THE 2026-2027 CALENDAR

AND INFORMATION GUIDE FOR THE MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Named A Great Pennsylvania School District and an HS National Blue Ribbon school.

THIS CALENDAR WAS POSTED ONLINE ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026.
THE NEW CALENDAR WILL BE ONLINE ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2026.

"Home of the Mustangs"

Mercer Area Elementary School
Mercer Area Middle School
Mercer Area High School

GLOSSARY OF EDUCATIONAL TERMS

In every field, professionals use acronyms and terms so that there is a common language among people involved in that profession. Sometimes those terms can be perplexing to those who are not involved professionally in the field. Below are some frequently-used acronyms and terms in the field of education. A number of the terms and descriptions contained below were taken from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website. Parents with questions about these or other terms should feel free to contact the school for further details.

PDE	Pennsylvania Department of Education
IU	Intermediate Unit
FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education
IEP	Individualized Education Program
MAWA	Mutually Agreed Upon Written Arrangement
PIN	Parents Involved Network
PPI	Pennsylvania Performance Index
Prompt	a topic or guiding question about which students are to reflect
PASA	Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment
LEA	Local Education Agency
PA Core	Pennsylvania Common Core State Standards
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
USDE	United States Department of Education
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
EI	Early Intervention
SPP	School Performance Profile FRIPA Future Ready Index Pa.
SAS	Standards Aligned System
PSSA	Pennsylvania System of School Assessment
EL	English Learners
Rubric	a scoring guide listing specific criteria for grading
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
ELA	English Language Arts—including reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and Englis

Every Student Succeeds Act	The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. The Act reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
State Assessment	State tests are aligned with PA Core standards. Students in grades 3 through 8 take the PSSA test in the areas of mathematics and ELA. Students in grades 4 and 8 take the PSSA test in the area of science. Keystone tests are administered at the end of course in the area of Literature (10th grade), Biology (9th grade), and Algebra I. If necessary, students are provided with multiple opportunities, through the end of their eleventh grade year, to earn proficiency status on their Keystone exams.
Disaggregated Data	"Disaggregate" means to separate a whole into its parts. In education, this term means that test results are sorted into groups of students who are economically disadvantaged, come from racial and ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency. This practice allows parents and teachers to see more than just the average score for their child's school. Instead, parents and teachers can see how each specific student group is performing. (PDE 2006)
Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic	These are placement levels that students are assigned based on their scores on the Pennsylvania state tests.
Academic Standards	These are aspects of various disciplines such as math, reading, writing, science, etc. that are defined as necessary for students to know and understand. These standards form the basis of the Pennsylvania state tests.
Ready to Learn Block Grant	This is supplemental money which the Commonwealth has appropriated for use by schools in a number of designated research proven areas of educational enhancement. These areas include full-day kindergarten, lower class size in the primary grades, technology, and subgroup intervention.

ABOUT THE 2026-2027 PUBLICATION

The Mercer Area School District Board of Directors is pleased to present this edition of the district calendar with important school activities and dates listed for the 2026-2027 school year, 54 years after the district's first publication for 1972-1973.

This year's edition includes specific dates and events for the current and following months, with the dates of each monthly updates listed on each calendar page. **Remember to check the "new" calendar every month.**

Sports schedules are found at https://mercerathletics.com. Updates are on the district website.

Permission is granted to individuals to download to a personal electronic device or to print any or part of this publication for personal use only.

In addition to the dates, important school policies and information are also provided. We urge you to read this material carefully. We hope that this guide will be of value to you, and we welcome and encourage your suggestions for this calendar/guide by contacting the appropriate department as listed on page 14 of this publication.

Board of Education--

David Lengel, president	Aimee Peters	Rodney Bobby
Shane Nugent, vice president	Matthew Hazi	Derek Stotsky
Arthur W. Amos, treasurer	Zachary Ryan	Becky Bolyard

*Michelle Goehring, secretary
*Knox McLaughlin Gornall &Sennett, solicitors
*indicates non-members

The Board of Education consists of nine elected members serving terms of four years; terms of office are staggered so that there is a constant balance between experienced and new members sitting in session during the operation of the schools. The directors are responsible for the total operation of the public schools and are empowered to construct buildings as needed, raise monies for operating expenses, and formulate policies for personnel who are employed by the district. The Mercer Board of Directors meets in the middle-high school library at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, except December (time and date TBA) and January and February (the fourth Monday), as noted in the calendar section. A copy of the monthly school board meeting agenda will be available on the District website at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. All meetings are public, and visitors are welcome to attend. The directors also have a representative (Mr. Lengel, Chairman) on the board of the Mercer County Career Center, 776 Greenville Road, Mercer. (Phone: 724-662-3000) and a representative (Mr. Bobby) on the Midwestern IU IV board.

HISTORY OF THIS CALENDAR/GUIDE

When the Mercer Area School District Board of Directors printed the first edition of the district calendar 54 years ago for the 1972-1973 school year, the calendar pages ran from September through August. The first several calendars were printed by a company in New Jersey, before printing was brought back to the area where they were printed by local companies, the last being Rafferty's Printing in Mercer.

In 2012, the publication, which also contains general district policies and other information, was made available online for the first time; and in 2014, the calendar switched to an August through July format, reflecting the increase in August activities and events leading up to the start of school. Being online allowed for new or altered policies, events, and dates to be included throughout the year and for individuals to download them onto personal devices or to print sections or items that better served people, so that printing hard copies of the calendar became unnecessary.

The pandemic of 2020 forced districts to alter schedules, changes that often came about daily or weekly, and after some experimenting to develop a calendar format that could be as accurate as possible.

After some fine tuning, for each of the past four years, the first edition of each year's calendar now comes with many events and dates listed, with specifics and details as possible, with calendar and information guide updates added, so that students, teachers, parents, grandparents, coaches, and the school community always have details of school events throughout the year to help in planning.

Each month, a new edition replaces the previous edition on a date shown on each month's page, usually two days following a school board meeting, so any new events and board policies can be included. Many events are updated, changed, added, or removed throughout the year. For the second year, each page reminds users of the specific date of that month's update.

So readers should remember to look for that "new" calendar with additional dates and information every month.

DAILY SCHOOL TIME SCHEDULES

Mercer Elementary School opens its doors at 7:30 a.m. for early student arrivals to report to the cafeteria. Students are released at 7:45 a.m. and must be in their classrooms by 8:10 a.m. School dismissal is between 2:50-3 p.m., with pre-arranged parent pickup at the main entrance at 3 p.m.

Mercer Middle/High School's student release bell is at 7:45 a.m. M/HS school sessions begin at 8 a.m. Dismissal for bus students is at 3:09 p.m., with all others dismissed at 3:15 p.m.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

It is the responsibility of the Mercer Area School District to inform the public that asbestos-containing material exists in small undisturbed quantities at the middle/senior high school. These isolated areas are limited to floor tile and inaccessible pipe fittings.

All other asbestos-containing material was removed in 1998-1999 at the middle/senior high school; all known asbestos containing material was removed from the elementary school in 2008-2009. If any additional asbestos-containing material is found at either building, the public will be made aware of its existence and location.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance as defined in Section 1327 of the Pennsylvania State Code is required by all students. Absent excuse forms are on p. 29.

Reasons for excused absence:

1. Illness (be specific); 2. Quarantine; 3. Serious illness or death in immediate family; 4. Emergency medical or dental attention; 5. Absence approved in advance with the principal (example: pre-planned educational trip); 6. Authorized religious holiday; 7. Impassible roads; 8. Exceptionally urgent reasons affecting child and his home or accepted by principal; and 9. Court appearance.

Reasons not considered excused:

1. Truancy; 2. Missing school bus; 3. Trips not approved in advance; 4. Shopping; 5. Hunting, fishing, or attending sports events; 6. Birthday or other celebration; 7. Baby sitting; 8. Driver's examination; and 9. Other reasons not listed in the legal excuse grouping.

The school has the responsibility to inform parents of the attendance regulations which apply to their children. Parents should use the absence excuse form in the back of the calendar. If a written excuse is not given within a week, the unexcused absence is considered illegal. A written excuse--although mandatory--does not necessarily mean that the absence is "excused." (See above lists.)

Children who are absent a total of ten days will need a signed statement by the doctor for each absence beyond the ten days. The doctor's statement will be required the day the student returns to school. If the school does not receive the doctor's statement, the absence(s) will be marked unexcused, and appropriate action will be taken by the superintendent as required by the state attendance laws. Middle/high school students who miss more than 30 class periods in a full-credit course or more than 15 class periods in a half-credit course (not including school-related absences and extended illnesses or injuries) may not receive course credit.

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

With the aim of assuring equal rights and opportunities within our community and to comply with Federal Laws (including Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972), State Laws, and State Departments of Education regulations concerning these, the Mercer Area School District reaffirms itself to be an Equal Rights and Opportunities School District. As an Equal Rights and Opportunities School District, it does not discriminate against individuals or groups because of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or non-relevant handicaps and disabilities. The school district's commitment to nondiscrimination extends to students, employees, prospective employees, and the community.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 states that no person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Sex discrimination under Title IX includes sexual harassment and sexual violence. Sexual Harassment is defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Any 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.
3. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be made to Equal Rights and Opportunities Director, or to the Director of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, Welfare, Washington, D.C.

Issues dealing with Title IX should be brought to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator (Dr. Michael Piddington, Assistant Superintendent – 724-662-5100 or mpiddington@mercer.k12.pa.us) at the district's central office where copies of the district's Title IX Grievance Procedure also may be obtained.

BUS LOADING PROCEDURES

It is the driver's responsibility to establish a regular schedule within a reasonable range of time. (That range will increase, of course, in extreme weather or when there are problems with the bus itself.)

Drivers are not permitted to wait for students at pick-up points. It is unlawful for a bus to hold up traffic. Also, a bus that waits for one child will be late for the next child and all subsequent children.

Parents are responsible for having their children at bus pick-up points on time. Parents also should instruct their children to stay back from the road until the bus is fully stopped and the lights are flashing. This is especially important in bad weather. In case of young children, parents should help form good safety habits. They should talk to their children about situations that might arise: what to do if a pet comes to the bus, if papers blow out of the child's hand and under the bus as the driver is pulling away, or if a stranger tries to pick up the child. Children should be instructed to go directly home after departing the bus.

Students will be assigned to both a specific bus and bus stop. Students are permitted to ride only the bus to which they have been assigned and must get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. In the case of an extreme emergency such as serious family illness or death, the building principal may grant an exception. Parents may choose to have their child picked up at one location and dropped off at another, but any change must be the same for every day of the week and must be approved based on seat availability, bus routing, and cost to the district.

It is very difficult for drivers to keep track of their children if they do not follow a safe, daily routine. It is important that parents support the bus driver and school principal when dealing with the misconduct of students riding the bus. The school's only concern is for the safety of the children. The administration has the authority to suspend students at any time from the bus.

THE CAFETERIA

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Food and Nutrition Division again has approved the Mercer Area School District's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) application.

CEP is a program that began with the 2022-2023 school year and will be in effect again for the 2026-2027 school year, during which time CEP will provide **all students one free breakfast and one free lunch per day during the school year.**

Under the CEP program, no lunches will be available for pickup. Please note that free meals do not include extras or snack items, and students who want a double lunch or an extra entree will be charged for the additional food items. No items in the snack line qualify as a free meal; therefore, all food in the snack line will be a charged item.

For parents with any questions or a need for additional information, please contact Mercer's Food Service Director, Mrs. Jane Ferguson, at 724-662-5104 extension 23.

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

It is the responsibility of the total school community to maintain an atmosphere conducive to a pleasant and effective educational program. Rules that are reasonable as well as consistent are necessary for a wholesome school climate. If learning is to prevail, discipline is essential. It sets the stage for learning, and it seeks to educate toward self-discipline. It is the intent of Mercer Area Schools to create and maintain disciplinary guidelines that provide a school setting that is safe and consistent for the students and staff.

The board, administration, and staff shall require each student of this district to adhere to these rules and regulations and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules. The code prescribes minimum steps to be followed for offenses. The board, administration, and staff may impose more stringent penalties in exceptional situations. The rules shall govern student conduct in school including all school activities and during the time spent in travel to and from school.

Each student will receive a student/parent handbook, which outlines school rules, expectations, and disciplinary measures.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Information on scholarships, grants, and loans is available in the high school guidance office for those students who wish to further their education upon graduation from Mercer Area High School. The guidance department phone number is 724-662-2272, ext.20. Many of these opportunities have deadlines early in the second semester. Seniors should not overlook the dozens of local awards that are given in addition to Pell Grants, SEOG (Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants), CWS (College Work Study), and aid from the institution the student will attend.

This year's financial aid presentation will be at 6 p.m. on Monday, November 16 at the high school.

HANDBOOKS FOR STUDENTS/PARENTS

School board-approved student/parent handbooks (including a handbook for the Mercer Area Virtual Academy) reflect expectations for students, disciplinary measures, and building and district policies. Each student will receive a copy of the building student/parent handbook.

Find the info on line at https://pa02218537.schoolwires.net/domain/184

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/ GRADE PROGRESSION FOR GRADES 9-12

In essence, students bear the responsibility to comply with graduation requirements. For school purposes a student will progress clerically with a homeroom, but may not have successfully completed all courses to date. A student will not fail a particular grade, but must meet all graduation requirements. Therefore, it would be possible for a student to be in a senior homeroom but not be able to comply with graduation requirements as indicated below by the end of the senior year.

Students earn a diploma at graduation with a total of 24.5 credits in grades 9-12. Minimum required courses are these:

English—4 Social Studies—4 Math—3 Science —3
Arts/Humanities—1 Health—1 PE —1 Electives – 6
Computer Application/Technology—1 Family/Consumer Science—.5

Each student is also required to complete a culminating project as required by the State Board of Education 22 PA Code Chapter 4 and score at a proficient level or better on the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature or must demonstrate proficiency through an alternate pathway as set forth in Act 158.

A pupil may not accrue more than 1.5 credits in failure in grades 9-12. If possible, students should attempt to remove failures from their records.

Career Center pupils must complete all state requirements in addition to the Career Center program.

Only those senior students who have completed requirements for a diploma will be permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.

HOMEWORK

Homework is properly defined as any work planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher.

Philosophy: We believe these points:

1. Assigning homework is an acceptable practice. It becomes an essential part of the total education of the student when it provides the opportunity for the student to practice, apply, integrate, or extend school learning, reinforce independent work-study skill, use school and community resources, and develop self discipline.
2. Homework must be based on student needs, abilities, and/or interests.
3. Each teacher, student, and parent has a responsibility for insuring the success of homework assignments: the teacher for following district and departmental guidelines when assigning homework, the student for completing the assignments according to the criteria established by or with the teacher, and the parent for providing the work area, time, and conditions necessary for the student to complete the assignments.

In-school and after-school tutoring for grades 7-12 is available. Interested students should contact the guidance office.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children eligible to enter kindergarten for the 2026-2027 school year will be registered from Monday, March 15 to Friday, March 19, 2027.

Parents must call 724-662-5102 to schedule an appointment, which will be made on a first-come, first served basis. Walk-Ins will NOT be permitted. Registration packets MUST be completed ahead of time. Go to https://www.mercer.k12.pa.us/elementary-school/parent-resources/kindergarten-registration **and click on**

COMPLETE KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET for the 2027-2028 school year information.

Packets also will be available in March the elementary main office.

Vision, speech and hearing, and kindergarten readiness screenings will be done during registration, with the entire process taking 20-30 minutes. Parents are required to show a state-issued birth certificate (must be five years old by August 31, 2027) and evidence of the completion of immunizations as required by state law. These include four doses of DT (one after the child's fourth birthday); three doses of oral polio vaccine; two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (first dose after the child's first birthday); three doses of hepatitis B vaccine; and two doses of varicella (given after the child's first birthday) or proof of the disease.

Immunizations can be obtained from your private physician or from the state Department of Health, at 724-662-4000.

Two proofs of residency are also required. If a student does not reside with both parents, a custody agreement/proof of guardianship is required.

TAKING MEDICINE DURING SCHOOL

Mercer Area School District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for giving medicines to their children. Medicines will be given by the school nurse or her designee under the following conditions:

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Board of School Directors of this district that each student shall be moved forward in a continuous pattern to achievement and growth that is in harmony with the student's own development, within the following guidelines:

1. Sequential levels of a course must be passed before a student can move from one level to the next (e.g., Spanish I to Spanish II).
2. A student will spend no more than two years in each of grades 7 or 8 unless determined by the administrator and counselors.
3. A student may not accrue more than one and one-half (1-1/2) credits in failures in grades 9-12. Students should attempt to remove failures.
4. If promotion is to be granted on the basis of summer school, the make-up course must consist of 30 hours of instruction at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.
5. One-on-one tutoring to earn promotions will be offered at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.
6. Conducted by Mercer staff or their designees, group tutoring sessions to earn promotion are offered in selected courses for a minimum of 30 hours at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.

Within the elementary school, student grade assignments will be made on the basis of student performance and progress and will focus on what is in the best interest of the child. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the decision-making process involving their child(ren).

FOLLOWING PROPER PROCEDURE

When parents feel that their child is having difficulties in school, they should use the following procedures for obtaining corrective action:

1. If the problem is related to a teacher, an appointment with the teacher should be made through the school office. If the problem cannot be resolved with the teacher, an appointment should then be made with the principal.
2. If the problem is other than teacher related, the parents should contact the building principal.
3. If satisfaction is not obtained at the teacher or building level, then the parents should contact the superintendent of the schools.
4. After the three levels have been exhausted, parents can always appeal to the president of the board of education.

We strongly urge all parents to use the procedures, as we have found that in 99% of all cases, most problems can be solved at the teacher or building principal level. The board of education has strongly endorsed this procedure and recommends that parents observe the suggested processes.

REPORT CARDS

All students in kindergarten through twelfth grades will receive report cards every NINE (9) weeks. Parents of students in kindergarten through sixth grade should sign the report card and promptly return it to the school. If you have a question about your child's progress, please feel free to call and arrange for a conference with your child's teacher.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Rules and Regulations: All students who participate in extra-curricular activities, regardless of whether they are dances, assemblies, plays, concerts, ceremonies, sports, or any unclassified activity identified with or representing the school, whether on school property or elsewhere shall automatically abide by these rules:

1. Promptness and attendance: When a sponsor is relying on students to be at a prescribed place at specific times, failure to be present and prompt can cause delays in transportation and in the entire activity. This can bring about much inconvenience for those who are present.
2. All school rules prescribed in the discipline code apply to school activities, with penalties listed.
3. Participation in a school function is a part of a student's education. Thus, school officials will encourage participation of all students who demonstrate the proper attitude, willingness to work, attend practice, etc.

Failure to abide by the above rules will result in suspension or expulsion from the activity as enforced by the sponsor and other penalties provided by the discipline code in the student/parent handbook.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE AND SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT TEAMS

The school district provides a Student Assistance Program, a way to identify students who are having problems in school because of alcohol or other drug abuse or because of other high-risk behaviors and to refer them for help. This program is not designed as treatment, but as an intervention program. The ESAP/SAP teams of specially-trained school personnel may receive referrals from other school personnel, parents, and students themselves; the team will conduct a pre-assessment to determine the need for action. Formal assessments, if indicated, are provided by a professional counselor or interventionist outside of the school. Further information on this program is available by calling the school office.

**Non-Prescription*: Medicines will be given only if accompanied by a doctor's order for them. For each day that the medicine is to be given during school hours, the parent must write a note stating the name of the medicine, the reason the medicine is to be given, the amount to be given, and the exact time the medicine should be given. Medicines must be in their original containers or they will not be given.

**Prescription*: Parents are required to bring and deliver to the school nurse all prescription medicines. Students are not permitted to bring prescription medicines to school. Medicines will be given only if needed more than three times a day.

The parent must bring only enough medicine for the doses required at school; medicines must be in the original pharmaceutical dispensed container. The parent must also sign a note stating when and why the medicine is to be given. Students taking medicine on a regular, daily basis must secure a medicine sheet from the health room to be completed by the student's doctor and parent or guardian.

All medications and written consents must be given to the school nurse.

OPEN HOUSE

Residents of the Mercer Area School District were invited to attend open house from **5:30-7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 26** at the middle/high school and from **5:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 3** at the elementary school**.**

Parents are always urged to remember that the purpose of Open House is to enable them to meet their children's teachers and to view school facilities. Due to the great number of visitors during the evening, it is impossible for the teachers to discuss appropriately an individual student's progress. Should parents desire to discuss the child's work, a conference should be arranged with the teacher.

SCHOOL DISTRICT RECOGNITION

*In July 2024, Mercer Area School District became one of only 19 school districts to be named a Great Pennsylvania School by the Pennsylvania School Board Association (PSBA).

*In November 2024, Mercer Area High School was named by the United States Department of Education a National Blue Ribbon School, one of only 13 schools in Pennsylvania to receive the honor.

PRIVACY RIGHTS OF PARENTS & STUDENTS

The Mercer Area School District and its employees are required by federal law and state and federal rules to protect the rights of the students.

The foundation of these rights comes from federal legislation entitled Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendments). There are state rules and regulations dealing with regular and special education students' rights and privacy. All students are covered by the state regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as the Students' Rights and Responsibilities. The basic premise of the above-mentioned laws, rules, and regulations is that information about students cannot be disclosed without written parental consent.

Educational records, personally identifiable information, and directory information: Educational records consist of information directly related to a student which is maintained by an educational agency. Personally identifiable information includes the student's name, the name of the parent or other family members, a personal identifier, or a list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable. Education records and personally identifiable information cannot be disclosed or released without written parent consent or, if a student is over eighteen, without student consent. There is certain information that can be released without consent, which is called directory information. Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The school district designates what information is labeled as directory information. It shall include the following: the student's name, address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. Disclosure of information means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communications of education records, or the personally-identifiable information contained in these records to any party by any means, including oral, written, or electronic. This means that information about a student cannot even be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge of a student.

Written parental consent is necessary for disclosure of personally identifiable information and education records. The consent must specify the records that may be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the part of the class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. Furthermore, the school district must maintain a written record of disclosure for the parents to inspect in case any information has been released.

The elementary school will also utilize the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS-RtII) through its Child Study Team (CST) process to monitor and provide a comprehensive system of supports that includes standards-aligned, culturally responsive, and high quality core instruction, universal screening, data-based decision-making, tiered services and supports, family engagement, central/building level leadership, RtII/SLD determination, and professional learning. Simply put, MTSS represents a broad set of evidence-based practices that may be implemented across a system to include Academics *and* Behavior within a recursive and systematic problem-solving process. MTSS is intended to help all students meet with continuous academic and behavioral success.

This collaborative effort requires a team of educators working along with the student's family. By working together to design instruction that works best with an individual student, we expect to provide an optimal learning experience for each and every child.

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

Parents or eligible students shall be permitted upon request to inspect and review the student's records of attendance, health, discipline, and education. Any request should be made to the building principal, who will arrange a meeting at a mutually agreeable time. At parental request, a professional employee will be available to explain items in the record.

A list of the school district's professional staff having access to students' records is kept in the file. Each staff member must sign an access sheet every time a record is reviewed and state the purpose for the review.

Any persons or agency representative not appearing on the access list must obtain written consent from the parent or eligible student to review any portion of the record.

Prior to the destruction of records, written notification to the parents shall be sent to inform them of their right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed.

RIGHT-TO-KNOW RECORDS

The complete records policy is available in each building's office. The Open Records Officer is Dr. Michael Piddington. All Right-to-Know requests may be sent to openrecordsofficer@mercer.k12.pa.us or to Mercer Area School District, Attn: Dr. Michael Piddington, 545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students shall have all legal rights as given to them by law. These rights include the right to an education, the right to express their opinion, and the right to be free from discrimination.

Along with student rights come student responsibilities. These responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and compliance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the faculty and administration the responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

Other student responsibilities are as follows: 1. to be aware of and to obey school rules and regulations; 2. to meet common standards of decency; 3. to take care of school property; 4. to attend daily classes, except when excused, and to be on time for all classes; 5. to come to class with necessary books and supplies; 6. to come to class with assigned work completed; 7. to avoid disrespectful, indecent, or obscene gestures or language; 8. to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous way and consider the rights of others at all times; 9. to obey the bus safety rules and safety practices in all school programs such as gym, shop, etc.; 10. to display good conduct and proper table manners in the school cafeteria; 11. to understand the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and the abuse of drugs; and 12. to be guided by acceptable public behavior and good taste in their conduct with others.

STUDENTS IN SCHOOL PICTURES

Throughout the year, pictures and/or videos are taken during various school activities and may be used in bulletin board displays, school/local newspapers, assemblies, the school website, and other media. Professional photographers take individual/group pictures for ID, yearbooks, sports/extra-curricular programs, collages, and educational documents.

Parents who do not want their child(ren) to be included must notify the appropriate principal in writing.

SUPPORT SERVICES EDUCATION PROGRAM

To meet the needs of eligible students, services are available which meet the needs of the entire district: *Within the district*--gifted support, learning support, autistic support, emotional support, life skills support, speech and language, vision support, hearing support, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and adaptive physical therapy. *Outside of the district*--supplemental and full-time life skills support, autistic support, emotional support, multi-handicapped support, and approved private schools.

WORKING PAPERS

No minor under 18 years of age (unless a HS graduate) shall be employed without an Employment Certificate (Work Permit), issued by the school district. Apply in person at the office of the superintendent.

The student must show evidence of date of birth (birth certificate, passport, driver's license, etc.). The completed application, including parent signature, must be returned to the superintendent's office.

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who need special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The IDEA requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents in newspapers or other media before any major identification, location or evaluation activity. The IDEA requires this notice to contain certain information. Pennsylvania law requires each school district to fulfill this notice requirement by providing an annual public notice.

The school district is required by the IDEA to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. Pennsylvania has adopted state laws which conform with the IDEA and which school districts must follow. In Pennsylvania a school age child with disabilities who needs special education and related services is identified as a child with a disability. Students are exceptional if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities: Autism, Orthopedic Impairment, Deaf-Blindness, Other Health Impairment, Deafness, Specific Learning Disability, Emotional Disturbance Speech or Language Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Intellectual Disabilities Visual Impairment Including Blindness, Multiple Disabilities.

In Pennsylvania, students also qualify as exceptional if they require specially designed instruction and are determined to be mentally gifted. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 PA Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

Early Intervention

IDEA requires the provisions of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners. In Pennsylvania, a child between 3 years of age And the school district's age of beginners who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental disabilities listed above is identified as a child with a disability. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) the child's score, on a developmental assessment device, an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or (ii) the child is delayed in one or more of the developmental area, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact the Early Intervention Program Supervisor at Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV, 453 Maple Street, Grove City, PA 16127 or (724) 458-6700.

These children are afforded the rights of school age exceptional children, including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provisions of appropriate programs and services. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to these children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act.

Screening

Each school district must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities, which include but are not limited to: review of group-based data (cumulative record, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening. In schools which have a child study team or Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), the above screening activities may be a consideration used by these teams as another level of screening. Parents and members of the professional staff of the student's school have the right to request screening by the child study team.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted in the student's home school unless other arrangements are necessary. Contact the district director of special education, Mrs. Amanda Simpson (grades K-12) at 724-662-5102, extension 3015.

Evaluation

When screening indicates that a student may be exceptional, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. "Evaluation" means procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that meet the child's needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is called a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which must include a school psychologist, a teacher and the parents. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and use procedural safeguard procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation may not be racially and culturally biased.

The MDE process results in a written evaluation report called an (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. The evaluation report also makes recommendations for educational programming regardless of whether or not the team recommends that the student is exceptional. Once parental consent for an evaluation is obtained, the school district has timelines and procedures specified by law, which it must follow.

Parents who think their child is a child with a disability may request, at any time that the school district conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the Coordinator of Special Education Office. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation the school district shall provide the parent with a form for written permission. Instructional Support (IS) activities or MTSS do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request, at any time, including prior to or during the provision of instructional support activities, a multidisciplinary evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school which your child attends. Telephone numbers and addresses can be found at the end of this notice. Parents of preschool age children three through five may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the Early Intervention Program Supervisor at Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV, 453 Maple Street, Grove City, PA 16127 or by contacting the Preschool Connection at 1-800-345-0033.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation. The school district must provide to parents, on request, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website at www.pattan.net. Once written parental consent is obtained, the school district, intermediate unit or charter school will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and the parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program (IEP) team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program, and determines the educational placement, school district staff, intermediate unit staff, or charter school staff will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice. Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Educational Placement

A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is exceptional. The IEP team must include a district representative, the student's teacher, special education teacher and the parents. If the student is determined to be exceptional an IEP will be developed.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, and objectives, and the individual programs and services, which the student will receive. IEP's are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students and therefore be

protected by other federal and state laws by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. The school district must ensure that protected handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extend appropriate for the individual student.

In compliance with state and federal law, the school district will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aides, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for protected handicapped students are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

The school district or parent may initiate an evaluation of a student under the laws, which protect handicapped students. Parents who wish to have a child evaluated should contact the building principal or the Office of Special Education.

Confidentiality

Each school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its exceptional and protected handicapped students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws.

The Family Education 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. The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. These rights are:

1.) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) 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 student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal (or appropriate school official) and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school 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 education interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her task.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4.) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4605

The school district maintains its education records in compliance with the guidelines for the collection, maintenance and dissemination of pupil records. Category "A" data which includes the minimal personal data necessary for operation of the school district will be maintained for a minimum time period of 100 years.

Category "B" data which includes verified information of clear importance, but not absolutely necessary to the school, over time, in helping

the child or in protecting others will be maintained until the child leaves school. Category "C" data which includes potentially useful information, but not yet verified or clearly needed beyond the immediate present, will be reviewed at least once a year and destroyed as soon as its usefulness has ended.

In addition, the school district may release "directory information" without parental consent unless a prior written objection to the release of such information is provided to the school district by the parent(s). "Directory information" includes the following: student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, photographs, video clips, major fields of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, duties of attendance, honors and awards received. If you object to the disclosure of this information, you must submit a written letter of objection to the school district. Written objections should be mailed to Mercer Area Schools

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the FERPA at the following url:
https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html?src=ft

State Testing

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

*PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.

*PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

This amendment to the Annual Notice will be in effect at the start of the 2018-19 school year.

Procedural Safeguards

Procedural safeguards protect the rights of parents and students. These safeguards include the following:Parent's consent is always required prior to: Conducting an initial (for the first time) evaluation or a reevaluation, Initially placing a child with a disability in a special education program, Disclosing to unauthorized persons personally identifiable information.

The school district must notify parents in writing whenever it wants to begin, change, or discontinue special education and related services. Along with this notification, the school district will provide the parents with a comprehensive, written description of their rights.

Parents who disagree with such actions proposed or refused by the school district have the right to request a hearing by an impartial third party using a procedure called due process.

Before a due process hearing will take place, the district must convene a preliminary meeting with the parent and the relevant member(s) of the IEP team in an attempt to resolve issues without the need for a due process hearing.

Pennsylvania has also made mediation services available throughout the Commonwealth at Commonwealth expense. Mediation services help parents and agencies involved in a dispute over special education to attempt to reach a mutually agreeably settlement with the assistance of an impartial mediator. Mediation is completely voluntary. Mediation does not deny or delay a party's right to a due process hearing. School districts also have the right to initiate due process in certain situations.

During a due process procedure, a student must remain in the last agreed upon educational placement (a status called pendency). Due process procedures are governed by timelines and procedures in Pennsylvania law. Throughout due process, an attorney may represent parents.

Due process hearings are oral personal hearings and are open to the public, unless the parents request a closed hearing. The decision of the hearing officer shall include finding of fact, a discussion, and conclusions of law. The decision of the hearing officer may be appealed to the appropriate court.

Each school district must make available, upon request, printed information regarding special education programs and services and parent due process rights. This printed information is available from each building principal and/or the Office of Special Education.

Mode of Communication

The content of this notice has been written in straight forward, simple language. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the school district or IU and request an explanation.

The school district or IU will arrange for an interpreter for a parent with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district or IU will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (e.g. sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

For further information, contact: Amanda Simpson, Director of Special Education (grades K-12) at 724-662-5102, extension 3015.

TITLE I

Title I is a 100 percent federally-funded supplemental education program that provides financial assistance to LEAs (Local Educational Agencies) to improve educational opportunities for children. Title I programs are designed to help children meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts, and mathematics. In buildings with 40 percent or more poverty, LEAs may utilize Title I funds to upgrade the entire curriculum of the school and are school-wide programs. In buildings with less than 40percent poverty, programs are designed to help specific children and are known as targeted assisted programs. LEAs and schools are subject to consequences of school choice and supplemental education services if they do not meet adequate yearly progress as determined by the SEA. (PDE - Division of Federal Programs)

The Mercer Area Elementary school-wide Title I Program provides instructional services developed at helping students improve their skills in mathematics and/or reading. Students qualify for these services based on assessments such as DRAs, NWEAs, PSSAs, and teacher recommendations. All students are assessed at least three times per year and can successfully exit or test into the program. Progress monitoring is done regularly and results are sent home so that families can stay informed.

At least one Family Participation event is conducted each year, sponsored by Title I. The format is an Introduction and Information. Title I families are encouraged to attend these informative and enjoyable experiences. Additionally, Mercer Area Elementary has two Scholastic Book Fairs, and the second one coincides with our Annual Book Talk Night. Students are invited to share their love of books and reading, and then all attendees are invited to the Scholastic Book Fair for purchases.

TITLE I RESOURCE CENTER

The Title I teachers can provide take-home packets that contain materials to practice skills at home. Please contact any of the Title I teachers regarding which skills you would like your child to work on or ask for the teacher's recommendations. Title I teachers would be glad to work with your child's classroom teacher and send a packet/materials home.

TITLE I CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Greg Acre, Principal/Title I Coordinator at 724-662-5102, ext. 3010 Parents' questions and comments are encouraged. Please do not hesitate to contact us. Your involvement in your child's education makes *all* the difference.

HOMELESSNESS

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence."

The Act provides examples of children who fall under this definition They are children and youth…

*sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship.

*living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations.

*living in emergency or transitional shelters.

*abandoned in hospitals.

*awaiting foster care placement.

*whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodations (e.g., park benches, etc.).

*living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus or train stations.

If you think you or your family is currently in a situation similar to any of the above examples, please contact Dr. Michael Piddington, assistant superintendent, at 724-662-5100 or in person within the central office.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

* **http://www.miu4.org/spac** (PA State Parent Advisory Council—SPAC.—has information to help families improve student achievement.)
* **http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iparta/parentinvguid.doc**
(Title I Program and parent involvement information).

TEXT AND E-MAIL ALERTS AVAILABLE

Mercer Area School District offers both text and email alerts to parents via **Finalsite**. These alerts will be provided in addition to regular TV and radio notices. Contact information that is within the Student Information System will be used to send notification messages to families.

As such, it is incredibly important to update the school with any changes that are made to telephone numbers and/or email addresses any time throughout the school year.

Information on the mass notification system can be found on the Mercer Area School District website (www.mercer.k12.pa.us) under the "Family & Community – Parent Quick Links – School Notification Program."

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

The topic of the use of electronic devices during the school day is currently being discussed in the state legislature with the possibility that all school districts may be required to follow regulations that could become law.

In the meantime, here is the posted message from the Technology Department:

Mercer Area School District is committed to utilizing technology to enhance the 21st century classroom and improve student achievement. By focusing on the effective integration of technology into the classroom, our students will be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to become responsible electronic citizens in a rapidly changing digital society.

The middle/high school has an acceptable use policy for electronic devices. Normal cellular phone use and the use of other similar devices (Tablets, I-pods, E-Readers/Kindles, CD players, MP3 players, headphones, etc.) are prohibited in school from 7:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m unless otherwise approved by a teacher ***for educational purposes only***. Permission from one teacher does not provide permission for the entire day.

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during school hours. The prohibition of cell phone use is extended to 4:15 p.m. for those students serving after-school detention.

If a cellular phone or other electronic device is turned into the office during the school day, a parent/guardian will be notified and arrangements will be made to pick it up during school hours.

*1st Violation: one (1) after-school detention
*2nd Violation: two (2) after-school detentions
*3rd Violation or more : Saturday detention(s)



Students who need to contact their parents/ guardians should report to the main office to use the office phone. Contacting a parent/ guardian by using a cell phone without permission will be considered a violation of the cell phone policy.

MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

MERCER AREA SCHOOLS ***www. mercer.k12.pa.us***
545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137
Mercer Area Schools Phone Number 724-662-5100
Mercer Area Schools FAX Number 724-662-5109
Superintendent: Dr. Ronald R. Rowe, Jr. *Assistant Superintendent:* Dr. Michael Piddington. *Office Manager/Secretary*: Mrs. Diane Nugent. *Maintenance:* Mr. Justin Haynie. *Facilities Director:* Mr. Arthur A. Amos. *Transportation Director:* Mr. Mark Roman (ext. 40). *Athletic Director:* Mr. Daniel Heckman (Phone: 724-974-1554).

MERCER AREA SCHOOL BOARD
545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137
Mercer Area School Board Phone Number 724-662-4120
Business Manager/Board Secretary: Mrs. Michelle Goehring. *Assistant to the Business Manager/Payroll Specialist:* Mrs. Aubrie Dennis. *Administrative Assistant:* Mrs. Dana Rowe.

MERCER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
301 Lamor Road, Mercer, PA 16137
Mercer Elementary Phone Number 724-662-5102; -5107; -5108
Mercer Elementary FAX number 724-662-5103
Principal: Mr. Greg Acre. *Dean of Students*: Mrs. Kristen Sansone. *K-12 Director of Special Education*: Mrs. Amanda Simpson (ext. 3015). *Secretaries:* Ms. Sharilynn Jones, Mrs. Brittany Milliren. *Special Education Secretary*: Mrs. Renee Masson.

MERCER AREA MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL
545 West Butler St., Mercer, PA 16137
Middle/High School Phone Number 724-662-5104; -5105
Middle/High School Guidance Office 724-662-2272
Middle/High School FAX number 724-662-2993
Middle/High School Principal: Mr. Eric Mausser. *Middle /High School Assistant Principal and Coordinator of the Mercer Virtual Academy:* Mr. Charles Bigelow. *K-12 Director of Special Education*: Mrs. Amanda Simpson (724-662-5102, ext. 3015). *Secretaries:* Mrs. Summer Green, Mrs. Darla Roman.

MASD MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mercer Area School District is to provide a world-class education to all students.

-MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL-

Art: Mrs. Meghan Glass.
Computers: Mr. Michael Morneweck.
Director of Athletics: Mr. Daniel Heckman. (Phone: 724-974-1554)
Family/Consumer Science: Mrs. Ariana Ritchey
Foreign Language: Mrs. Mandy Oates, Spanish; Mrs. Shelley Rowe, French.
Guidance: Mrs. Courtney Smithco, 7-9 counselor; Mrs. Melanie Nelson, 10-12 counselor; *Secretary:* Mrs. Jennifer Flockerzi.
Health and Physical Education: Mr. Tyler Hile, Mrs. Michelle Santom.
Industrial Arts: Mr. Doug Schmid.
Language Arts: Mrs. Jill McCracken, Miss Breanna Renkin, Mrs. Danielle Ross, Mrs. Nicole Walzer.
Speech/Language Pathologist: Miss Kylie McElrath.
Librarian: Mrs. Janice Langdon. *Library Aide*: Mrs. Valerie Ellenberger.
Mathematics: Mr. William Chess, Mrs. Cynthia Gilmore, Mr. Michael Morneweck, Mr. Troy Morris., Miss Kaitlyn Schmidt.
Music: Mrs. Michalee Christy, vocal; Ms. Kelly Heffern, instrumental.
Nurse: Mrs. Jennifer Mausser, R.N. (Phone: 724-662-5104, ext. 21).
Certified School Psychologist: Mrs. Jillian Braden.
Science: Mr. William Chess, Mrs. Anna Cook, Mr. Andrew Finzel, Mr. Luke Rust, Ms. Candice Vincent.
Social Studies: Mr. Justin Gadsby, Mr. Derek Myers, Mrs. Cassie Washil, Mr. Kevan Yorns.
Support Services Education: Mr. Andrew Burk, Mr. Doug Edney, Mrs. Jessica Ingley, Mrs. Erica Mild, Mr. Kevin Reese.
S**tudent Services: Aides/Paraprofessionals**: Mrs. Mary Jean Borowicz, Mrs. Brenda Briggs, Mrs. Julieauna Griffith, Mrs. Jamie Heckman, Ms. Danielle Kocher, Ms. Diana McFeely, Mrs. Shenna Ross, Ms. Nicole Shablesky, Mrs. Terri Stringert, Ms. Becky Wymer.
Technology Aide: Mr. Jacob Kytchak.
Greeter: Mrs. Cindy Green, Mrs. Joanne Weaver.

Mercer Area School District is a proud host site for Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps, serving students for 2026-2027.

-ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL-

K: Mrs. Rachel Algoe, Mrs. Lexi Bourdeau, Mrs. Alexandra Sniezek, Mrs. Haley Steff.
Grade 1: Mrs. Tammy Bright, Miss Maya Price, Mrs. Carrie Schmid, Mrs. Courtney Shepherd-Conner.
Grade 2: Mrs. Andrea Crooks, Mrs. Debbie Gawne, Mrs. Julee Reese,
Grade 3: Mrs. Marcy Dadich, Mr. Marshall Nych, Mrs. Kerry VanWoert, Miss Lacey Weaver.
Grade 4: Mrs. Emilie Mulneix, Mrs. Laura Nych, Miss Allysen Uber, Mr. David Urey.
Grade 5: Mrs. Savannah Colteryahn, Mrs. Amy Murray, Mrs. Amy Neugebauer, Mr. Caleb Ritenour.
Grade 6: Mrs. Kristen Cassano, Mr. Nathan Crooks, Miss Ava Delvaux, Mrs. Meredith Safran, .
Student Services: **Aides/Paraprofessionals**: Ms. Tina Claypool, Mrs. Amy Cubellis, Mrs. Earla Ferry, Miss Madison Link, Miss Kelsey Marsh, Mrs. April Reid, Mrs. Rachel Richardson, Mrs. Kellie Sealand, Mrs. Nannette Sirofchuck, Mrs. Virginia Smith, Mr. Dave Tomson.
Art: Mrs. Delaney Munnal. **Computer**: Mrs. Maggie Ference. **Gifted/Pre-Algebra**: Mrs. Kathy Grossman. **Guidance:** Mrs. Allyson Rust. K-6 counselor. **Librarian**: Mrs. Janice Langdon. *Library Aide*: Mrs. Cory Myers. **Math Lab**: Miss Lisa Wishart. **Music**: Ms. Kelly Heffern, instrumental; Mrs. Beth Weller, vocal. **Nurse**: Mrs. Beth Ellison, R.N. (Phone: 724-662-5102, ext. 3025). **Physical Education**: Miss Kylie Kennis. **Certified School Psychologist**: Mrs. Jillian Braden. **Speech/Language:** Miss Kylie McElrath, Mrs. Lydia Sipe, Mrs. Korina Yanak. **STEAM:** Mrs. Maggie Ference. S**upport Services Education:** Mrs. April Edney, Mrs. Bridget Kniess, Mrs. Joni Kostelnik, Miss Ava Park, Mr. Justin Reno. **Title I Staff**: Mrs. Julie Harris, Mrs. Mandy Jockel, Mrs. Nancy Smith, Miss Lisa Wishart.
Technology Aide: Mr. Tony DiFede.
Greeter: Mrs. Megan .Helgerson

Mercer Area School District is a proud host site for Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps and Miss Avery Ellis, serving students for 2026-2027.

School personnel may be contacted by e-mail by typing the first initial of their first name before their last name and adding @mercer.k12.pa.us
Updated news, changed dates, links to school groups, and other items of interest are all available on the district's website: www.mercer.k12.pa.us

August 2026

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change. Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE AUGUST 19.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5)		Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.	1
2	3 Band Camp—8 a.m.-3 p.m.	4 Band Camp—8 a.m.-3 p.m.	5 Band Camp—8 a.m-3 p.m.	6 Senior yearbook headshot photos taken by Leary's in HS library 9 a.m.-noon Band Camp—8 a.m.-3 p.m. Band Parent Preview Show 6 p.m. at HS	7	8
9	10 Show Choir Camp 9 a.m.-noon First golf practice permitted by PIAA Football: Heat Acclimatization	11 Show Choir Camp 9 a.m.-noon  Band: at Kennywood Fantasy Parade Football: Heat Acclimatization 7th Gr. Orientation—7 p.m.	12 Show Choir Camp 9 a.m.-noon Football: Heat Acclimatization	13 Show Choir Camp 9 a.m.-noon Football: Heat Acclimatization Board Committees 6 p.m. HS lib (tentative)	14 Football: Heat Acclimatization	15
16 Girls Soccer: at Waldameer Park, Erie	17 First non-golf fall sports practice permitted by PIAA  *Chromebook Distribution 8 a.m.-3 p.m.* School Board—7:30 p.m.	18 *Chromebook Distribution 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m.*	19 *Chromebook Distribution 8 a.m.-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.* Band Front Pittsburgh Pierogi sale through 9/10 DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	20 *Chromebook Distribution 8 a.m.-5 p.m.* Band and Sports Photos Noon-5:50 p.m.	21 TEACHER INSERVICE *Chromebook Distribution 8 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m.* Kindergarten Orientation 4-5:45 p.m.	22
23 30	24 TEACHER INSERVICE *Chromebook distrib. 8 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m.* 5/174 Speech Boosters 5:30 p.m. Show Choir first rehearsal 31 Elem. Orientation	1/178 25 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 	2/177 26 Grades 7-12 student orientation meetings MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE *and final Chromebook distribution* 5:30-7:30 p.m. Meet the Mustangs at the football field: 8 p.m.	3/176 27	4/175 28 Junior Class Daffin's candy bar sale begins Grade 7 class officer applications available	29

September 2026

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change. Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE SEPTEMBER 23.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SEPT. TESTS 8-30: CDT/Firefly Fall Testing Window 12: SAT 19: ACT		1 6/173 Elementary Student Orientation meetings Choir: Marianna sub sale through September 15	2 7/172 Elementary Student Orientation meetings Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. at Common Grounds	3 8/171 Elementary Book Fair opens Elementary Student Orientation meetings **ELEMENTARY OPEN HOUSE AND BOOK FAIR 5:30-7:30 p.m.**	4 9/170 Elementary Student Orientation meetings Elementary Book Fair Grade 7 class officer applications due	5
6 ***NOTE***: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.	7 NO SCHOOL 	8 10/169 Elementary Book Fair	9 11/168 Elementary Book Fair Grade 7 class officer election Mercer County Band Fest	10 12/167 K-6 PHOTOS TAKEN Elementary Book Fair Grade 7 student council applications available Band Front Pittsburgh Pierogi sale ends	11 13/166 Book Fair ends	12 ROSH HASHANAH (starts at sundown September 11) SAT testing date
13 ROSH HASHANAH	14 14/165	15 15/164 7-11 PHOTOS TAKEN during English classes Sub sale ends	16 16/163 Elementary Book Fair Rain Date—County Fest	17 17/162 Grade 7 student council applications due School Board committees 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	18 18/161 Cross Country stromboli, pies, pumpkin roll sale	19 ACT testing date Mercer Band Festival
20	21 19/160 YOM KIPPUR (starts at sundown September 20) School Board—7:30 p. m.	22 20/159 Choir/Show Choir sings at Pirates-Cardinals game at PNC Park  FALL BEGINS 8:05 p.m.	23 21/158 Speech: Reorganization 7 p.m. LGI DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR EDITION TODAY	24 22/157 Speech: Reorganization Make-Up 6:30 a.m. LGI Subs delivered	25 23/156 K-12 progress reports due Art Club and French Club students to The Frick Museum in Pittsburgh	26 SUKKOT begins (starts at sundown September 25)\ Band Front Pittsburgh Pierogi delivery
27	28 24/155	29 25/154 Cross Country stromboli, pies, pumpkin roll sale ends	30 26/153 Junior Class Daffin's candy bar sale ends		NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (*Details on page 5.*)	

October 2026

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE OCTOBER 21.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
OCTOBER TEST DATES 3: SAT 17: ACT	***NOTE***: Shaded **GRAY** blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded **PURPLE** blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. *(Details on page 5.)*	***NOTE***: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.	1 27/152 Juniors to Thiel College Career and College Fair Honors Chorus auditions at Westminster College	2 28/151 All-Elementary assembly M/HS assembly HOMECOMING Homecoming FB Game—7 p.m.	3 SAT testing date HOMECOMING Homecoming Dance—7-10 p.m.
4	5 29/150 Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m.	6 30/149	7 31/148 All juniors take PSAT Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. at Common Grounds Speech New Member Orientation: 7 p.m.	8 32/147 ACT 80 EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elem.; 1:15 p.m. M/HS Elem. Parent Conferences	9 33/146 ACT 80 EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elem.; 1:15 p.m. M/HS Elem. Parent Conferences	10 Band: at Grove City College Festival—7 p.m.
11	12 COLUMBUS DAY NO SCHOOL NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK XC stromboli, pies, pumpkin rolls delivered	13 34/145	14 35/144 AG at SRU: On-Sets 3-12	15 36/143 Grade 1 to Irons Mill Farmstead: 9 a.m.-noon School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	16 37/142 Grade 4 to Oil Creek State Park	17 ACT testing date
18	19 38/141 Speech Meetings begin School Board—7:30 p.m.  NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK	20 39/140	21 40/139 Art students to YSU Art Day in Youngstown DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	22 41/138 Aevidum Club to training at Wilmington HS Honors Chorus at Westminster College	23 42/137 Fifth Grade Career Day Honors Chorus	24 Honors Chorus Concert 2 p.m.
25	26 43/136 Elem. Red Ribbon Week Mix-Up Day: Staff dresses like students and students like staff	27 44/135 Elem. Red Ribbon Week: Wear your grade's color Honors Band auditions at Slippery Rock Univer.	28 45/134 1ST QUARTER ENDS Elem. Red Ribbon Week: Wear your pajamas Ac. Games: Onsets—3-12 M/HS Fall Choral Concert 7 p.m. HS aud.	29 46/133 2ND QUARTER BEGINS Elem. Red Ribbon Week: Wear sports team clothes	30 47/132 Elem. Red Ribbon Week: Wear Halloween costume (school appropriate, no masks/props)	31 

November 2026

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info
Get text or e-mail alerts on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," on district's home page.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE NOVEMBER 18.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (*Details on page 5.*)		NOVEMBER TEST DATES 6: ASVAB for Grade 10 7: SAT	***NOTE***: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.	
1 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS—"FALL BACK" ONE HOUR. ALL SAINTS DAY	2 48/131 Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m.	3 49/130 ELECTION DAY polls open 7 a.m.-8 p.m.	4 50/129 HS assembly: 1-man VB AG: Propaganda 7-12 Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. at Common Grounds Marching Band In-Review Concert -7 p.m.	5 51/128	6 52/127 K-12 REPORT CARDS ASVAB for all sophomores	7 SAT testing date Band Boosters Spaghetti Dinner—HS cafeteria
8 DIWALI Choral Boosters —2 p.m. Madrigal dinner prep in HS auditorium	9 53/126	10 54/125 Elementary assembly in the gym	11 55/124 VETERANS DAY PROGRAM—9:30 a.m. elementary gym	12 56/123 K-6 PHOTOS MAKE-UP School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	13 57/122 Madrigal Dinner $25 HS cafe—6 p.m. Doors Open—5:45 p.m.	14 Madrigal Dinner $ 25 HS cafe—6 p.m. Doors Open—5:45 p.m.
15	16 58/121 AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK Financial Aid program 6 p.m. in the high school School Board—7:30 p.m. *(The date for the December Board meeting will be announced.)*	17 59/120	18 60/119 AG at SRU Propaganda 3-6 DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	19 61/118 Tech Ed Club to Carpenters Technical Center in Pittsburgh M/HS County Chorus Festival at Farrell HS	20 62/117 First winter sports practice permitted Grade 4 to Drake Well Museum and Park	21
22 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT 29	23 63/116 NO SCHOOL 30	24 64/115 MS Volleyball tournament pds. 8, 9, advisory	25 65/114 HS Volleyball tournament EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elementary 1:15 p.m. M/HS	26 THANKSGIVING NO SCHOOL	27 THANKSGIVING BREAK	28

December 2026

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m.
and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE DECEMBER 9.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
DEC. TEST DATES 5: SAT 7-9: Winter Keystone exams 12: ACT Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	*The date for the December School Board meeting will be announced.*	1 66/113 NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes postponements, etc.	2 67/112 AG: LinguiSHTIKs —7-12	3 68/111 K-12 progress reports due	4 69/110 FCS students to PPG Place for Gingerbread House competition	5 FIRST DAY OF HANUKKAH (starts at sundown December 4)  Breakfast with Santa—9 a.m. HS cafeteria $10 Speech: at Duquesne Invitational SAT testing date
6	7 70/109 Winter Keystone exam: Algebra (tentative) Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m.	8 71/08 Winter Keystone exam: Biology (tentative)	9 72/107 Winter Keystone exam: Literature (tentative)  Mercer CFL tourney M/HS Band Concert 7 p.m. HS auditorium DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	10 73/106 Winter Keystone exams make-up date Honors Band at SRU	11 74/105 Honors Band at SRU Winter Keystone exams make-up date	12 LAST DAY OF HANUKKAH ACT testing date Honors Band at SRU Speech: at North Catholic
13 M/HS Choral Concert 3 p.m. 	14 75/104 AG: LinguiSHTIKs —3-6	15 76/103	16  77/102 Elem. Band/Chorus Concert—9 a.m./1 p.m.	17 78/101	18 79/100	19 Speech: Sparkle Online tournament
20	21 CHRISTMAS BREAK  FIRST DAY OF WINTER 3:50 p.m.	22 CHRISTMAS BREAK	23 CHRISTMAS BREAK	24  CHRISTMAS EVE	25  FIRST DAY OF CHRISTMAS	26 CHRISTMAS BREAK
27	28 CHRISTMAS BREAK	29 CHRISTMAS BREAK	30 CHRISTMAS BREAK	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. *(Details on page 5.)*	

January 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m.
and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE JANUARY 27.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JANUARY TEST WINDOW 5-30: CDT/Firefly Winter Testing Window		*NOTE*: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (*Details on page 5.*)		NO SCHOOL  1	Choir: to Universal Studios in Florida 2
Choir: at Universal 3	80/99 Choir: at Universal Speech Boosters:5:30 p.m 4	81/98 12TH DAY OF CHRISTMAS Choir: at Universal 5	82/97 EPIPHANY Choir: at Universal 6	83/96 Speech: at McDowell CFL 7	84/95 Deadline for senior Yearbook headshots to be taken by Leary's 8	Speech: at Pittsburgh Dalmasse-Sterner Inv. 9
10	85/94 AG: Presidents—9-12 Musical auditions—4 p.m. 11	86/93 12	87/92 AG: Presidents—3-8 Musical Read-thru—5 p.m. Mandatory Parent meeting for Musical—7:30 p.m. 13	88/91 First Musical Rehearsal 5 p.m. HS auditorium District Band at New Castle HS 14	89/90 District Band at NCHS 15	District Band at NCHS Speech: at North Allegheny Invitational 16
17	DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY NO SCHOOL TEACHER INSERVICE 18	90/89 2ND QUARTER ENDS Elem. Book Fair begins 19	91/88 3RD QUARTER BEGINS Elementary Book Fair Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. at Common Grounds 20	92/87 Elementary Book Fair Book Talk in elem. LGI 5:30 p.m. Speech: at Gen. McLane CFL School Board com. mtgs. 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) 21	93/86 Elementary Book Fair 22	Speech: at Pine-Richland Invitational 23
24 31	94/85 Elementary Book Fair School Board—7:30 p.m. 25	95/84 Elementary Book Fair 26	96/93 K-12 REPORT CARDS District Chorus at Moniteau High School Elementary Book Fair AG: Equations—7-12 DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY 27	97/92 District Chorus Elementary Book Fair 28	98/92 District Chorus Elem. Book Fair ends 29	Speech: 52nd Annual Mercer Invitational Tournament  30

February 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m.
and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE FEBRUARY 24.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
FEB. TESTING 19: ASVAB 27: ACT testing date	The school board will set and announce the 2027-2028 school calendar dates in the first few months of 2027.		Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.	***NOTE***: Shaded **GRAY** blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded **PURPLE** blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (*Details on page 5.*)	
	1 99/80 Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m.	2 100/79 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL GROUNDHOG DAY 	3 101/78 AG: Equations—3-6 Speech: at Fairview CFL	4 102/77 District Orchestra	5 TEACHER INSERVICE NO SCHOOL Senior Interviews District Orchestra	6 Speech: at Hampton Inv. District Orchestra
7	8 103/76 FIRST DAY OF RAMADAN (starts at sundown February 7)	9 104/75 MARDI GRAS	10 105/74 ASH WEDNESDAY LENT BEGINS AG: Theme (Roaring 20s) Grades 5-12 Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. in Choir Room	11 106/73 K-6 PHOTOS TAKEN	12 107/72 Speech: at Pittsburgh Three Rivers Invitational	13 Speech: at Pittsburgh Three Rivers Invitational
14  SUPER BOWL LXI Inglewood, California	15 PRESIDENTS' DAY NO SCHOOL	16 108/71	17 109/70	18 110/69 Region Band at Westminster College Speech: at Meadville CFL School Board com. mtgs. 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	19 111/68 ASVAB Region Band	20 Speech: at Mars Pre-Qualifier Tournament Region Band
21 28	22 112/67 School Board—7:30 p.m	23 113/66 K-12 progress reports due Junior High District Band at Mercer HS AG: Tri-Bowl State Tournament at GCC	24 114/65 AG: Tri-Bowl State Tournament at GCC DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	25 115/64	26 116/63	27 ACT testing date Speech: Pittsburgh PHSSL State Qualifier at Pine-Richland

March 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m.
and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE MARCH 17.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MARCH TEST DATE 6: SAT testing date **NOTE FOR JUNIORS** Registration deadline for the May 1 SAT is April 16.	1 117/62 Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m.	2 118/61 READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY  Choir: Marianna sub sale through March 16	3 119/60 Chamber of Commerce Lunch at elem.—noon	4 120/59 NATIONAL GRAMMAR DAY Region Chorus at Waynesburg Central HS	5 NO SCHOOL (Snow Make-Up Day) Region Chorus	6 CFL National Qualifier at Gannon University, Erie SAT testing date
7 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS—"SPRING AHEAD" ONE HOUR 	8 121/58 LAST DAY OF RAMADAN First spring sports practice set by PIAA 	9 122/57	10 123/56 EID AL-FITR (starts at sundown March 9) Choral Boosters: 6 p.m. in Choir Room	11 124/55 Speech: state tournament at Bloomsburg University School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) Region Orchestra	12 125/54 Speech: state tournament Region Orchestra	13 Speech: state tournament Region Orchestra
14 NATIONAL PI DAY	15 126/53 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION *(See page 6 for THE COMPLETE 2027-2028 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET)* School Board—7:30 p.m.	16 127/52 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION *(See page 6 for THE COMPLETE 2027-2028 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET)* Marianna Sub sale ends	17 128/51 ST. PATRICK'S DAY KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION *(See page 6 for THE COMPLETE 2027-2028 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET)* DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	18 129/50 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION *(See page 6 for THE COMPLETE 2027-2028 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET)*	19 130/49 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION *(See page 6 for THE COMPLETE 2027-2028 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PACKET)*	20  Spring begins at 4:24 p.m. Speech: NSDA National Qualifier, Pittsburgh
21 PALM SUNDAY	22 131/48 HOLI Deadline for submitting senior graduation ads for the yearbook.	23 132/47 PURIM (starts at sundown March 22)	24 133/46 Marianna Subs delivered	25 NO SCHOOL HOLY THURSDAY	26 NO SCHOOL GOOD FRIDAY	27
28 EASTER SUNDAY 	29 NO SCHOOL	30 134/45	31 135/44 3RD QUARTER ENDS	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. *(Details on page 5)*	***NOTE***: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, and postponements, etc.	

April 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE APRIL 21.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
APRIL TESTS/ WINDOWS 10: ACT testing date 16: Registration deadline for May 1 SAT test date 26-30:PSSA Eng/LA Gr.3-8 and make-ups	NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. *(Details on page 5)*	***NOTE***: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, and postponements, etc.		136/43 4TH QUARTER BEGINS 	137/42 2	Speech: at Pittsburgh Frosh-Soph Tournament 3
4	138/41 Speech Boosters: 5:30 p.m. 5	139/40 6	140/39 K-12 REPORT CARDS 7	141-38 M/HS Musical—7 p.m. *(Doors open at 6:30 p.m.)* 8	142/37 M/HS Musical—7 p.m. *(Doors open at 6:30 p.m.)* 9	ACT testing date M/HS Musical—7 p.m. *(Doors open at 6:30 p.m.)* 10
Student Council's 3rd Annual DJ Graham Run 11	143/36 12	144/33 13	145/34 State Band and Chorus In Erie 14	146/33 TAX DAY DEADLINE School Board Committee Meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) State Band and Chorus 15	Registration deadline for May 1 SAT test date State Band and Chorus 16	State Band and Chorus 17
18	147/32 School Board—7:30 p.m. 19	148/31 20	149/30 21 DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	150/29 FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER (starts at sundown April 21) EARTH DAY 22	151/28 Ac. Games: Nationals in Orlando, Florida 23	AG Nationals 24
AG Nationals 25	152//27 AG Nationals PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 7-11 Class officer applications available for 2027-2028 26	153/26 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 AG Nationals NJHS/NHS/Mercer Hall of Fame Inductions 7:30 p.m. HS aud. 27	154/25 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 28	155/24 LAST DAY OF PASSOVER PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 29	156/23 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 7-11 Class officer applications due for 2027-2028 30	***NOTE***: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.

May 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 p.m. for bus riders, 3:15 p.m. for all others.

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE MAY 19.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MAY TESTS/WINDOWS 1: SAT testing date 4-13:PSSA Math/Science Gr. 3-8 and make-ups 4-15: AP exams 17-21: Stanford Test Gr. 2 17-28: Keystones window 24-6/3: FINALS WINDOW			NOTE: For the 2026-2027 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. *(Details on page 5)*		***NOTE***: Events and dates for the 2027-2028 school year will be available on the online calendar on July 28 to help families plan for the upcoming school year.	**1** SAT Suggested date for Mercer juniors to take the SAT
2	**3** NO SCHOOL (Snow Make-Up Day)	**4** 157/22 NATIONAL TEACHER DAY PSSA: MATH Gr. 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE Gr. 5, 8	**5** 158/21 CINCO DE MAYO K-12 progress reports due PSSA: MATH Gr. 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE Gr. 5, 8 AP English exam—8 a.m. 7-11 Class officer elections for 2027-2028 M/HS Spring Choral Concert—7 p.m. HS aud.	**6** 159/20 PSSA: MATH Gr. 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE Gr. 5, 8 AP Chemistry exam—noon 7-11 student council applications available for 2027-2028	**7** 160/19	**8**
MOTHERS' DAY **9**	**10** 161/18 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-8 AP Calculus exam	**11** 162/17 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-8 M/HS Art Show and Equus Premiere—6-7:30 p.m. M/HS Band: Spring Concert—7 p.m.	**12** 163/16 Grade 4 to Shenango Dam PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-8	**13** 164/15 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-8 PMEA Music Performance Assessment at MHS 8 a.m.-3 p.m. 7-11 student council applications due School Board committees 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	**14** 165/14  Elementary Band and Choral Spring Concert 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. AP Psychology exam—noon JUNIOR-SENIOR PROM at Avalon at Buhl	**15**
PENTECOST **16**	**17** 166/13 EID AL-HADA (starts at sundown May 16) Stanford Testing: Grade 2 School Board: 7:30 p.m.	**18** 167/12 Stanford Testing: Grade 2 Grade 3 to Olympic Fun Center in Hermitage	**19** 168/11 Stanford Testing: Grade 2 DOWNLOAD THE NEW CALENDAR TODAY	**20** 169/10 Stanford Testing: Grade 2	**21** 170/9 Stanford Testing: Grade 2	**22**
23 **30** Speech: CFL Nationals	**24** 171/8 SENIOR FINALS  MEMORIAL DAY NO SCHOOL 5M Band at Memorial Day 500 parade	**25** 172/7 SENIOR FINALS	**26** 173/6 7-12 FINALS WINDOW	**27** 174/5 7-12 FINALS WINDOW	**28** 175/4 7-12 FINALS WINDOW *Chromebook Collection for grades 7, 8, and 12* Speech: at CFL Grand National Tournament in Minneapolis, Minnesota	**29** Speech: CFL Nationals

June 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
School Day Hours—Elementary 8:10 a.m.-3 p.m. Middle/High School 8 a.m.-3:09 for bus riders, 3:15 for all others

NEW CALENDAR EDITION ONLINE JUNE 23.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NOTE: Events and dates for the 2027-2028 school year will be available on the online calendar on July 28 to help families plan for the upcoming school year.		1 176/3 Commencement Practice 7-11 FINALS WINDOW *Chromebook Collection for grades 9, 10, and 11*	2 177/2 Commencement Practice 7-11 FINALS WINDOW BACCALAUREATE 7:30 p.m.	3 178/1 Commencement Practice Juniors at Cedar Point 7-11 FINALS make-ups	4 179 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL Juniors' Breakfast—7:45 Senior Awards—8:45 a.m. Grade 6 Promotion-10 a.m. K-6 REPORT CARDS EARLY DISMISSAL Elem.-noon; M/HS-12:15 p.m. COMMENCEMENT 7:30 p.m.	5 SAT testing date
6	7 TEACHER INSERVICE	8	9	10	11 SHAVUOT (starts at sundown June 10) 7-11 REPORT CARDS MAILED	12 ACT testing date
13 National Speech and Debate National Tournament in Phoenix, Arizona	14  FLAG DAY Speech Nationals	15 Speech Nationals	16 Speech Nationals	17 Speech Nationals School Board committees 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	18 JUNETEENTH (federal holiday celebrated) Speech Nationals	19 JUNETEENTH
20 FATHERS' DAY	21 FIRST DAY OF SUMMER 10:10 a.m School Board—7:30 p.m.	22	23 DOWNLOAD THE NEW JUNE AND JULY CALENDAR TODAY	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Parents with children who will be age age 5 by August 31, 2027 who still need to be registered should get a Kindergarten Registration Packet for the 2027-2028 school year, which can be found on the district website at https://www.mercer.k12.pa.us/elementary-school/parent-resources/kindergarten-registration Click on "Kindergarten Registration Packet," and call 724-662-5102 to schedule an appointment.			

July 2027

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change. Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.
*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.
*Parents may sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line. Go to "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the school district's home page.

THE 2027-2028 ONLINE CALENDAR WILL BE AVAILABLE JULY 27.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	NOTE: Events and dates on the 2027-2028 school district calendar will be available online on Tuesday, July 27.			1	2	3
	INDEPENDENCE DAY (federal holiday celebrated) 5	6	7	8	9	ACT testing date 10
11	12	13	14	School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) 15	16	17
18	School Board—7:30p.m. 19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 THE 2027-2028 CALENDAR/GUIDE IS ONLINE TODAY	28	29	30	31

PLEASE PRINT, CUT ON THE DOTTED LINE, AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL WITH YOUR STUDENT.

A report may also be made on line at https://www.mercer.k12.pa.us/elementary-school/main-office/report-absence

Mercer Schools Report of Absence Form 2026-2027

Please return within five days of absence

STUDENT NAME: _____ TODAY'S DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ ABSENCE DATE(S): _____

Please check the reason for your child's absence:

1. ☐ Illness
2. ☐ Death in the immediate family
3. ☐ Quarantine
4. ☐ Religious Holiday
5. ☐ Out of Town (school pre-approval required)
6. ☐ Family Vacation (school pre-approval required)
7. ☐ Other: _____

On the back, please state reason for number 7
Note: Numbers 1 — 4 are considered Legal Excuses.
Numbers 5, 6, and 7 may be declared unexcused/illegal.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

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