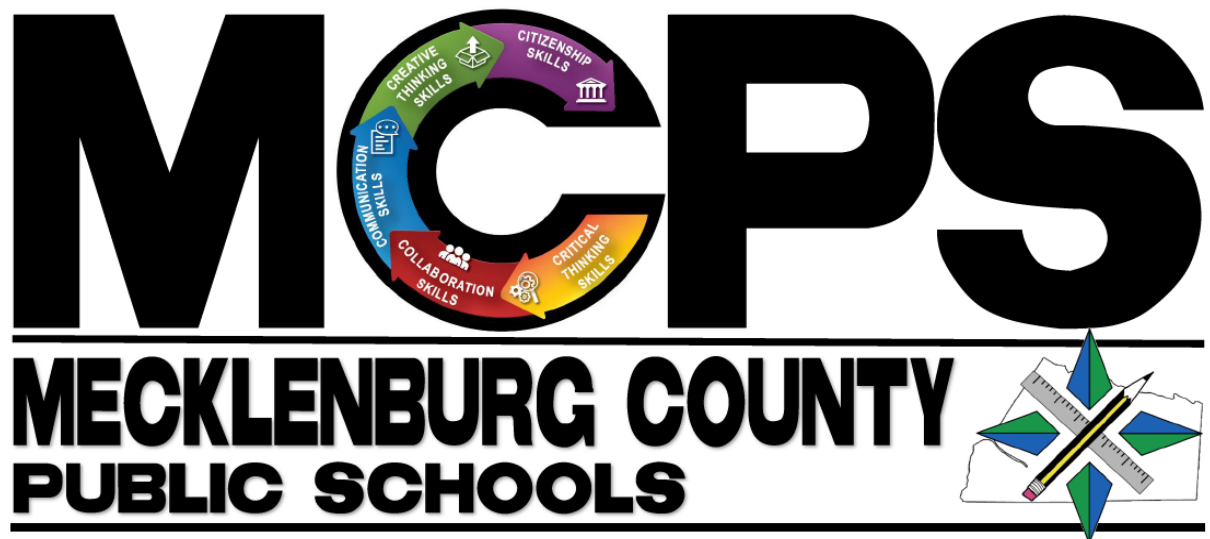


SCHOOL BOARD APPROVED (July 31, 2023)

# Student & Parent Handbook

## Mecklenburg County Elementary Schools



2023 - 2024

# MCPS VISION STATEMENT

To provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment that fosters career literacy, academic enhancement, social-emotional growth, and community engagement that prepares students who contribute to the global society.

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## MCPS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mecklenburg County Public Schools Division, in partnership with family and community, is to provide all students with a quality education within a safe environment supporting the development of intellectual growth, effective communication, wellness, and life-long learning in a rapidly-changing society.

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## PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to be a comprehensive guide for our students and their families. As a virtual document, links are used throughout to allow quick access to content either in the appendix or located elsewhere in the internet. This School Board approved handbook is designed to help students and parents understand expectations, learn about the high school, and help navigate the complexities of school. This handbook is guided by policy and, in the event there is a conflict between this document and School Board policy, the policy shall prevail.

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*Please Note the following:*

*"Parent(s)," as used throughout, means biological parent(s), adoptive parent(s), or legal guardian(s)/parent(s).*

*For purposes of this document, references to "School Board" should be understood to indicate the Mecklenburg County School Board.*

*This handbook is reviewed and approved annually by the School Board.*

*The content of this handbook is subject to change to reflect best practice and/or policy changes.*

## **SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**

**District 1**  
Sandra Crowder

**District 2**  
Gloria Smith

**District 3**  
Wanda Bailey

**District 4**  
Lindell Palmer

**District 5**  
Gavin Honeycutt

**District 6**  
Matthew Dunn

**District 7**  
Dora Garner

**District 8**  
Ricky Allgood

**District 9**  
Glenn Edwards

Dr. Scott Worner, **Division Superintendent**

Miss Christy Pepper, **Assistant Superintendent**

Dr. Paige Lacks, **Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction**

Mr. Brian Dalton, **Executive Director of Facilities & Operations**

Paula Giammatteo, **School Board Clerk/Executive Secretary to the Superintendent**

Division Office  
175 Mayfield Dr.  
Boynton, VA 23917

Phone: (434) 738-6111

On the web:  
[www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org)



## PROFILE OF A MECKLENBURG GRADUATE

In order to meet the twenty-first century demands of our current society, it is important to incorporate the 5 C's into daily instruction as frequently as possible and throughout our students' educational experience with us. This will encourage students to think critically in order to problem solve and work collaboratively to make positive impacts in whichever field they choose to pursue as they move through elementary school and into middle and high school. The 5C's are critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.

1. Students will develop problem-solving and **critical-thinking skills**.
2. Students will use **natural curiosity and creativity** to explore possibilities and take intellectual risks.
3. Students will **collaborate** with others to contribute and initiate new ideas, to listen and cooperate, and to build trust and provide support.
4. Students will demonstrate **effective communication skills** and competency in language arts, mathematics, science, and social sciences.
5. Students will develop and demonstrate behaviors that **show respect** and **appreciation for themselves** and others to prepare them to become **productive citizens**.

# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

It is my hope that the 2023-2024 school year offers to each student and their parents a renewed opportunity of learning and personal growth. Our teachers and staff are committed to providing the knowledge and experiences that will best prepare our students to obtain their potential as a scholar and citizen. We are in the process of renovating, or rebuilding our three older elementary schools: Clarksville Elementary (re-opening in the Fall of 2025), Chase City Elementary (with a hopeful re-opening in the Fall of 2027, and LaCrosse Elementary (with a hopeful opening of a new facility in the Fall of 2029).

This handbook outlines in significant detail the expectations and opportunities that are available to our primary and elementary students. We ask that each parent and guardian take time to read through it thoroughly to understand the opportunities and expectations for our students. Please let us know if you have any questions.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to secure the best education possible for your child.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Scott Worner". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "S" and a cursive "Worner".

Dr. Scott Worner  
Superintendent  
Mecklenburg County Public Schools

# Elementary School Administrative Directory

## [Chase City Elementary School](#)

5450 Highway 47, Chase City, VA 23924 (434) 372-4770

*Frederick Taylor, Principal*  
*Reagan Cannon, Assistant Principal*

## [Clarksville Elementary School](#)

6825 Skipwith Road, Skipwith, VA 23968 (434) 374-8668

*Dr. Dominique Sturdifan, Principal*  
*Stephanie Neal, Assistant Principal*

## [La Crosse Elementary School](#)

1000 School Circle, La Crosse, VA 23950 (434) 757-7374

*Connie Puckett, Principal*  
*Justin Kirkland, Assistant Principal*

## [South Hill Elementary School](#)

1290 Plank Road, South Hill, VA 23970 (434) 447-8134

*Lauren Thompson, Principal*  
*Melissa Chumney, Assistant Principal*  
*Dr. David Holzendorf, Assistant Principal*

DISCLOSURE: The Mecklenburg County School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, religion, marital or veteran's status, genetic information, disability, or any classification protected by applicable law in its programs, activities, or employment. The Director of Human Resources acts as the Compliance Officer as outlined in School Board Policy for the following areas: Title IX, Equal Employment Opportunity/Nondiscrimination, Equal Educational Opportunities/Nondiscrimination, Section 504, Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation, and Third Party Complaints Against Employees. The Assistant Superintendent serves as the Alternate Compliance Officer. Both the Compliance Officer and Alternate Compliance Officer may be contacted at the Mecklenburg County Public Schools' Central Office at 175 Mayfield Drive, Boynton, VA 23917, or by calling 434-738-6111.

# SCHOOL QUALITY PROFILES

The Virginia Department of Education collects annual data for each school and school division in the Commonwealth. The School Quality Profile (SQP) provides information about student achievement, school safety, teacher quality, college and career readiness, and other topics. You may access your school's report at the appropriate link below:

Chase City Elementary- [Chase City Elementary - Mecklenburg County Public Schools](#)

Clarksville Elementary- [Clarksville Elementary - Mecklenburg County Public Schools](#)

La Crosse Elementary- [LaCrosse Elementary - Mecklenburg County Public Schools](#)

South Hill Elementary- [South Hill Elementary - Mecklenburg County Public Schools](#)

## CONTENT STANDARDS

The Virginia Department of Education provides the most current details for content areas for all students. Click on the links below to access the Standards of Learning.

[English and Reading](#)

[Mathematics](#)

[Science](#)

[History and Social Science](#)

## 23-24 ELEMENTARY CALENDAR

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The [2023-2024 School Calendar](#) can be found on the mcpsweb.org website.

## SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

To be a successful 21<sup>st</sup> Century future-ready student at Mecklenburg County Public Schools, students are expected

1. To be on time and present at school each day.
2. To have regular classroom attendance and to be prepared to learn.
3. To be responsible for their behavior – a student chooses how they react to different events and situations.
4. To understand that inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior interferes with teaching and learning.

5. To respect the feelings and rights of others.
6. To refrain from the use of physical force or the threat of physical force.
7. To do what the teacher or adult in the building reasonably requests.
8. To be aware of and follow all school and district rules and procedures.
9. To refrain from using profanity and other offensive language and behavior.
10. To be a student leader.
11. To be an active learner, including completing classwork, homework, projects, etc.

## MCPS HONOR CODE

We expect all students to perform work to the best of their ability and certify their work is their own using our **Honor Code**. The Honor code agreement is at the bottom of this document and should be signed and returned to the school.

- o **For Assessments:** "I affirm that I will not give or receive any unauthorized help on this exam, and that all work will be my own."
- o **For Graded Assignments:** "I affirm that I have not given or received any unauthorized help on this assignment, and that this work is my own."
- o **For Group Projects:** "I accept responsibility for my role in ensuring the integrity of the work submitted by the group in which I participated."

Students will sign the Honor Code Agreement at the beginning of each school year. Students may also be asked to write the honor code on each graded assignment or otherwise verify they are abiding by the honor code using the method directed by the teacher.

## STUDENT RIGHTS

The Constitution and the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia give students many legal rights and liberties. School Board policies and regulations provide students many privileges as well, according to their ages and maturity levels. Students may exercise these rights and privileges as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or the schools' ability to provide a safe learning environment. A student with a problem or a concern is encouraged to speak to an administrator, teacher, school counselor, or other faculty members.

Mecklenburg County Public Schools students have the right to:

- Schools, offices, and classrooms that are caring, nurturing, and enhance positive relationships;
- Curriculum and instruction that promote opportunities for rigorous educational experiences;
- Attend schools that are welcoming, safe, and conducive to a positive learning environment for staff and students;
- Equitable and valuable educational experiences with respect to their individual level of understanding and capabilities;
- Due process when questions arise concerning conduct, academics and/or extra-curricular activities;
- Essential documents translated or interpreted in a language of their understanding when requested; and



- Courtesy, respect, and fairness from adults and other students to include their cultural beliefs and differences.

Students, staff, and parents share the responsibility for an orderly and safe school environment. Information about drugs, weapons, or other factors which may be harmful to others or to the school environment should be reported. Any attempted or actual retaliation for the reporting of Code of Conduct violations shall be addressed by corrective action, up to and including expulsion.

Students who have knowledge of drugs, weapons, violence, or other behaviors which may be harmful to others or to the school environment, may be subject to disciplinary action for failure to report such information to school authorities.

Students who discover something in their possession which is not permitted at school, should report to an administrator or other staff member immediately. School staff responsible for initiating follow-up action shall take into consideration that the student voluntarily brought this to the attention of staff. Students should contact an administrator, teacher, counselor, or other trusted adult immediately if they have information about, or believe that they have been, victims of misconduct which violates the Code of Conduct.

Student Rights under Section 504 information can be found in [Section J](#) of the School board Policies.

Notice of the administration of surveys and questionnaires (PPRA) can be found in [Section K](#) of the School Board Policies.

Notice of Directory Information (FERPA) can be found in [Section J](#) of the School board Policies.

## **VIRGINIA TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORTS (VTSS)**

All MCPS elementary schools have adopted the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS).

The Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS) is a data-informed decision making framework for establishing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students.

The VTSS systemic approach allows divisions, schools and communities to provide multiple levels of support to students in a more effective and efficient, clearly defined process. Implementing the VTSS requires the use of evidence-based, system-wide practices with fidelity to provide a quick response to academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs. The practices are progress-monitored frequently to enable educators to make sound, data-based instructional decisions for students.

VTSS functions under the anchor process of integrating data, practices and systems to affect outcomes. The essential elements of an effective VTSS framework are:

- Aligned Organizational Structure
- Data Informed Decision-Making

- Evidence-Based Practices
- Family, School and Community Partnerships
- Monitoring Student Progress
- Evaluation of Outcomes and Fidelity

## ACADEMICS

### Academic Dishonesty (Cheating)

MCPS believes that every student should be encouraged to be a responsible, trustworthy individual that is capable of excelling to the best of his or her ability. A positive environment conducive to learning is provided, and students are encouraged to seek assistance from parents, teachers, and peers in a supportive way when extra help is needed. Academic Dishonesty (Cheating), however, is not acceptable at any MCPS school.

### Family Life Education

The Virginia Board of Education provides standards of learning and curriculum guidelines for a comprehensive, sequential family life education curriculum from kindergarten through grade 12. The guidelines include instruction as appropriate for the age of the student in family living and community relationships; abstinence education; the value of postponing sensual activity; the benefits of adoption as a positive choice in the event of an unwanted pregnancy; human sexuality; human reproduction; forms of contraception; dating violence; the characteristics of abusive relationships; steps to take to avoid sexual assault, and the availability of counseling and legal resources, and in the event of such sexual assault, the importance of immediate medical attention and advice, as well as the requirements of the law, the etiology, prevention and effects of sexually transmitted diseases; and mental health education and awareness. All such instruction shall be designed to promote parental involvement, foster positive self-concepts, and provide mechanisms for coping with peer pressure and the stresses of modern living according to the students' developmental stages and abilities. Parents and guardians have the right to review the family life education program offered by their school division, including written and audio-visual educational materials used in the program. Parents and guardians also have the right to excuse their child from all or part of the family life education instruction. A copy of Virginia's Family Life Education may be obtained at <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/family-life-education>

### Academic Gifted and Talented

We recognize that students of exceptional ability have the right to an education commensurate with their unique abilities. These exceptional children require a differentiated academic program that considers individuals learning styles and unique capabilities. Mecklenburg County Public Schools is committed to identifying gifted students in kindergarten through grade twelve, and to provide these students with services that challenge them to expand their critical and creative thinking abilities.

Referral Process for Academic GATE: Parents, teachers, administrators, and school staff may refer students. Referral forms may be obtained from the school counselor or GATE contact at

each school. Referrals can be submitted throughout the school year. Referrals should be returned to the classroom teacher, school counselor, GATE contact or the Gifted and Talented Education Coordinator. The timeline for an eligibility decision on each case is 60 instructional days from the date received by the Gifted and Talented Education Coordinator

## Gifted and Talented, Art

The Arts Screening students for the arts program is conducted annually by the classroom teachers, art teachers and gifted teachers. Referrals can be submitted by parents/guardians, students, teachers or other persons who may have knowledge or expertise to make such a referral. Based on the results, students are referred and asked to complete a portfolio of art work to be evaluated by the Art Selection Committee.

## Grading Procedures

Report cards will be issued at nine-week intervals. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will receive an S, N, or U. Students in grades 1-5 receive evaluations on a grade scale as follows:

A	90-100	S	Satisfactory
B	80-89	N	Needs Improvement
C	70-79	U	Unsatisfactory
D	60-69		
F	Below 60		

Interim reports will be sent home to parents/guardians near the middle of each nine-week grading period. Interim reports are another form of communication between parents, teachers, and the school.

### Incomplete Grade(s)

On the report card, an incomplete grade 'I' may be given to a student for a number of reasons. Students are required to complete the missing work that caused the 'I' and teachers are required to assign a grade other than 'I' prior to the end of the next grading period. If the missing work is not completed/made up, the mark of 'I' will revert to the marking period average where any incomplete assignments would be listed as a F.

## Promotion and Retention

Academic performance will be the prime determiner as to whether a student should be promoted or retained. Other factors such as chronological age and social/emotional growth will be considered on an individual basis.

Students in grades kindergarten through three who fail language arts may be retained in their respective grades. Students in grades 1-3 who fail the same major subject two (2) years in succession may be retained. Students in grades four and five who fail two major subjects in one school year or who fail the same major subject two (2) years in succession may be retained. Summer School may be required to be promoted to the next grade.

Major subjects are defined as:

**Kindergarten**  
Language Arts

**Grade 1**  
Language Arts  
Mathematics

**Grade 2**  
Language Arts  
Mathematics

**Grade 3**  
Language Arts  
Mathematics

**Grade 4-5**  
Language Arts  
Mathematics  
Science  
Social Studies

## Academic Extra-Credit

- Extra credit is not a requirement in any course nor should it be an expectation.
- Teachers may provide students with extra-credit activities only if those activities are appropriately aligned with the Virginia Standard Course of Study, provide opportunities for academic enrichment, and enhance classroom instruction.
- Extra-credit activities should not be used to replace missing assignments.

## Honor Roll Requirements (Grades 3-5)

**"AB" Honor Roll:** No grade lower than a B and all conduct grades must be S.

**Principal's List:** At the end of the year, eligible students are recognized for principal's list in grades 3-5. To be eligible for the principal's list, the student must not earn any grade below an "A" on the report card for the entire year. This includes grades in all classes and all "S" in conduct. The student must also be discipline free for the entire school year.

## Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance (8VAC20-131-180). The term "confined at home or in a health-care facility" means the student is unable to participate in the normal day-to-day activities typically expected during school attendance; and, absences from home are infrequent, for periods of relatively short duration, or to receive health care treatment. Students receiving homebound instruction MAY NOT participate in any school activities, extracurricular activities, non-academic activities (such as field trips), or community activities.

If a student is ill and requires extended time out of school (more than two weeks), **parents must call the school to request homebound instruction**. A licensed physician must indicate **in writing** that the child cannot attend school in order for a child to qualify for this service.

## Homework

Homework is assigned to help reinforce skills covered in class. All students are expected to devote time to and give their best effort on all homework assignments. Exact times for homework

completion will vary from student to student but typically should take half an hour for students in Kindergarten and first grades and one hour for students in second, third, fourth, and fifth grades.

## Make-Up Work

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain assignments from the teacher. Students are fully responsible for completing these assignments. Students have a maximum of five days to make up work missed during an excused period of absence. However, the period of time allowed to complete missed assignments may be extended at the discretion of the teacher. A grade of “zero” (0%) may be assigned only if a student fails to submit or make-up assignments.

## Standardized Testing

Students in grades 3-5 participate in state assessments at the beginning of the year.

Third Grade: Reading and Mathematics  
Fourth Grade: Reading and Mathematics  
Fifth Grade: Reading and Mathematics

Students in grades 3-5 participate in state assessments in the middle of the year.

Third Grade: Reading and Mathematics  
Fourth Grade: Reading and Mathematics  
Fifth Grade: Reading and Mathematics

Students in grades 3-5 participate in state assessments at the end of the year.

Third Grade: Reading and Mathematics  
Fourth Grade: Reading, Mathematics, and Virginia Studies  
Fifth Grade: Reading, Mathematics, and Science

### Expedited Retakes

In the spring of 2015, the Virginia General Assembly approved SOL retakes. Students who score between 375 and 399 are eligible to retake those tests. Before retesting, students receive small group remediation. Elementary students who qualify must have documented permission from the parent to retake the test(s). Retakes are only available for end of year testing.

### Opt-Out Information

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. If you would like to receive information about this topic, please contact Shelby Averette, Testing and Accountability Specialist, either by phone at (434) 738-6111 or in email at [saverette@mcpsweb.org](mailto:saverette@mcpsweb.org).

## Performance-Based Assessments

In 2015, the Virginia General Assembly removed three elementary end-of-grade tests; Grade 3 Science, Grade 3 Social Studies, and Grade 5 Writing. School divisions are required to replace these SOL tests with alternative assessments. These assessments will be scored locally but

participation in these assessments are reported to the Virginia Department of Education. Parents will be notified of the score their child receives on the performance assessments.

## State, Division and School Assessments

All students in grades three through five take the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments. The school uses additional countywide and school-wide assessments. Other assessments may be added. Examples of options available for school assessments include:

Assessments	Proficiency Levels
Virginia Standards of Learning	400-499 Pass/Proficient 500-600 Pass/Advanced
*VESOL/VAAP	Pass/Proficient, Pass/Advanced, Fail
PALS (PreK-3rd grade)	Benchmark (Fall, Mid-Year, Spring)
VKRP (PreK-Kindergarten)	Benchmark (Fall, Spring)
Benchmark Assessments	County Policy; 60-100 indicates passing
Remediation Pre- and Post-Tests	County Policy; 60-100 indicates passing
Curriculum Based Assessments	Grade Level Proficiency
Teacher-made Assessments	County Policy; 60-100 indicates passing
Textbook Assessments	County Policy; 60-100 indicates passing
STAR (Reading and Math)	Fall/Winter/Spring
Common Assessments	County Policy; 60-100 indicates passing
Growth Assessments	Fall/Winter/Spring
Aptitude Tests	Screeners for GATE
Performance Based Assessments	Scored Using Rubrics

\* for identified students only

## ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

It is the policy of the Mecklenburg County School Board to do everything possible to encourage all children to attend school with regularity.

It is the legal responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that students are in regular attendance for the entire school day. Failure to attend school and all classes on time will put students at a disadvantage in their studies as there is a close correlation between attendance and learning. Attendance is a discipline and legal matter and will be handled as such. Parents or guardians must seek homebound instruction for their children when they are absent for extended periods due to illness. The principal or school counselor will assist them in making necessary arrangements. Please carefully read the entire attendance policy and help us ensure all students are in class on time for all class periods. This information can be found in [section J](#) of School Board Policy.

Regular attendance is necessary for maximum school achievement. In addition, punctuality and dependability in meeting assigned responsibilities are personal behavior habits valued in our society. In order to help students to develop desirable behavior patterns, as well as to increase students' classroom learning, MCPS requires that students be punctual and regular in school

class attendance. MCPS has employed a system of support and intervention strategies to build positive attendance habits. When attendance problems exist, the school system resources are made available to aid in solutions to these problems. Teachers, parents and guardians should jointly stress to students that school attendance is critical in promoting high academic achievement.

When students are absent without prior communication between the parent or guardian and the school, school personnel will notify the parent or guardian by phone or electronic communication and take appropriate action based on the individual circumstances. After three unexcused absences, a conference may be requested with the parent or guardian to discuss truancy prevention and procedures. After the fifth unexcused absence, a truancy prevention plan meeting is held to develop a Truancy Prevention Plan. At the sixth unexcused absence, a Truancy Conference is held to further discuss attendance barriers and plan additional interventions. If an additional unexcused absence occurs, the school may refer the student to the attendance officer to file a complaint with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court that the student is in need of supervision or services and/or will institute proceedings against the parent or guardian as described in Section 22.1-258 of the Code of Virginia.

An **excused** absence is one for which parents or guardians have prior knowledge, consent, and a legitimate reason. The principal or the principal's designee determines whether or not absences will be excused and will require a physician's note in cases of chronic or long-term illness. Parents or guardians and students are encouraged to prearrange excused absences when possible.

Parents of students who are absent must inform the school of the reason for the absence no later than upon the student's return to school. Absences are excused for the following reasons:

- For middle and high school students, one school day per school year to engage in a civic event
- a maximum of 5 school days per academic year for participation in a 4-H educational program or activity; no credit will be provided for a student whose participation in a 4-H educational program or activity occurs during scheduled Standards of Learning assessments or during any period of time that the student is suspended or expelled from school; the student's principal or assistant principal may request a representative of 4-H to provide documentation of a student's participation in order for the student's absence to be excused
- subject to guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education, students who are members of a state- or federally-recognized tribal nation that is headquartered in Virginia shall be granted one excused absence per academic year to attend such nation's pow wow gathering provided that the student's parent provides the student's school advance notice of the absence in the manner required by the school
- Illness (if over two days, the school may require a note from the physician);
- Medical and dental appointments;
- Court appearance;
- Death in the family;
- Observance of a religious holiday; and
- Extenuating circumstances as determined by the school administration



An **unexcused** absence is one for which the parent or guardian does not have prior knowledge, consent, and/or legitimate reason. Examples of reasons that are not justified and will result in an unexcused absence include: family and/or student vacations, child care situations, nonschool-related activities, missed school bus, or other reasons unacceptable to the principal or his or her designee. This definition holds for all day and period absences.

A student who is absent for any portion of the day requires a note from their parent/guardian. A student is NOT considered present ("Not Been Absent") unless they are in school over 50% of that day (3 hours and 16 minutes). A maximum of 10 parent/guardian notes will be accepted during the school year. In the event that there have been excessive parent/guardian notes already received for absences, a valid note from a physician or other appropriate professional's office. ("Excessive parent/guardian notes," as determined by the school principal, are no more than five per semester.) Suspensions are unexcused absences (but are not included in truancy totals). A student will be expected to make up all assignments or to make arrangements with the teacher for any make-up work within five days of return to school. Students on suspensions will be expected to submit their assignments upon return to school and make arrangements with the teacher within five days after the end of the suspension period to make up any additional hands-on activities, tests, or other schoolwork. Extenuating circumstances may be considered in extending the time limit.

## Check In Procedure/Tardiness

In Mecklenburg County Public Schools, we emphasize the importance of each student being in the classroom on time every school day. Learning the responsibility of getting to class on time is an integral part of MCPS' standard of excellence, which prepares students for success. Students who arrive at school **after 9:00 a.m.** must be signed in by a parent or guardian in the main office. Office staff will issue a tardy pass for students to enter the classroom. A record of late arrivals will be maintained by the attendance clerk.

## Check Out Procedure

Student safety is our **first priority**. A principal shall not release a student during the school day to any person not authorized to assume responsibility for the student. All students must comply with established release procedures. Students are not to leave the school building for any reason during the day without checking out in the attendance office. Students feeling ill must see the nurse and be cleared to leave from the clinic prior to leaving school and check out in the attendance office. Parent/guardian must provide written notification, a hard copy or verifiable email for early dismissal if someone other than the parent, guardian, or emergency contact is picking up the student. MCPS requires written notification or verifiable email that states the time and the reason for dismissal and must include a daytime phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached. All notes, whether for someone else to pick up the student or for early dismissal, will be verified with parent/guardian before students will be allowed to leave school. Parents must contact the school and give permission in order for their student to leave the school grounds for any reason.

All individuals wishing to check out a student will need to present either a valid Driver's License or Identification Card and must be listed in the Student Information System or on the student emergency information card as a parent, legal guardian, or as an approved contact.



## Excessive Absences

For any student whose absences exceeds more than five (5) unexcused or ten (10) excused school days, the principal or designee may require a conference with the parent or legal guardian to discuss the implications for learning and achievement, the consequences of failure to attend, and any corrective actions that need to be made. Further, the principal or designee may require documentation beyond the written excuse (doctor's note) if more than ten (10) handwritten notes have been sent. **After 15 consecutive, missed school days a student will be withdrawn from school.** If a student accumulates more than twenty (20) absences all year long, including days missed because of late enrollment, the student may be retained in their grade.

## Not Been Absent

A student is NOT considered present ("Not Been Absent") unless they are in school over 50% of that day (3 hours and 16 minutes).

## Truancy Prevention Procedures

At Each Absence:

- Phone Call to Parent:

At 3<sup>rd</sup> Unexcused Absence:

- Phone Call to Parent/ 3 Day Letter Sent
- Parent Conference

At 5<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence:

- Phone Call to Parent/ 5 Day Letter Sent
- Meeting Scheduled for Parent/Guardian to come in and create TPP.
- Complete and sign Truancy Prevention Plan (TPP)

At 6<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence:

- Phone Call to Parent/ 6 Day Letter Sent
- Second Parent/Guardian Conference scheduled
- Truancy Conference Held and Minutes of conference placed in Truancy Record.

At 7<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence:

- Phone Call to Parent/ 7 Day Letter Sent
- Refer to Truancy Officer

After 10<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence:

- Parent may be referred for court intervention
- School will continue to monitor attendance to determine when/if a referral to court is needed

# OTHER MCPS INFORMATION

## (arranged alphabetically by topic)

### ACCIDENT/INJURY ON CAMPUS

It is MCPS's desire for everyone to be safe and injury-free while on our property or in our vehicles. From time to time, accidents do occur. Any accident that occurs on campus or in a vehicle should be immediately reported to the school administration. This goes for employees, visitors, and students, even if there is no apparent injury sustained. If an accident report is generated, it should be signed and returned as soon as possible to the school principal.

### ADDRESS CHANGE/MOVING

Parents must notify the School Office when their home address changes. If families move out of Mecklenburg County, children are no longer eligible to attend Mecklenburg County Schools and will be withdrawn.

If a student moves, they must bring in 2 verifiable documents as proof of residency from the following.

- One proof of residency from: current utility bill (electric, water, gas, cable/satellite), voter registration, auto registration, payroll stub, personal property tax receipt, W2, or bank statements (2 months) **All have to be current within 3 months.**
- An additional proof of residency from: mortgage statement, deed, sales agreement, tax bill, or lease agreement.

### ATTENDANCE ZONE

#### Out of Zone

Students may attend a school that is "out of zone" with written permission. *Out of Zone* is defined as living within Mecklenburg County, but attending school outside of the school attendance zone where the residence is located. Requests are reviewed and renewed yearly. Approval must be given by the principal and the superintendent. The due date for a renewal Out of Zone application for 2024-25 returning students is April 30, 2024. The due date for new students in 2024-25 is June 28, 2024. [The application can be found here.](#)

#### Non-Resident

Students may attend a school within Mecklenburg County even if the student's residence is not in Mecklenburg County. This requested application form for 2024-25 is due by April 30, 2024 for returning students and June 28, 2024 for new students. This only applies for grades K-12. PreK

students are not eligible for non-resident enrollment. There is an annual fee for non-resident students. [The application can be found here.](#)

## Homeless Students

The Mecklenburg County School Board is committed to educating all children and youth in our community. Homeless children and youth shall not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The school division will coordinate the identification and provision of services to such students with relevant local social services agencies and other agencies and programs providing services to such students, and with other school divisions as may be necessary to resolve interdivisional issues. For more information regarding your rights, please see Policy JECA on our website at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org).

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Honor Roll

Each nine weeks, an honor roll list of students in grades 3-5 will be published. To be eligible for the honor roll, the student must not earn any grade below a "B" on his or her report card for that particular grading period. This includes grades in all classes and all "S" in conduct.

### Not Been Absent

A student is NOT considered present ("Not Been Absent") unless they are in school over 50% of that day (3 hours and 16 minutes).

### President's Award for Educational Excellence (5th Grade)

Founded in 1983, the President's Education Awards Program (PEAP) honors graduating elementary school students for their achievement and hard work. The program has provided individual recognition from the President and the U.S. Secretary of Education to those Fifth grade students whose outstanding efforts have enabled them to meet challenging standards of excellence. Each year, thousands of elementary schools participate by recognizing deserving students. Students must meet criteria in three areas - 1. Grade point average, 2, School Criteria/Standards and 3. Standards of Learning Test.

### Principal's List

At the end of the year, eligible students are recognized for the principal's list in grades 3-5. To be eligible for the principal's list, the student must not earn any grade below an "A" on the report card for the entire year. This includes grades in all classes and all "S" in conduct. The student must also be discipline free for the entire school year.

## BOOKBAGS

Students may bring a bookbag to school daily in order to transport school materials to and from school each day. However, please do not send rolling bookbags. For our younger students, we want to ensure they have a light load.

# BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT (SCC)

The faculty, staff, and administration are dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment while providing an academically challenging curriculum that will cultivate each student's unique capabilities and talents. Elementary schools in Mecklenburg County believe in taking a preventive and positive approach to discipline that creates a safe, supportive, and positive environment where adults respond to misbehavior with interventions and consequences aimed at understanding and addressing the causes of misbehavior, meeting students' needs and keeping students in school and learning. Each student is encouraged to model good citizenship and appropriate behavioral traits that demonstrate an understanding of respect for themselves and others. In order to maintain this environment, each student must be held accountable for their actions with an understanding that there are positive and/or negative choices for such actions. For detailed information regarding Student Code of Conduct, please see School Board Policy JFC on our website at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org).

## Parental/Guardian Responsibility and Involvement Requirements

Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a public school has a duty to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and [compulsory school attendance](#) (School Board Policy JEA) in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights.

Schools will schedule meetings with parents/guardians to develop student behavior assessment (SBA)/student intervention plans (SIP) to assist those students with multiple behavioral incidents. Upon the failure of the parent/guardian to comply with schools to develop an SBA/SIP, under the provisions of Section G of the Code of Virginia §22.1-279.3, the School Board may, by petition to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, proceed against the parent/guardian for willful and unreasonable refusal to participate in efforts to improve the student's behavior. Students with a history of misbehavior, who have a SBA/SIP in place and continue to misbehave, may have charges filed against them for code of conduct infractions.

## Cumulative Nature of Discipline

Certain infractions of school rules or School Board policies by students will carry penalties of a cumulative nature. These policies include those dealing with drugs, alcohol, weapons, and violent disrespect of employees/students. In these cases, a first offense of a particular type carries a particular penalty. A second or third infraction of a similar type carries more severe penalties.

## Discipline Expectations

MCPS Elementary administrators aim to keep students in the classroom so that learning can continue for each child. When a discipline incident occurs, there may be a need to remove a student from the educational environment, including MCPS transportation.

**Examples of consequence may include, but are not limited to:**

- Time out of the classroom
  - The student may spend time in the office, ISS, school counseling office, behavior interventionist office, or other appropriate location that includes adult supervision
- Conference with student
  - The student will meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss the incident and consequences. This could also include educational material on the subject matter being discussed, such as vaping educational materials.
- Parent contact
  - School personnel will talk with a parent by phone or in-person to discuss the incident
- Conference with parent
  - The parent is required to meet with school personnel before a student can return to school. Parents can request a conference if one is not required by school personnel.
- In-school Suspension (ISS)
  - The student is placed in ISS for part or all of a school day based on the incident.
- Out-of-school Suspension (OSS)
  - The student is not allowed on school property or at a school sponsored event during an out-of-school suspension.
- Denial of Transportation Privileges
  - When transportation privileges have been revoked, a student can attend school, but can not use school transportation.
- Referral to the Disciplinary Hearing Committee
  - The parent and student are required to meet with the Disciplinary Hearing Committee to determine the student's placement before a student can return to school.

## BULLYING/HARASSMENT PREVENTION

According to the Virginia Department of Education, **Bullying** is any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes cyberbullying. **Cyberbullying** refers to any threats by one student toward another typically through emails or on websites (e.g., blogs, social networking sites). Electronic communication that supports deliberate, hostile, hurtful messages intended to harm others is a form of bullying. "Bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

A student, individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others. Bullying behavior may include physical intimidation, taunting, name calling, and insults; comments regarding the race, gender, religion, physical abilities or other characteristics associated with the targeted individual; and falsifying statements about the targeted individual or associates. Bullying behavior may be verbal or non-verbal. Mecklenburg County does not tolerate bullying/harassment. If you witness someone being bullied/harassed, or if you are being bullied/harassed, please report it to your school counselor, teacher, or an administrator immediately. The principal shall notify the parent of any student involved in an alleged incident of bullying of the status of any investigation within 24 hours of learning of such allegation

Some key elements of bullying are:

- Intentionally aggressive behavior designed to inflict harm
- Repetitive behavior planned into the future
- Interpersonal relationship marked by an imbalance of power

CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Occasional	Occasional	Once or Twice	Is REPEATED
Not planned; in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous: unintentional	Intentional	Is planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings; upset	Can hurt others deeply	The target of the bullying is upset
All parties want to work things out	Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism	Based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person accepts responsibility	Behavior often regretted;	The bully blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem			The target wants to stop the bully's behavior, the bully does not
Can be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/ should NOT be ignored	CANNOT be resolved through mediation

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

## CAFETERIA/FOOD SERVICES

Mecklenburg County's Food Service employees work hard to provide healthy, flavorful, and nutritious breakfast and lunch for our students every day. All Mecklenburg Schools provide breakfast and lunch free of charge for all students thanks to the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. We know the importance of good nutrition to student learning and encourage all students to enjoy the meals prepared every day with care.

**Outside Food/Drinks are not to be brought onto our campus during the operational school day.** Students may bring their own lunch to school, but parents or visitors are not to bring outside food or drink.

Students have an online account through [Myschoolbucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com) where parents can add funds to the child's account for additional meals, beverages, snacks, and other a la carte items.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) establishes many school nutrition requirements. One USDA requirement is that children between the ages of 3 and 5 years of age must be served unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk with their meals. This policy is specifically designed for this younger age group to help meet their nutritional needs. Taste preferences are formed early in a child's life, and meals served to preschoolers are a critical part of establishing healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Mecklenburg County serves all PreK and Kindergarten students unflavored milk only, regardless of student age.

## CELL PHONES and ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may not use personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, game systems, VR devices, cellular enabled watches, etc., during the school day. Students are required to leave these items in their bookbag. They should remain out of sight and off during the school day. Students may not use their devices at any time during the school day. If a student is observed using their device during the school day, that device is to be confiscated and may only be returned to the student's parent or guardian. If a student records any activities during a school day without expressed permission from the school principal, they will be subject to disciplinary action.

Any student, who uses a cellular telephone or other personal device for unlawful activity while on school property, or while attending any school function or activity, will be subject to disciplinary action that may include out-of-school suspension or a recommendation for expulsion. Mecklenburg County Public Schools is not responsible for lost or stolen personal cellular telephones or other personal electronic devices.

## COMMUNICATION

### Conference Request

If you would like to have a parent/teacher conference with a single teacher, please contact the teacher directly. If you would like to meet with multiple teachers, please contact your school counselor and they will help to set up that parent/teacher conference. If you would like to have a conference with the principal or other administrator, please contact that person directly.

### Inclement Weather

MCPS seeks to maximize instructional days while balancing risks of student transportation. Generally, MCPS will not cancel or delay school due to fog, but does urge extra care on those frequent days when fog is present. If inclement weather is forecast, MCPS may declare a day of virtual learning prior to the event and all students will take home assignments for up to two days of self-directed work. In certain situations, MCPS may delay the start of school or end the school day early. Whenever possible, all announcements concerning school closings or late openings will be posted on our website and social media or callouts made no later than 6:00 a.m.



Announcements will be made on all local radio, television stations, the Mecklenburg Public School website ([www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org)), the Mecklenburg County Facebook page, and on the School Messenger System.

## Parent Portal

Parents have access to student grades and attendance 24 hours a day through the [Parent Portal](#). A parent can request access by contacting the school. It should be used to access grades throughout the marking period. Progress reports (interims) will be printed at the mid-term of each grading period. They can be printed upon request at other times during the nine weeks. Parent Portal can be found at this [website](#).

## REMIND

[REMIND](#) is also a resource widely used in MCPS for parental notifications from teachers as well as administrators. This is a text messaging service that parents must opt into for each individual class in order to receive notifications. Remind can be downloaded as an app on your cell phone or accessed through this [website](#).

## Automated Messenger

Mecklenburg County Public Schools is pleased to again provide the rapid notification service, School Messenger, to our students and their families at *no charge*. School Messenger allows school principals and division administrators the opportunity to use digital messaging technology to quickly provide telephone, cell phone, and pager notification messages to parents and faculty in the event of school closings, delays, and emergencies. The School Messenger system can also be used to send school related messages about meetings, practices, public services, and other important, but less serious matters to individuals or select groups.

The system uses the main phone number provided on the School Emergency Card when students register to notify parents/guardians in the event of a school delay, closing, or emergency and to receive other school related messages. It is imperative that the school is informed when parents/guardians change a contact number or address for any reason. In the event that a student has more than one parent/guardian who needs to receive School Messenger messages, the parent should contact their child's school for further guidance.

## CRISIS PLAN AND EMERGENCY DRILLS

It is the intent of Mecklenburg County Public Schools to provide a safe and secure environment for learning and, if needed, to restore the learning environment as quickly and safely as possible following traumatic incidents.

The division continually updates the Emergency Response Crisis Management (ERCM) and school safety plans for all schools. These plans include protocols and procedures concerning the following phases of ERCM: prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for multiple types of incidents that may occur at or may impact schools.

In order to assure that proper procedures are being followed, schools will be required to perform functional tests (drills) and assessments of each phase. Assessments and drills will be performed with students present and when they are not present. Some assessments and drills will be



announced and some will be unannounced. Prior notice will be given to parents when required by law.

In order to assure everyone's safety in the event of a drill or incident, it is important for students, parents, faculty and staff, visitors, and first responder organizations (law enforcement, fire, and rescue squads) to follow established protocols and procedures.

*Be aware that:*

- Students are not permitted to use cell phones or other personal communication devices at school and especially not during a drill or actual emergency.
- Only authorized law enforcement, fire department, rescue squad, and other officially designated persons should respond to any school during an incident.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged not to call the school during a crisis event, and should not come to school to remove their children during a crisis or threatened event unless informed to do so by school administration.
- In the event of an actual emergency, the school administrator or central office administration will notify parents and the public of the following: the situation, what is being done to protect students, if and when the school will close, and when and how students will be reunited with their families.

## **DEBT (STUDENT)**

Students who have lost books, damaged property, or failed to pay other appropriate and school board approved required fees may accumulate debt from year to year. Individual student debt records are maintained by the school bookkeeper and students and families may verify the amount owed upon request. Students may be excluded from activities for nonpayment of fees. More information regarding student debt can be found in [Policy JN](#) of the School Board Policy.

## **DELIVERIES**

No deliveries will be accepted for students. This includes, but is not limited to, fast food, flowers, balloons, or gifts.

## **DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES & PROCEDURES**

Students may be disciplined by school administration per School Board policy JFC for violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination is treating someone unequally based on a certain characteristic in a way that interferes with a person's education and/or academic performance. Discrimination based on a person's sex, sexual orientation, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, gender identity,

ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status or any other unlawful basis is illegal.

## DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

Discriminatory Harassment is verbal, physical, written, graphic, or electronic conduct that disparages or shows hostility toward an individual or group of individuals based on a certain characteristic (referenced above). Examples of discriminatory harassment include: epithets, various slurs such as racial, deadnaming, and misgendering, negative stereotyping, jokes, written, printed or graphic material that contains offensive, demeaning, or degrading images or comments. Discriminatory harassment may create an intimidating or offensive learning environment that interferes with a student's education and/or academic performance.

## DRESS CODE

Parents/guardians and students must assume the responsibility of the student's proper attire as outlined in the policy. A student's dress and appearance should not cause disruption, distract other students from their school work, or compromise health and safety. If a student's dress or appearance is inappropriate, the student will be required to change the student's dress or appearance. Note: School administration can make exceptions to the student dress code at their discretion for spirit days and special events.

These guidelines serve as the warning in reference to the dress code:

- Shoes must be worn at all times. Sneakers should be worn for PE/Recess every day.
- Stretch leggings, jeggings, tights, or similar clothing may be worn with tops that are no shorter than fingertip length all the way around the student's body.
- All pants and shorts must be worn at the waistline. No undergarments may be visible, nor should gym shorts or any other garments underneath the outer layer of clothing be visible.
- Sleeveless garment straps must be three fingers in width.
- Clothing should not expose the student's midriff, chest, or private areas at any time.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee all the way around the student's body.

Students **may not** wear the following:

- Clothing, jewelry, and other personal belongings displaying language or images that are vulgar, lewd, or obscene; that reflects adversely on or disparage another's race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability; that promote the use of drugs, illegal substances, or alcohol; that contains threats, gang

symbols, symbols of groups associated with threatening or violent behavior, or groups that promote the unlawful use of weapons or other criminal behavior.

- Hats, hoods, bandanas, sweatbands, tiaras, crowns, masks (that covers more than the mouth and nose), or head coverings of any kind while inside the school building, unless worn for religious, ethnically specific, or medical reasons.
- Sunglasses while inside the school buildings unless prescribed by a physician.
- Jeans with rips, tears, or holes that expose skin above the fingertips. If jeans have rips, tears, or holes, skin must be covered.
- Jerseys with large armholes unless there is a t-shirt worn underneath.
- Pajamas, sleepwear, swimwear.
- Spiked jewelry, chains, fish hooks, and items which could cause student injury.
- Clothing that is see-through, revealing, or resembles undergarments

Students who are improperly dressed will be referred to school administrators or a designee who will assist the student in complying with dress code standards.

#### **CONSEQUENCES OF IMPROPER DRESS:**

<b>First Offense:</b>	Hold in ISS until changed/parent/guardian phone call
<b>Second Offense:</b>	One Day of In-School Suspension with student contract
<b>Third Offense:</b>	Required parent/guardian conference
<b>Fourth Offense:</b>	One Day of Out-of-School Suspension

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Parents are asked each year to verify the emergency information on the Student Verification Form. The importance of these forms cannot be overemphasized. They let school officials know about student health issues and provide contact information that is used to reach parents if an emergency arises.

Please complete and quickly return your student's Student Verification Form. Also, be sure to contact the school to update your child's information whenever there is a change in

- your child's health
- your address, email address, cellphone, home phone, work phone or workplace
- the people authorized to pick up your child if you cannot be reached during an emergency

It is imperative that your child's information be kept current. In some cases, your child will need to be picked up by a parent or designee so that a decision can be made on the treatment needed. Adequate facilities and staffing are not available to allow us to isolate sick or injured children for an extended amount of time; therefore, your prompt response is essential.

## FEES

Special Fees – The cost of supplemental paperback books, which are purchased by students on a voluntary basis.

### *Elementary Schools*

Student Planner, Grades 2-5 (replacement cost)	\$5.00
# Transcript/Non-academic records fee	\$5.00

\*See Technology for fees associated with devices.

*Fees are subject to change.*

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are learning activities that should be designed to further or continue instruction and learning outside of the classroom. Students are not to be excluded from field trips due to debt or inability to pay the prescribed fee. If you have difficulty paying field trip fees, please contact the administration.

## HOME SCHOOL

In Virginia, as stated in the Guidelines for Home Instruction in Virginia, "parents must ensure that a child attends school in compliance with the state compulsory attendance law" as specified in § 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia when the child has reached his 5th birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and has not passed his 18th birthday. Parents who believe that a child is not mentally, physically, or emotionally prepared to attend school may inform the school board that they want to delay school attendance until the following year if the child has not reached his 6th birthday on or before September 30. The compulsory attendance law permits a child subject to that law to attend a private or public school or receive an education through alternatives to school attendance outlined in state law unless the child is excused from attendance by a local school board, as stated in § 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia.

Home instruction or home schooling is one alternative to school attendance. In Virginia "any parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person having control or charge of a child" (§ 22.1-1 of the Code of Virginia) may provide home instruction as prescribed by § 22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia. Section 22.1-262 of the Code of Virginia requires a school attendance officer to refer to a juvenile and domestic relations court (with the knowledge and approval of the school superintendent) any parent who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance law."

## Other Alternatives for Parents

The Guidelines for Home Instruction in Virginia further states that "Section 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia allows parents to have their children taught by a tutor or a teacher who meets the teacher licensure qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education when that individual has been approved as a tutor by the school division superintendent. To meet the qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education, the tutor must have a valid Virginia teaching license in any area and may be a parent who meets the tutor qualifications.

Parents seeking a religious exemption must petition the school board and show that, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief, the pupil, together with his parents, is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school. The term bona fide religious training or belief "does not include essentially political, sociological, or philosophical views or a merely personal code." (§ 22.1-254.B.1, Code of Virginia)."

For further information regarding home instruction or religious exemption, please contact:

Mary Hodges, Director of Student Services

Wendy Bohannon, Secretary

434.738.6111

[mhodges@mcpsweb.org](mailto:mhodges@mcpsweb.org)

[wbohannon@mcpsweb.org](mailto:wbohannon@mcpsweb.org)

## INSURANCE

Neither the school nor the school board provide insurance for individual students. Parents/guardians and/or students are responsible for their own insurance coverage. Students may purchase, at their option, a comprehensive accident insurance policy from a vendor of their choice.

## LOST AND FOUND

Students should take all found items to the office. If a student loses anything, check in the office. Items not claimed by the end of the semester will be donated to charity or discarded. Mecklenburg County Public Schools is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

## MANDATORY REPORTING

All school employees are required by law to immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the relevant law enforcement or child protection agency. From time to time, employees may see or hear things that cause them to believe a student may be ill treated. They are considered "mandated reporters," and are required by law to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect.

# MINUTE OF SILENCE

The school observes a minute of silence at the beginning of each school day. It is important that all students respect this time by remaining seated and quiet during this moment. The minute of silence may be used for any lawful silent activity including personal reflections, prayer, meditation, and/or reading. However, the teacher who is responsible for each class will not influence students in any way to pray or meditate during the minute of silence. Students and employees are prohibited from praying aloud during the minute of silence.

# MONEY

Students are discouraged from bringing large sums of money to school. All money for lunch, fund-raising activities, etc., must be turned into the office in the morning. Payments to the school of any kind should be made by check and made payable to your child's school. Money for breakfast, lunch, etc. can also be added to your child's account online. Please contact the main office for more information on how to add meal money to [Myschoolbucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com). Online purchase programs may charge a service fee.

School Cash Online will be available for parents to pay school fees in the very near future.

# NURSE

Mecklenburg County is fortunate to have a nurse in each of our schools. They administer hearing and vision screenings, provide health education, care for sudden onset illness, manage chronic illnesses, update immunization records, and administer approved medications. Generally, no elementary school student may have medication on their person or take medication unsupervised at school. The exception is that students can self carry and self administer epipens, asthma inhalers, and diabetic supplies per MCPS policy and with doctor and parent approval. Parents/Guardians with students with any special health needs or concerns should work closely with the school nurse to ensure proper documentation of those needs so that key people will be informed of that need.

Normally, if a child is too sick to be in class, they are too sick to be in school. **Your child must be symptom free (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) for 24 hours (without medication) before returning to school. They must be fever free without a fever reducing medicine.**

## Health Screenings

Our health professionals will conduct vision and hearing screenings in Kindergarten and 3rd grade to assist in early identification of problems. If you have concerns about your child's hearing or vision, please contact your school nurse.

## Injury and/or Illness

If it is determined that a student is ill or has sustained an injury that requires more than assistance given in the classroom, that student will be brought to the nurse's office immediately for further

evaluation by the school nurse. If parent contact is necessary, every effort will be made to notify the parent or responsible party listed on the student's emergency card.

## Medication

It is recommended that students take medications at home whenever possible. Students that need to take medication at school must have a parent fill out and sign the necessary forms. The forms may also need to be signed by the doctor. Parents must bring in medication for their child. It should not be sent to school with the child for everyone's safety. Medication will be kept and dispensed by authorized personnel. Students can self carry epipens, asthma inhalers, and diabetic supplies per our policy and with parent and doctor approval. Please see the School Board Policy JHCD on our website at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org) for more information on prescription and over the counter requirements. All medication must be picked up at the end of the academic year or it will be destroyed per our guidelines. All forms must be completed annually.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

There will be two scheduled parent-teacher conference dates each year following the first and third nine weeks. Parents/Guardians can schedule individual conferences, should the need arise, at any time during the academic year.

## PESTS

When head lice are found on a student at school, the parent will be contacted and given information about treating lice. Parents should check and treat everyone in the home for head lice. As per VDH recommendations, students diagnosed with live head lice will not be sent home early from school. They can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to school and class after appropriate treatment. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. The school nurse will check the child on return to school to confirm there are no live head lice present. Parents will be notified if live head lice or nits are still present. A nit comb should be used again if nits are still present. Most chemical treatments do not kill nits (eggs), and nits can hatch causing a reinfestation.

Although bedbug infestations are on the rise in the United States, few have been observed in Mecklenburg County schools. One bedbug is not an infestation. If a bedbug is found, school staff members will follow cleaning and monitoring procedures and will notify parents as appropriate. Students will not be sent home for bed bugs.

## PETS/SERVICE ANIMALS

Animals are effective and valuable teaching aids, but safeguards are required to reduce the risk for infection and injury. Classroom pets can provide opportunities to achieve a variety of learning objectives. Service animals are sometimes used on campus. MCPS has established administrative guidelines for allowing animals in classrooms or on campus. In addition, documentation must be completed and approved annually in order to allow animals to be in our schools or on our school campuses.

# PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance, as established in 4 U.S.C. § 4, is recited daily in each classroom of the Mecklenburg County school division. During the recitation of the Pledge, students shall stand and recite the Pledge while facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts or in an appropriate salute if in uniform.

No student is compelled to recite the Pledge if the student or the student's parent or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to the student participating in this exercise.

Students who are exempt from reciting the Pledge shall quietly stand or sit at their desks while others recite the Pledge and shall make no display that disrupts or distracts those who are reciting the Pledge.

Appropriate accommodations are made for students who are unable to comply with the procedures described herein due to disability.

# RESTROOMS

Students are given adequate opportunities to use a restroom during the school day. If a medical condition exists requiring more frequent restroom visits, a doctor's note is required to be on file.

# SALE OF GOODS

Only approved student groups may sell goods as scheduled through the Principal. No individual may sell for personal profit. Approved sale of goods are not permitted during any period of time in a school building during established breakfast or lunch time.

# SCHOOL PICTURES

MCPS will have opportunities for student pictures in fall and spring. The fall picture is required and is included as part of the student information system (Infinite Campus). Parents will have the opportunity to purchase pictures directly from the company.

# SEX OFFENDERS

**Sex Offenders are NOT Allowed on School Property!**

Every adult convicted of a sexual offense is prohibited from entering or being present on school property during school hours and during school-related and school-sponsored activities (MCPS [Policy KN](#) & [Policy KNA](#) ). Per requirements in Va. Code § 22.1- 79.3, parents may access information in the Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry at <https://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/>

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Mecklenburg County School Board to maintain a working and learning environment for all its employees and students, which provides for fair and equitable treatment, including freedom from sexual harassment. It is prohibited for any employee or student, to harass another employee or student, by doing such things as unwelcome sexual advances or requests



for sexual favors, engaging in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or engaging in conduct which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Anyone who is found after investigation to have engaged in sexual harassment of another employee or student will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Sexual harassment complaints are to be brought to the attention of an administrator immediately.

## STUDENT PLANNER

Some schools and/or grade levels require students to have a homework planner. The first planner will be provided free of charge. Replacement planners will cost \$5.00.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Mecklenburg County School Board provides a free, appropriate public education for all children and youth with disabilities, ages 2 through 21, inclusive, who are residents of Mecklenburg County. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled.

Referral process for Special Education: Parents, teachers, administrators, and school staff may refer students by contacting the Special Education Chairperson at the student's school and request a comprehensive study meeting. The timeline for an eligibility decision on each case is 65 instructional days from the date received by the Office of Student Services.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Canvas

Canvas is a Learning Management System. All teachers use Canvas for online instructional management and course communication. Additionally, Canvas integrates with the many applications students use for learning. Computers and internet access are vital in education because they are vital in almost all 21st century careers. When teachers leverage rich, interactive digital content in their instruction, students are provided with greater opportunity to personalize and tailor learning to their personal and immediate needs.

### Chromebook Initiative

For the 2023-2024 school year, Chromebooks are being issued to students in Grades K-12. Students will be assigned a Chromebook for the school year. Because they are considered as essential as pencils and paper, they will need to be kept at school each day. In the event that MCPS experiences unforeseen school closures due to weather, an emergency, a pandemic, or other cause, students will use their Chromebook to engage in learning remotely. Chromebooks are the property of Mecklenburg County Public Schools, are on loan in accordance with the Chromebook Policies and Procedures as outlined in the Code of Conduct, the District's Acceptable Use Policy, and any applicable laws.

Violations such as searching inappropriate websites and not following specific directions with the use of the Chromebook may result in disciplinary actions and loss of privileges. Abuse of mobile

learning devices will result in the parents assuming the cost of repairs. For the MCPS Chromebook Initiative, please refer to the Mobile Responsibility Handbook. **Students must use their school issued device. No personal computers or chromebooks will be allowed on the school network.**

All students and parents are responsible for signing the [1:1 Mobile Learning Device Responsibilities Handbook agreement](#).

## Technology Fees (MCPS) for 2023-2024

### *Mecklenburg County Public Schools End of Year Technology Costs for 2023-2024*

#### *Cash Payment*

Chromebook	Damage 2nd Offense	Damage 3rd Offense
	\$25	\$50
Chromebook Charger	Damaged	Lost
	\$25	\$25

#### *Online Store Payment*

Chromebook	Damage 2nd Offense	Damage 3rd Offense
	\$26.25	\$52.25
Chromebook Charger	Damaged	Lost
	\$26.25	\$26.25

**Lost Chromebooks:** The charge for Chromebooks will depend on the years of service of the Chromebook. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**Note:** All Chromebooks should be returned in their protective case.

- *Damage/Intentional damage, loss, or theft (to be determined by administration and IT) will be subject to disciplinary action and fees.*
- *Fees are subject to change.*
- *Drawing and adding stickers to the chromebook will be classified as an offense.*

## Photographs and Video for Media Use

The school division and even the media regularly photograph and tape events, activities and success stories at schools. If you do not want your child's image or name used in publications or other media, you must annually notify the school by filling out the Computer Use Agreement.

## Blended Learning

Mecklenburg County Public Schools provides Chromebooks to students at all grade levels. In addition to using the computers throughout the school day, students have the opportunity to use their Chromebooks outside of school and engage in anytime, anywhere learning. This blended learning initiative puts thousands of Chromebooks into the hands and/or homes of MCPS students. Mecklenburg County Public Schools has created a digital teaching and learning environment to better prepare students for college and careers.

## TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

Textbooks adopted for use by Mecklenburg County Public Schools are selected from Virginia's state approved/adopted text list. When there are multiple selections to choose from, a committee is created to review and provide recommendations as to which textbook(s) to choose. Some texts are available electronically only, some hard copy only, and some are available in multiple formats.

The Mecklenburg County School Board provides, free of charge, textbooks required for course instruction for each child attending public schools; however, the school board may assess a reasonable fee or charge for damages (including, but not limited to, marks made with pencils or pens, torn pages, and damages to the cover or spine) or loss of school property when such property has been used by students without charge. Fees assessed will be based on the prices for the current school year. Furthermore, fees may be assessed for damages or loss of classroom resource books and library books.

Unpaid textbook fees from lost or damaged textbooks/books should be paid for by the parent before the end of the school year. See more information under Debt (Student).

## TITLE I

Title I is the single largest federally funded program for elementary and secondary education in the nation. Re-authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I funding helps local school divisions provide equal educational opportunities for low-performing students in schools with economic need.

## Program Components

Title I provides supplemental support through a multifaceted approach to improving student achievement. Key facets of that approach include:

- **Additional Staffing:** Title I funds can be used to provide additional staffing.
- **High Academic Standards:** Student progress is monitored throughout the year to ensure that all students are meeting academic goals.
- **Early and Comprehensive Intervention:** Additional instructional time is provided for identified Title I students through supplemental programs such as Reading Recovery, Book Buddies, small-group instruction in reading and math, both in and out of classrooms.
- **Family Engagement:** Parent Advisory Council and Family Literacy and Math Activities help families focus on literacy and numeracy.
- **Professional Development:** Courses, workshops, and in-services provide additional training for teachers at Title I schools. These professional development activities can be related to math, reading, intervention, and/or classroom strategies for student engagement and learning.
- **Partnerships between Schools and Community:** Partnerships with community organizations that share our mission provide additional literacy and numeracy opportunities for Title I students.

## Home-School Connection

Title I is committed to developing strong partnerships with parents. Parents and schools working as partners increase student achievement and help develop positive attitudes about self and school.

A countywide Title I Advisory Committee is established in the fall of each year. This committee is made up of parent representatives and Title I teachers from each Title I school. They meet with the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction and other designated MCPS personnel. These meetings inform parents about the Title I program and give them the opportunity to have input into the planning and design of the program.

### Contact Information:

Dr. Paige Lacks, Executive Director Curriculum and Instruction  
Mecklenburg County Public Schools  
434-738-6111  
[placks@mcpsweb.org](mailto:placks@mcpsweb.org)

# Title I - Parental Involvement

Mecklenburg County Public Schools recognizes that the education of each student is a responsibility shared by the school, the student, and the student's family. Mecklenburg County Public Schools endorses parental involvement and encourages regular participation by all parents in the education of their child(ren). All Mecklenburg County Elementary Schools are designated as school-wide Title I Schools.

- The school will convene an annual parent meeting during the month of August/September.
- The school will establish a meeting schedule. Meeting agendas and minutes will be available to parents.
- The school will establish a Title I Advisory Committee and these meetings will be open to all parents.
- The Committee will consist of administrator(s), Title I staff, teachers, and parent representative(s) from each grade level.
- The school will provide curriculum/assessment information to all parents.
- The school will review data with school staff and provide input relative to the School Improvement Plan.
- The school will provide parents with a copy of the school's Parental Involvement Plan
- The Parental Involvement Plan will be developed by the Title I Advisory Committee and reviewed/amended annually. The plan will be available to parents of English Learner (EL) students.
- The school's Parental Involvement Plan supports the division level plan.
- The school will provide timely information about programs, parent/teacher conferences, daily schedules, school events, supply lists, and contact information via automated message service, newsletters, school calendar, school/county website, and other varied media outlets.

## Parental Involvement is the Centerpiece of Title I

- Parents are full partners in their child's education and are encouraged to be actively involved in their success.
- The school will include parents, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child(ren).
- Parents are encouraged to attend meetings and workshops at the school level.
- Parents may participate by volunteering at school, serving on various teams and committees, observing the operation of the Title I Program, assisting with the evaluation of the success of the Title I Plan and offering suggestions for improvement.
- Many activities and events are planned throughout the year to include our families and communities. Be sure to check out flyers and social media posts throughout the school year for more information.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Instruction of all students at Mecklenburg County Public Schools involves using the Virginia Standards of Learning in all subject areas. Mecklenburg County follows the state-developed curriculum framework and countywide pacing guides. To support the Standards of Learning, the

school uses county-adopted textbooks that follow the Virginia Department of Education's guidelines. Many opportunities are provided to help children perform at their maximum level of academic achievement. Examples of those opportunities include, but are not limited to:

Accelerated Reader  
Holey Cards (Math Facts)  
Art Education  
Special Education and Related Services  
Speech & Language  
Occupational Therapy  
Physical Therapy  
Vision  
Hearing  
Counseling/Behavior Specialists  
ESL  
Gifted and Talented  
Science Fair  
4-H  
Response to Intervention

Music Education  
Before/Afterschool Remediation  
Summer Remediation  
Career Pathways  
Leveled Readers  
Literacy Groups  
Title I Services  
Tutoring  
Family Literacy Workshops  
PALS  
Reading Specialists  
Physical Education  
Computer Technology Programs  
ST Math  
Nutrition/Wellness Programs

## TOBACCO

Smoking, vaping, chewing or any other use of any tobacco, vapor, or marijuana products by staff, students, and visitors is prohibited on school property. This ban on these products' use applies to students, employees, and all guests at all times - whether or not school is in session. For more information regarding tobacco use, please see the School Board Policy JFCH/GBEC on our website at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org).

## TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED BY MCPS

It is the county's goal to transport all children to and from school safely and free from intimidation or fear of harm. All students who ride a school bus or other MCPS provided transportation are subject to and expected to abide by the laws, rules, and regulations set by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Mecklenburg County School Board. All transportation and school rules and regulations apply from the bus stop/pick up point to drop off - sometimes known as portal to portal coverage. The driver is in charge of the MCPS-provided vehicle and students who ride in the MCPS-provided vehicle. The student must accept the authority of the driver and cooperate with their request. At any time, a parent conference may be required by the principal or their designee before a student can return to the bus or other MCPS provided transportation. Riding in a MCPS-provided vehicle is a privilege. Abuse of this privilege will not be tolerated and can be revoked for general education students.

**MCPS-provided transportation is a privilege not a right.** Parents, guardians, and caretakers of students attending Mecklenburg County Public Schools and utilizing school transportation (school buses or other MCPS provided transportation ) must:

1. Discuss transportation safety rules with their children on a regular basis.
2. Assure their children are appropriately supervised at their bus stops and be present or arranged for other adults to assume this responsibility.

- a. Students should arrive at least five minutes before the regular pickup time, but no earlier than ten minutes before the pickup time. Remain at the stop until buses arrive.
  - b. Students will be picked up and released at their designated (assigned) bus stops. Students grade 3 and under will not be released at a bus stop unless an older student, or responsible adult is there to receive them. If the student(s) will be returned to their home school and the parent will be contacted.
  - c. Students should not stand on the traveled portion of the roadway or parking lot while waiting for the bus or engage in play or other activities that will endanger themselves or their companions or possessions while waiting beside the road.
  - d. Students should not approach a bus arriving at the bus stop until it has come to a complete stop with the entrance door open.
  - e. Students should not run alongside a moving bus. Wait to cross a traveled portion of the roadway, or to board a bus, until the bus is stopped and other vehicles approaching or following the bus have stopped. The bus driver will signal students to cross a roadway when it is safe to do so.
  - f. Students should report any illness or injury sustained on or around the bus immediately to the driver.
3. Students may not ride a bus that is different from their assigned bus. In order to alleviate bus overcrowding and logistical challenges, **bus notes to ride different buses will not be accepted.**
  4. Communicate MCPS provided transportation concerns to building administration. **No conferences at/on the bus.**
  5. Refrain from entering county public transportation vehicles.
  6. Acceptable classroom standards of conduct shall be expected of bus passengers and drivers shall ensure that pupils observe regulations at all times. This conduct is also expected while at a bus stop. Among other things, students shall not smoke, yell, scream, swear, push, fight, bully, or take advantage of any other student; extend hands, arms, or heads or objects from bus windows; carry on the bus any drugs, weapons, water pistols, live reptiles, animals, insects, or oversized items (including school instruments) that would block an aisle, cause loss of passenger seat space, obstruct the driver's view, or create a safety hazard.
  7. By signing the handbook signature page at the end of this booklet, you are indicating that you, as the parent or guardian, and your child understand the importance of appropriate conduct whether riding for regular home-to-school service or other activities.

MCPS will annually survey all families electronically to determine transportation needs. A parent must indicate they plan to use MCPS transportation for us to build efficient transportation routes. This information must be provided annually by families to MCPS.

Additionally, MCPS audits transportation usage regularly. If a student misses five consecutive days of MCPS-provided transportation without school notification, that student's seat may be reassigned to another. In order to re-establish MCPS-provided transportation, the parent must contact the Transportation Office.

# VANDALISM AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

This is our school! Each student and employee is expected to take pride in keeping the buildings and grounds neat in appearance at all times. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If a student willfully destroys school property, suspension and possible expulsion will result as well as legal and financial responsibilities. If a student happens to damage something by accident, they should report it to a teacher or the office immediately.

# VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

As a component of a comprehensive safe school plan, video surveillance, with or without audio capability, may be used in the common areas of certain schools and in MCPS vehicles to maintain the security of students, staff members and visitors. Surveillance equipment may or may not be monitored at any time. Video recordings may be used for disciplinary purposes and will be retained if used in such a manner. Law enforcement representatives, in the course of a criminal investigation, may view video recordings. Students and parents/guardians may not have access to view surveillance footage due to privacy concerns.

# VISITORS

All MCPS employees will direct visitors to the main office. Upon entering the building, ALL visitors must report to the office, sign in with appropriate picture identification, and be issued a visitor's pass, which they must wear the duration of their visit. Visitors are only allowed in the designated area indicated on the visitor's name badge during sign in. Persons who fail to do so may be considered trespassers and are subject to legal action. Upon leaving campus, visitors should return to the office and sign out.

As a general rule, *student visitors will not be permitted during the school day*. No person whose presence or action interferes with or disrupts the operations of the school, its students, or its activities may enter or remain in any school building or property.

For more information on the Check In or Check Out procedures, please go to [Attendance](#).



# MCPS DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Mecklenburg County Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment. All students must be aware of both their rights and responsibilities. Our discipline practices are based upon the MCPS student code of conduct. Students and their parents should review and discuss the code of conduct and its guidelines in detail to ensure complete understanding.

All MCPS students will follow the policies, rules, and consequences as outlined in this handbook.

## **General Notes:**

1. The school board has tried to anticipate possible offenses. Not every possible act of misconduct may be listed. Failure to specify a behavior as an offense does not mean the behavior is acceptable and free from disciplinary action. The administration reserves the right to take disciplinary action and/or legal action as deemed necessary.
2. A student suspended from school may not participate in any school activity from the time of suspension until reinstatement in school, nor may they be on school property. The Elementary School Student Handbook/Code of Conduct applies to all activities and sports hosted by MCPS or at events where MCPS participates.
3. A student placed in ISS may not participate in any extracurricular activities, nor may they be on school grounds after hours until they have finished ISS assignments. This includes club activities, field trips, etc.
4. Every attempt will be made to notify parents/guardians of their son/daughter's misconduct.
5. Incomplete disciplinary action may be carried over from one academic year to the next.
6. All discipline offenses will be recorded in the student's record.

## **In-School Suspension**

Assignment of students to In-school Suspension (ISS) by building administrator(s) is not subject to appeal.

## **Suspension for Nine Days or Less**

The principal, any assistant principal, or in their absence, any designated certified staff member may suspend a pupil for nine school days or less using the following procedures:

- The student shall be informed of the nature and facts of the alleged misconduct.
- The student shall be given an opportunity to explain the circumstances of the alleged misconduct from his or her perspective.
- The student shall be informed of the conditions of the suspension, such as the required conference with the parent/guardian prior to return, prohibition from coming on school property, and prohibition on attending scheduled school activities or school-sponsored events.
- The principal shall execute a letter of suspension stating the condition of the suspension and the date that the student may return to school. Copies of the letter of suspension shall be given to the student, if possible, and mailed to the student's parent/guardian.
- The parent/guardian shall be notified of the right to an appeal if applicable and the procedures for appeal.

## **Emergency Suspension**

Any student whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption may be summarily removed from school immediately. The notice, explanation of facts, and the opportunity to present his or her version required under Suspension for Nine Days or Less shall be given as soon as practicable thereafter.

## **Suspension Ten or More Days**

In certain circumstances, an incident may warrant a suspension greater than nine days. In case of such an incident, the principal shall call the Superintendent's designee and inform them of the incident and consequence(s). Any student suspended for ten days out of school will result in a referral to the division's Hearing Officer. The Building Principal, or their designee, shall execute a letter of suspension, stating the condition of the suspension and the requirement that the student appear before the Hearing Officer before they return to school. The ten day suspension with a discipline hearing may not be appealed - the case will be made at the hearing. The division's Hearing Office shall contact the student/family to notify them of the date of the hearing.

Following the discipline hearing, the Superintendent's designee, the Hearing Officer, may suspend a student from school in excess of ten school days after the student and the parent/guardian have been provided written notice of the proposed action, and the reason therefore. In any case in which a student receives additional days of suspension or receives an alternative placement by the Superintendent's designee after a hearing, the student and the parent/guardian may appeal the decision to the School Board.

## **Make Up Work for Suspension**

Students in grades PK-5 who receive an out-of-school suspension will be expected to keep up with missed classwork and submit all assignments upon return to school. It is the responsibility of the student's parents to obtain assignments from the main office. If the parent/guardian or student makes a request for assignments, teachers are required to submit to the office any student assignments within twenty-four (24) hours of the request. In the case of class assignments that require in-class completion (test, lab assignments, etc.), the student will be expected to make arrangements with the teacher within five (5) days after their return to school to make up missed assignments. Due dates for completion of these in-class assignments will be established by teachers. Grades of zero (0) may be assigned only if a student fails to submit or make-up assignments according to these guidelines.

## **Discipline Hearing**

The superintendent's Hearing Officer or designee shall conduct all disciplinary hearings. Any suspension of a student for ten days shall require a referral to the Hearing Officer. Upon notice of a hearing, the student and their parent/guardian are required to appear before the hearing committee.

### **The procedure shall be as follows:**

- The principal or their designee shall provide the hearing officer with the discipline hearing packet, which includes a detailed incident report (including pictures and video when available), a summary of the student's prior discipline, the student's statement, witness statements, and a summary of the student's attendance and academic performance.

- The Hearings Officer or designee shall contact the student and their parent/guardian to notify them of the hearing requirement, the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- At the hearing, the Hearing Officer will state the reason for the hearing.
- The student will be asked to share their account of the incident and answer any questions the Discipline Hearing Committee may have.
- Following the student's statement, the Hearing Officer may question both the school representative(s) and the student. Questions will relate to the current infraction as well as discipline, attendance, and grades from the current year and prior years.
- Once all questions have been answered, the parent/guardian will be given an opportunity to share any information they have regarding the incident.
- No decision will be made at the hearing. The Hearing Officer will review the evidence with the Discipline Hearing Committee. After deliberation, the committee will render a decision and recommendation to the Superintendent, and inform the school and parent.

## **School Board Hearing**

The procedure for the School Board hearing shall be as follows:

- The School Board shall determine who should be in attendance at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing. The hearing shall be private unless otherwise specified by the School Board.
- The School Board may ask for opening statements from the principal, the principal's representative, the Discipline Hearing Officer, and the student, the parent/guardian or representative and, at the discretion of the School Board, may allow closing statements.
- The parties shall then present their evidence. The school division representative shall present evidence first. Witnesses may be questioned by the School Board members and by the parties (or their representatives). The School Board may, at its discretion, vary this procedure, but it shall afford full opportunity to both parties for presentation of any material or relevant evidence and shall afford the parties the right of cross-examination; provided, however, that the School Board may take testimony of a student witness outside the presence of the student in the discipline case, the parent/guardian or their representative if the School Board determines, at its discretion, that such action is necessary to protect the student witness.
- The parties shall produce such additional evidence the School Board may deem necessary. The School Board shall be the judge of the relevance of the evidence.
- Exhibits offered by the parties may be received in evidence by the School Board and, when so received, shall be marked and made part of the record.
- The School Board may, by majority vote, uphold, reject, or alter the recommendation.
- The School Board shall transmit its written decision to the student, the parent/guardian, the principal and Superintendent, including the reasons, therefore, the length of the expulsion, the availability of community-based educational programs, alternative education programs or other educational options. The cost of any community-based educational program, alternative education program, or educational option that is not a part of the educational program offered by the division shall be borne by the parents/guardians.
- The School Board may periodically review the progress of students who have appeared before them and may place reasonable requirements or stipulations on those students who they return to a school setting. Any such stipulations will be captured in the decision letter following the appeal.

## **Procedure for Appealing Out-of-School Suspension for Nine Days or Less**

A decision to suspend a student nine or fewer days may be appealed by the student's parent/guardian. The student may not attend school during the appeal process. Failure to file a written notice of appeal within the prescribed time will constitute a waiver of the right to appeal. A parent/guardian may appeal a suspension by an assistant principal to the principal of the school. A parent/guardian may appeal a suspension (or upheld suspension appeal) in the following manner:

1. A parent/guardian shall submit a written letter of appeal to the principal of the school within two administrative working days of notification of the suspension. The parent/guardian should state specifically the reasons for the appeal and consider the following before appealing a suspension:
  - a. whether the facts warrant the suspension,
  - b. if the consequences were appropriate for the behavior, and
  - c. whether school and county procedures were followed.

The principal shall review the suspension, all the evidence, and render a written decision as soon as possible but within three working days. The principal may uphold the suspension, reduce the suspension, or increase the suspension.

2. To appeal further, the parent/guardian shall submit written notice to the principal, within two administrative working days of the principal's decision to uphold the suspension, requesting that the principal forward the letter of appeal and all documentation to the Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent shall review the information, gather any additional information, or conduct a hearing if necessary, and render a written decision. The assistant superintendent may uphold the suspension, reduce the suspension, or increase the suspension. For suspensions of nine days or less, the decision of the Assistant Superintendent, as the Superintendent's Designee, shall be final.

## **Procedure for Appealing Out of School Suspension of More Than 10 Days or Change in Placement**

The Discipline Hearing Officer may suspend a student from school in excess of ten school days or modify the student's school setting after the student and the parent/guardian have been provided written notice by the Discipline Hearing Officer. A decision which alters a student's school setting or extends out of school suspension may be appealed by the student's parent/guardian. An appeal of a suspension shall not hold the suspension in abeyance. A parent/guardian may appeal a suspension in excess of ten days to the School Board in the following manner:

- 
1. When a student has been suspended more than ten days or whose school setting has been altered by the Discipline Hearing Officer, the student and the parent/guardian may appeal that decision to the School Board. Such an appeal must be in writing and must be filed within seven calendar days from the date of written notification of the decision to suspend in excess of ten days or to change the student's placement. The parent/guardian should state specifically the reasons for the appeal and consider the following before appealing a suspension:

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    - a. whether the facts warrant the suspension,
    - b. if the consequences were appropriate for the behavior, and
    - c. whether school and county procedures were followed.

Failure to file a written appeal within the specified time will constitute a waiver of the right to appeal.

2. The School Board shall, within 30 calendar days of the decision to suspend in excess of ten days, conduct a review of the record and render a written decision.

## **Expulsion**

The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may recommend that a student be expelled. Recommendations for expulsion for actions other than those specified in Va. Code §§ 22.1-277.07 and 22.1-277.08 shall be based on consideration of the following factors:

- nature and seriousness of the violation; degree of danger to the school community;
- student's disciplinary history, including the seriousness and number of previous infractions; appropriateness and availability of alternative education placement or programs;
- student's age and grade level;
- results of any mental health, substance abuse, or special education assessments; student's attendance and academic records; and other matters as deemed appropriate.
- No decision to expel a student shall be reversed on the grounds that these factors were not considered, and these factors may be considered as special circumstances for the purposes of complying with Va. Code §§ 22.1-277.07 and 22.1-277.08.

The Superintendent's designee shall notify the student and the parent/guardian in writing of the following:

- proposed action and the reasons therefore; and
- of the requirement that the student and the parent/guardian appear before the School Board.

If the Superintendent's designee recommends expulsion, the student shall be suspended until the School Board decides the matter. The Superintendent's designee may impose a lesser sanction. In cases involving weapons as described in Va. Code § 22.1-277.07 or drugs as described in Va. Code § 22.1-277.08, the Superintendent's designee may conduct a preliminary review of such cases to determine whether a disciplinary action other than expulsion is appropriate. If a determination is made that another disciplinary action is appropriate, then the Superintendent's designee may implement that disciplinary action so long as it is taken in accordance with procedures related to student discipline in this regulation.

## **Procedure for Imposing and Appealing Out-of-School Exclusions**

Any student who has been suspended for more than 30 days or expelled by a public or private school in or outside of Virginia, or for whom admission to a private school has been withdrawn may be excluded from attendance from Mecklenburg County Public Schools upon written notice to the student and the parent/guardian setting forth the reasons therefore and the opportunity for a hearing before the Superintendent's designee. The decision of the Superintendent's designee shall be final unless altered by the School Board, upon a written petition filed with the Superintendent's designee by the student or the parent/guardian within five (5) days of the decision of the Superintendent's designee to exclude. Upon a timely petition, the School Board shall review the matter on the record.

- In the case of a suspension of more than 30 days, the term of the exclusion may not exceed the duration of such suspension.
- In excluding any expelled student from school attendance, the School Board may accept or waive any or all of any conditions for readmission imposed upon the student by the expelling school board. The School Board shall not impose additional conditions for readmission to school.

Upon the expiration of the exclusion period for expulsion or withdrawal of admission, a period that shall be established by the Superintendent's designee, the student may again petition the School Board for admission. If the School Board again rejects the petition for admission, the School Board shall identify the length of the continuing exclusion period and the subsequent date upon which the student may petition the School Board again for admission.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities or Students in the Comprehensive Study Referral Process**

#### **A. Definition**

For purposes of this regulation, a student will be considered disabled if identified as disabled by the Eligibility Committee and not subsequently terminated from the special education program or if, prior to the date on which the misconduct occurs, there is a reason to suspect a disability.

#### **B. Short-Term Suspension**

A student with disabilities may be suspended out of school for nine days or less at a time in accordance with regular suspension procedures. The imposition of any additional short-term suspension after the first nine days cumulative in a school year must be reviewed to determine whether it will result in a change in placement. If it is found to result in a change in placement, then the discipline procedures for a suspension of greater than nine days must be followed.

The principal is to keep a tally of the total number of days of suspension received by each disabled student. When a student has accumulated more than ten (10) days of suspension in any single school year, a manifestation determination review, functional behavior assessment, behavior intervention plan, reevaluation, and/or procedural protections review is required. A student with a disability may be removed from the student's current educational setting for a period of time that cumulatively exceeds ten (10) school days in a school year for separate incidents of misconduct as long as the removals do not constitute a pattern. Isolated short-term suspensions for unrelated instances of misconduct may not be considered a pattern. Factors to consider in determining whether a change in placement has occurred are the length of each suspension, the proximity of the suspensions, and the total number of days suspended in a single year. If it is determined that this suspension would result in a change in placement, then the procedures in Section C for Long-term Suspension and Expulsion must be followed. In any case, once suspensions have totaled ten (10) days in a single school year, the administrator of special education in the school shall convene an IEP committee meeting to develop a functional behavioral assessment plan, create a behavior intervention plan, and determine if any modifications in the special education program or updated evaluations are required.

#### **Customary procedures for notice of:**

1. Evaluation and IEP meetings, including procedural safeguards, must be followed.
2. Suspension from the bus counts as a day of suspension if the student does not receive the services specified in the IEP during the suspension.
3. In-school suspension counts as a day of suspension if the student is not allowed the opportunity to continue progress in the general curriculum, receive the IEP services, or participate with non-disabled students to the same extent.

### **C. Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion**

If it is proposed that a student with a disability be expelled or receive a single suspension of more than nine days at a time, the following procedures must be followed in addition to the regular suspension and expulsion procedures:

The principal shall notify the Superintendent's designee immediately of the proposed disciplinary action.

Because long-term suspensions and expulsions are a change in placement, notice of the contemplated disciplinary recommendation, the reasons for the disciplinary action, and notice of procedural safeguards must be given to the parent/guardian the same day as the recommendation for discipline is made. The notice will be considered as given if mailed first class postage prepaid on the date the recommendation for discipline is made. The Principal or their designee is responsible for seeing that these notices are given.

A functional behavior assessment plan must be developed at an IEP meeting held within ten (10) business days of the recommendation for discipline. A behavior intervention plan is developed or reviewed as soon as practicable after the completion of the functional behavior assessment. If an evaluation is required to conduct the functional behavior assessment, written permission from the parent/guardian will be required. The timeline for concluding the functional behavior assessment should be established during the IEP meeting.

The Manifestation Review Committee composed of the members of the IEP Committee and other qualified individuals must be convened within ten (10) school days of the recommendation for a long-term suspension or expulsion. The committee should be composed of members familiar with special education or the student. At least one or more members of the committee must be knowledgeable about the student.

The following typically serve as members of the committee and additional members may be appointed by the Principal or their designee:

- principal and/or principal designee
- student's special education teacher
- school psychologist
- school social worker
- parent or legal guardian
- student's regular education teacher

The parent/guardian is to be notified of the manifestation review meeting and invited to participate. The Principal or their designee shall be responsible for notifying the parent/guardian of the time, date, place, and purpose of the meeting and must identify the individuals who will be attending the meeting. Accommodations in the scheduling should be made to permit the parent/guardian to attend, although timelines must be met. Documentation of efforts to notify the parent/guardian shall be maintained. If the parent/guardian declines to attend or fails to attend after having been given notice, the committee may meet without them. The parent/guardian may have representation during the meeting at his or her own expense if desired.

The committee is to consider all relevant information including evaluation and diagnostic results, information supplied by the parents/guardians, observations of the student, the student's IEP, placement, and records. The committee will then decide whether the misconduct is a manifestation of the disability.

Minutes of the meeting shall be maintained. The minutes shall include those attending, the information considered, the consensus of the committee, and the rationale for the decision.

The Principal or their designee shall give written notice to the parent/guardian of the committee's decision and of procedural safeguards including the right to contest the committee's decision through a due process hearing.

If the committee determines that there is **no manifestation**, the student may be considered for a long-term suspension or expulsion through regular disciplinary procedures. The student still must be provided with a free appropriate public education, although in another setting.

If the committee determines that there **is a manifestation**, the student may not receive a long-term suspension or expulsion. The student may still be suspended for a maximum of ten (10) days for this offense by following the short-term suspension requirements for students with disabilities.

The student may not be suspended from school for more than ten (10) days while the manifestation committee process is being followed unless the parent/guardian gives permission for a longer suspension or for a change in placement that may be homebound instruction. In the absence of parental/guardian consent, authorization for a longer suspension or change in placement may be sought from the court or from a hearing officer. Students with disabilities (1) who bring weapons to school or possess weapons on school premises or at a school function or (2) knowingly possess or use illegal drugs or sell or solicit the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function may be removed from school for 45 calendar days. A student in these circumstances may be placed in an interim alternative education program without parental/guardian consent and regardless of whether the misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. This unilateral authority to remove the child from their IEP placement does not limit the authority of the administrator to recommend appropriate discipline.

While proceedings are pending to contest the imposition of discipline, and except as provided above, the student must remain in his or her current educational placement.

In those cases where the handling of discipline is specified in the student's IEP, the IEP's provisions shall supersede this regulation.

If prior to the misconduct occurring there is knowledge by the school that the student has a disability but has not yet been identified, the student is entitled to assert the protections afforded to identified students with disabilities.

A student, who is referred for identification as disabled after disciplinary measures are taken and for whom there was no knowledge of a disability prior to the misconduct occurring, is subject to the same disciplinary procedures as students without disabilities. The student is entitled to an expedited evaluation. Special education and related services will be provided if the student is found to be eligible. The manifestation review decision and the educational services provided to a student with disabilities while disciplined may be challenged in a due process hearing under applicable special education laws.



# Required Notifications

## Asbestos Identification

Each school division must annually notify parents, employees and other building occupants about asbestos inspections, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic reinspection and surveillance activities that are planned or in progress. 40 C.F.R. 763.84(c).

To: Parents/Guardians

### **Re: Asbestos Identification and Notification (AHERA Public Law 99-510) (40 CFR Part 763)**

This memo is to provide notification and identification of the presence of asbestos in Chase City, Clarksville, and La Crosse Elementary School.

On October 22, 1986, President Reagan signed into law the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, Public Law 99-519). The law required EPA to develop regulations that provide a comprehensive framework for addressing asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. On October 30, 1987, EPA published the Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule (40 CFR Part 763 Subpart E). This new rule requires all public and private elementary and secondary schools to be inspected for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans, and implement response actions in a timely fashion.

To carry out the above activities involving inspections, management plans, and response actions, the Mecklenburg County School employed an accredited Asbestos Inspection firm, Industrial Training Company, of Richmond, Virginia, to prepare our Management Plan as determined by AHERA, Public Law 99-519.

Each elementary school has been tested for asbestos. Results of those tests have shown that there is some asbestos present in Chase City, Clarksville, and LaCrosse Elementary schools. The Management Plan, which includes laboratory reports, is available at the school. The Management Plan and documentary data have also been filed with the Virginia Department of Education, Energy, and Facilities Services. Questions regarding any of this data may be addressed at the school.

## Availability of School Division Policies and Regulations

Each division must make an annual announcement at the beginning of the school year advising the public that current copies of all division policies and regulations are available on the division's website. The announcement should also state that printed copies of school division policies and regulations are available to citizens who do not have online access. VSBA Policy BF Board Policy Manual; Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:7.E.

# Budget

Upon approval of the school division's budget by the appropriating body every year, the school board must publish the approved annual budget, in line item form, including the estimated required local match, on the division's website. The document must also be made available in hard copy as needed for citizens for inspection. Va. Code § 22.1-93.

## Child Nutrition Programs

Each division which participates in the Free and Reduced Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools programs must notify parents and the public about the programs. VSBA Policy EFB Food Services; 42 U.S.C. § 1758; 7 C.F.R. 245.2, 7 C.F.R. 245.5. Divisions must

also provide notice that they do not discriminate on the basis of handicap. 7 C.F.R. 15b.7.

Parents of all children in attendance at school must receive a notice containing an application form and the following information:

- eligibility criteria for benefits
- application procedures
- an explanation that an application for benefits cannot be approved unless it contains complete documentation including, for households applying on the basis of income and household size
  - names of all household members
  - income received by each household member, identified by source of the income (such as earnings, wages, welfare, pensions, support payments, unemployment compensation and social security and other cash income)
  - the signature of an adult household member
  - the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application or an indication that he/she does not possess a social security number
- an explanation that households with children who are members of currently identified food stamp, FDPIR (food distribution program for households on Indian reservations) or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) households may submit an abbreviated application for benefits for those children with the following information: the child's name and appropriate food stamp or TANF case number or FDPIR case number or other identifier and the name and signature of an adult household member
- an explanation that the information on the application may be verified at any time during the school year
- how a household may apply for benefits at any time during the school year as circumstances change
- a statement to the effect that children having parents or guardians who become unemployed are eligible for free or reduced price meals or for free milk during the period of unemployment if the loss of income causes the household income during the period of unemployment to be within the eligibility criteria

- a statement to the effect that in certain cases foster children are eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk regardless of the income of the household with whom they reside and that households wishing to apply for such benefits for foster children should contact the school
- the statement: "In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age or disability"
- an explanation that Head Start enrollees and foster, homeless, migrant, and runaway children are categorically eligible for free meals and free milk and their families should contact the school for more information
- how a household may appeal the decision on the application; and • a statement that Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) participants may be eligible for free or reduced price meals

The public notification must be made at the beginning of each school year. It must contain the same information given to parents and must be provided to the informational media, the local unemployment office and to any major employers contemplating large layoffs in the area from which the school draws its attendance.

The public announcement must contain a copy of the letter or notice sent to parents.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's document entitled Eligibility Manual for School Meals contains an explanation of the required notices. The document also contains a chart describing to whom, and under what conditions, information regarding free and reduced eligibility status may be disclosed.

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP36\\_CACFP15\\_SFSP11-2017a1.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP36_CACFP15_SFSP11-2017a1.pdf)

In addition, schools must post a report of the most recent food safety inspection in a publicly visible location. A copy of the inspection report must be provided to members of the public upon request. 7 C.F.R. § 210.13(b).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) directs divisions which participate in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program to have a written and clearly communicated system to address meal charges in place. SP 23-2017. The USDA directs the division's system regarding unpaid meal charges to be delivered to all households at the start of the school year and to households that transfer into the school division during the school year. VSBA Policy EFB Food Services.

## **Code of Student Conduct, Compulsory Attendance Law, Parental Responsibility and Involvement**

Within one calendar month of the opening of school, each division must, simultaneously with any other materials customarily distributed at that time, send to the parents of each enrolled student

- a notice of the requirements of Va. Code § 22.1-279.3 regarding parental responsibility and involvement (Va. Code § 22.1-279.3.C(i));
- a copy of the school division's standards of student conduct (VSBA Policy JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct) JFC Student Conduct); Va. Code § 22.1-279.3.C(ii)); and
- a copy of the compulsory school attendance law and the enforcement procedures and policies adopted by the school board (Va. Code § 22.1-279.3.C(iii)).

Each parent must sign and return to the student's school a statement acknowledging the receipt of the above materials and each school must maintain records of such signed statements. Va. Code § 22.1-279.3.C.

The materials sent to parents must include a notice that by signing the statement of receipt, parents expressly reserve their rights protected by the constitutions or laws of the United States or the Commonwealth and that parents have the right to express disagreement with a school's or school division's policies or decisions. Va. Code § 22.1- 279.3.C.

## **Cost per Pupil**

The superintendent must prepare and distribute notification of the estimated average per pupil cost for public education in the division for the upcoming school year. The notice must also include actual per pupil state and local education expenditures for the previous school year. The notice may include federal funds spent for public education in the division. The notice must be made available in a form provided by DOE and published on the school division's website or in hard copy on request. The notice should be printed on a form prescribed by the Board of Education and distributed to school divisions for publication. VSBA Policy DIA Reporting Per Pupil Costs; Va. Code § 22.1- 92.

## **Counseling**

Parents must be notified annually regarding the academic and career guidance and personal/social counseling programs which are available to their children. The notification must include the purpose and general description of the programs, information regarding ways parents may review materials to be used in guidance and counseling programs at their child's school and information about the procedures by which parents may limit their child's participation in such programs. 8 VAC 20-620-10. (See VSBA Policy IJ Guidance and Counseling Program).

## **Credits Required for Graduation**

Each division must notify the parents of rising eleventh and twelfth grade students of

- requirements for graduation pursuant to the standards for accreditation, and
- requirements that have yet to be completed by the individual student for graduation.

VSBA Policy IKF The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements; Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.A.

The division must notify parents of students with disabilities who have an IEP and who fail to meet the graduation requirements of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive. Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.B.

The division must notify parents of students who fail to graduate or to achieve graduation requirements as provided in the standards for accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the student is one for whom English is a second language, the division will notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-5. Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.C.

# Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement Classes and Special Programs

Students and their parents must be notified of the availability of dual enrollment, advanced placement classes, career and technical education programs, including internships, externships, apprenticeships, credentialing programs, certification programs, licensure programs, and other work-based learning experiences, the International Baccalaureate program and Academic Year Governor's School Programs. The notification must include the qualifications for enrolling in classes, programs and experiences, and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take the advanced placement and International Baccalaureate examinations. Notification must also be given to students and parents of the division's agreement with a community college in the Commonwealth to enable students to complete an associate's degree or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies concurrent with a high school diploma. VSBA Policy IGBI Advanced Placement Classes and Special Programs; Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:1.D.11.

## Eating Disorders Awareness Information

Every school board must annually provide information to parents of pupils in grades five through 12 regarding eating disorders. The information must be consistent with guidelines developed by the Virginia Department of Education. Va. Code § 22.1-273.2. A sample information sheet for parents is available on the Virginia Department of Education's website at

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health\\_medical/office/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/index.shtml) under the heading "Eating Disorders Parent Information Sheet".

Mecklenburg County Public Schools

Post Office Box 190 • 175 Mayfield Drive • Boydton, Virginia 23917

Phone: (434) 738-6111 Fax: (434) 738-6679

## Eating Disorders

Dear Parent of Students in Grades Five through Twelve:

Eating disorders are serious health problems that usually start in childhood or adolescence and affect both girls and boys. With early diagnosis, eating disorders are treatable with a combination of nutritional, medical, and therapeutic supports. Recognizing the importance of early identification of at-risk students, the 2013 Virginia General Assembly passed a law requiring each school board to provide parent educational information regarding eating disorders on an annual basis to students in the fifth through twelfth grades.

It is important to note that eating disorders are not diagnosed based on weight changes as much as behaviors, attitudes, and mindset. Symptoms may vary between males and females and in different age groups. Often, a young person with an eating disorder may not be aware that he/she has a problem or keeps the issues secret. Parents/guardians and family members are in a unique position to notice symptoms or behaviors that cause concern. Noting behaviors common to people with eating disorders may lead to early referral to the primary care provider. It is important for eating disorders to be treated by someone who specializes in this type of care.

After reviewing the information on the reverse side of this letter, if you think your child may be showing signs of a possible eating disorder, please contact your primary health care provider, school nurse, or one of the resources listed below.

- Academy for Eating Disorders (AED)  
<http://www.eatingdisorderhope.com/information>
- Families Empowered and Supporting Treatment of Eating Disorders (F.E.A.S.T.)  
[www.feast-ed.org](http://www.feast-ed.org)
- National Eating Disorders Association  
[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org)  
Toll free, confidential Helpline, 1-800-931-2237  
Text, confidential Helpline, (800) 931-2237

Additional resources may be found at:

- Virginia Department of Education  
[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health\\_medical/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/index.shtml), under the section titled, Eating Disorders

## Emergency Procedures

Each school's written procedures to follow in emergencies such as fire, injury, illness and violent or threatening behavior must be outlined in the student handbook and discussed with staff and students in the first week of each school year. VSBA Policy EB School Crisis, Emergency Management and Medical Emergency Response Plan. 8 VAC 20-131-260.D.

## English Learners

School divisions receiving federal funds to provide a language instruction educational program must, not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, inform the parents of English learners of the following:

- the reasons for the identification of their child as an English learner and in need of placement in a language instruction educational program
- the child's level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement
- the methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is, or will be participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instructional goals, and the use of English and a native language in instruction
- how the program in which their child is, or will be participating, will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child
- how such program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation
- the specific exit requirements for the program, including the expected rate of transition from such program into classrooms that are not tailored for English learners and the expected rate of

graduation from high school (including four year adjusted cohort graduation rates and extended-year adjusted cohort

graduation rates for such program) if federal funds are used for children in high schools

- in the case of a child with a disability, how such program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child

- information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing

- o the parents' right to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request and

- o the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available

- o information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance assisting parents in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered by the division

20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(3).

For those children who have not been identified as English learners prior to the beginning of the school year, the division must give the notifications listed above to parents within the first two weeks of the child being placed in a language instruction educational program. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(3).

In addition, parents of English learners will be notified regarding parental involvement opportunities in the same manner as notice is given regarding other Title I programs. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(3).

## Fees

The school division's policy regarding student fees and the fee schedule must be provided to parents annually and posted on the division's website. [VSBA Policy JN](#) Student Fees, Fines and Charges; 8 VAC 20-720-80.B.

## FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

School divisions must provide parents/guardians and adult students annual notice of their rights to inspect and review education records, amend education records, consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information in education records and file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. 34 C.F.R. § 99.7.

You may download the U.S. Department of Education's Model Notification of Rights for Elementary and Secondary Schools at: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/node/490>.

School divisions must give notice of the categories of information, if any, which they have designated as directory information. This requirement may be met by providing parents a copy of the division's FERPA policy (VSBA Policy JO Student Records). 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(5)(B).

The division must allow a reasonable period of time after such notice has been given for a parent to inform the division that any or all of the information designated should not be released without the parent's prior consent.

You can download the model Notice for Directory Information here:

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/model-notice-directory-information>

## Gifted Education Plan

Each division is required to make its comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students accessible through the division's website. The division must also ensure printed copies are available to citizens who do not have online access. 8 VAC 20-40-60.

## Graduation Requirements

At the beginning of each school year, every school must provide to students in all grade levels a notice of all requirements for Board of Education-approved diplomas. VSBA Policy IKF The Virginia Assessment Program and Graduation Requirements; 8 VAC 20-131-270.B.

Guidance from the Virginia Department of Education must be provided to parents of students with disabilities regarding the Applied Studies diploma and its limitations at a student's annual EP meeting corresponding the grades three through 12 when curriculum or statewide assessment decisions are being made that impact the type of diploma from which the student can qualify. Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:4.B.

## Homeless Students

Each division must provide public notice of the education rights of the homeless students enrolled in the division. 42 U.S.C. § 11432(e)(3)(C)(i). The notice is to be disseminated in places where homeless students receive services, including schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens. 42 U.S.C. § 11432 (g)(6)(A)(vi). The notice must be in a "manner and form" understandable to homeless students and their parents/guardians, "including, if necessary and to the extent feasible," in their native language. VSBA Policy JECA Admission of Homeless Students; 42 U.S.C. § 11432(e)(3)(C)(iii).

The National Center for Homeless Students (funded by the U.S. Department of Education) has created posters that can be downloaded or ordered from <http://center.serve.org/nche/products.php#electronic>.

## Internet Privacy

Every school division that has an Internet website must make its Internet privacy policy statement conspicuously available on its website. At a minimum, the statement must address

- what information, including personally identifiable information, will be collected, if any;
- whether any information will be automatically collected simply by accessing the website and, if so, what information;
- whether the website automatically places a computer file, commonly referred to as a "cookie," on the Internet user's computer and, if so, for what purpose; and



- how the collected information is being used or will be used.

VSBA Policy KBE Internet Privacy; Va. Code § 2.2-3803.

## Learning Objectives

At the beginning of each school year, every school must provide to parents or guardians the learning objectives to be achieved at their child's grade level or, in high school, a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses. 8 VAC 20-131-270.B.

## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Parents of children selected to participate in any NAEP assessment must be informed before the administration of any assessment that their child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish any authorized assessment and is not required to answer any test question. 20 U.S.C. § 9622(c)(1)(A), 20 U.S.C. § 9622(d)(2).

Parents and members of the public must have access to all assessment data, questions and complete and current assessment instruments of any NAEP assessment except personally identifiable information and questions that may be reused in the future. School divisions must make reasonable efforts to inform parents and the public about their right of access to assessment data. If access is requested in writing, it must be provided within 45 days of the request and be made available in a secure setting that is convenient to both parties.

## Nondiscrimination

A number of federal statutes protect the rights of beneficiaries in programs or activities that receive financial assistance from discrimination. Specifically, the following statutes prohibit discrimination:

- Title VI on the basis of race, color and national origin
- Title IX on the basis of sex
- Section 504 on the basis of disability
- the Age Discrimination Act on the basis of age
- Title II prohibits state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability
- the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) protects employees from discrimination on the basis of genetic information

In addition, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act prohibits schools which have an open forum or limited public forum from discriminating based on the membership or leadership criteria of the Boy Scouts of America or the other designated youth groups. 20 U.S.C. § 7905.

The regulations implementing these federal statutes require school divisions to notify students, parents, and others, including, in some instances, unions or professional organizations that have contracts with the school board, that they do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age. Title VI, 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(d); Title IX, 34 C.F.R. § 106.9 34 C.F.R. 106.8; Section 504, 34 C.F.R. § 104.8; Age Discrimination Act, 34 C.F.R. § 110.25; Title II, 28 C.F.R. § 35.106; see also 34 C.F.R. 108.5 (re the Boy Scouts). The regulations contain some minor

differences relating to the notices' required content, the persons and groups to whom notice must be given, and the methods used to publish them. However, you may download the U.S. Department of Education's Notice of Non-Discrimination, which describes the content and publication requirements for each notice required under each statute, at <http://www.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/nondisc.html>.

Employers are required to post a notice approved by the EEOC regarding GINA. VSBA Policy GBA/JFHA Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation; 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff 1; 29 C.F.R. 1635.10(c). A notice may be downloaded at

[https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/migrated\\_files/employers/eeoc\\_self\\_print\\_poster .pdf](https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/migrated_files/employers/eeoc_self_print_poster.pdf).

Pursuant to the Title IX regulations that became effective on August 14, 2020, schools are required to notify applicants for admission and employment, parents or legal guardians, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the school board of the name or title, office address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the division's Title IX Coordinator. 34 C.F. R. 106.8.

Students and employees must be notified of the name, office address and phone number of the division's Compliance Officer(s) under Section 504 (34 C.F.R. 104.8), the Americans with Disabilities Act (28 C.F.R. § 35.107) and the Age Discrimination Act (34 C.F.R. § 110.25). See also VSBA Policy JFHA/GBA Prohibition of Harassment and Retaliation.

In addition to the requirements of federal law discussed above, Virginia law requires employers to post in conspicuous locations, and include in employee handbooks, information concerning an employee's rights to reasonable accommodations for disabilities. The Division of Human Rights is required to develop and publish the required notice by November 1, 2021. The information must also be directly provided to new employees at the beginning of their employment and to any employee within 10 days of the employee giving notice to the employer that the employee has a disability. Va. Code § 2.2-3905.1.

## **Postsecondary Education and Employment Data**

Each school board's career and technical education program must include annual notice on its website to enrolled high school students and their parents of the availability of the postsecondary education and employment data published by the State Council of Higher Education and the opportunity for such students to obtain a nationally recognized career readiness certificate at a local public high school, comprehensive community college or workforce center. Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:1.D.3.d.

## **PPRA (Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment)**

The PPRA requires school divisions to provide notice of their policy controlling the administration of surveys on certain sensitive topics including political or religious beliefs and behavior involving sex or illegal conduct. This notice must be given directly to the parents of students enrolled in the division. The notice must be given at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time after any substantive change in the policy. VSBA Policy KFB Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires; 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(A).

You may download the U.S. Department of Education's PPRA Model General Notice of Rights at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/ppra-model-general-notice-rights>.

In addition, divisions must also directly notify parents, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities will occur:

- activities involving the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information
- the administration of any survey concerning sensitive information • any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(2)(B).

You may download the U.S. Department of Education's PPRA Model Notice and Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities at:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ppraconsent.pdf>.

These requirements may also be met by providing parents a copy of the division's policy on this topic (VSBA Policy JOB Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires).

## **Prosecution of Juveniles as Adults**

School boards must provide information developed by the office of the Virginia Attorney General to students regarding laws governing the prosecution of juveniles as adults for the commission of certain crimes. The methods of providing the information may include, but are not limited to, announcements in schools, written notification to parents, publication in student handbooks, and inclusion with other materials distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year. VSBA Policy JFCL Notification Regarding Prosecution of Juveniles as Adults; Va. Code § 22.1-279.4. The information to be distributed is attached to Superintendent's Memo #057-12 (Feb. 24, 2012).

## **Pupil/Teacher Ratios**

School boards must annually on or before December 31, report to the public the actual pupil/teacher ratios, by school, for the current school year, in elementary school classrooms and also must report the actual pupil/teacher ratio in middle school and high schools in the division by school. Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:2.

### **Release of Student Records to Armed Forces Recruiters and Educational Institutions**

Divisions must notify parents that they will release the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary students to all recruiters or institutions of higher education that request them unless the parents specifically request that this information not be released. VSBA Policy JO Student Records; 20 U.S.C. § 7908(a).

## **Report Cards/Quality Profiles**

Divisions that receive Title I funds must prepare and disseminate specified information to parents. Federal law refers to the distribution of this information as a "report card". The Virginia Board of Education, in the Standards of Accreditation as revised in January 2018, uses the term "School Quality Profile". VSBA Policy CMA Quality Profiles; 20 U.S.C. § 6311(h)(2); 8 VAC 20-131-270.

The Virginia Department of Education posts the information required by federal law to appear in division and school report cards on its website and has stated that this posting satisfies the requirements of federal law.

## **Services for Students Identified as Deaf or Hard of Hearing or Visually Impaired**

Each school board must annually post information distributed by the Department of Education describing the educational and other services available through the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard-of Hearing and the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired to the parents of those students who are identified as deaf or hard of hearing or visually impaired. School boards must also inform the parents of the availability of the information and ensure that packets of the information are available in an accessible format for review by parents who do not have Internet access. Va. Code § 22.1-217.01.

## **Special Education**

Each division must, at least annually, conduct a public awareness campaign (also known as a child find program) to

- inform the community of the rights of persons, ages two to 21, inclusive, to a free appropriate public education and the availability of special education programs and services;
- generate referrals; and
- explain the nature of disabilities, the early warning signs of disabilities and the need for services to begin early.

8 VAC 20-81-50.B.

## **Student Rights under Section 504**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as Section 504, is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination and ensure benefits are equal to those provided to nondisabled students. For more information regarding your rights under Section 504, please see the School Board [Policy JBA](#) on our website at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org).

## **Standards of Learning (SOLs)**

At the beginning of each school year, every school must provide to parents or guardians a copy of the Standards of Learning applicable to their child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date and potential impact of the child's next SOL testing. 8 VAC 20-131-270.B.

## **Student Achievement**

Schools that receive Title I funds must provide parents individual reports regarding their student's level of achievement and academic growth on the state's academic assessments, if applicable and available, as soon as is practicable after the assessment is given. The reports must be in an

understandable format and, to the extent practicable, be in a language that parents can understand. 20 U.S.C. §§ 6311(b)(2)(B)(x); 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(1)(B).

## **Tobacco and Nicotine Vapor Products**

Every school division must annually provide educational information to parents of students in grades K through 12 regarding the health dangers of tobacco and nicotine vapor products. The information must be consistent with guidelines developed by the Department of Education. Va. Code § 22.1-273.3.

## **Teacher Qualifications**

At the beginning of each school year, divisions that receive Title I funds must notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving Title I funds that the parents may request and the division will provide (in a timely manner) information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including whether the teacher 1) has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction, 2) is teaching under emergency or other provisional status and 3) is teaching in the field or discipline of the teacher's certification. The notification must also inform the parents that they may request information regarding whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(1)(A).

School divisions are required to send notification to parents in Title I schools if their children are taught four or more weeks by a teacher who is not properly licensed in Virginia to teach the class to which the students are assigned. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(1)(B)(ii).

Virginia Department of Education

Parent Notification Letter

### **Right to Request Information on Teacher Qualifications**

As Required Under the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended

Dear Parent/Guardian,

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(1)(A) states that as a parent of a student in [school name], receiving Title I funds, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers instructing your child. Federal law requires the school division to provide you this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status because of special circumstances.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification or degree they received.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the superintendent of schools either by phone at (434) 738-6111 or in writing at P.O. Box 190, Boynton, VA 23917.

Sincerely,

Mecklenburg County Public Schools Superintendent

## Testing Transparency and Parent Opt Out

At the beginning of each school year, school divisions that receive Title I funds must notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving Title I funds that the parents may request, and the division will provide (in a timely manner), information regarding any state or division policy regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2) and by the state or division, which must include a policy, procedure or parental right to opt the child out of such assessment, where applicable. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(2)(A).

In addition, divisions that receive Title I funds must make widely available through public means (including by posting in a clear and easily accessible manner on the division's website and, where practicable, on the website of each school in the division, for each grade, information on each assessment required by the state to comply with 20 U.S.C. § 6311, other assessments required by the state, and where such information is available and feasible to report, specified information regarding assessments required division wide by the division. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(e)(2)(B).

### Voluntary Retirement Savings Programs (403(b) Plans)

Divisions which have 403(b) retirement plans must notify employees about the plan at least once each year. VSBA Policy GBR Voluntary Retirement Savings Program; 26 C.F.R. 1.403(b)-5.

## Wellness Policies

Divisions must inform the public about the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy. Divisions must also inform the public about progress toward meeting the goals of the policy and compliance with the policy by making the triennial assessment available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner. VSBA Policy JHCF Student Wellness; 7 C.F.R. 210.31.

# Youth Health Risk Behavior Survey

The school board must notify parents of each student enrolled in a middle or high school selected for participation in the survey of student health risk behaviors pursuant to Va. Code § 32.1-73.8 that their child may be randomly selected to participate in the survey unless the parent denies consent for the student's participation in writing prior to administration of the survey. The notice must be in writing and be given at least 30 days prior to administration of the survey. The notice will inform the parent regarding

- the nature and types of questions included in the survey,
- the purposes and age-appropriateness of the survey,
- how information collected by the survey will be used,
- who will have access to such information,
- whether and how any findings or results will be disclosed, and
- the steps that will be taken to protect students' privacy.

Parents have the right to review the survey prior to its administration. (VSBA Policy JOB Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires; Va. Code § 22.1-79.3.

## Posting Requirements

### Alternatives to Animal Dissection

School boards must provide notice that they provide alternatives to animal dissection. This notice may be given in the relevant biological sciences syllabi, student course selection guides or local school division policies or directives. VSBA Policy IGAK Alternatives to Animal Dissection; Va. Code § 22.1-200.01; Superintendent's Memo No. 161 Aug. 6, 2004.

### Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States must be posted in a conspicuous place in each school. VSBA Policy IEC Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States; Acts 2003, c. 902.

### Child Abuse Reporting

A notice must be posted in each school stating that

- anyone employed there who suspects that a child is abused or neglected is required to report such suspected cases of child abuse or neglect; and
- all persons required to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect are immune from civil or criminal liability or administrative penalty or sanction on account of such reports unless such person has acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose. The notice must also include the Virginia Department of Social Services' toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline.

VSBA Policy GAE Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting; Va. Code § 22.1-291.3.

## **Comprehensive Plan (formerly Six-Year Plan)**

Prior to the adoption of the division's comprehensive plan or revisions thereto, the plan or revisions must be posted on the division's Internet website, if practicable, and a hard copy of the plan must be made available for public inspection and copying. VSBA Policy AF Comprehensive Plan; Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:6.

Each school board must present a report to the public by November 1 of each odd numbered year on the extent to which the objectives of the division's comprehensive plan have been met during the previous two school years.

## **Online Courses and Programs**

Divisions must post information regarding online courses and programs available through the division on their websites. The information should include the types of online courses and programs available, when the division will pay course fees and other costs for nonresident students, and the granting of high school credit. VSBA Policy IGBGA On Line Courses and Virtual School Programs; Va. Code § 22.1-212.25.

## **Pregnancy, Childbirth and Related Medical Conditions**

School Boards must post in a conspicuous location and include in any employee handbook information concerning an employee's rights to reasonable accommodation for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Such information must also be directly provided to new employees and to any employee within 10 days of such employee's giving notice to the employer that she is pregnant. Va. Code § 2.2-3909.

# **CODE OF VIRGINIA**

Current version of the [Code of Virginia § 22.1-279.3](#), Parental Responsibility and Involvement requirements:

- A. Each parent of a student enrolled in a public school has a duty to assist the school in enforcing the standards of student conduct and compulsory school attendance in order that education may be conducted in an atmosphere free of disruption and threat to persons or property, and supportive of individual rights.
- B. A school board shall provide opportunities for parental and community involvement in every school in the school division.
- C. Within one calendar month of the opening of school, each school board shall, simultaneously with any other materials customarily distributed at that time, send to the parents of each enrolled student (i) a notice of the requirements of this section; (ii) a copy of the school board's standards of student conduct; and (iii) a copy of the compulsory school attendance law. These materials shall include a notice to the parents that by signing the statement of receipt, parents shall not be deemed to waive, but to expressly reserve, their rights protected by the constitutions or laws of the United States or the Commonwealth and that a parent shall have the right to express disagreement with a school's or school division's policies or decisions. Each parent of a student shall sign and return to the school



in which the student is enrolled a statement acknowledging the receipt of the school board's standards of student conduct, the notice of the requirements of this section, and the compulsory school attendance law. Each school shall maintain records of such signed statements.

- D. The school principal may request the student's parent or parents, if both parents have legal and physical custody of such student, to meet with the principal or their designee to review the school board's standards of student conduct and the parent's or parents' responsibility to participate with the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, to ensure the student's compliance with compulsory school attendance law, and to discuss improvement of the child's behavior, school attendance, and educational progress.
- E. In accordance with the due process procedures set forth in this article and the guidelines required by § 22.1-279.6, the school principal may notify the parents of any student who violates a school board policy or the compulsory school attendance requirements when such violation could result in the student's suspension or the filing of a court petition, whether or not the school administration has imposed such disciplinary action or filed a petition. The notice shall state (i) the date and particulars of the violation; (ii) the obligation of the parent to take actions to assist the school in improving the student's behavior and ensuring compulsory school attendance compliance; (iii) that, if the student is suspended, the parent may be required to accompany the student to meet with school officials; and (iv) that a petition with the juvenile and domestic relations court may be filed under certain circumstances to declare the student a child in need of supervision.
- F. No suspended student shall be admitted to the regular school program until such student and their parent have met with school officials to discuss improvement of the student's behavior, unless the school principal or their designee determines that readmission, without parent conference, is appropriate for the student.
- G. Upon the failure of a parent to comply with the provisions of this section, the school board may, by petition to the juvenile and domestic relations court, proceed against such parent for willful and unreasonable refusal to participate in efforts to improve the student's behavior or school attendance, as follows:
  - a. If the court finds that the parent has willfully and unreasonably failed to meet, pursuant to a request of the principal as set forth in subsection D of this section, to review the school board's standards of student conduct and the parent's responsibility to assist the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order, and to discuss improvement of the child's behavior and educational progress, it may order the parent to so meet; or
  - b. If the court finds that a parent has willfully and unreasonably failed to accompany a suspended student to meet with school officials pursuant to subsection F, or upon the student's receiving a second suspension or being expelled, it may order the student or their parent, or both, to participate in such programs or such treatment, including, but not limited to, extended day programs, summer school, other educational programs and counseling, as the court deems appropriate to improve the student's behavior or school attendance. The order may also require participation in parenting, counseling, or a mentoring program, as appropriate or that the student or their parent, or both, shall be subject to such conditions and limitations, as the court deems appropriate for the supervision, care, and rehabilitation of the student or their parent. In addition, the court may order the parent to pay a civil penalty not to exceed \$500.
- H. The civil penalties established pursuant to this section shall be enforceable in the juvenile and domestic relations court in which the student's school is located and shall be paid into

a fund maintained by the appropriate local governing body to support programs or treatments designed to improve the behavior of students as described in subdivision G 2. Upon the failure to pay the civil penalties imposed by this section, the attorney for the appropriate county, city, or town shall enforce the collection of such civil penalties.

- I. All references in this section to the juvenile and domestic relations court shall be also deemed to mean any successor in interest of such court.

Current version of the [e Code of Virginia § 22.1-254](#) Compulsory School Attendance

Every parent, guardian, or other person in the Commonwealth having control or charge of any child who will have reached the fifth birthday on or before September 30 of any school year and who has not passed the eighteenth birthday shall, during the period of each year the public schools are in session and for the same number of days and hours per day as the public schools, send such child to a public school or to a private, denominational, or parochial school or have such child taught by a tutor or teacher of qualifications prescribed by the Board of Education and approved by the division superintendent, or provide for home instruction of such child as described in § 22.1-254.1. For additional details on the Virginia Compulsory School Attendance Law, refer to section 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia.

As prescribed in the regulations of the Board of Education, the requirements of this section may also be satisfied by sending a child to an alternative program of study or work/study offered by a public, private, denominational, or parochial school or by a public or private degree-granting institution of higher education. Further, in the case of any five-year-old child who is subject to the provisions of this subsection, the requirements of this section may be alternatively satisfied by sending the child to any public educational pre-kindergarten program, including a Head Start program, or in a private, denominational, or parochial educational pre-kindergarten program.

Instruction in the home of a child or children by the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of such child or children shall not be classified or defined as a private, denominational or parochial school.

The requirements of this section shall apply to (i) any child in the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Corrections who has not passed his eighteenth birthday and (ii) any child whom the division superintendent has required to take a special program of prevention, intervention, or remediation as provided in subsection C of § 22.1- 253.13:1 and in § 22.1-254.01. The requirements of this section shall not apply to (a) any person 16 through 18 years of age who is housed in an adult correctional facility when such person is actively pursuing the achievement of a passing score on a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education but is not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan pursuant to subsection E, and (b) any child who has obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent, a certificate of completion, or has achieved a passing score on a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, or who has otherwise complied with compulsory school attendance requirements as set forth in this article.

- A. A school board shall excuse from attendance at school:
  - a. Any pupil who, together with his parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school. For purposes of this

- subdivision, "bona fide religious training or belief" does not include essentially political, sociological or philosophical views or a merely personal moral code; and
- b. On the recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides and for such period of time as the court deems appropriate, any pupil who, together with his parents, is opposed to attendance at a school by reason of concern for such pupil's health, as verified by competent medical evidence, or by reason of such pupil's reasonable apprehension for personal safety when such concern or apprehension

in that pupil's specific case is determined by the court, upon consideration of the recommendation of the principal and division superintendent, to be justified.

- B. Each local school board shall develop policies for excusing students who are absent by reason of observance of a religious holiday. Such policies shall ensure that a student shall not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, for any which he missed by reason of such absence, if the absence is verified in a manner acceptable to the school board.
- C. A school board may excuse from attendance at school:
  - a. On recommendation of the principal and the division superintendent and with the written consent of the parent or guardian, any pupil who the school board determines, in accordance with regulations of the Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at such school; or
  - b. On recommendation of the juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which the pupil resides, any pupil who, in the judgment of such court, cannot benefit from education at such school.
- D. Local school boards may allow the requirements of subsection A to be met under the following conditions:
- E. For a student who is at least 16 years of age, there shall be a meeting of the student, the student's parents, and the principal or his designee of the school in which the student is enrolled in which an individual student alternative education plan shall be developed in conformity with guidelines prescribed by the Board, which plan must include:
  - a. Career counseling;
  - b. Mandatory enrollment and attendance in a preparatory program for passing a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education or other alternative education program approved by the local school board with attendance requirements that provide for reporting of student attendance by the chief administrator of such preparatory program or approved alternative education program to such principal or his designee;
  - c. Mandatory enrollment in a program to earn a Board of Education-approved career and technical education credential, such as the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or the Virginia workplace readiness skills assessment;
  - d. Successful completion of the course in economics and personal finance required to earn a Board of Education-approved high school diploma;
  - e. Counseling on the economic impact of failing to complete high school; and
  - f. Procedures for re-enrollment to comply with the requirements of subsection A.
- F. A student for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted pursuant to this subsection and who fails to comply with the conditions of such plan shall be in violation of the compulsory school attendance law, and the division superintendent or attendance officer of the school division in which such student was last enrolled shall seek

immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law as set forth in this article.

- G. Students enrolled with an individual student alternative education plan shall be counted in the average daily membership of the school division.
- H. A school board may, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article 3 (§ 22.1-276.01 et seq.) of Chapter 14 and upon a finding that a school-age child has been (i) charged with an offense relating to the Commonwealth's laws, or with a violation of school board policies, on weapons, alcohol or drugs, or intentional injury to another person; (ii) found guilty or not innocent of a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injury to others, or of an offense that is required to be disclosed to the superintendent of the school division pursuant to subsection G of § 16.1-260; (iii) suspended pursuant to § 22.1-277.05; or (iv) expelled from school attendance pursuant to § 22.1-277.06 or 22.1-277.07 or subsection C of § 22.1-277, require the child to attend an alternative education program as provided in § 22.1-209.1:2 or 22.1-277.2:1.
- I. Whenever a court orders any pupil into an alternative education program, including a program preparing students for a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, offered in the public schools, the local school board of the school division in which the program is offered shall determine the appropriate alternative education placement of the pupil, regardless of whether the pupil attends the public schools it supervises or resides within its school division.
- J. The juvenile and domestic relations district court of the county or city in which a pupil resides or in which charges are pending against a pupil, or any court in which charges are pending against a pupil, may require the pupil who has been charged with (i) a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injury to others, (ii) a violation of Article 1 (§ 18.2-77 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 18.2, or (iii) any offense related to possession or distribution of any Schedule I, II, or III controlled substances to attend an alternative education program, including, but not limited to, night school, adult education, or any other education program designed to offer instruction to students for whom the regular program of instruction may be inappropriate.
- K. This subsection shall not be construed to limit the authority of school boards to expel, suspend, or exclude students, as provided in §§ 22.1-277.04, 22.1-277.05, 22.1-277.06, 22.1-277.07, and 22.1-277.2. As used in this subsection, the term "charged" means that a petition or warrant has been filed or is pending against a pupil.
- L. Within one calendar month of the opening of school, each school board shall send to the parents or guardian of each student enrolled in the division a copy of the compulsory school attendance law and the enforcement procedures and policies established by the school board.
- M. The provisions of this article shall not apply to:
  - a. Children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases while suffering from such diseases;
  - b. Children whose immunizations against communicable diseases have not been completed as provided in § 22.1-271.2;
  - c. Children under 10 years of age who live more than two miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within one mile of the place where such children live;
  - d. Children between the ages of 10 and 17, inclusive, who live more than 2.5 miles from a public school unless public transportation is provided within 1.5 miles of the place where such children live; and
  - e. Children excused pursuant to subsections B and D.

- N. Further, any child who will not have reached his sixth birthday on or before September 30 of each school year whose parent or guardian notifies the appropriate school board that he does not wish the child to attend school until the following year because the child, in the opinion of the parent or guardian, is not mentally, physically, or emotionally prepared to attend school, may delay the child's attendance for one year.
- O. The distances specified in subdivisions 3 and 4 of this subsection shall be measured or determined from the child's residence to the entrance to the school grounds or to the school bus stop nearest the entrance to the residence of such children by the nearest practical routes which are usable for walking or riding. Disease shall be established by the certificate of a reputable practicing physician in accordance with regulations adopted by the Board of Education.

Current version of the [Code of Virginia § 22.1-279.4](#) Information Regarding Prosecution of Juveniles as Adults

The Virginia Department of Education provided this information via superintendent's memo on Feb. 24, 2012:

The following information has been developed by the Office of the Attorney General regarding the prosecution of juveniles as adults:

Section 22.1-279.4 of the Code of Virginia states: School boards shall provide information developed by the office of the Attorney General to students regarding laws governing the prosecution of juveniles as adults for the commission of certain crimes. Methods of providing such information may include, but not be limited to, public announcements in the schools, written notification to parents, publication in the student conduct manual, and inclusion in those materials distributed to parents pursuant to § 22.1-279.3.



# MCPS HONOR CODE AGREEMENT 2023-2024

Mecklenburg County Public Schools holds our students to its HONOR CODE. Students are expected to adhere to this code listed below.

## FOR ASSESSMENTS:

"I affirm that I will not give or receive any unauthorized help on this exam, and that all work will be my own."

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## FOR GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

"I affirm that I have not given or received any unauthorized help on this assignment, and that this work is my own."

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## FOR GROUP PROJECTS:

"I accept responsibility for my role in ensuring the integrity of the work submitted by the group in which I participated."

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return the Honor Code Agreement with the Handbook Acknowledgement for placement in the student's record.*

**MECKLENBURG COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – 2023-2024**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

This handbook has been drawn up to help your son/daughter gain the greatest possible benefit from their school experience. Parents/guardians have the responsibility for the actions of their children and should be involved in the education of their children. Students are responsible to be an active part of their school safety through involvement in the reporting of potential violent acts. All students will sign annually when they have reviewed the Student Handbook. The teacher or administrator will house the signature sheet.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) need to become involved in the education of their children and have the responsibility to provide the school with the current emergency contact person and/or telephone numbers. They also have the responsibility to notify the school of anything (such as medical information) that may affect their child's ability to learn, to attend school regularly, or to take part in school activities. Parents should take special notice of the Attendance section of this document as well as the Suspension and Expulsion provisions, which are in accordance with School Board Policy.

The school system must have proof that every student and every parent/guardian has had a chance to review the Student Handbook. Signed acknowledgement must be part of every student's record. Your signature means that you have received information about the Student Handbook and have been made aware of how to electronically access the Student Handbook at [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org) (It does not mean that you agree or disagree with them.)

Failure to return this acknowledgement will not relieve a student or the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) from responsibility to know the contents of the Student Handbook and will not excuse the student's noncompliance with the Handbook. Contact your school's principal or the MCPS Central Office if you have questions or concerns.

**The link to the Student and Parent Handbook can be found on the [www.mcpsweb.org](http://www.mcpsweb.org) website. Please be sure to read through the document carefully before signing.**

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (Print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent /Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (Print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_