.C. 20-33-8-13.5

Presented: 10/16/13
Adopted: 11/5/13
Updated: 4/14

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

When a principal (or designee) determines that a student should be suspended, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A meeting will be held prior to the suspension of any student. At this meeting the student will be entitled to:
   a. a written or oral statement of the charges;
   b. if the student denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against the student will be presented; and,
   c. the student will be provided an opportunity to explain his or her conduct
2. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of the suspension.
3. Following the suspension, the parent or guardian of a suspended student will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension; describe the student's misconduct, and the action taken by the principal.
4. Parents can pick up make-up work from the office by providing the teacher's with 24 hour notice while a student is out on OSS.
5. If the homework is picked up from the office while the student is out on OSS, the student must have it completed and turned in the day that the student returns. If the work is not picked up, the teacher must assign a due date and if it is not completed by the due date it becomes a zero.
6. It will be recommended that a student be expelled when, in a trimester, he/she has been assigned any combination of ten (10) Friday Extension Program days, in-school suspensions, or out-of-school suspensions.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Expulsion means disciplinary action whereby a student is suspended from school attendance in excess of ten (10) days.

When a principal (or designee) recommends to the superintendent (or designee) that a student be expelled from school, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following persons to conduct the expulsion meeting:
   a. legal counsel
   b. a member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student during the current school year and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.
2. An expulsion will not take place until the student and the student's parent/guardian are given notice of their right to appear at an expulsion meeting conducted by the superintendent or the person designated above. Failure to request and to appear at this meeting will be deemed a waiver of rights administratively to contest the expulsion or to appeal it to the school board.
3. The notice of the right to an expulsion meeting will be in writing, delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and the procedure for requesting the meeting.
4. At the expulsion meeting, the principal (or designee), will present evidence to support the charges against the student, and to present evidence to support the student's position. An attorney may not represent the student at the expulsion meeting, but the attorney may be available for consultation outside the meeting room during the course of the meeting.
5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parent/guardian.

Right to Appeal

The student or parent has the right to appeal an expulsion decision to the school board within 10 days of the receipt of notice of the action taken. The student or parent/guardian appeal to the school board must be in writing. If an appeal is properly made, the board will consider the appeal unless it votes not to hear the appeal. If the board hears the appeal, it will consider the written summary of the expulsion meeting and the arguments of both the school administration and the student and/or the student's parent/guardian. The board will then take any action deemed appropriate

Any expulsion taking effect more than three (3) weeks prior to the beginning of the trimester of any school year

must be reviewed prior to the beginning of the trimester. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first trimester of the following school year must be reviewed before the beginning of the school year.

SUSPENSION AND DETENTION POLICY

Any student who has lunch/after-school detention will report directly to the detention room, unless otherwise directed..

Students who are assigned lunch detention must either bring a sack lunch from home or purchase one from the cafeteria. Students assigned to after-school detention must bring books and study materials to the detention room.

If an examination is being given while a student is in suspension or detention he/she must make that up the day he/she returns to his/her regular class or the teacher may give the student the test while he/she is in suspension. A student must be doing something constructive and cannot sleep while in suspension. Any student who is truant from Friday School will receive ISS.

While a student is on out-of-school suspension, he/she is not allowed to attend any Merrillville Community School function or be on any school property until midnight of the last day of suspension. All discipline referrals will be recorded and kept as part of that student's record until the end of that school year.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

Any principal (or designee) may suspend a student for a period of no more than ten (10) school days. This suspension may deny a student the right to attend school or to take part in any school function until midnight of the last day of suspension. A student may be suspended on the following grounds:

1. Conduct constituting grounds for expulsion as set out above.
2. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior, the Board approves or receives. Such suspensions shall be made only after the principal (or designee) has made an investigation thereof and has determined that such suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference therewith. No suspension may be made without affording the student an opportunity for an informal meeting. At the informal meeting the student is entitled to:
   a. a written or oral statement of the charges against him/her
   b. and, if he/she denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against him/her; and
   c. the student will be provided an opportunity to explain his conduct.
3. The meeting shall precede suspension of the student except where the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal. In such situations, the meeting will follow the suspension as soon as reasonably possible following the date of the suspension.
4. Following the suspension meeting, the parent or guardian of a suspended student will be notified in writing. The notification will include the dates of the suspension; describe the student's misconduct, and the action taken by the principal (or designee).

Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities or Suspected Disabilities

Students with disabilities or suspected disabilities are subject to the discipline rules adopted by the Board of School Trustees and, therefore, may be suspended or expelled for any violation(s) of such rules. In accordance with I.C. 20-8.1-5.1 and 511 IAC 7-15 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, administrators may take the following discipline actions:

SUSPENSION

A suspension is defined as a unilateral, temporary cessation of educational or related services. A short-term removal of a student pursuant to the student's individualized education program or Section 504 plan is not a suspension. Students with disabilities or suspected disabilities may be suspended up to ten (10) consecutive school days, but no more than ten (10) cumulative school days in a school year. Before a student with disabilities or suspected disabilities can be suspended, the student must be afforded a meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal, wherein the student is entitled to: (1) a written or oral statement of the charges against the student; (2) if the student denies the charges, a summary of the evidence against the student; and (3) an opportunity to explain the student's conduct. This meeting shall precede the suspension of a student unless the nature of the misconduct requires immediate removal of the student.

EXPULSION

An expulsion is defined as separation from school attendance or a related service for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Before a student with disabilities or suspected disabilities can be expelled from school, the student and the student's parent or guardian must be afforded the opportunity to attend an expulsion meeting before an appointed expulsion examiner. However, prior to any expulsion meeting, the case conference committee or Section 504 committee made up of persons knowledgeable with the student and evaluation data, must meet to review the student's behavior and determine whether the behavior is caused by, or is a manifestation of, the student's disability or suspected disability.

If the committee determines there is such a causal relationship between the student's behavior and the student's disability or suspected disability, the student may not be expelled. If, however, the committee determines there is no causal relationship between the student's behavior and the student's disability or suspected disability, the parent may: (1) request the appointment
of an independent hearing officer to contest the committee's determination; (2) request an expulsion

meeting; or (3) waive the right to an expulsion meeting. In the event of the expulsion of a student with disabilities or suspected disabilities, educational and related services shall not cease. The case conference committee shall determine which educational services will be provided during the expulsion period and where the services will be provided as indicated by the student's status by their Special education or 504 plan.

LAW ENFORCEMENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Reporting of Threat or Intimidation against School Employee: In compliance with Indiana law, any employee who has knowledge of a school employee being the subject of a threat or an act of intimidation shall report orally this knowledge to the building administrator and to the local law enforcement agency. The building administrator upon receiving such a report shall also make an oral report to the local law enforcement agency.

The law provides that any person who reports a threat or an act of intimidation against a school employee, or who participates in any judicial proceeding or other proceeding resulting from such a report, is immune from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be imposed because of such actions, provided that the individual is acting in good faith.

The Superintendent, or his designee, will notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when a student is expelled for violation of behavior rules related to firearms, destructive devices, and deadly weapons.

LEGAL REFERENCE I.C.20-8.1-5.1-1 et seq.; 20 U.S.C.8921; 20 U.S.C. 8922; 20 U.S.C. 1415; 511 I.A.C. 7-15-1; 511 I.A.C.7-15-2; **I.C. 35-47.5-2-4; I.C. 35-41-1-8; I.C. 35-47-1-5.**

Full details of the rules, regulations, and due process procedure of the Merrillville Community School Corporation are available to any parent, guardian, or student in the office of each school in the corporation, and at the Merrillville Community School Corporation Center at 6701 Delaware Street, Merrillville, Indiana.

The Merrillville Community School Corporation has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy for the discipline infractions listed below. Expulsion will be recommended for these first time offenses:

1. **Serious disrespect to a staff member.**
2. **Causing a false alarm.**
3. **Immoral conduct.**
4. **Possession or use of alcohol.**
5. **Possession or use of a drug/look alike.**
6. **Possession of firecrackers or other explosives.**
7. **Possession of a weapon/facsimile.**

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

The following guidelines have been developed for use when students are sent to the office with a discipline referral. Teachers will continue to use their own classroom management plans in their classroom. It is understood that these are only guidelines designed to aid in providing uniform discipline, **AND THAT THE FINAL DECISION RESTS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.** Each case will be handled on an individual basis. Teachers may make recommendations for specific punishments. The office notifies parents of all Friday schools, detentions, and suspensions by notes taken home by the student. Parents are mailed notices of out of school suspensions.

KEY:

LD	Lunch Detention (30 minutes)
ASD	After School Detention Program (1 hour)
F	Friday School (3 hours)
CS	Class Suspension (1 Period)
ISS	In School Suspension
OSS	Out of School Suspension (all
day) Rec Exp	Recommended for Expulsion
PC	Conference with Parent
ATS*	Alternatives to Suspension
SA	Suspended from attending school sponsored activities

Friday School Program can be changed for emergencies only! The **parent** must call prior to 2:00 P.M. on the Thursday prior to the scheduled Friday. **Work is not an emergency.** Pierce Main Office telephone number is 650-5308 ext. #6718. Voice mail is available on the weekends (24 hour voicemail). **A parent or guardian must call in to reschedule ASD or Friday School.**

Hall Freezes are created to ensure the students arrive at their next class on time. Anyone caught in a hall freeze will receive an automatic consequence.

*Alternatives to Suspension (ATS)

Community service gives students an opportunity to build meaningful relationships, introduces students to positive role models, builds competency, teacher's responsibility and empathy, reduces further discipline infractions, improves school attendance, and interrupts the spiral toward alienation and dropout. Students who participate in ATS will receive a number of benefits and will typically exhibit a reduction in aberrant behavior and an increase in positive behavior.

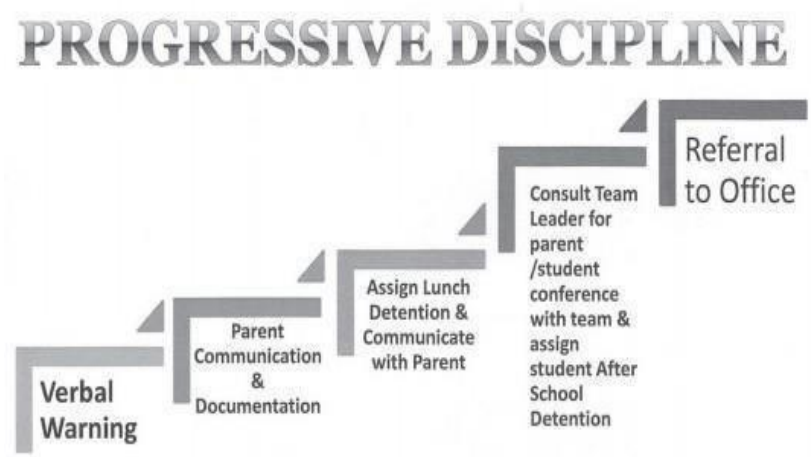
Community service tasks may be assigned to individual students in place of disciplinary actions. Such tasks may include but are not limited to:

- Trash pick up
- Cleaning tables/desks/dry erase boards
- Mopping/sweeping floors
- Removing graffiti from surfaces

NOTE: All students participating in ATS will be provided with rubber gloves and the necessary materials to clean. Students will be supervised during ATS time.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE CHART

Teachers will follow the Progressive Discipline Steps listed below in the event of minor offences.



CLIFFORD PIERCE MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE GUIDELINE EXAMPLES

The following are general guidelines for administrators and are subject to change based on severity of the incident. The following should be considered **EXAMPLES** of progressive disciplines.

*Items are cumulative for the year

VIOLATION	1st OFFENSE	2nd OFFENSE	3rd OFFENSE
A. Disrespect to another person			
Inappropriate language or gestures, teasing	1 F-1 ISS	2 F-3 ISS	1-3 OSS
Racial, ethnic, or sexual remark, threats, coercion, blackmail, harassment	1-5 OSS	5 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Bullying (Verbal or Physical)	1-3 ISS/ Refer to Social Worker/ Guidance/Call Home	1-3 OSS/ Parent conference	5 OSS
Profane Language/Obscene gestures (Middle Finger, Sexual Vulgarity, Curse Word)	1-3 CS or ISS	3-5 ISS/OSS	3-5 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Insubordination	1-3 ISS	1-3 OSS	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Disrespect to a school employee	1-3 ISS	1-3 OSS	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP

Serious disrespect to a school employee	10 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP		
Signs of violence & hate (gang graffiti)	1-3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Scuffle (Without Punch)	1-3 ISS	3 OSS	5 OSS
Verbal Altercation	1-3 ISS	1-3 OSS	5 OSS
Fighting/Assault (subject to arrest)	5 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP	5-10 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Refusing to stop fighting upon request (subject to arrest)	5 OSS	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP	
Fighting that results in employee injury (subject to arrest)	10 OSS & Rec for exp/PEP		
Instigating a fight/Threats	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP
Disruption of the school process or function	ISS	OSS	Rec Exp/PEP
Disrespect for another student	1-2 F or ISS/OSS	2-4 OSS	5 OSS
Inappropriate affection (Kiss)	Reprimand (Call)	ASD (Call)	1 ISS (Call)
B. Disrespect to property			
Minor*-includes:			
Inside another person's locker	1 ASD	1 F	2 F
Allowing use of locker	1 ASD	1 F	1-3 OSS
Minor damage to property	Clean/replace & 1-3 ASD	Clean/replace & 1-2 F	Clean/replace & 1-2 ISS
Deliberately littering	Clean up/1 ASD	Clean Up/2 ASD	Clean up/2 F
Inappropriate disposal of food or gum/Bringing food out of cafeteria	Clean up/1 ASD	Clean up/2 ASD	Clean up/1 Friday
***If removed from ISS-2 days of OSS**			
Major-includes:			
Theft (depending on value)	Repayment or Replacement & 1-10 Suspension/Expulsion		
Possession of stolen property	1-3 ISS	1-2 OSS	2-4 OSS
Vandalism (depending on cost)	1-3 ISS/OSS Rec Exp (work/pay)	3-5 OSS Rec Exp (work/pay) /PEP	10 OSS Rec Exp/PEP

Trespassing	1-3 F	3-5 OSS	10 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP
C. Lying, misrepresentation includes:			
Plagiarism or cheating	Teacher notifies Parent & '0' on assignment/test	Teacher notifies Parent & '0' on assign./test	'F' for grading period in subject & Parent notified
Lying	1-3 ASD or 1 F	2 F	1-3 ISS
Forging parent's signature	1-2 F	1-2 ISS	1-3 OSS
Forging a pass	1-2 F	1-3 ISS (NO PASS LIST)	1-3 OSS
Impersonating Parent or another	2 F	2-4 ISS	1-3 OSS
Failing to follow rules & instructions includes:			
No visible ID in school Student not admitted to after school activities without an ID– (replacement ID's are $5)	1 LD	1 F	Replace ID/ 1 ISS
No visible ID caught by administrator	1 F	2 F	1 ISS
Repeated violation of classroom rules	1 LD	1-2 ASD/Conf w/ student	1-2 Class suspensions
Failing to identify self to school employee	1 F	1-2 ISS	1-2 OSS
Refusing or failing to report to the office	1 F	2 ISS	1-2 OSS
Refusing to follow directions of a school Employee-Defiance	1-3 ISS/OSS	3-5 ISS/OSS	5-10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
E. Horseplay:			
Horseplay - no injury	1 ASD/Friday	1-2 ISS	1-3 OSS
Horseplay-resulting in a student injury	3-5 ISS/OSS	3-5 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP	5-10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
F. School/Class Disruption:			
Minor*-includes:			
Disruption in Lunch Detention	1 ASD	1 F	1 ISS

Disruption in ASD	1 FD	ISS	OSS

Disruption in Friday School	2 ISS	3-5 ISS	OSS
Disruption in ISS	1-3 OSS	3-5 OSS	10 OSS
Inappropriate dress (includes sagging)	ISS & parent notified	ISS & change of clothing/Parent notified	1F/change/ Parent notified
Continuous Violation of Dress Code (Defiance)	1 OSS	2 OSS	3-5 OSS
Major offenses			
Gambling	3-5 ISS/OSS	3-5 OSS	10 OSS/Rec Exp/PEP
False Alarm (fire, etc.)	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP		
Immoral conduct/inappropriate sexual contact	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP		
VIOLATION	**1st OFFENSE**	**2nd OFFENSE**	**3rd OFFENSE**
G. Possession or use of Inappropriate materials			
Minor*-includes:			
On cell phones or any other electrical devices	1 ASD & Parent Pickup	2 ASD & Parent Pickup	1 F & Parent Pickup
Major-includes:			
Electronic recording/videotaping/inappropriate usage, including locker room and bathroom	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP		
Possession or use of tobacco materials, including e-cigarettes, vape pens, cartridges, etc.,	3 OSS and online drug education program	5 OSS and online drug education program	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Possession of matches or lighters	3 OSS	5 OSS	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP
Possession or use of alcohol, drugs, or materials containing THC, including vape pens, cartridges, etc.	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP and online drug education program		

Possession of drug Paraphernalia	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP and online drug education program		
Possession of Flammables/Explosives/Fireworks	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP		
Possession of weapons (or look-alike)	10 OSS & Rec Exp/PEP		

*Any student who accumulates any combination of ten (10) days In School suspensions, Friday Detentions, or in/out of School Suspensions in a trimester will be recommended for expulsion. *Days of suspension will be carried over into the next trimester.*

Appendix A:

Wireless Communication Electronic Procedure and Expectations

A. Definition of Terms

Wireless communication devices include, but are not limited to: cellular phones, smartwatches, tablets, laptops, personal gaming devices, earbuds, headphones, smart glasses and any other personal electronic device capable of sending, receiving, or accessing communication or digital content.

B. Universal Student Expectations

To maintain a focused learning environment, students are not permitted to access or use wireless communication devices during the school day. Any cell phone, smart watch, earbud, or similar device in a student's possession must remain powered off, stored out of sight, and inaccessible from the beginning of the school day until the final dismissal bell.

- **Storage Locations:** Devices must be securely stored out of sight in student backpacks (in elementary buildings) or assigned student lockers (in intermediate, middle, and high school buildings). Devices are not permitted to be kept in student desks or on a student's person.
- **Strictly Prohibited Times & Areas:** Personal wireless communication devices are not permitted during the school day which includes bringing, using, or possessing such items on one's person in the following areas:
  - classroom instruction
  - passing periods
  - lunch periods
  - study halls and school assemblies
  - restrooms and locker rooms
  - including any other building locations during the school day unless authorized by school personnel.

MERRILLVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST, STOLEN, OR DAMAGED PERSONAL WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES BROUGHT ONTO SCHOOL PROPERTY OR SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRANSPORTATION.

C. Approved Exceptions

In strict alignment with Indiana state law, students will only be permitted to access or operate personal wireless communication devices under the following specific, documented circumstances:

1. **Educational Plans:** When explicitly required as part of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.
2. **Medical Needs:** When required by a documented, verified medical condition (e.g., continuous blood glucose monitoring).
3. **Translation Services:** When approved by administration for language translation support services.
4. **Emergency Situations:** During a health or safety emergency, or when authorized explicitly by the Superintendent or a building administrator.
5. **Audio Note-Taking:** Students may use an unobtrusive, audio-only recording device for personal educational assistance ***only*** if pre-approved by building administration. The device must remain fully visible to staff, cannot capture imagery/video, cannot livestream/broadcast, and cannot be used for evaluative or disciplinary purposes.

Note: Teacher directed technology use within classrooms will occur exclusively via school issued Chromebooks/devices or approved school sanctioned equipment. Personal student devices are not permitted for general classroom assignments.

D. Prohibited Conduct & Disciplinary Action

Personal devices may never be used for cheating, academic dishonesty, harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, threats, or any activity that violates the Student Code of Conduct.

Unauthorized photographing, audio/video recording, livestreaming, or distribution of media involving students, staff members, or school activities during the school day is strictly prohibited.

In instances where a student's device is visible or active during restricted times, the item will be confiscated by a staff member and turned over to the appropriate administrator. Confiscated devices will only be released directly to a properly identified parent/guardian who must come to the school to reclaim it. Refusal to surrender a device upon request will be deemed insubordination and will result in immediate disciplinary referrals, up to and including suspension.

E. Notice Regarding Device Content

Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual or illegal nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device, is strictly prohibited on school

grounds or school sponsored events. Possessing or distributing such items will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

- **Child Abuse/Neglect Law:** Indiana law requires school personnel to report to law enforcement or child protective services whenever there is reason to believe that any student is involved with "child exploitation" or "child pornography" as defined by Indiana Criminal Statutes.
- **Child Exploitation (I.C. 35-42-4-4(B)):** It is a felony for any person/student to exhibit, photograph, or create a digitized image of any incident that includes "sexual conduct" by a child under the age of 18; or to disseminate, exhibit, or offer to distribute matter depicting "sexual conduct" by a child under 18.
- **Child Pornography (I.C. 35-42-4-4(C)):** It is a felony for any person/student to knowingly possess a photograph, motion picture, digitized image, or pictorial representation depicting "sexual conduct" by a child who is or appears to be less than 16 years of age.
- **Sexual Conduct (I.C. 35-42-4-4(a)):** Defined to include sexual intercourse, exhibition of uncovered genitals intended to satisfy or arouse sexual desires, or fondling/touching of a child by another person.
- **Indiana Sex Offender Registration (I.C. 11-8-8-7 & I.C. 35-42-4-11):** Requires individuals convicted of or adjudicated as a juvenile delinquent for violating Child Exploitation statutes to register as a sex offender. Given that student cell phones across various Indiana school districts have contained evidence of "sexual conduct" as defined above, parents and students must remain fully aware of these severe legal and disciplinary consequences.