

Missoula County Public Schools

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

CS Porter Middle School

2026-2027



“Respectful, Responsible, Safe”

CS Porter Community,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! Thank you for the trust and partnership you've shown over the past year. Together, we are building a school where every student is known, challenged, and supported.

At CS Porter, student safety remains our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment through clear expectations, consistent responses, and strong communication with families.

This year, we will continue strengthening both academic achievement and student character. Our staff will be even more intentional in implementing the Leader in Me 7 Habits while connecting this work to Missoula County Public Schools' Profile of a Graduate. By partnering with families to reinforce these skills at home, we can help students develop the leadership, responsibility, resilience, and communication skills they will need long after middle school.

Attendance remains one of the most important factors in student success. Thanks to the partnership of our families, student attendance improved from the 2024–2025 school year to the 2025–2026 school year, and we are proud of that progress. Let's continue building on that momentum. Every day students are in school, they gain valuable academic skills, strengthen positive relationships, and deepen their connection to our school community.

One of the highlights of the year will be our Student-Led Conferences, where students will take ownership of sharing their learning, growth, goals, and progress with their families. These conferences are an important opportunity for students, families, and teachers to work together in supporting each student's success.

We also hope to increase family involvement this year. Our Porter Parent Council will play an important role as we continue improving our campus. We are exploring projects such as an outdoor learning space or a middle school-appropriate obstacle course. If you have experience in engineering, design, construction, landscaping, or related fields, we would love your expertise as we bring these ideas to life.

Your student's WIN teacher will continue to be your primary contact for conferences, field trips, lockers, supplies, and general questions. Alongside our counselors, support staff, teachers, and administrators, they are committed to supporting your child's academic, social, and emotional growth.

Please take time to review this handbook so you and your student understand our school expectations. Thank you for your continued partnership and for helping make CS Porter a place where every student can thrive. Together, let's make the 2026–2027 school year our best yet!

Best,

CS Porter Community Mission

We will empower, engage and inspire each and every student to reach his or her full potential as a lifelong learner and respected member of the community. We will encourage students to pursue their dreams with confidence and passion in a safe, stable, and supportive learning environment.

CS PORTER KEYS TO SUCCESS

BE RESPECTFUL

Show regard and consideration for others, the property of others and yourself.

BE RESPONSIBLE

Be accountable for things that are within your control. Take responsibility for what you say or do. Remember to think about the impact your words and/or actions have on the people around you.

BE SAFE

Make decisions that are safe for you and others.

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CONTENTS

To Students and Parents:	8
Superintendent's Message	8
Board of Trustees 2026-2027	8
Notice of Non-Discrimination	8
Admission Requirements	9
athletics	9
Attendance	10
Bell Schedules	12
Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing	13
Child Safety GPS and Audio Child Tracking/Monitoring Systems	15
Closed Campus	15
Communicable Diseases	16
Complaints by Students and Parents	16
Computer Resources	17
Conduct	17
Corporal Punishment	22
Counseling	22
Discipline and Due Process	23
Distribution Of Material	24
Dress and Grooming	24
Extracurricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations	25
Early Dismissals	26
Electronic Devices	26
Fees	26
Food Services	27
Fundraising	27
Grading Guidelines	27
Homeless Students	28
Homework	28
honor roll	29

Immunization	29
Law Enforcement	29
Lost and Found	31
Medicine At School	31
Multi-Tiered systems of support	31
Parent Involvement, Responsibilities, and Rights	32
Protection of Student Rights	32
Release of Students from School	33
Religious Practices	34
Safety	34
Searches and Seizures	36
Sexual Harassment	38
Students in Foster Care	38
student in good standing	39
Student Records	39
suicide prevention	42
telephone calls and classroom disruptions	43
Textbooks	43
Toys and Games	44
Transportation	44
Videotaping of Students	45
Visitors	45

TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS:

The Missoula County Public School District Student Handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the school year. The handbook is organized alphabetically by topic. Throughout the handbook, the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please note that references to policy codes are included to help parents confirm current policy. A copy of the District’s Policy Manual is available in the school office.

SUPERINTENDENT’S MESSAGE

On behalf of Missoula County Public Schools, we welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year! We're excited to have you join us and we hope to make your educational experience the best that it can possibly be. It is my honor to serve as the superintendent of MCPS, and I am excited about the opportunities our schools will help provide to you to learn and grow in the months ahead.

This handbook contains important guidance for MCPS students and parents. The administration is required to enforce the rules described in this handbook and is given the discretion needed to address special circumstances as they arise. It is the student and parent's responsibility to know and comply with the policies listed in the handbook. If the student or parent has a question, we recommend you contact your school.

We strongly encourage students and parents to read the handbook. It is a great tool for navigating and understanding the resources that are available to you. Students and parents are required to sign the accompanying signature card and return it to the school office.

We sincerely hope that each of you will have a successful and enjoyable year.

Micah Hill, Superintendent

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2026-2027

The Board of Trustees would like to extend an invitation to students, parents and community members to come to board meetings throughout the school year and summer. We would also like to encourage you to share with us your concerns, ideas, and general comments. We will be available to listen to and we will provide guidance on how to get your concerns addressed through the proper channels. Please find the trustee contact information on the MCPS website (<https://www.mcpsmt.org/our-district/board-of-trustees>).

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Missoula County Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, in the educational programs and activities it operates including admission and employment. The District is required by federal law, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, and Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and their regulations to not discriminate against individuals in violation of these laws. The District also

provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints under Title IX (sex discrimination and sexual harassment) and all other non-discrimination policies:

Title IX Coordinator: Amy Shattuck

Address: 909 South Ave. West, Missoula, MT 59801

Telephone: (406)728-2400

Inquiries may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

According to School [Board Policy 3110](#), no pupil may be enrolled in kindergarten or first grade whose fifth (5th) or sixth (6th) birthday does not occur on or before the tenth (10th) day of September of the school year in which the child registers to enter school. A parent or guardian may request a waiver (see [board policy](#)). MCPS requires evidence of a birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of residency prior to admission.

ATHLETICS

Students may also elect to participate in sport activities. Athletics are supervised by the assistant principal. The calendar of dates for the various sport activities is available in the fall.

- Soccer, cross country, wrestling and track are open to all students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades.
- Boys' basketball, girls' basketball and volleyball are open to 7th grade and 8th grade students.

Volleyball	Aug 31 - Oct 10
Soccer	Aug 31 - Oct 8
Cross Country	Aug 31 - Oct 13
Boys Basketball	Oct 12 - Dec 4
Girls Basketball	Jan 4 - Feb 26
Wrestling	Feb 22 - April 15
Track	April 12 - May 18

Students electing to participate in interscholastic sport activities are required to pay a participation fee for each activity and a parent/guardian must also sign a sport waiver and concussion protocol prior to the student participating in each sport activity. The participation fee is \$30.00 per sport, with a maximum of \$90.00 per individual and \$150.00 per family. There is no charge for intramural sports. (Note: A parent should contact the assistant principal if there is a financial hardship. Scholarships are available.)

Academic eligibility requirements for participating in athletic activities are as

follows:

- No student athlete may have an "F" in any subject during an athletic season.
- The eligibility of students earning a failing grade in one or more subjects will be reviewed. Athletic Directors will check students' grades throughout the athletic season (2nd, 4th, and 6th weeks of competition, as well as midterm and quarter grades). They will use their best judgment to determine when these checks should occur, with priority on midterm and

quarter grades. Track and Field has more specific guidelines listed below because students miss school to participate in meets. Please refer to MCPS Middle School Sports Waiver.

- A student athlete who is in a prescribed special education class or 504 program and is not meeting academic eligibility will have his/her grades reviewed to ensure all accommodations are being implemented. This review will be comprised of an administrator, parent, special education teacher and the teacher from the class the student is failing.

***There are attendance and behavior requirements for activity participation that our AD will address at the beginning of each season.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education — to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. The District permits resident students of school age who are enrolled in a nonpublic or home school to enroll part-time in a District school at the parent's request.

- A student between the ages of 7 and 16 **must** attend school unless the student is otherwise legally exempted or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her sixteenth birthday is required to attend each school day.
- A student who persistently does not attend school for the day or any part of the school day equivalent to the length of one class period is truant and may be subject to disciplinary action. Truancy may also result in assessment of a penalty by a court of law against the student and his or her parents. The District's Attendance Officer may request a meeting with the truant student's parent or legal guardian to develop a truancy plan in the event of continued truancy.
- The principal or designee will attempt to contact a student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian by the end of the school day in order to inform him or her of the student's absence if no excuse has been offered. See Policy 3120, 3122.

Types of absences

Excused Absences: These include family authorized absences and school authorized absences. The following reasons shall be sufficient to constitute excused absences:

1. Family authorized excused absences:
 - a) Personal illness
 - b) Family emergency or death in the family
 - c) Medical or dental treatment
 - d) Other activities as approved by the school beliefs or practices.
2. School authorized excused absences
 - a) Approved field trips
 - b) Interscholastic competitions and events
 - c) Other activities as approved by the school

Unexcused Absences: These are absences which are not authorized by the parent/guardian or the school. The following absences are examples of absences which will not be excused:

1. Leaving school premises without authorization from the nurse, the attendance office or the principals' offices;
2. Failing to attend class (while remaining on the premises) without advanced permission;

3. Family trips/vacations for which no prior arrangement have been made with the school;
4. Other absences not authorized by the school or parent/guardian.

Reporting Student Absences: When a student must be absent from school, the parent/guardian is requested to notify the school's attendance office, whenever possible, in advance of the absence or at least 30 minutes before the start of the student's school day if enrolled on a part-time basis. If the school attendance office does not receive advance notice, the school will make a reasonable effort to contact a parent/guardian to verify the student's absence. If the school is unable to contact a student's parent/guardian after a reasonable effort has been made, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Single or multiple absences that are not verified by a parent/guardian, or which have been recorded as unexcused, may be handled as part of the disciplinary process.

Whenever possible, students are to request make-up work in advance of the absence and to complete work according to the timelines established by the individual teacher.

Absences necessitated by student participation in field trips or extra-curricular activities must be excused in advance. The participating student is responsible to secure each teacher's signature on a pre-arranged absence slip and request homework assignments prior to the date of the absence.

Parents/guardians must notify the school of an absence within 24 hours for their students unexcused absence to be considered for excusal. If notification is not received within 24 hours of the student's absence, the absence will remain recorded as unexcused.

Procedure for Student Prearranged Absences: All absences other than illness and family emergencies should be planned for in advance. Prearranged Absence forms are available in the Attendance Office.

Students participating in school-related activities must fill out the Activities Prearranged Absence forms. This form is to be picked up from the coach or sponsor of the activity and returned complete to them at the time the coach sets. The list of students attending the activity should be handed in to the Attendance Office by 3:00 p.m. the day preceding the trip. Also, notify the attendance office of any changes occurring the day of the event before leaving.

Human Sexuality or Identity Instruction Absence

A student may be withdrawn or absent from a class period, assembly, school function, or other instruction at the request of a parent/guardian/other person responsible for human sexuality instruction. Human sexuality instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities. These absences do not count toward the student's discretionary 10-day total.

Written consent from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to any student attending identity instruction. Identity instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A student is

excused from not attending identity instruction unless the student's parent/guardian provided written consent for the student to be in attendance prior to the instruction.

The District will provide parents/guardians with at least five (5) school days' notice (but not more than 14 school days' notice) before human sexuality or identity instruction is scheduled to occur.

BELL SCHEDULES

Period	6th (Regular: M/T/W/F)	7th (Early-out:Th)
1 (WIN)	7:48-8:32 (44)	7:48-8:27 (39)
2 (Explo)	8:34-9:18 (44)	8:29-9:08 (39)
3 (Explo)	9:20-10:04 (44)	9:10-9:49 (39)
4	10:06-10:50 (44)	9:51-10:30 (39)
5	10:52-11:37 (45)	10:32-11:11 (39)
6 (Lunch)	11:39-12:24 (45)	11:11-11:56 (45)
7	12:26-1:11 (45)	11:58-12:37 (39)
8	1:13-1:57 (44)	12:39-1:18 (39)
9	1:59-2:43 (44)	1:20-1:59 (39)

Period	7th (Regular: M/T/W/F)	8th (Early-out:Th)
1 (WIN)	7:48-8:32 (44)	7:48-8:27 (39)
2	8:34-9:18 (44)	8:29-9:08 (39)
3	9:20-10:04 (44)	9:10-9:49 (39)
4	10:06-10:50 (44)	9:51-10:30 (39)
5 (Explo)	10:52-11:37 (45)	10:32-11:11 (39)
6 (Explo)	11:39-12:24 (45)	11:13-11:52 (39)
7 (Lunch)	12:26-1:11 (45)	11:52-12:37 (45)

Period	7th (Regular: M/T/W/F)	8th (Early-out:Th)
8	1:13-1:57 (44)	12:39-1:18 (39)
9	1:59-2:43 (44)	1:20-1:59 (39)

Period	8th (Regular: M/T/W/F)	6th (Early-out:Th)
1 (WIN)	7:48-8:32 (44)	7:48-8:27 (39)
2	8:34-9:18 (44)	8:29-9:08 (39)
3	9:20-10:04 (44)	9:10-9:49 (39)
4	10:06-10:50 (44)	9:51-10:30 (39)
5 (Lunch)	10:52-11:37 (45)	10:30-11:15 (45)
6	11:39-12:24 (45)	11:13-11:52 (39)
7	12:26-1:11 (45)	11:52-12:37 (45)
8 (Explo)	1:13-1:57 (44)	12:39-1:18 (39)
9 (Explo)	1:59-2:43 (44)	1:20-1:59 (39)

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/HAZING

Bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Bullying does not include the determination after an investigation that the students used reasonable and necessary physical force as self-defense or the defense of another in response to a physical attack.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated.

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry.

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Reporting Safety Concerns

Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and staff. MCPS uses a behavioral threat assessment process to identify, assess, and respond to concerning behaviors or situations that may pose a risk to an individual or the school community.

Threat assessment is a prevention and problem-solving process designed to understand concerning behavior, determine the level of concern, and identify appropriate supports, interventions, and safety measures.

See Something. Hear Something. Say Something.

Students and families are encouraged to report concerns such as:

- Threats to harm oneself or others
- Threatening or intimidating statements, messages, or social media posts
- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- Discussion or planning of violence
- Weapons or concerns about access to weapons
- Drugs, fights, or other serious safety concerns
- Significant changes in behavior that cause concern for someone's safety

Concerns may be reported directly to a teacher, counselor, administrator, School Resource Officer, or other trusted adult.

Safer Montana Tip Line

Students, parents, guardians, and community members may also anonymously report school safety concerns through the Safer Montana Tip Line, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Submit a tip:

- Online: SaferMT.com
- Call or Text: 406-206-7431
- Email: tip@SaferMT.com
- Mobile App: SaferMT

Safer Montana may be used to report concerns including bullying, harassment, threats of violence, weapons, drugs, fights, cyberbullying, or concerns about someone who may harm themselves or others. Tips are reviewed and routed to the appropriate school officials and/or law enforcement for follow-up.

Students should not investigate a threat, confront the person involved, or share threats or rumors on social media. Report the concern to a trusted adult or through Safer Montana.

For additional information, please see [Policy 3225](#).

Cell Phones

The possession and use of cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic signaling devices on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or while otherwise under the supervision and control of District employees is a privilege.

Students in grades 6-8 are prohibited from using cellular phones and other electronic signaling and listening devices on campus throughout the instructional day. These devices must remain turned off and out of sight, except:

- Students with medical reasons with prior approval from a building administrator.
- Middle school staff may request approval from a building administrator to use devices as an instructional tool during the class period.

Parents can call the school office, and messages will be relayed to students. Unauthorized use will result in device confiscation and returned to the student at the end of the day. Repeat offenders may be required to have parent meetings ([Board Policy 3630](#)).

Students are prohibited from operating a cell phone or other electronic device (or camera embedded in such device) while in a locker room, bathroom, or any other location where the privacy rights of others may be violated. Students may not use cell phones, pagers, or other electronic signaling devices during classes unless such use is under the direction of certified staff for educational purposes.

Unauthorized possession or use of these devices is grounds for confiscation. Repeated unauthorized use will result in disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the unauthorized use, the student's parents and/or law enforcement may be contacted and the student's cell phone may be searched.

CHILD SAFETY GPS AND AUDIO CHILD TRACKING/MONITORING SYSTEMS

Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one- or two-way audio communication technology (i.e., technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag/backpack, on the student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without express written consent of the Superintendent. Any requests to place a recording device or other device with one- or two-way audio communication technology within a student's book bag/backpack or on a student's person shall be submitted, in writing, to the Superintendent along with an explanation of why such recording is necessary. The Superintendent or a designee shall notify the parent(s), in writing, whether such request is denied or granted within five (5) school days. Where consent has been given by the Superintendent, the Principal must be given access by the parent to be a school guardian on the device. This will ensure any "Listen-In" feature is disabled during school hours due to privacy concerns.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Middle schools have a closed campus. Leaving the school grounds at any time during the day without permission is not permitted.

- If a student will be leaving with someone other than a parent/guardian, the parent must provide written permission stating the third party's full name and the time of the pick-up.
- If a parent/guardian wishes to have their student leave campus, an adult is required to be present and sign the student out. (Exception: With written permission, students can walk across the street to the orthodontist.)
- Students are also required to sign in at the office if they are arriving late to school or if they are returning from an appointment.

- Students will not be allowed to leave campus at lunch unless a parent or guardian physically comes into the office to check them out.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal so that other students who **may** have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

These diseases include, but are not limited to:

Amebiasis	Mumps
Campylobacteriosis	Pinkeye
Chickenpox	Ringworm of the scalp
Diphtheria	Rubella (German Measles)
Gastroenteritis	Scabies
Hepatitis	Shigellosis
Influenza	Streptococcal disease, invasive
Measles (Rubeola)	Tuberculosis
Meningitis	Whooping Cough (Pertussis)
Coronavirus	

COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply — by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a Uniform Complaint Procedure policy for most complaints (Policy 1700) with the exception of complaints/concerns regarding involving challenges to educational material, those governed by a specified procedure in state or federal law that supersedes a uniform grievance process, and those about sexual harassment and/or disability discrimination. A written copy of the Uniform Complaint Procedure can be obtained at the Superintendent's office.

If a student or parent believes that the Board, its employees, or agents have violated their rights, he or she may file a written complaint with any District Principal or Supervisor under the applicable grievance procedure. If still unresolved, the matter generally may be referred to the Superintendent. Under some circumstances, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees in the event the matter cannot be resolved at the administrative level.

Some complaints require different procedures. Any building office or the Superintendent's office can provide information regarding specific processes for filing complaints. Additional information can also be found in Policy 1700, available in any principal's and Superintendent's offices.

Students shall use the Title IX Grievance Procedure to address complaints/concerns about sexual harassment. A copy of the Title IX Grievance Procedures can be obtained on the District's website www.mcpsmt.org or any District or school office or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.

Students shall use the Section 504 Grievance Procedure to address complaints/concerns about disability discrimination. A copy of the Section 504 Grievance Procedures can be obtained on the District's website www.mcpsmt.org or any District or school office.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

Computer resources, including the District's electronic networks, are an integral part of the District's instructional program. Use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. Students have no expectation of privacy in material that is stored, transmitted, or received via the District's electronic networks or the District's computers. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the District's computer resources. Students must sign the *Authorization for Electronic Access* Agreement prior to being authorized to use the District's computer resources. See Appendices B (K-6) and C (7-12) for the forms. For additional information, see Policy 2168, 3612.

CONDUCT

In order for students to take advantage of available learning opportunities and to be productive members of our campus community, each student is expected to:

- Demonstrate courtesy — even when others do not.
- Behave in a responsible manner and exercise self-discipline.
- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Meet District or building standards of grooming and dress.
- Obey all building and classroom rules.
- Respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and other District staff.
- Respect the property of others, including District property and facilities.
- Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline.

Applicability of School Rules and Discipline

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all our students, the Missoula County Public School District's rules and discipline will apply:

- On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during or after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
- Off school grounds at a school sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
- Traveling to and from school or a school activity, function or event; and
- Anywhere, including virtual networks, if conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member, an interference with school purposes or an educational function, or a threat to the safety and welfare of the student population, or conduct that detrimentally effects the climate or efficient operations of the school.

Violation of Student Code of Conduct

A student is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct if the student engages in any inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to:

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco, vapor products, or marijuana products (tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, alternative nicotine product, or any other tobacco or nicotine innovation; marijuana products include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping);
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages.
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling marijuana (including medical marijuana).
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances, look-alike drugs, and drug paraphernalia.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the “Possession of a Weapon in a School Building” section of this policy.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon.
- Disobeying directives from staff or disobeying rules governing student conduct.
- Using violence, force, coercion, intimidation or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct except when physical force is determined to be reasonable and necessary and used as self-defense or the defense of another person after an investigation into such conduct.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s property.
- Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
- Unexcused absenteeism.
- Misconduct of any sort on any means of District transportation.
- Bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), or intimidation, including cyberbullying.
- Forging any signature or making any false entry or attempting to authorize any document used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.
- Engaging in dishonesty in academic work, including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence applications to complete school work, submitting work generated by artificial intelligence as original work, or any other form of academic dishonesty.

Gun-Free Schools/Firearms

In accordance with the Gun Free School Act, any student who brings a firearm onto school property shall be expelled for a period of not less than one calendar year unless the Board of Trustees has authorized the school administration in writing to modify the requirement for expulsion, including eliminating the requirement for expulsion, on a case-by-case basis.

An administrator may immediately suspend a student if there is cause to believe the student brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school prior to any board hearing on a recommendation for expulsion. If there is a recommendation to expel a student for bringing a firearm to school or possessing a firearm at school, the trustees shall notify the adult student or parent/guardian of a minor student in a clear and timely manner that the student may waive his or her privacy right by requesting the hearing be held in public and may invite other individuals to attend the hearing. At a due process hearing on the recommendation for expulsion due to a student bringing a firearm to school or possessing a firearm at school, there shall be a presentation of a summary of the information leading to the allegations and an opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations. The Board of Trustees is permitted to expel a student only when the trustees determine that the student knowingly (had knowledge of the facts) brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school.

The Board of Trustees is not required to expel a student who has brought a firearm or possessed a firearm at school as long as the firearm is secured in a locked container approved by the District or in a locked motor vehicle the entire time the firearm is at school unless the firearm is in use for a school-sanctioned instructional activity.

If a student is determined by trustees to not have knowingly brought or possessed a firearm at school, the student's record will be expunged of the incident.

Possible Interventions

- Student conference with the teacher, team or administrator
- Phone call to parent/guardian
- Detentions (at lunchtime or after school)
- Community service
- Parent/Team conference
- Positive behavior contracts
- Parent/Teacher/Team conference
- Counseling
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Classroom adaptations/accommodations
- Counseling group
- Insight group
- Police action
- Due process/expulsion

Important Terminology and Definitions: Classroom (Minor) and Office (Major) Definitions 4 minors = 1 major (per quarter) This list is not intended to be either inclusive or conclusive. Administrators reserve the right to adjust progressive consequences at their discretion pending determination of special circumstances.

Minor Infraction	Definition	Possible Consequences: Consequences will increase with multiple offenses.
Defiance/Noncompliance	Refusal to comply with directions. For example, talking back or refusing to sit when requested. Use of school areas for non-intended purposes (bathrooms, hallways, closets, common-areas)	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Disrespect	Verbal or non-verbal displays of rudeness or discourtesy. For example, inappropriate gestures, mocking, heavy sighing, rolling eyes.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Disruption	Making distracting sounds or having distracting behavior.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Dress Code Violation	Wearing clothing that is not within the guidelines as defined by the school/district. Clothing with derogatory slogans or logos, hats, etc.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, provided alternative clothing, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period),
Inappropriate Language	Minor profanity and/or offensive language not directed at others. Saying "this is stupid," "this sucks," swearing, etc.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Inappropriate Display of Affection	Non-threatening, but physical contact- kissing, hugging or other forms of displays of affection not suited for the school environment.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Physical Contact/Aggression	Shoving, pushing, tripping, throwing objects, roughhousing (even in play), or out of competitiveness. Exception: Physical force is determined to be reasonable and necessary and used as self-defense or the defense of another person after an investigation into such conduct.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Selling for Profit	Students are not allowed to sell items or collect money from other students for profit under any circumstance. Board Policy #3530	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution. May result in major infraction for repetitive actions.
Tardy	Student has had 4 or more tardies in a quarter.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period)
Technology Violation	Student engages in non-serious, but inappropriate (as defined by school) use of cell phone, camera, earbuds and/or computer at school. Students are not allowed to video or take pictures of students or staff without consent.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), loss of technology use.
Cell Phone/Smart Watch/Headphones and airpods	Student's phone or smart watch is used without staff permission or in an area where phones are not prohibited. (i.e. during lunch, bathroom or hallway)	First Offense Minor: Phone/Smart watch taken and left in the office until the end of the day. Parent contact. Second Offense Minor: Phone/Smart watch taken and left in the office until the end of the day. Lunch Detention. Parent contact. Third Offense Minor: Phone/Smart watch taken and left in Administrator's office. Parents will be required to come to school and pick up the phone. Lunch Detention. Parent contact. Fourth Offense Major: Phone/Smart watch taken and left in Administrator's office. Parents will be required to come to school for a meeting with the administration and student before the phone can be picked up. Lunch Detention. Parent contact. (All offenses reset each quarter. i.e. a First offense in quarter one would not roll into a second offense in quarter 2)

Major Infraction	Definition	Possible Consequences:
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		Consequences will increase with multiple offenses.
Defiance/ Noncompliance	Continual, chronic, or extreme refusal to follow requests or directions. Talking back, arguing, or ignoring authority.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS.
Disrespect	Verbal or non-verbal displays of rudeness or discourtesy. For example, inappropriate gestures, mocking, flipping someone off.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS.
Disruption	Student engages in behavior causing an interruption on the bus, classroom, or common spaces. Sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; horseplay or roughhousing; and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS.
Cheating/Forgery	An effort to improve your grades or help another student improve grades by copying notes, papers, looking at another's paper or test, plagiarism, use of electronics or pictures etc.	Parent notification, zero on work, possible replacement test/assignment, ISS, OSS.
Harassment / Bullying	Harassment - Disrespectful behavior (verbal or gestural) toward another student which is intended to disturb or upset including negative comments based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, disabilities, sexual orientation or other personal matters. Bullying – Harassment that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.	Parent notification, conference with student, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Inappropriate Language	Student delivers verbal messages that include swearing or name-calling. Verbal or gestural messages that include threats, intimidations, pictures or written notes with the intent to harm or upset another.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS.
Theft	Student is involved by being in possession, having passed on, or being responsible for removing someone else's property. This includes the theft of lost or mislaid property.	Parent notification, conference with student, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Physical Aggression / Fighting	Students engage in serious physical contact where injury may occur. Intent to hurt another (hitting, punching, scratching, spitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling etc.) Or inappropriate verbal and/or physical gestures/contact of a sexual nature. Exception: Physical force is determined to be reasonable and necessary and used as self-defense or the defense of another person after an investigation into such conduct.	First Offense: Student will receive 1-3 days ISS/OSS and have a loss of unstructured time during the day and increased supervision (lunch/recess/transitions). SRO Contact and reentry meeting. Second Offense: Student will receive 4-6 days OSS and a loss of unstructured time during the day and increased supervision (lunch/recess/transitions). SRO Contact and reentry meeting to discuss an alternative learning program temporarily. Third Offense: Student will receive 6-9 days OSS and placement in an alternative learning program long term.
Inappropriate verbal and/or physical gestures/contact of sexual nature.	Students engage in inappropriate verbal and/or physical gestures/contact of sexual nature.	First Offense: Student will receive 1-3 days ISS/OSS and have a loss of unstructured time during the day and increased supervision (lunch/recess/transitions). SRO Contact and reentry meeting. Second Offense: Student will receive 4-6 days OSS and a loss of unstructured time during the day and increased supervision (lunch/recess/transitions). SRO Contact and reentry meeting to discuss an alternative learning program temporarily. Third Offense: Student will receive 6-9 days OSS and placement in an alternative learning program long term. ***Title IX investigation will take place.
Technology Violation	Student engages in inappropriate use of cell phone, music/video players, camera, and/or computer as per district tech agreement and/or individual classroom expectations. Students are not allowed to video or take pictures of students or staff without consent.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS, Loss of technology use.
Truancy / Campus violation	Student receive an "unexcused" absence for the entire period. Or student leaves school grounds during the school day, or in a location within the building without permission.	Parent notification, Conference with student, after school or lunch detention, loss of privilege, increased supervision/restrictions, restitution/community service or removal from class (BIR for remainder of period), ISS, OSS.

Use/Possession of Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs	Student is in possession of or using Tobacco, alcohol, or is using illegal drugs/substances or imitations or possession of paraphernalia (pipe, vape pen, etc.) Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco, vapor products, or marijuana products (tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, alternative nicotine product, or any other tobacco or nicotine innovation; marijuana products include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping).	Parent notification, conference with student, loss of unstructured time, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Use/Possession of Combustibles	Student is/was in possession of substances/objects readily capable of causing bodily harm and/or property damage (matches, lighters, firecrackers, gasoline, lighter fluid).	Parent notification, conference with student, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Possession of Weapons	Student is in possession of knives or guns (real or look alike) or other objects readily capable of causing bodily harm.	Parent notification, conference with student, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Property Damage	Deliberately destroying Bus property, school property or property of another.	Parent notification, conference with student, loss of unstructured time, School Resource Officer action, ISS, OSS.
Refusal to be Searched	Any student who will not consent to search of belongings by administration for a suspected violation of code of conduct. (i.e. Refusal to search backpack for a vape pen.)	Student will receive the consequence as though they are found to have the item the school staff would have been searching for. (i.e. Student will receive major office discipline referral and two days of ISS.)

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

No person who is employed or engaged by the District may inflict or cause to be inflicted corporal punishment on a student. Corporal punishment does not include, and district personnel are permitted to use, reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense.

COUNSELING

Academic Counseling

Students and parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn about course offerings, the graduation requirements of various programs, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grades 6 through 8 will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

Students who are interested in attending a college, university, or training school or pursuing some other type of advanced education should work closely with their counselor so that they take the high school courses that best prepare them. The counselor can also provide information about entrance examinations and deadlines for application, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

Personal Counseling

School counselors are available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. Counselors may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. Students who wish to meet with a counselor should contact the school office.

Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes. The school will notify the parent or guardian of the right to opt a student out of a mental health screening and will be notified of any issues or concerns resulting from a mental health screening.

DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS

Students who violate District policies, rules, and directives are subject to discipline at the discretion of District administration. Discipline may include referrals, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion. Administrators have the discretion to impose, or in the case of expulsion, recommend, the level of discipline deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

Suspension

An administrator has the authority to suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days. The student is entitled to oral or written notification of the charges and is entitled to the opportunity to provide his or her version. Immediate suspension when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process may occur without notice or the opportunity to be heard provided that notice and the opportunity to be heard shall follow as soon as practicable. Written notice of the suspension containing a statement of its basis and notice of the right to a review of the suspension will be sent to the parents as soon as possible. At the request of the parents, the Superintendent will review the appropriateness of the suspension. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

An administrator has the authority to extend a suspension for an additional ten (10) school days. Prior to extending the suspension beyond the original length not to exceed ten days, the administrator must hold an informal hearing with the student and determine that the student's immediate return to the school would be detrimental to the health, welfare, or safety of others, or would be disruptive to the educational process.

Expulsion

Expulsion is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of educational services. Only the Board has the authority to expel a student after holding a hearing that provides the student with an opportunity to be heard. After an investigation into the student's conduct, the administrator must send a written notice to the parents regarding the recommendation to expel the student, the specific charges against the student and supporting evidence, a description of the rule or regulation broken, the date, time, and location of the board hearing, a copy of the Board's procedure, and a description of the student's and parents' rights at the hearing.

Students With Disabilities

Students with rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may be suspended in the same manner as students without those rights or expelled under certain circumstances, but prior to the imposition of either penalty, the District must follow all procedural requirements of those Acts, including holding a manifestation determination meeting when necessary, as required by these Acts.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL

School Materials

School publications distributed to students include approved materials per Board policy. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal and are part of the curriculum. School officials have the discretion to edit or delete material which is inconsistent with the District's educational mission. School-sponsored groups are permitted to distribute materials directly to students upon approval of the building Principal or Superintendent.

Non-School Materials

Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not contain material that is obscene, libelous, invasive of the privacy of others, substantially disruptive to the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, or which advocates conduct inconsistent with the shared values of civilized social order are not permitted. Outside groups, including governmental agencies, parent and student organizations not sponsored by the school, and community organizations are permitted to display their materials on a centrally-located bulletin board and/or table available for the displaying of these materials.

Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Prior approval must be obtained before displaying these materials. Materials should be submitted to the Principal or Assistant Principal at least one week prior to the requested distribution.

DRESS AND GROOMING

All students are expected to dress in a manner that promotes school pride. Student dress and grooming must be consistent with the educational, safety and sanitary environment of the school. Dress should not be disruptive to the educational process. Students dressed inappropriately will be asked to call home for alternate clothing or given appropriate apparel to be worn during the school day.

Dress code Guidelines:

- Clothing and jewelry which causes a disruption of the learning environment for others is prohibited. (Old Language; *Clothing and jewelry which bears graphics or speech that display profanity, bias/hate/racism, chemical substances, gangs, or sexual connotations are not allowed*).
- Clothing or jewelry which present a safety hazard to self and/or others are not allowed.
- Hoods are not allowed to be on in the building with the exception of school directed dress-up day.
- Underwear beyond shoulder straps should not be visible.
- Clothing must cover your buttocks.

- Shirts must have shoulder straps and cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit.
- Shoes are required at all times.
- Blankets may not be used throughout the day or carried out at recess.
- Costumes are allowed only on special occasions. Guidelines for costumes will be defined prior to the event.

Note: exceptions to the dress code must be made for religious practices – i.e., prohibition on head coverings

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in extracurricular activities, clubs, and organizations is a worthwhile endeavor to enhance students' development and educational experience. Specific eligibility and conduct rules may be adopted regarding participation in activities, clubs, and organizations.

Activities include soccer, cross country, volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball, wrestling, track, Business Professionals of America, Student Council, Ambassadors, Robotics, Quiz Bowl and Math Counts. Detailed descriptions of these activities are located on the school website.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA § 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by Missoula County Public School District subject to the student's eligibility as set out in the Student Activities Handbook. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the principal.

Parent/guardian permission is required for a child to participate in a school club and/or extracurricular activity (Appendix E). Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from any club or extracurricular activity.

Please note: Student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior — including consequences for misbehavior — that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA § 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by Missoula County Public School District subject to the student's eligibility as set out in the Student Handbook. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the principal. Any nonpublic or home school student seeking to participate in an extracurricular activity shall be required to provide proof of identity and residence in the same form as a student enrolling in school in order to establish residency. Parental permission must be obtained for the student to participate in the extracurricular activity.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Appointments for students should be scheduled after school hours, if possible. Should an appointment during the school hours be imperative, parents should write a request for an early dismissal and send it to the school to be given to the homeroom teacher. The child's name, time of dismissal, teacher's name and reason for the dismissal should be stated.

Parents are to report to the main office when picking up a student for an early dismissal and the student will be called to the office. Parents are required to sign out their child and provide identification if requested. Only a parent, guardian, or emergency contact may pick up a child. A child cannot be released directly from the classroom. No child will be excused at any time other than the regular dismissal time without permission from the parent or guardian.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Radios, audio recorders/players, toys and other electronic hand-held devices such as games, MP3 players, iPods and DSS should not be brought to school. The district will not be responsible for lost, damaged or stolen electronic devices that are brought onto school property in violation of this policy.

Electronic readers are acceptable for students with teacher permission.

The use of student cell phones is prohibited during the school day. Student cell phones off and away door to door.

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds and are at no charge to a student. A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the District.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on District premises.
- Summer school courses that are offered tuition free during the regular school year.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the school office.

FOOD SERVICES

The District participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program and offers students nutritionally-balanced and appealing meals daily. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. The District will make every effort to prevent the overt identification of students participating in the free and reduced-price meals by utilizing electronic identification and payment systems. See school secretary to apply. Forms will be sent home the first week of school or you can apply online.

Free & Reduced Meals are available to eligible families. Families must re-apply each year for eligibility. Applications are accepted any time during the school year. Visit the website – [Meal and Nutrition Services](#) - for details.

Please refer to [Policy 8200](#) for additional information regarding the District's wellness program and its meal charging policy.

Paying for Cafeteria Purchases

A computerized debit system is used for all purchases. Students use their 5-digit student ID number at the register. Parents have options to monitor and make payments to their student's meal accounts.

You can check your child's meal account balance and pay through our [Infinite Campus Student Information System](#)). Parents may also make payments to students' lunch accounts by sending cash or a check. If paying with a check, make payable to **MCPS Food Service**. Please make sure to list your student's name/homeroom or student ID number on the check. Parents with multiple students may write one check.

FUNDRAISING

Student clubs or classes, outside organizations, and/or parent groups occasionally may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to school administration at least seven days before the event.

Except as approved by the Central Office, fundraising by non-school groups is not permitted on school property. Please refer to Policy 4210 for additional information.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Grades assigned by a teacher cannot be changed except by that teacher after discussions involving the student, teacher, and administrator. Grades will comply with the following:

Middle School

Letter Grades--Students' grade are alphabetically designated (i.e., A, B, C, D, F). Grade point averages will be computed on a 4-point scale as follows:

- A--4.0 points
- B--3.0 points

- C--2.0 points
- D--1.0 points
- F--0.0 points

"I" is used as an incomplete and the students are given a specific length of time by the teachers to complete the work in the course. Incompletes not made up are recorded as failures (F).

HOMELESS STUDENTS

In accordance with federal and state law and regulations, the District will provide homeless students with access to the instructional programming that supports achievement of the content standards and to other services for which they are eligible. Students shall not be segregated into a separate school or program based on their status as homeless, nor shall they be stigmatized in any way.

The District will determine, according to the best interest of the child whether the child will be enrolled in the school of origin or in the public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child is actually living are eligible to attend. In determining the best interest of the child, the District will, to the extent feasible, keep the child in the school of origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the parent.

If the child is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, the homeless liaison will assist in placement and enrollment decisions, with the views of the child taken into consideration.

The District shall immediately enroll the homeless child, even if the child into the selected school even if the parent/child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, immunization records, evidence of residency, or other documentation.

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to services available to other students in the school system including, but not limited to, transportation services; educational services for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, such as educational programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, and students with limited English proficiency; vocational and technical programs; preschool programs; before and after school-care programs; and school meals/nutrition programs.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. For more information or assistance with determining eligibility, contact the MCPS FIT Liaison.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

HONOR ROLL

A student must have a grade point average (G.P.A.) of at least 3.0 for Honor Roll and 4.0 for High Honor Roll.

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical or religious reasons, the student will not be immunized. The immunizations required are diphtheria, pertussis, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, poliomyelitis, varicella and tetanus. Haemophilus influenza type B is required for students under age five (5). Except for those vaccinations required by law, the District will not discriminate against a student by denying or withholding educational opportunities based upon the student's vaccination status.

A student who transfers into the District may photocopy immunization records in the possession of the school of origin. The District will accept the photocopy as evidence of the immunization. Within thirty (30) days after a transferring student ceases attendance at the school of origin, the District must receive the original immunization records for the student who transfers into the District.

If a student's religious beliefs conflict with the requirement that the student be immunized, the student must present a form signed by the parent stating that immunization conflicts with the religious tenets and practices of the parents and student. This form will be maintained as part of the student's immunization records.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a health care provider who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by the laws of any state or Canada to provide health care under Montana law, is authorized within the provider's scope of practice to administer immunizations to which the exemption applies, and has previously provided health care to the student seeking the exemption or has administered an immunization to which the student has had an adverse reaction. This certificate must indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstances which contraindicate immunization. This certificate will be maintained as part of the student's immunization records. For further information, see [Policy 3110](#) and [Policy 3413](#).

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Questioning of Students

Law enforcement or social service workers must contact students through the administrative office. Students will not usually be questioned or interviewed by law enforcement or other lawful authorities while at school. When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities, however,

wish to question or interview a student at school or the principal requests that the student be interviewed at school:

- The principal shall verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority.
- If the interview is not at the request of the principal, the principal shall ascertain the authority of law enforcement to question or interview the student at the school. If the interview is by court order or other exigencies exist (concern about loss/damage of evidence, flight from jurisdiction, or health, safety, or welfare of the student or other students or staff), the principal has the discretion to allow the interview to take place. Otherwise, if law enforcement can reasonably interview the student at a time when the student is not in school, the principal may, absent a court order or warrant, deny the request for an immediate interview of a student.
- The principal will make reasonable efforts to notify parents unless the officer produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents.
- In the event that a parent cannot be present or cannot be reached, the principal will observe the interview.
- Law enforcement must comply with all legal requirements regarding notification of parents and consent prior to interviewing students.
- Social service workers may be permitted to interview students at a school consistent with Montana law. The principal will observe the meeting if the social service worker declines to notify the parents.

Students Taken into Custody

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody by a law enforcement officer or probation officer to comply with a lawful court order, a warrant for arrest, or a law enforcement determination that probable cause exists for the arrest. To the extent practicable, the arrest should be conducted out of the view of other students in the administration offices. A social service worker may take custody of a student with a lawful court order or under the powers of MCA § 41-3-301.

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will make reasonable attempts to notify a parent unless the officer or official produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

Service of Process

At times, law enforcement may seek to serve a student with a subpoena or other legal documents (i.e., complaint, summons). Absent a court order, the principal has the discretion to determine whether service at school is disruptive to the educational environment. If service is directed by a

court or is not disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents regarding the service. Where the principal has determined that service would be disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make a reasonable attempt to coordinate with law enforcement to serve the student when school is not in session. Service on a student will be accomplished out of the view of other students in the administration offices.

LOST AND FOUND

The school has a Lost and Found area located in the building. Items are stored there for a reasonable amount of time. When items are not recovered, they are given to a charitable organization quarterly. The school takes no responsibility for items left in the Lost and Found. By making certain you have labeled your child's lunch box, coat, boots with their full name, you can help ensure your child's lost items can be returned to them.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

A student who must take prescription medicine during the school day that is necessary for his or her health and well-being must have written authorization signed by the parents and the licensed health care provider allowing the dispensation of the medication. The student must bring the medicine in its original, properly labeled container, to the school nurse. The school nurse or school employee to whom the task is delegated pursuant to Montana law will either give the medicine at the proper times or give the student permission to take the medication as directed.

A student who has authorization to possess and self-administer medication must have completed and filed, with the office, a written order for self-administration of a medication from a licensed health care provider or dentist as well as written authorization from the parents for the self-administration. The principal may authorize, in consultation with medical personnel, a student with asthma, severe allergies, or anaphylaxis to possess and self-administer emergency medication from an epinephrine pen (EpiPen), epinephrine nasal spray, or asthma inhaler. The written order and written authorization must be provided annually.

For additional information, please see [Policy 3416](#).

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

Middle school has a set of expectations that have been agreed upon by our staff as an effective way to be proactive in supporting positive student whole child development. Students will be learning about these school-wide expectations at the beginning of the year, and we will periodically remind students about these expectations throughout the year.

In addition to helping students know what our expectations are and supporting them in meeting these expectations, we have a **system for rewarding students' positive engagement**. At our school, students are acknowledged for exhibiting expectations of the building. We have a variety of interventions available and include parents in the process.

Please take this opportunity to talk to your student about the expectations at school and the importance of continuing to demonstrate **respectful, responsible, safe & kind behaviors**.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parents/guardians, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Review the information in the student handbook with his or her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s) and the directory information notice. A parent with questions is encouraged to contact the school office.
- Become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the academic programs and course of study, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, early graduation, methods to opt-out of programs and instruction consistent with parent/family rights, and other options available to the child.
- Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed, including to discuss homework, attendance, and discipline. Parents have the right to review their child's education records upon request.
- Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.
- Become a school volunteer. For further information, contact the Volunteer Coordinator, (406)728-2400, ext. 1030.
- Access District policies, handbooks, Board and committee meeting agendas, and District grievance procedures to participate in the governance of the District through the Board of Trustees. Contact information for administrators and trustees is available on the District's website www.mcpsmt.org.
- Contact a counselor or principal to discuss rights related to student name and pronoun use consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and Policy 3600.
- Participate in campus parent organizations. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS

Parent Rights

All fundamental parental rights are exclusively reserved to the parent of a child without obstruction or interference by a government entity in accordance with state and federal law (including without limitation to statutes and the common law) and District policy.

Surveys

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation that does not require the collection of personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution. Parents have the right to opt their student into a survey or data collection that requires the collection of personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution.

Instructional Materials

Parents have the right to inspect instructional materials used as a part of their child's educational curriculum, within a reasonable time. This does not include academic tests or assessments.

Collection of Personal Information from Students for Marketing

The District will not administer or distribute to students any survey or other instrument for the purposes of collecting or compiling personal information for marketing or selling such information, with the exception of the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products/services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

Pursuant to federal law, the District will seek parental consent prior to and will not request, nor disclose, the identity of a student who completes any federally funded survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the District) containing one or more of the following:

- Political affiliations.
- Mental and psychological problems
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or the student's parent/guardian.
- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Students will be released, with a parental request in writing, for the purpose of receiving religious

instruction. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the office or school nurse. The administrator or nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent. When in doubt as to custodial rights, the District will rely on the most recent information available in the student's records. A student will only be released with prior written permission from the custodial parent to a previously unauthorized adult unless an emergency situation justifies a waiver.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. Students may also pray in groups and discuss their religious views with other students as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity. Student prayer, even if nonsectarian or non-proselytizing, will not be broadcast over the school public address system.

Students may study religions ancillary to the studies of human history and development and various national, cultural, and ethnic groups. This study will give neither preferential nor derogatory treatment to any religion or religious belief. The inclusion of religious music, symbols, art, or writings during instruction or in school programs or performances may occur where the religious content has a historical and/or independent educational purpose consistent with the approved curriculum. A student may read the Bible or other religious material during free reading time or when self-selected and consistent with a classroom or course requirements. For additional information, please see Policy 2332.

SAFETY

Accident Prevention

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up to date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the office to update any information.

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other District employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Emergency Response

Our school uses the **“I Love U Guys” Standard Response Protocol (SRP)** to provide clear, consistent directions during emergencies and safety situations. The five SRP actions are:

HOLD – “In Your Room or Area. Clear the Halls.”

- **Students:** Remain in your classroom or assigned area and follow staff directions. Normal activities may continue.
- **Parents/Guardians:** No action is usually needed. Monitor school communications if additional information is provided.

SECURE – “Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors.” - Used when there is a potential concern or threat **outside the school**.

- **Students:** Go inside immediately, remain inside, and follow staff directions.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Do not come to the school unless directed. Monitor official school communications for updates.

LOCKDOWN – “Locks, Lights, Out of Sight.” - Used when there is a potential threat **inside the school** or circumstances require rooms to be secured.

- **Students:** Follow staff directions immediately, move out of sight, remain quiet, silence electronic devices, and do not open doors.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Do not come to the school or attempt to enter the building. Monitor official school communications and avoid calling or repeatedly texting students during the incident.

EVACUATE – “To the Announced Location.” - Used when students and staff need to move to another location.

- **Students:** Follow staff directions, leave belongings behind unless instructed otherwise, stay with your class or group, and report to the designated location.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Do not go to the school or evacuation site unless directed. If reunification is necessary, the school will provide instructions on where and how students will be released.

SHELTER – Hazard and Safety Strategy Announced - Used when protective actions are needed because of severe weather, hazardous materials, or another environmental hazard.

- **Students:** Listen carefully and follow the announced safety instructions.
- **Parents/Guardians:** Monitor official school communications and follow any instructions provided by the school or emergency officials.

During Any Emergency

Students should remain calm, follow staff instructions, and avoid posting photos, videos, or unverified information on social media.

Parents and guardians should rely on **official school communications**, avoid coming to the school unless instructed, and follow all directions regarding dismissal or student-parent reunification.

Emergency School-Closing Information

The District may close the schools in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the safety of students, staff members, or school property. Emergency school closing information will be broadcast on:

Emergency School Closure: All students, parents, and school employees should assume that school will be in session and buses running as scheduled, unless there is official notification from the Superintendent to the contrary. Such notice will be given via public media. In the event that weather conditions or other emergency circumstances require a modification of the normal routine, the Superintendent will make the modification decision prior to 6:30 a.m. and contact the public media for broadcast to the community and will initiate the emergency decision tree communication procedure to all administrators. [Policy 2221](#).

Personal Protective Equipment

The District may require the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including but not limited to face masks, if determined to be necessary for the safety and welfare of students and staff members. Exceptions may be made to any such requirement for PPE as permitted by law and on a case-by-case basis.

SEARCHES AND SEIZURES

To protect students, employees, and visitors from the serious risk to the health and safety of students posed by alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, and weapons, which are compelling interests, it is necessary to conduct searches of persons and property under certain, limited circumstances. Such searches are necessary to: deter the presence and possession of prohibited substances and items; deter drug and alcohol abuse among the student population; to educate students as to the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by drug and alcohol abuse; to prevent injury, illness and harm as result of drug, alcohol abuse and/or weapons; to help identify student drug use and assist parents in pursuing evaluation and appropriate counseling; and to maintain a safe environment free of weapons, alcohol and drug use by vigilant monitoring. In the school

environment, including student use of District-owned parking lots, students have a lower expectation of privacy due to the District's responsibility for maintaining discipline, health, and safety.

District officials may conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, students and their personal effects, and vehicles parked on District property to maintain health, safety, and security in the schools. The types of property that may be searched by school officials include but are not limited to lockers, desks, purses, backpacks, cellular phones or other electronic communication devices, or vehicles parked on District property.

Students and their Personal Effects

School officials may search a student, the student's personal effects (e.g., purses, backpacks, coats, etc.), and/or District property under the direct control of the student when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or the District's policies or rules. Reasonable suspicion shall be based on the specific and objective facts that the search will produce evidence related to the alleged violation. The parent of the student shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

Vehicles Parked on School Property

Parking on District property is a privilege for all students. Students may not use, transport, carry, or possess alcohol, illegal drugs or any weapons in their vehicles on school property. While on school property, vehicles may be inspected at any time by staff, or by contractors employed by the District utilizing trained dogs, for the presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons. Any student seeking to park on District property shall sign the authorization form contained in Appendix D. Students who park on District property without signing the authorization form may be subject to discipline.

In the event the school has reason to believe that alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons are present, including by alert-trained dogs, the District is authorized to contact law enforcement to conduct a search of the interior of the student's vehicle. A student who removes a vehicle prior to a search by law enforcement when staff have reason to believe that alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons are present, may be subject to discipline and is prohibited thereafter from parking on District property.

School Property

School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers, is owned and controlled by the District and may be searched by school authorities at any time it is not under the immediate, direct control of the student, regardless of whether there is reasonable suspicion. School authorities are authorized to conduct area-wide, general administrative inspections of school property without notice to or consent of the student and without reasonable suspicion. The District may employ contractors to handle trained dogs to assist in these searches.

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Evidence produced by a search may be used in a disciplinary proceeding against the student.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the District's Title IX coordinator.

Sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. Quid pro quo: An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), , or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

A determination of responsibility resulting from a formal complaint against a student for engaging in sexual harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense.

Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to Policies 3210 and 3225 for additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

Students in foster care are entitled to educational stability under Title I for the duration of their time in foster care. "Foster care" means "24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility." This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive home.

The District will take efforts to ensure that a child in foster care:

- Remains in his or her school of origin (school last enrolled in at the time of placement in foster care) unless it is not in the child's best interest; or

- If the school of origin is not in the child’s best interest, the child must be immediately enrolled in a new school regardless of being able to produce records otherwise required.

The District will collaborate with the child welfare agency involved in a particular student’s case to make the “best interest” determination as quickly as possible. The District will also collaborate with the child welfare agency regarding the provision of transportation to the selected school for the student.

STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING

- **Academics: Students in Good Standing earn passing grades (D or higher) in all classes.** The eligibility of students earning a failing grade in one or more subjects will be reviewed.
- **Attendance: Students in Good Standing have prompt, regular attendance.** The eligibility of students who have missed five or more days of school in one quarter or have been tardy five times or more in one quarter will be reviewed. Any student who qualifies as a student with “Chronic Absenteeism” (missing 10 percent or more of their total days enrolled in school) as per the ‘ESSA Chronic Absenteeism Calculation’ from the state Office of Public Instruction will be reviewed by the Tier II/Tier III Intervention team.
- **Behavior: Students in Good Standing abide by all expectations listed in the Behavior Plan.** The eligibility of students who have received one or more major ODRs (Office Discipline Referral) in a quarter will be reviewed. Four minor ODRs equal one major ODR. Students who receive an out of school suspension for any infraction will be ineligible for the activity that quarter. Students who receive an ODR that results in a citation from law enforcement or receives a major Office Discipline Referral for possession of an illegal substance or weapon will be automatically ineligible to attend any major field trip such as Silverwood, school camp school trip, or other end of year trip/activity.

STUDENT RECORDS

Access by Parents and Student

A student’s school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The District maintains two sets of records: a permanent record and a cumulative record.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The building principal will be responsible for maintenance, retention, or destruction of a student’s permanent or cumulative records, in accordance with District procedure established by the Superintendent. The principal will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. Access to records will be granted within 45 days of receipt of a written request. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will

either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parents of a minor, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are persons who may regularly access a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are working with a student or otherwise performing functions the school would perform in accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student. Access will also not be granted to the parent or the student to confidential letters and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements.

See [Policy 3600](#) and [3606](#) for more information.

Access by Other Individuals and Entities

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records without prior consent by the parents or student (over 18 years of age). Disclosure to these governmental agencies may be done under some of the following circumstances:

- The District may grant access to or release information from student records to employees or officials of the District or the Montana State Board of Education, provided a current, legitimate educational interest is shown.
- The District may grant access to or release information from student records without parental consent or notification to any person, for the purpose of research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent can be identified from the information released, and the person to whom the information is released signs an affidavit agreeing to comply with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to school student records.
- The District will grant access to or release information from any student record as specifically required by federal or state statute.
- The District may release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health

or safety of the student or other persons. The Superintendent or Principal will make this decision, taking into consideration the nature of the emergency, the seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or other persons, the need for such records to meet the emergency, and whether the persons to whom such records are released are in a position to deal with the emergency.

- The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
- The District will comply with an *ex parte* order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to or consent of the student's parent.
- The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.
- The District may disclose student records to caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student without notification or consent of the parent.

The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records in most circumstances. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The District charges a nominal fee for copying records; however, no parent or student will be precluded from copying information because of financial hardship. An access log will also be maintained for each record which details those individuals accessing the records and their legitimate interest in the records.

Challenging Content of Records

Students over 18, and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the

student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course or references to expulsion and out-of-school suspensions through this process.

Directory Information

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone, including military recruiters and/or post-secondary institutions, who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Directory information includes: a student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, grade level, and honors and awards received in school.

Maintenance of Records

Permanent records are maintained in perpetuity for every student who has enrolled in the District. Cumulative records will be maintained for eight (8) years after the student graduates or permanently leaves the District. Cumulative records which may be of continued assistance to a student with disabilities, who graduates or permanently withdraws from the District, may, after five (5) years, be transferred to the parents or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parents.

Rights Under FERPA

Specific parental and eligible student rights are Appendix A in this Handbook.

Privacy Matters – Photographs and Social Media

Because of the advent of cell phones and social media, it has become almost impossible to fully protect the privacy rights of any individual from having his or her picture taken and shared with others. Parents have the right to annually opt out of the District sharing their child's photograph in publications or through District media events. The District will honor any parent opt-outs and not share this information. However, the District cannot prevent others who are present from sharing photos and videos from school events open to parents and/or the public, including music performances, sporting events, open assemblies, or field trips.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to MCPS. The school district will help to protect all students through the following steps:

- Recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, support systems and seeking help for themselves and peers. This curricular content will occur in all health classes throughout the school year. The encouragement of help-seeking behavior will be promoted at all levels of the school staff, leadership and stakeholders.
- Mental health staff will serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to provide students appropriate resources.

- For at-risk students, a risk assessment will be completed by a trained school staff member(s). If needed, staff will connect the student and family to outside resources.
- Students and families may be given national resources that they can contact for additional support, such as:
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Dial 988
 - suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 - Text Line: Text MT to 741-741
 - Text “NATIVE” 741-741
 - Crisistextline.org
 - The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386
 - thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now
 - Trevor Lifeline Text/Chat Services, available 24/7
 - Text “TREVOR” to 678-678 Crisis

MCPS strives to create a district and school culture of acceptance and support, where students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they or a friend are feeling suicidal, or are in need of help.

While confidentiality and privacy are important, if there is risk of suicide, safety comes first and may result in school staff sharing information with necessary individuals in order to maintain the safety of the student.

TELEPHONE CALLS AND CLASSROOM DISRUPTIONS

In an effort to minimize classroom disruptions, we ask that you please make any arrangements with your student prior to the school day. We understand that plans change and emergencies may arise, and we ask that you contact the office and we will relay the message to your student.

If your student has forgotten their lunch and/or an item necessary for their school day, please drop the item off at the table in the front office lobby. We will contact your student to let them know they have an item to retrieve.

Food and drinks delivered outside of breakfast and lunch times are distracting to the learning environment. Any food or drinks dropped off for students will remain at the office until scheduled lunch or end of the day. DoorDash or similar food delivery systems are not allowed at school.

Cell phones and other personal electronics including earbuds are not allowed for use during school hours including the lunch period, unless being used for educational purposes under teacher direction. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an office discipline referral and electronic confiscation (see cell phone policy). If a student needs to contact their parent/guardian, please ask for permission to use their cell phone from a teacher or staff member prior to use. There is also a phone available in the front office for students to use.

TEXTBOOKS

Board-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a

damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school or damaging a book issued by the school may be charged to replace the book.

TOYS AND GAMES

Students are not permitted to bring toys and electronic games to school, unless approved by the principal or the principal's designee. Toys and games can present a safety hazard as well as a distraction from learning. **When toys and games get broken or lost/taken the school cannot be held liable.**

TRANSPORTATION

School Sponsored

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school to and from the event. The principal, however, may make an exception if the parent personally that the student be permitted to ride with the parent, or the parent presents — before the scheduled trip — a written request that the student be permitted to ride with an adult designated by the parent.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted on [Infofinder](#) on the MCPS website. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Students are expected to assist District staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding school buses, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook. Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, band instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus and before crossing in front of the bus.

When students ride in a District van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

Misconduct will be punished and bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

Bus Passes

If arrangements have been made for your child to go home with a friend after school, it is necessary for both you and the parents of your child's friend to send in separate notes indicating the names of

the children and the bus number they will be riding. The notes should be presented to the classroom teacher and bus driver.

VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS

The District has the right to use security and surveillance video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students may be videoed at events and practices open to the public, including but not limited to public performances, dress rehearsals, athletic practices open to the public, and athletic competitions.

Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings from security and surveillance cameras may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. Signs will be posted at various locations to inform students, staff, and members of the public that video surveillance cameras are in use. The District will seek consent before recording students individually in the classroom. A consent form seeking permission to record during extracurricular activities for coaching or instruction is included in Appendix E.

VISITORS

The District has the discretion to permit visitors. For the safety of those within the school, all visitors must first report to the principal's office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

Appendix A – FERPA RIGHTS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records:

Parents will receive annual notice of their FERPA rights. This appendix is intended only as a summary of such rights. Parents generally have the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. Upon request, the school district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student’s enrollment or transfer.
5. The District classifies the following as Directory Information: a student’s name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of

attendance, and honors and awards received in school. School officials may release this information to any person without the consent of the parents or the student. Any parent or eligible student who objects to the release of any or all of this information without his consent must notify, in writing, the principal of the school where the records are kept by October 1 of this school year, or within 10 working days following enrollment if enrollment takes place after October 1 of this school year. The objection must state what information the parent or student does not want to be classified as Directory Information. A parent has the right to provide a limited opt-out of directory information, which could include but is not limited to the District's disclosure or sharing of student photographs or images. If no objection is received as required above, information designated above will be classified as Directory Information until the beginning of the next school year.

6. Copies of the complete FERPA Policy adopted by the District may be obtained from the Superintendent's Office or from the Principal's Office of each school within the District.
7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Missoula County Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
[School], DC 20202-4605