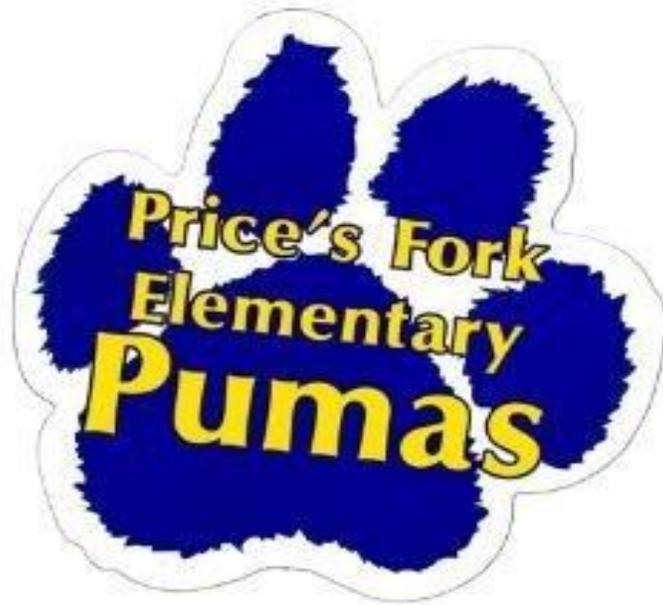


# **Price's Fork Elementary School**

## **Student-Parent Handbook 2021-2022**



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## ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY

Our offices are equipped to handle only routine treatment of minor injuries (i.e. Band-Aids, etc.). Contact with a parent/guardian will be attempted for injuries or emergencies of a more serious nature. It is important that a reliable daytime telephone number at which a parent/guardian may be contacted, and the name and telephone number of an emergency contact person, be on file and kept current for every student. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to update this and pertinent medical information as needed.

## ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL/DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL

**Arrival** - Drop off for all car rider and bus rider students begins at 8:45am for the 2021-2022 school year. Students will be counted tardy if arriving after 9:15am. Parents/guardians must park and walk their child into the front office if arriving tardy.

**Dismissal** - Dismissal begins for both car riders and bus riders at 3:45pm. If a parent/guardian plans to pick up their child prior to dismissal, you must do so before 3:20pm to eliminate vehicle traffic outside and foot traffic in the main office.

## ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is a cooperative effort among schools, parents, and students. To achieve optimum learning, good attendance by students K-12 is crucial. Each parent or guardian is responsible for the student's regular and punctual attendance.

Regular class attendance is considered by the Montgomery County School Board to be essential to the educational process and to the satisfactory completion of the requirements of any class and subject offered. Regular school attendance also is directly related to the development of good habits, which are important in the world of work and in higher education. A ninety-five percent (95%) or better average daily attendance rate is state mandated.

Parents and guardians should make every effort to contact the school when your child is going to be absent. If your child must be absent from school, parents are asked to:

- notify the school between 8:30-9:15 the morning of the absence
- provide a written excuse to the teacher on the day your child returns from an absence
- PFES administration will monitor attendance and will communicate with families regarding attendance concerns

### **Absences for Observance of a Religious Holiday**

A student may be excused from school for the observance of a religious holiday. The parent/guardian shall provide a letter to the student's school in advance of the planned absence notifying the school of the planned absence, the dates of the planned absence and the religious holiday being observed.

A student who is absent in accordance with this policy shall not be deprived of any award or eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, for any which he or she missed by reason of such absence.

### **Make-Up Work**

It shall be the responsibility of the student and/or parent to request make-up work for absences and for the student to complete all assigned make-up work within one school day for every day missed (Example: miss 3 days, 3 school days to make up the work) unless the teacher extends his/her time. Teachers shall have the discretion to extend the time limit because of extenuating circumstances. Make-up work shall be provided for all absences, including absences caused by out-of-school suspension.

# Compulsory Attendance 7-2.1

## General Requirements

Every parent, guardian, or other person in Montgomery County having control or charge of any child between the ages of 5 and 18 must cause such child to attend the appropriate Montgomery County Public School in accordance with Virginia Code § 22.1-254. Principals and the division superintendent shall follow all legal requirements with regard to the compulsory school attendance reporting requirements of state law. Non-compliance with the state regulations will lead to disciplinary action, where appropriate, by the principal and the division superintendent or his/her designee.

As used in this policy, "attend" includes participation in educational programs and courses at a site remote from the school with the permission of the school and in conformity with applicable requirements.

## General Exemptions

All students age 5 to 18 shall attend school regularly as set forth in § 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia, except those specifically exempted.

1. The School Board may release students from school in compliance with state law and Virginia Board of Education Regulations, including but not limited to those students who:
  - a. satisfy all legal requirements for home schooling;
  - b. are enrolled in qualified alternative programs;
  - c. have received a high school diploma or its equivalent;
  - d. the School Board determines, in accordance with regulations of the state Board of Education, cannot benefit from education at school;
  - e. together with their parents and by reason of bona fide religious training or belief, are conscientiously opposed to attendance at school;
  - f. based on a recommendation from the Montgomery County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, should be excused by reason of concern for the pupils' health, as verified by competent medical evidence, or by reason of the pupils' reasonable apprehension for personal safety when such concern or apprehension in those pupils' specific cases is determined by the Court to be justified; or
  - g. are excused by the Montgomery County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court following the Court's determination that they cannot benefit from education.
2. Compulsory attendance regulations shall not apply to children under 10 years of age who live more than two miles from a Montgomery County Public School, unless public transportation is provided within one mile of the place where they live, nor to children between 10 and 17 years of age who live more than two and one-half miles from a public school, unless public transportation is provided within one and one-half miles of the place where the children live. Compulsory education distances shall be measured or determined by the nearest practical routes usable for either walking or riding from the entrance to the school grounds, or from the nearest school bus stop to the residence of the children.
3. The School Board may allow the compulsory attendance requirements to be met pursuant to an individual student alternative education plan developed in conformity with guidelines prescribed by the Board of Education under the following conditions:
  - a. The student must be at least sixteen years of age.
  - b. There shall be a meeting of the student, the student's parents, and the principal or his designee to develop the plan, which must include career guidance counseling; mandatory enrollment and attendance in a general educational development preparatory program or other alternative education program approved by the School Board with attendance reported to the principal or his designee; 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; successful completion of 2 the course in economics and personal finance required to earn a Board of Education approved high school diploma; counseling on the economic impact of failing to complete high school and procedures for re-enrollment.
  - c. A student for whom such an individual student alternative education plan has been granted but who fails to comply with the conditions of the plan shall be deemed in violation of the compulsory attendance laws, and the division superintendent or attendance officer shall seek immediate compliance with the compulsory attendance laws.
  - d. Any child who will not have reached his sixth birthday on or before September 30 may be exempted from school attendance until the following year if the parent notifies the School Board, or its designee, because the child, in the opinion of the parent or guardian, is not mentally, physically or emotionally prepared to attend school.

## **Health-Related Exemptions: Contagious or Infectious Diseases; Immunizations**

1. Children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases shall be exempt from compulsory attendance when the physical incapacity is documented by a written statement from a physician or nurse practitioner treating the child, giving the reason(s) for the student's inability to attend school. However, a child excluded from the regular instructional program under this exemption may be eligible to apply for homebound instruction in cases where such instruction may be of benefit to the child.
2. The attendance at school of students who suffer from or are reasonably suspected of suffering from (a) a communicable disease which poses a substantial risk or danger of infection to the school community and is serious or long term, such as tuberculosis or Hepatitis A; or (b) bloodborne diseases which are infectious or contagious, such as HIV-1, Hepatitis B, and cytomegalovirus, and which may be transmitted by the exchange of body fluids or secretions, shall be determined by the division superintendent on a case-by-case basis as established elsewhere in School Board policy. The division superintendent shall seek a recommendation from a review committee to assist him in making his determination. The student may be temporarily excluded from school pending the division superintendent's decision.
3. Children whose immunizations against communicable diseases have not been completed may be excluded from school attendance unless such children have been exempted from immunization requirements. (Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child being exempted or excused from school attendance shall comply with the immunization requirement provided in § 32.1-46 of the Code of Virginia in the same manner and to the same extent as if the child has been enrolled in and is attending school.)

All other exemptions from compulsory attendance granted by the School Board shall be in accordance with state law.

## **Requesting Exemptions**

Any request for exemption from attendance shall be presented annually in writing to the division superintendent or his/her designee. Applicants desiring to provide home instruction shall be referred to the division superintendent's office.

## **Home Instruction**

Parents shall provide annual notification of intent to educate children at home to the division superintendent by August 15 prior to the opening of school. Such notification shall include evidence that he/she meets one of the four legal requirements for providing home instruction: 1) holds a high school diploma; 2) is a teacher with qualifications prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education; 3) provides the child with a program of study which, may be delivered through a correspondence course or distance learning program or in any other manner; or 4) provides evidence that the parent is able to provide an adequate education for the child. The notification shall also include a description of the curriculum, limited to a list of subjects to be studied during the coming year.

Parents who begin home instruction or who establish residence in the school division during the school year shall provide written notice of their intention to educate their children at home as soon as practicable. Within thirty (30) days of providing such notice, the parents shall provide a description of the curriculum to be followed for the remainder of the school year and evidence of meeting one of the four legal requirements for providing home instruction listed above.

Within thirty (30) days of notification of intention to instruct at home, the division superintendent or his or her designee shall ensure that the parents have submitted evidence of having met one of the four requirements listed above. At a minimum, the following information is required:

1. child's name and date of birth;
2. a list of subjects being taught and at what grade level; and
3. the names/agency providing instruction.

Instruction in certain courses is required for a regular high school diploma should a student who has previously received home instruction return to the Montgomery County Public Schools. All graduates shall have earned the units of credit as required by the Standards of Quality and prescribed by the State Board of Education. All graduates beginning with the class of 2003-04 shall have earned the standard and verified credits as required by the Standards of Quality and prescribed by the State Board of Education.

Parents who anticipate their home-instructed child will return to the school division and proceed to graduate should include these subject areas in their home schooling curriculum and should confer annually with the director of student services to ensure compliance with the most current course requirements.

The Montgomery County Public Schools will not be required to place home instructed students who subsequently seek public school enrollment in specific grade level classes unless the required subject areas have been satisfactorily mastered, nor will the Montgomery County Public Schools be responsible for enforcing such course requirements on home-instructed students who may, at some future point, seek a regular high school diploma.

The equivalent of 180 days of instruction shall be provided each year. By August 1 following the school year in which children have received home instruction, the parents shall submit either: 1) evidence that the children have attained a composite score in or above the fourth stannine on any nationally normed standardized achievement test, or an equivalent score on the ACT, SAT, or PSAT test; or 2) an evaluation or assessment which the division superintendent determines to indicate that the children are achieving an adequate level of educational growth and progress, including but not limited to: (a) an evaluation letter from a person licensed to teach in any state, or a person with a master's degree or higher in an academic discipline, having knowledge of the child's academic progress, stating that the child is achieving an adequate level of educational growth and progress; or (b) a report card or transcript from a community college or college, college distance learning program, or home-education correspondence school.

If the parent does not provide evidence of satisfactory achievement or growth, the home instruction program for that child may be placed on probation for one year. Parents shall file with the division superintendent evidence of their ability to provide an adequate education for their child in compliance with this Policy and a remediation plan for the probationary year, which indicates their program, is designed to address any educational deficiency. Upon acceptance of such evidence and plan by the division superintendent, the home instruction may continue for one probationary year. If the remediation plan and evidence are not accepted or the required evidence of progress is not provided by August 1 following the probationary year, the division superintendent shall advise the parents that home instruction shall cease and the parents shall otherwise comply with § 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia for the education of the child. These requirements shall not apply to children who are under the age of six (6) as of September 30 of the school year.

Any parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of a child being home instructed shall comply with immunization requirements provided in §§ 32.1-46 and 22.1-271.4 of the Code of Virginia in the same manner and to the same extent as if the child has been enrolled and is attending school. Upon the request of the division superintendent, the parent shall submit to him or her documentary proof of immunization in compliance with Virginia Code §§ 32.1-46 and 22.1-271.4, and Montgomery County School Board policy.

The School Board shall make Advanced Placement (AP), Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), and the PreACT examinations available to students receiving home instruction. The School Board shall notify such students and their parents of such registration deadline and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take such examinations.

Any parent aggrieved by a decision of the division superintendent may appeal his or her decision to an independent hearing officer in accordance with § 22.1-254.1(E) of the Code of Virginia.

The division superintendent and the School Board will not disclose to the Department of Education or any other person or entity outside the local school division information that is provided by a parent or student to satisfy the requirements of this Policy regarding home instruction and religious exemption. However, the division superintendent or School Board may disclose, with the written consent of a student's parent, such information to the extent provided by the parent's consent.

## BUS RULES

Although all students do not ride a bus to and from school, there may be times during the year, such as field trips, when it is necessary to ride a bus. Therefore, we ask that all families review these important rules for bus conduct and safety.

1. Students must follow the directions of their driver at all times.
2. Bus drivers have the authority to assign specific seats.
3. Students will keep their hands and feet off others while riding the bus.
4. Eating, drinking, and chewing gum are prohibited on the bus.
5. There are to be no glass containers of any type on the bus.
6. Alcohol, tobacco, or drugs are not allowed on the bus.
7. Students should be seated immediately upon entering the bus and should remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop at their point of departure.
8. There are to be no obscenities spoken on the bus.
9. Fighting is prohibited.
10. No large objects which could block the aisle are permitted.
11. No weapons of any kind are allowed on the bus – this includes toy “look alike” weapons.
12. No ammunition, firecrackers, explosives, or laser pointers are allowed.
13. Animals (living or non-living) are not allowed on the bus.
14. Students/parents are responsible for any damage done to the bus.
15. Parents must send a signed note to request that their child/children ride a different bus or be allowed to depart the bus at a stop different from their normal stop.
16. For the safety of all students, discipline must be maintained on the bus. Students who habitually violate bus rules are subject to suspension from the bus.
17. Students must be supervised to and from the bus stop before and after school.



## CAFETERIA

	Breakfast	Lunch (Prices subject to change.)
Full Price	\$1.75	\$2.75
Reduced	.40	.40
Milk Only	.50	.50
Adult Lunch		3.75

Prepayment of meals helps prevent money from being lost and helps speed up our lunch lines. We encourage children to pay for meals in advance by the week or month by using mySchoolBucks at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). Students will use a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access their lunch accounts each day. However, students may pay for lunch each day in the line

Free and reduced lunch applications are available in the office. A new form must be completed each year.

### Expectations for Behavior in the Cafeteria

- ✓ Enter the cafeteria in an orderly and quiet manner.
- ✓ Talk quietly in your classroom line while waiting to enter the serving line.
- ✓ Wait without talking in the serving line – the dishwashers and other machinery make it very difficult to hear your choices for lunch.
- ✓ Use good table manners.
- ✓ Sit at the table with your feet under the table. Do not straddle the bench or turn with your back to the table.
- ✓ Visit quietly with the students at your table. Good manners do not include yelling to people across or down the table from you.
- ✓ Stay seated during lunch. Raise your hand if you need help.
- ✓ Keep your food on your own tray – do not play with your food.
- ✓ All food must be taken the first time through the line. Students may not return to the line to purchase more food items.
- ✓ Keep hands and feet off other people and their food.
- ✓ Candy should be left at home and is not permitted in the cafeteria
- ✓ With teacher permission students may bring quiet games or books may be used at the lunch table when their meal is finished.



All other school rules concerning behavior apply during lunch.

## CLINIC

When a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified. First aid will be administered to minor cuts and abrasions. Ill children may wait in the clinic until parents arrive.

Please do not send your child to school if his/her temperature is over 100.4 degrees or if you needed to give your child medication in the last 24 hours to control his/her temperature. Children need to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Head Lice - Children with active cases and children with visible nits/eggs will be sent home for treatment and nit removal. Students will not be readmitted to school while the condition persists.**

Younger students should have a change of clothes at school. This eliminates phone calls to parents to bring clothes to school should a spill or accident occur.

Administration of medications will be permitted on school property only when medically necessary and under the direct supervision of appropriate staff members. We attempt to discourage the administration of medication during school hours and whenever possible, request doses of medication be scheduled other than school hours. The first dose of any newly prescribed medication should always be given at home. For the safety of the students, the following procedures must be followed:

- If prescription medications are to be given at school, the Montgomery County Medication Permission form must be provided and signed by the doctor/licensed prescriber, and the parent/guardian. It must specify the name of the medication, dosage and time to be given. A separate medication permission form must be completed for each medication. Please note: Prescription bottles do not take the place of a medication form signed by a physician.



- If non-prescription medications are to be given at school, the medication permission form must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian, indicating the name, dosage and time to be given. Non-prescription medications can be administered for no longer than three consecutive days, after which time a written order from a physician/other licensed prescriber is required.
- All medication is to be brought to school by the parent or guardian in the original, properly labeled container. The information on the container must match the information on the medication permission form. If the parent is unable to deliver the medication to the school, he or she must call the school to report that the medication is being delivered by the student. All medication must be accompanied by a medication permission form.
- Self-administration of any medication, prescription or non-prescription, is prohibited for students in grades kindergarten through eight with one exception. Medications needed in a medical emergency such as inhalers, epi- pens, or glucose tablets may be kept in the possession of a student and self-administered only with a written statement from a physician/licensed prescriber.
- Sharing, borrowing or distributing any medication is prohibited and may result in a recommendation of expulsion.

Medication permission forms are available in the school office and most local doctors' offices. They can also be downloaded from the MCPS website.



# Guidelines for Keeping a Sick Child at Home

## Should I keep my child home or send him or her to school?

Please keep your child home if he or she has had any of the following in the past 24 hours:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- vomiting
- diarrhea more than one time
- Has symptoms that prevent him or her from participating in school, such as:
  - Excessive tiredness or lack of appetite
  - Productive coughing, sneezing
  - Headache, body aches, earache
  - Sore throat

*A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be strep throat even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat include headache and stomach upset. Contact your pediatrician for a test to determine if it is strep throat.*

**Keep your child home until his or her fever has been gone for 24 hours without medication.** Colds can be contagious for at least 48 hours. Returning to school too soon may slow recovery and expose others unnecessarily.

## Does my child have the flu?

The flu is serious! Call your pediatrician at the first sign of flu symptoms, which typically come on suddenly, including:

- High fever
- Chills
- Headache, body aches, earache
- Nausea, vomiting
- Dry cough

If you're unsure about the best way to treat your child's cold or flu, ask your school nurse, doctor, or pharmacist.

## How do I make my child feel better?

- Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and put limits on TV watching
- Encourage fluids like water, soup, juice and ice
- Help your child relax by reading him a story and giving him plenty of TLC
- Used as directed, children's cough and cold medicines help relieve cough and cold symptoms while your child is getting better. Read the directions carefully and give the exact recommended dose for the child's age. Do not use over the counter cough and cold medications for children under age four.

## How can I prevent my child from getting a cold?

- Teach your child to wash his or her hands frequently using plenty of soap and warm water. Proper hand-washing should take about 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice
- Teach your child to cover coughs and sneezes with their sleeve
- Keep the child's environment tobacco free
- Try to minimize the time your child spends with other children who have cough or cold symptoms
- Keep an annual well-child exam to follow changes in your child's health
- Keep your child's immunizations up-to-date (CDC guidelines recommend a flu vaccine for most children)
- Serve a balanced diet with lots of fruits and vegetables.
- After your child is feeling better, clean all surfaces; wash the bedding and air out the room
- Keep surfaces like doorknobs, phones, remote controls, toys, and keyboards clean
- Always make sure to consult your school nurse or doctor if you have any questions

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USAGE

I will read the rules for using the internet that are given in my handbook and will ask an adult at my school if I do not understand what any of them mean. I also know that if I do not use computers and equipment in the right way, I will have consequences for my choices. I may not be allowed to use computer and equipment again at school.

- I will only use the technology and equipment in the manner for educational purposes. I understand that I may be held responsible for any or all damage incurred as a result of my negligent behavior.
- While online, I will not use language, which may be offensive to other users. I will treat others with respect. The written and verbal messages I send while on the Internet will not contain profanity, obscene comments, sexually explicit material, or expressions of bigotry, racism, or hatred.
- I will not cyberbully. "Cyberbully" means using the computer to threaten, harass, or intimidate another person. I will tell an adult if I see any cyberbullying, cyberthreats, or inappropriate activity.
- I will not place unlawful information on the Internet, nor will I use the Internet illegally in any way that violates federal, state, or local laws or statutes. I will never falsify my identity while using the Internet.
- I will not use the Internet for non-school related activities.
- I will not engage in Internet activities that cause congestion on the MCPS network.
- I will not use the Internet to buy or sell, or to attempt to buy or sell, any service or product.
- I will not change any computer file that does not belong to me.
- I will not use copyrighted materials or software from the Internet without permission of the author. I will cite the source where appropriate.
- I will never knowingly give my password to others, nor will I use another person's password.
- I will never use the Internet to send or obtain pornographic or inappropriate material or files.
- Except for the usual information contained in the headers of my electronic mail, I will never give out personal information such as name, address, phone number, or gender.
- I will never knowingly circumvent, or try to circumvent, security measures on either Montgomery County Public Schools' computer system or on computers at any remote site.
- I will never attempt to gain unlawful access to another person's or organization's resources, programs, or data.
- I will not make, or attempt to make, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user on the Internet, including the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses.
- I understand that the school division is not responsible or liable for any harm, damages or charges that result from my use of the school division's technology, including loss of data, interruption of services, corruption of files or programs, purchases, hacking or other violations of this Acceptable Technology Use and Internet Safety Policy.
- I will report any violations of this Acceptable Technology Use and Internet Safety Policy to my teacher or principal.



# MCPS Code of Conduct

## Safe Schools

It is the belief of the Montgomery County School Board and staff that schools should be safe havens for students within the community. Montgomery County is fully committed to having a learning environment in all of our schools in which children and personnel are safe. To that end, the School Board supports preventative and positive approaches to discipline and systems of support that create safe, supportive, and positive schools where adults respond to student misbehavior with interventions and consequences aimed at understanding and addressing the causes of misbehavior, resolving conflicts, meeting students' needs and keeping students in school and learning.

## Philosophy

The Montgomery County School Board intends for its schools to promote good citizenship and to provide an atmosphere which is safe and conducive to learning. Both good citizenship and a safe environment require that students demonstrate personal responsibility, self-discipline, self-control, and respect for themselves, for others, and for property. To reach this goal, teachers and principals will work cooperatively with children and their families.

## School Climate

Montgomery County Public School is committed to equity and to creating and maintaining a positive school climate "free of disruptions and threat to persons or property and supportive of individual rights" as required in the Standards of Quality (§ 22.1-253.13.7.D.3 and Section 22.1-279.6) of the Code of Virginia, which make reference to incorporating discipline options and alternatives "to preserve a safe, non-disruptive environment for effective teaching and learning". A positive school climate will be achieved through the following ways:

## Responsibilities

These guidelines promote personal and social responsibility and self-discipline on the part of all who are part of the school community: students and their families, administrators, teachers, and all others who work in or for schools to create a safe, supportive, and effective school environment. These guidelines will be in effect when going to and from school, waiting at school bus stops, riding school buses, attending school, and participating in school-sponsored activities, including field trips.

## Student Responsibilities:

1. to understand and respect that everyone has a right and a responsibility to learn in a safe environment;
2. to treat everyone with respect, both physically and verbally;
3. to follow the instructions of teachers and other adult staff;
4. to come to school, unless ill, on time and prepared to work;
5. to adhere to bus rules and directions given by bus drivers;
6. to complete schoolwork on time;
7. to take care of personal property, property of others, and school property;
8. to help keep parents informed by taking information home;
9. to bring school supplies to class but leave non-academic items at home; and
10. to adhere to the law. Items such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, inhalant products and weapons are not allowed on school property. Violations of the laws concerning alcohol, drugs, tobacco, electronic cigarettes, inhalant products, and weapons will be reported to law enforcement officials.

Students will assume these responsibilities and will help make school a safe and positive space for everyone.

## Parent or Guardian Responsibilities:

1. to **partner** with school authorities, participate in school level meetings, and be supportive of the educational process;
2. to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct and discuss it with their child;
3. to notify the school of any unusual behavior pattern or medical problem;
4. to maintain regular communication with the school and provide a current daytime phone number;
5. to partner and participate with the school to address student behavior;

6. to monitor and require daily attendance;
7. to advocate for their children and be a part of the educational process;
8. to verify they have discussed the student code of conduct with their child;
9. To reinforce academic lessons, instructions and homework at home to ensure students are prepared for testing

#### **Teacher Responsibilities:**

1. to teach and model for students expectations for classroom behavior;
2. to adopt and maintain discipline that is both fair and consistent in the classroom;
3. to avoid ridiculing or making negative comparisons of students;
4. to use student support systems (PBIS, SAPT, and Restorative Practices) to find possible solutions to discipline problems;
5. to report to the parents or guardians, when appropriate, about the acceptability of a student's conduct;
6. to protect the rights of other students by removing disruptive students from their class, through referral to an appropriate administrator;
7. to enforce the rules and regulations of the school and student compliance with their responsibilities set forth above;
8. to maintain regular and open communication with parents;
9. to have focused and engaged lessons and provide differentiated instruction;
10. to build a conducive learning environment where relationships are a focus every day;
11. to develop positive relationships, teach (and reteach when necessary) behavioral expectations, and reinforce positive behavior;
12. to actively listen and seek to understand people with different experiences; and
13. to use practices that promote student self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

#### **School Administrator Responsibilities:**

1. to ensure that all students, parents and guardians, and school personnel are familiar with School Board student code of conduct policy;
2. to assume responsibility for student discipline in the building and on school property;
3. to involve parents and students in the development of rules and regulations not covered by this policy through student assemblies and parental involvement activities;
4. to establish and implement rules and regulations for student conduct in their school that are consistent with the student responsibilities listing;
5. to support teachers in their commitment to equity, discipline and a positive learning environment;
6. to enforce the student conduct code in a consistent, equitable, and fair manner;
7. to ensure the delivery of responsive guidance and counseling services;
8. to notify and involve parents or guardians, when appropriate, about the acceptability of a student's conduct and to notify parents of disciplinary actions; and
9. to work collaboratively with school personnel, parents, school board, law enforcement officers, and service agencies to provide necessary resources that will meet the needs of all students.
10. to ensure that the administrative team and all teachers, counselors, and school staff know and follow the principles of positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS), family engagement, trauma informed instruction, and restorative practices.

By working with families to promote good citizenship, self-discipline, and personal responsibility in children, Montgomery County Public Schools will establish a supportive environment for learning.

#### **Montgomery County School Board Responsibilities:**

1. to establish student conduct policies and procedures that are fair, equitable, and consistent in content and application;

2. to adopt a discipline policy that is fair, equitable and consistent in content and in application;
3. to review the adherence to and enforcement of the Student Code of Conduct; and
4. to review and implement restorative practices prior to long-term suspensions, expulsions, and the readmission of students who have been expelled.

#### **Coach and Sponsor Responsibilities:**

1. to set additional standards concerning dress, behavior and training related to the extracurricular activity and to notify involved students, in writing, of any additional requirements;
2. to notify parents and students, in writing, that the Student Code of Conduct is in force during all school-sponsored activities, including field trips; and
3. to enforce the rules and regulations of the school and the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **School Counselor Responsibilities:**

1. to provide individual counseling for students;
2. to conduct small group sessions for students with similar concerns;
3. to serve as a resource person for classroom sessions to present factual knowledge concerning students' physical and social-emotional growth;
4. to create safe spaces for students to have an open dialogue about issues and concerns they are dealing with in the school and at home; and
5. to develop programs designed to enhance skills in problem solving, assertiveness, relationship building, and communication.

#### **School Nurse Responsibilities:**

1. to establish and maintain standards of emergency care to minimize the effects of accidents and illness in school;
2. to serve as a child advocate;
3. to make home visits in regards to home-school related health problems when necessary;
4. to assist students, families, and school personnel in achieving optimal levels of wellness through health education; and
5. to provide health related in-services for students, families, and school personnel as necessary.

#### **School Psychologist Responsibilities:**

1. to confer with parents and school personnel to interpret test findings;
2. to consult with teachers and parents to explain the needs of all students;
3. to recommend to teachers and guidance counselors special activities geared to help all students;
4. to participate with other school personnel in Team Program planning; and
5. to recommend and develops alternative learning strategies for teachers.

#### **Non-Certified School Staff Responsibilities:**

All members of the school community should be engaged in and responsible for establishing a positive school climate. Every school employee is responsible for ensuring a safe, supportive, effective learning environment.

#### **Statement of Procedures**

1. **Communication of policy to students, staff, and parents:** All students, parents, and staff members will receive copies of the School Board's "standards of conduct" published in the Student Code of Conduct. Students and parents will be required to sign a statement indicating that they are aware of policy guidelines and procedures and sanctions for misconduct. This signed

statement will be kept on file in the school office. Students will receive information about the policy from teachers and/or school administrators in student assemblies. Staff will be provided with an annual in-service regarding the Student Code of Conduct policy.

Within one calendar month of the opening of school, the Montgomery County 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 Virginia Code § 22.1-279.3 regarding "Parental Responsibility and Involvement Requirements," (ii) a copy of the School Board's standards of student conduct; and (iii) a copy of the Virginia 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 of Virginia and that a parent shall have the right to express disagreement with a school's or the school division's policies or decisions.

Each parent of a student shall provide an electronic signature or return to the school in which the student is enrolled a signed statement acknowledging the receipt of the School Board's standards of student conduct, the notice of the requirements of Virginia Code § 22.1-279.3, and the Virginia compulsory school attendance law. Each Montgomery County Public school shall maintain records of such signed documents.

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 his 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 Virginia's compulsory school attendance law, and to discuss improvement of the child's behavior, school attendance, and educational progress.

In accordance with all due process requirements in applicable Virginia law, the school principal must notify the parents of any student who violates a School Board policy or the 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.

No suspended student shall be admitted to the regular school program until such student and their parent have met with school officials to discuss a plan for reentry, unless the school principal or his/her designee determines that readmission, without parent conference, is appropriate for the student. **New legislation requires school boards to adopt policies containing this provision.** Suspended students will be able to access and complete graded work during and after the suspension.

Upon failure of a parent to comply with the provisions of Virginia Code § 22.1-279.3, 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.

**2. Prevention of misconduct:** The prevention of student misconduct will be an essential element of this policy. Decision-making skills, restorative practices and PBIS, and anger management should be modeled for students by staff members and opportunities provided for students to learn ways to solve problems in a non-violent, positive, and productive manner. To this end, staff will participate in professional learning on the practices of trauma informed instruction, social-emotional learning, Tiered Systems and PBIS, and restorative practices. Frequent contact between the school and home will be encouraged to promote home/school communication and help prevent student misconduct.

**3. Effective handling, monitoring and documentation of student misconduct:** Student misconduct will be handled as effectively and efficiently as circumstances allow and within agreed upon timelines and in accordance with a leveled system of disciplinary responses and instructional interventions matrix. Teachers and staff will monitor student conduct throughout the school building, on school grounds, and during all school activities.

**4. Consistent enforcement:** Students who violate the policy will be addressed consistently, equitably, and fairly following a leveled system of disciplinary responses and instructional interventions matrix.

**5. Preparation for crises:** Crisis prevention, preparedness, and management will be handled with the assistance of school crisis

teams and the specific legislation regarding how crises should be addressed.

6. **Consideration for the needs of at-risk students:** Support services, counseling services, and varied education opportunities, if appropriate, will be available for students who are at-risk for using and/or possessing alcohol and other drugs, for committing violent behavior, or for dropping out.

7. **Annual policy evaluation:** An annual evaluation of the Student Code of Conduct and analysis of school discipline data will be conducted to ensure that the Code of Conduct is implemented and addresses the current needs of the school community. A large part of the evaluation will be used to assess the discipline data, pertaining to suspensions, the disproportionality of the suspensions, and the racial and ethnic makeup of the data. This annual evaluation of policy will be led by the administration and include a committee of diverse stakeholders who will determine whether the Code of Conduct requires revision by the School Board.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

This policy applies to any student, PK-12, who is in or on school property, in a private vehicle on school property, in attendance at school or at a school-sponsored activity including field trips. This policy also covers students going to and from school and waiting at bus stops.

It is the expectation of the School Board that all students have the right to an environment that is safe, drug free, and conducive to learning and that all disciplinary actions are administered in a respectful, equitable and fair manner. To that end, a matrix of disciplinary responses and instructional interventions, which defines and categorizes each behavior and sets level response parameters, will be followed in response to student behaviors. The following is a list of terms and definitions addressed in the matrix.

1. **Absenteeism:** Tardiness, cutting/skipping class, truancy, or leaving school without the permission of the principal or his/her designee.

2. **Acting as an Accessory:** Acting as an accessory or accomplice to another person who violates any provision of the Student Code of Conduct.

3. **Bullying/Biased-Based Behaviors:** 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" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument or peer conflict. Students, either individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others. Behaviors associated with bullying include, but are not limited to, intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults. Bullying behaviors may take a variety of forms, including by electronic means such as cell phone, social media, text message and email. Bullying, threatening, intimidation, harassment, or any other activity characterized by targeted, intentionally hurtful behavior (verbal or nonverbal) that results in any physical, social/relational or emotional/psychological harm to another person is not tolerated in any form in any Montgomery County Public School. The principal shall notify the parent of any student involved in an alleged incident of bullying, as defined herein, of the status of any investigation within five school days of the allegation of bullying.

4. **Bus Misbehavior:** Any behavior that interferes with the orderly transportation of pupils on a school bus. A student is expected to cooperate with the bus driver and any other adult with School Board authority and follow the posted rules on the bus. Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats. Failure to comply with bus rules and directions of drivers or other authorized adults may result in a loss of bus privileges.

5. **Cell Phones & Other Portable Communication Devices:** Students are not freely permitted to use or display such devices during instructional time. Such devices will be considered to be "in use" if they are on (regardless of if they are on silent or set to ring), sending or receiving a call or text message or being used to take, display, or send photos/videos, etc. However, students may have such items in their possession for use after school hours, during bus rides to and from school, and during athletic events. Students may utilize such devices during instructional time only for academic purposes and under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher.

6. **Cheating:** Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance with schoolwork.

7. **Creating Aggravating Circumstances in Class/School:** Any behavior that impedes academic progress of the student or of

other students. The following are examples, not an all-inclusive list: continual talking after being asked to cease, throwing objects not part of supervised school activities, use of CD/tape players or radios, cameras, recording devices, electronic games or other non-instructional articles during regular school hours, gambling, display of pornographic material, etc.

8. **Dressing Inappropriately:** Wearing of clothes, jewelry, other apparel and/or decals that advocate violence, alcohol and other drug use and/or distribution; that represent gang activity and/or membership; that advertise obscenities; or that reflect adversely on a person's race/ethnicity, color, gender, creed, national origin, physical, emotional, or intellectual abilities; or that would cause disruption to the learning environment at any school. Students shall not at school, on school property, or at school activities wear or have in their possession any written material that is racially divisive. Examples include clothing, articles, material or publications or any item that denotes Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nation-White Supremacy, Neo-Nazi, or any hate group, or Confederate flags or articles of clothing, jewelry, etc. This list is not intended to be all inclusive. Any student may wear religiously and ethnically specific or significant head covering or hairstyle, including hijabs, yarmulkes, headwraps, braids, locs, and cornrows. No employee may enforce the dress code by direct physical contact with a student or a student's attire or require a student to undress in front of any other individual, including the enforcing school board employee, to comply with this dress code. Students shall be subjected to the same set of rules and standards regardless of gender.

9. **False Alarms:** Setting off false fire alarms and making false bomb threats.

10. **Gang Activity:** Any group activity that threatens, that is illegal and/or violent, or that portends the development of gang activity, which may include wearing gang-related apparel, inappropriate congregating, bullying, and harassment.

11. **Hazing:** Students shall not recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or students or inflict bodily harm on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority, or student body regardless of whether the student or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant activity. The principal of any Montgomery County Public School at which hazing which causes bodily injury occurs shall report the hazing to the local Commonwealth's Attorney. Hazing, as defined herein, is a Class I misdemeanor, which may be punished by confinement in jail for up to 12 months and a fine of up to \$2,500.00, or both, in addition to any disciplinary consequences which may be imposed under this policy. In addition, any person receiving bodily injury by hazing has a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants. See Virginia Code § 18.2-56.

12. **Noncompliance:** Failure to comply with the fair and reasonable directions of a teacher or other school employee. Interference with or intimidation of school authorities is unacceptable also.

13. **Physical Assault:** Any physical confrontation that may result in no injury, minor injury, or serious injury that includes, but may not be limited to, kicking, spitting, elbowing, aggressively touching, shoving, pushing, hitting, and fighting. Self-defense or action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect oneself or some other person will be taken into consideration.

14. **Sex Offenses:** Inappropriate activities including, but not limited to, indecent exposure, sexual assault, fondling, and obscene phone calls.

15. **Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

16. **Substance Abuse-Use and/or Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs:** The possession, use, and/or distribution of alcohol, tobacco and/or tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, inhalant products and other drugs on school grounds, on school buses, or during school activities, on or off school property. (See the complete Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Policy below).

17. **Theft:** Taking school property the property of another without right or permission.

18. **Threats:** Communicating a threat verbally or in writing, including by electronic means.

19. **Trespassing:** Being present on school property or using school facilities without proper authority and/or permission (includes

students who have been suspended or expelled.)

20. **Vandalism:** Willful or malicious defacing of school property, including graffiti, and defacing of private property.

21. **Improper or Unsafe Operation of a Vehicle:** Driving on school property without a valid driver's license or reckless driving on school property. Student parking on school property is a privilege that comes under the approval of the school administration.

22. **Verbal Abuse:** Any use of profanity, obscene gesture, bullying, intimidating gestures, or language that interferes with teaching and learning or that intentionally offends or threatens another. Abusive language includes, but is not limited to, language that demeans another's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, intellectual ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other personal characteristics.

23. **Weapons-Possession and/or Use:** Possession and use of weapons is a violation of the law as well as the Student Code of Conduct. (See the Weapons Policy below).

### **Corrective Actions**

Except as provided under the following drug and alcohol policy and certain firearms/weapons violations, the principal or his/her designee will have the responsibility to determine that a matrix of disciplinary responses, instructional interventions, and disciplinary sanctions is followed in response to student behaviors. Examples of behavior responses are listed below and are not in any particular order:

1. counseling;
2. involvement of other human service agencies, as appropriate;
3. reprimand;
4. loss of school privileges;
5. loss of bus or student parking privileges;
6. parental conferences;
7. community service;
8. tasks or restrictions assigned by the principal or their designee;
9. detention before school, at lunch or after school;
10. suspension from school-sponsored activities or events prior to, during, or after the regular school day;
11. in-school supervision/suspension with behavioral instruction, interventions, and/or restorative practices with academic support;
12. short-term out-of-school suspension with a plan before returning to school;
13. reassignment to another school within the division in accordance with Board policy;
14. referral to law enforcement as required;
15. recommendation of long-term suspension (11 to 45 days);
16. recommendation of expulsion (indefinite period of time, in some instances a minimum of 365 days) and
18. Saturday School.

### **Multiple Incidents of Aggravated Circumstances, Fighting, and/or Other Repeated Violations of the Student Code of Conduct**

Students involved in multiple incidents of aggravated circumstances, fighting, and/or repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct other than truancy will be considered for recommendation to the School Board for long-term suspension or expulsion. This does not preclude a recommendation by the school administration for long-term suspension or expulsion in the case of a single serious incident.

## **Search and Seizure**

To maintain order and protect students and school personnel, school authorities (minimum of two persons) may, with reasonable suspicion, search a student or student automobile on school premises. Student lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

## **Notification of Law Enforcement**

Local law enforcement will be contacted in the event of, but not limited to, the following violations:

Weapons violations	Possession, use, and/or distribution of illegal substances
Assault and Battery	Property crimes
Sex offenses	Robbery
Bomb threats	Threats against school personnel

Additionally, the Code of Virginia requests that courts notify school divisions of the disposition of particular offenses involving students. The division may pursue disciplinary action consistent with applicable law as a result of this notice.

## **Prosecution of Juveniles as Adults**

Under certain circumstances, the Code of Virginia allows the transfer of juveniles for trial as adults. The Commonwealth's Attorney makes such requests. More information is available at [www.mcps.org](http://www.mcps.org).

## **Appeal Process**

Before appealing a disciplinary action, parents and students are encouraged to discuss the matter with the principal. Appeals must be filed in accordance with School Board policies. Different processes may apply to different types of discipline. Corrective action will not be delayed while an appeal is pending.

The disciplinary appeals process is addressed in MCPS Policy 7-3.2.

## **Weapons Policy**

Students shall not possess, handle, transport or use weapons. The School Board shall expel students for violations of this policy unless the School Board determines, based upon the facts of the particular situation that special circumstances exist and another disciplinary action is appropriate. Any weapon possessed in violation of this policy will be confiscated and may be forfeited to the Commonwealth.

The following items, in accordance with Virginia Law, are considered weapons:

1. any pistol, revolver, shotgun or other weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind;
2. any weapon of like kind as those enumerated in item 1;
3. any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
4. the frame or receiver of any weapon referenced in item 3;
5. any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
6. any destructive device. "Destructive device" is defined as (1) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket

having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or other similar device, and (2) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in this subsection and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. "Destructive device" does not include any device which is not designed or redesigned for use as a weapon, or any device originally designed for use as a weapon and which is redesigned for use as a signaling, pyrotechnic, line-throwing, safety, or similar device; or

7. any knife (Bowie, switchblade, or ballistic) or razor, metal knuckles, or blackjacks.

Students who possess firearms or knives on school property, including school buses, may be expelled and not allowed to attend school.

In addition, using a knife to threaten or to cause bodily harm will result in an automatic recommendation for expulsion.

The division superintendent or their designee is authorized to conduct a preliminary review of any violations of this policy to determine whether long-term suspension or other discipline, rather than expulsion, is appropriate to recommend to the School Board. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a student's expulsion regardless of the facts of the particular situation.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs**

### Tobacco

Students shall not possess, use, and/or distribute tobacco and/or tobacco products on school property, on school buses, or during activities on or off school property. This includes but may not be limited to any product intentionally inhaled in order to elicit an intoxicating effect such as smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, inhalant products such as vapor cigarettes, liquid tobacco, or hookah pipes.

### Alcohol and Drugs

Students shall not possess a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, marijuana, or synthetic cannabinoids, any substance used as an intoxicant (including alcohol), drug paraphernalia, or any substance which is represented by or to the student, or which the student believes to be a controlled substance, marijuana, illegal drug, substance used as an intoxicant. In addition, students shall not attend school while under the influence of any of these listed substances. Possession or being under the influence of any of these substances may result in a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion. However, the division superintendent is authorized to determine that special circumstances exist and to implement an intervention plan that includes the following for the first offense of possession or being under the influence of any of these substances:

A ten (10) day suspension (may be served at Montgomery Central if deemed appropriate pending availability);

Meetings with the parent/guardian;

Signing of a Substance Abuse Violation Behavior Contract;

Counseling sessions;

Drug prevention counseling

The division superintendent or their designee is authorized to conduct a preliminary review of any violations of this policy to determine whether long-term suspension or other discipline, rather than expulsion, is appropriate to recommend to the School Board.

Distribution, attempted distribution, or the purchase of any of the substances listed above requires the school administration to make a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion to the division superintendent. When it is determined to be necessary and appropriate, the division superintendent is authorized to conduct a Disciplinary Hearing to hear and review all evidence presented relevant to the distribution, attempted distribution, or the purchase of any of the substances listed above. Serving as the Hearing Officer, the superintendent will take all evidence under advisement before rendering a decision for the disciplinary action to be implemented. The proposed disciplinary action may include long-term suspension or a recommendation to the School Board for expulsion. The student and his/her parents/guardians will receive written notification of the Hearing Officer's proposed action, the reasons for the action, and the right to a hearing before the School Board. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a student's expulsion regardless of the facts of the particular situation.

The principal will refer all students who violate this policy to a substance abuse intervention program prior to readmission.

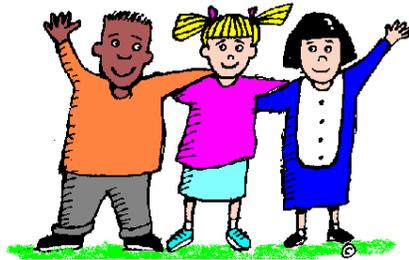
Any student in possession of prescription drugs that are not prescribed to that student or the intentional misuse of prescription drugs to elicit an intoxicating effect will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the guidelines for the possession or being under the influence of alcohol and other drugs above. Sharing, borrowing, distributing, manufacturing or selling any medication (both prescription and non-prescription "over-the-counter" medications) is prohibited and may result in a recommendation of expulsion.

In addition to the consequences listed in this Code of Student Conduct, a student who is a member of a school athletic team will be ineligible for two school years to compete in interscholastic athletic competition if the school principal and the division superintendent determine that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic team, unless such steroid was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

\*The Substance Abuse Violation Behavior Contract, available on the MCPS Web Administrative Guide, will be provided by the principal.

### **Alternative Education Programs**

The School Board may, in accordance with the procedures set forth in applicable law, require a student to attend an alternative or regional alternative education program as provided in Virginia Code Sections 22.1-209.1:2 or 22.1-277.2:1. The principal or their designee may impose a short-term suspension upon a student who has been charged with an offense involving intentional injury, as described in subsection G of §16.1-260, to another student in the same school pending a decision as to whether to require the student to attend an alternative education program.



### **POLICY 7-1.1 EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Montgomery County Public Schools' educational programs and services shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students and shall not discriminate against any individual for reasons of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Home and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Further, no student shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege or advantage, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity conducted by the school division. The School Board encourages school division employees, patrons and students to report promptly all incidents of alleged discriminatory conduct.

In furtherance of this policy, the School Board shall (i) provide facilities, programs and activities that are accessible, usable and available to qualified disabled persons; (ii) provide a free, appropriate education, including non-academic and extracurricular services, to qualified disabled persons; (iii) not exclude qualified disabled persons, solely on the basis of their disabilities, from any preschool, daycare, adult education or vocational programs; and (iv) not discriminate against qualified disabled persons in the provision of health, welfare or social services.

### **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of the School Board to maintain a working and learning environment for all of its employees and students, which provides for fair and equitable treatment, including freedom from sexual harassment or abuse. No employee or student, male or female, shall harass or abuse another employee or student, male or female, by making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment or academic decisions affecting the employee or student, (2) such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive or abusive working or learning environment, or (3) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment or participation in school programs. As used elsewhere in this policy, the term "harassment" specifically includes sexual harassment unless the context implies otherwise.

## **Grievance Procedure for Students with Complaints of Discrimination**

### Reporting

Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of prohibited discrimination, or any student that has knowledge of conduct which may constitute prohibited discrimination against another person should report the alleged discrimination as soon as possible to a building principal. The building principal will attempt to resolve the complaint through informal resolution prior to initiating a formal complaint. If it is not possible to resolve the matter within 5 business days, then a formal complaint will be reported by the building principal to one of the compliance officers designated in this policy.

Any student, employee, parent, or other person who has knowledge of conduct which may constitute prohibited discrimination shall report such conduct to the building principal. If it is not possible to resolve the matter within 5 business days, then the building principal will forward the report to one of the compliance officers designated in this policy.

The reporting party should use the form, *Report of Discrimination*, to make complaints of discrimination. However, oral reports shall also be accepted. The complaint must be filed with either the building principal or one of the compliance officers designated in this policy. The principal shall immediately forward any report of alleged prohibited discrimination to a compliance officer. Any complaint that involves a compliance officer shall be reported to the division superintendent.

The complaint and identity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator shall not be disclosed except as required by law or policy, as necessary to fully investigate the complaint or as authorized by the complainant.

### Investigation

Upon receipt of a report of alleged prohibited discrimination, the compliance officer shall immediately authorize or undertake an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school personnel or a third party designated by the school division. The investigation shall be completed as soon as practicable, but not later than fourteen (14) business days after receipt of the report by the principal or compliance officer. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the alleged perpetrator, and any others who may have knowledge of the alleged discrimination or the circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of the inspection of any other documents or information deemed relevant by the investigator. All employees shall cooperate with any investigation of alleged discrimination conducted under this policy or by an appropriate state or federal agency.

The school division shall take necessary steps to protect the complainant and others pending the completion of the investigation. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a case-by-case determination based on all of the facts and circumstances revealed after a complete and thorough investigation.

The compliance officer shall issue a written report to the division superintendent upon completion of the

investigation. If the complaint involves the division superintendent, then the report shall be sent to the School Board. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations are substantiated, whether this policy was violated, and recommendations for corrective action, if any.

Within five (5) business days of receiving the compliance officer's report, the division superintendent shall issue a decision regarding (1) whether the policy was violated and (2) what action, if any, should be taken. This decision must be provided in writing to the complainant. If the division superintendent determines that prohibited discrimination occurred, the Montgomery County School Division shall take prompt, appropriate action to address and remedy the violation as well as prevent any recurrence. Such action may include discipline up to and including expulsion or discharge.

### Appeal

If the school division determines that no prohibited discrimination occurred, the student, or parent/guardian of the student, who was allegedly subjected to discrimination may appeal this finding to the School Board within five (5) business days of receiving the decision. Notice of appeal must be filed with the division superintendent who shall forward the record to the School Board. The School Board shall make a decision within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the record. The School Board may ask for oral or written argument from the aggrieved party and the division superintendent and any other individual the School Board deems relevant.

### Retaliation

Retaliation against students or school personnel who report discrimination or participate in the related proceedings is prohibited. Montgomery County Public Schools shall take appropriate action against any student or employee who retaliates against another student or employee who reports alleged discrimination or participates in related proceedings.

### Right to Alternative Complaint Procedure

Nothing in this policy shall deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse to address concerns relating to prohibited discrimination including initiating civil action, filing a complaint with outside agencies or seeking redress under state or federal law.

### Compliance Officers

The Montgomery County School Board has designated the Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education, 200 Junkin Street, Christiansburg, Virginia, 24073, (540) 382-5100, as the Compliance Officers responsible for identifying, preventing, and remedying prohibited discrimination. The Compliance Officers shall: (1) receive reports or complaints of discrimination; (2) oversee the investigation of any alleged discrimination; (3) assess the training needs of the school division in connection with this policy; (4) arrange necessary training to achieve compliance with this policy; (5) insure that any discrimination investigation is conducted by an impartial investigator who is trained in the requirements of equal education opportunity, including the authority to protect the alleged victim and others during the investigation.

### Prevention and Notice of Policy

Training to prevent discrimination should be included in employee and student orientations as well as employee in-service training. This policy shall be (1) displayed in prominent areas of each division building in a location accessible to students, parents and school personnel, (2) included in the student and employee handbooks, and (3) sent to parents of all students within thirty (30) calendar days of the start of school. All students and their parent/guardian shall be notified annually of the names and contact information of the Compliance Officers.

## False Charges

Students or school personnel who make false charges of discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **DELAYED OPENING AND EARLY DISMISSAL**

Announcements to close schools, delay the opening of school or to dismiss students early because of extreme weather conditions or other emergencies will be made on local radio and TV stations.

Parents are also encouraged to call

**382-5102**



or visit [www.mcps.org](http://www.mcps.org)

for information concerning school closings, delayed openings and early dismissals. We respectfully ask that you do one of the above rather than the school number for this information.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that Montgomery County Public Schools obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. A student's address, phone number, or email address cannot be released in response to a request or under FOIA unless the parent has consented in writing to the disclosure. Appropriately designated directory information will be disclosed if you have given MCPS permission to do so in writing.

MCPS has designated the following categories as directory information: student's name, address, email address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

Any parents or eligible students who object to the release of any or all of this information without their consent must notify, in writing, the principal of the school where the records are kept. Using the Directory Consent form and PowerSchool, the objection must state what information the parent or eligible student does not want released. If a consent form is not received, your child's information will not be shared in any of the publications listed above.

## DRESS CODE

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing to school. Clothing should not be distracting to the educational environment. The purpose of our dress code is to prevent injuries and keep children safe and comfortable. Appropriate school attire shows respect for self and others.

Children should wear clean clothes and sturdy shoes that are suitable for running during gym class and on the playground. Any items of clothing that may be removed during the day such as jackets, sweaters, mittens, etc. should be clearly marked with the student's name. Students and parents are encouraged to check the Lost and Found area of their child's school for items as soon as they are discovered to be missing

### Shoes

- The type of shoe worn is very important to the safety of our children's feet – both inside the building and on the playground. It is recommended that students wear shoes that enclose and protect the entire foot while at school each day.
- The best choice for shoes is always athletic shoes! All students must wear athletic shoes for PE and recess. Children will not participate in PE without athletic shoes. Students who wear flip-flops to school will have a restricted recess area. Shoes with large heels are not permitted since students often twist their ankles in these while playing or walking. Shoes with wheels are not permitted.

### Shirts and Tops

- Shirts and/or blouses must be worn at all times and must be buttoned according to the design of the garment. **Shirts must extend over the belt line.**
- Tops should be about three fingers in width at the shoulder to cover the shoulder adequately. Halter tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, backless tops, see-through tops and tops that expose the waist or midriff are not allowed. Undergarments must be covered. Mesh shirts and shirts with large armhole openings should be worn over another top.

### Shorts and Skirts

- Shorts and skirts that fall at mid-thigh or below are an appropriate length for school.
- Short shorts and miniskirts worn without leggings are not permitted.
- Undergarments must be covered.

Schools may call home or find a suitable clothing alternative for students who are not dressed appropriately for school.

### Graphics

- Students may not wear clothing, jewelry or other apparel that advocates violence, alcohol, tobacco or drug use or that advertises obscenities or that reflects adversely on others due to race, religion, nationality, beliefs, or gender.
- Clothing depicting drugs or alcohol or tobacco products is prohibited.
- Clothing which depicts inappropriate language or scenes may be prohibited at the discretion of the principal.

### Hats, Gloves and Sunglasses

- Hats or caps may not be worn inside the school building except on designated theme days. This includes hoods on jackets or sweatshirts.
- Students may not wear gloves or sunglasses during the school day.

## EEO/CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT

Montgomery County Public Schools does not discriminate in its programs and activities for reasons of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, age, or on any other basis prohibited by law. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Director of Human Resources and Assistant Superintendent for Operations 750 Imperial Street SE, Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-5100.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS

Emergency fire drills will be conducted once a week for the first month of school and at least once each month for the remainder of the school year. Two lock-down drills will be conducted during the first month of school, and two additional drills will be conducted during the remainder of the school year. One of the drills will occur in January. Directions for evacuating the building during a drill or actual crisis situation are posted in each room. Students should walk rapidly in single file without running or talking, and remain with their class as they leave the building and report to the designated safe area where the teacher will take roll. Students will remain a minimum of 100 feet from the building until told to return to the building.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT - FERPA**

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) – Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day MCPS receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to ask the MCPS to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible students, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.  
One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement until personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.  
Upon request, MCPS discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student’s enrollment or transfer.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by MCPS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:  
Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips related to some phase of the class' instructional program are taken during the school year. Students are responsible for returning a signed permission slip and any field trip fees to the teacher by the deadline specified on the permission slip.

The teachers and principal will determine how many chaperones will be needed to adequately supervise students and parents may be asked to help supervise if needed. Parents may not bring siblings or other children when chaperoning a field trip.



## 504 INFORMATION

Information regarding 504 Plans can be found at the MCPS website by going to [www.mcps.org](http://www.mcps.org). Click on "Departments", then click on "Student Services". The 504 Coordinator for MCPS is Natalie Mey, 750 Imperial Street SE, Christiansburg, VA 24073; (540) 382-5100 x1021.

## INVOLVEMENT OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

As specified by the Code of Virginia and the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), non-custodial parents have the full rights as parents for access to student records and for participating in school activities, "unless otherwise ordered by the court for good cause shown." It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide documentation of any restrictions on a non-custodial parent. Duplicate copies of report cards and other written communications mailed to a student's home will be made available to non-custodial parents upon their request. If a person not known to school officials' attempts to contact or pick up a child at school, a photo ID and other verification of identity/relationship to a student (including confirmation with the custodial parent) may be required before releasing the student.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Montgomery County School Board has established the daily observance of one (1) minute of silence in each classroom of the school division (Division Policy 6-1.5). During this minute of silence, students must remain seated and silent and make no distracting display.

## PARENT'S RIGHT TO KNOW

### Right to Request Information on Teacher Qualifications As Required Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1111(h)(6)(A) states that as a parent of a student in a Title I school, receiving Title I funds, has 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 meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any information, please contact the school principal.

### Parent Notification of Assessment Opt Out Policies under Section 1112(e)(2) of *The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA)

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. You may contact your principal or Montgomery County Schools or find more information on the Virginia Department of Education's website: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml>

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Per School Board Policy 6-1.5, "The Pledge of Allegiance shall be recited daily in each classroom of the Montgomery County Public Schools as part of opening exercises. During the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, students shall stand while facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts or in an appropriate salute if in uniform. No student shall be compelled to recite the Pledge of Allegiance if the student, the student's parent(s), or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical or other grounds to the student's participation in this exercise. Students who are exempt from reciting the Pledge of Allegiance shall stand quietly or sit at their desks while others recite the pledge and make no display that disrupts or distracts those who are reciting the pledge. Appropriate accommodations shall be made for students who are unable to comply with the procedures described herein due to disability."

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The Virginia Board of Education charges school principals with the ultimate responsibility of assigning pupils to classes, programs and activities that are designed to promote maximum learning. In accordance with this provision, the school principal is the final authority in all matters of promotion and retention. In making the determination for placement, such factors as reading and math achievement commensurate with ability and social maturation and other requisites necessary to predict success in placement will be considered.

## RECESS

We believe that outdoor recess is best for students. Parents should send their children to school with the expectation that they will be playing outside during the day. Please remember that temperatures can change drastically from morning to afternoon. Rain, sleet, falling snow or saturated ground conditions may make inside recess necessary. We may also decide that indoor recess is necessary when the wind chill dips below 30 degrees according to weather.com.



Flip-flops and sandals pose an increased accident risk on the playground and are not appropriate for recess. Students who do not wear appropriate shoes for recess will have restricted play areas.

Teachers and administrators will evaluate students' clothing for appropriateness to conditions. If we believe a student's clothing is not suitable for outside play, we will keep them inside for recess.

## REPORT CARDS

Students are expected to master certain academic skills at each grade level. Parents will be informed concerning the child's achievement and weaknesses through notes, phone conversations and report card grades and comments. Report cards are provided for parental review at the end of each nine-week grading period for grades K-5.

Parent should review, discuss it with their child, sign and return the report card envelope to school. Please call your child's teacher when you have questions or concerns and arrange for a conference if necessary.

## RETURNED CHECKS

Montgomery County Public Schools uses an outside vendor to process returned checks submitted to our schools. This includes all checks written to the school for any fees/payments.

In the event of a returned check, all communication about the check will come directly from the outside vendor, not from the school. The vendor will contact the writer of a returned check by mail and by telephone in order to make arrangements to pay before an attempt is made to collect the check electronically. Each returned check is subject to the applicable state returned check fees.

## SPECIALITY CLASSES

All students will be assigned to the following specialty classes each week:

**ART, PE, Music, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), and Library**

## SOL INFORMATION AND STUDENT IMPACT

Virginia Department of Education regulations require students to take Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in grades 3, 4, and 5. Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 take SOL assessments in English Reading and Mathematics. Students in grade 4 also take the Virginia Studies assessment and students in grade 5 take the Science assessment. The scores range from 0 to 600 with 400 to 499 being Pass Proficient and 500 to 600 being Pass Advanced. Students who do not pass an SOL assessment may be considered for remediation programs. Failing an SOL assessment may also be used as one of many criteria for retention.



## Student Assistance Programming (SAP) Parent Notification

Our school has a Student Assistance Programming (SAP) Team that helps students who are struggling with their academics, behavior, attendance, and/or emotional wellness by working together with YOU.

**You are the expert on the needs of your child** and your voice matters. If your child is referred, you will be notified and invited to participate in this ongoing process.

The SAP Team will gather, review, and document information important to your child's learning and monitor his/her progress. The following activities **may be** completed as part of the SAP Team process:

Vision Screening	Classroom Observations	Academic Assessments
Hearing Screening	Develop/Review Intervention Plan	Work with School Counselor
Record(s) Review	Anecdotal/Written Notes	Other necessary information

**If you have any questions regarding the Student Assistance Programming Team process, please contact your school's administrator.**

**Title I School: PFES Parent Involvement Policy/School-Parent Compact**  
***Updated 7/19***

**Parent Involvement School-Parent-Student Compact**

Our school communities include teachers, principal, parents, students, and community partners, who share in the responsibility of educating and supporting each student to succeed in school and become a productive, responsible citizen. Our schools focus on practicing safely, acting responsively, working together, and showing respect each day at school.

*Family/Parent Responsibilities:*

I will support my child's learning and...

- Send my child to school regularly, well rested, and prepared to learn.
- Read with my child at least 15 minutes and talk together about books that have been read.
- Establish a homework routine and make sure that homework is completed.
- Monitor and limit the use of any screen time (TV, internet, and computer games).
- Encourage my child to be an active learner, good listener, and to do his/her best.

*Student Responsibilities:*

I will do my best and...

- Read 15 minutes every day outside of the school day and talk about what read.
- Do my homework every day and ask for help if needed.
- Be an active learner and follow school/class/rules.
- Be respectful of classmates and teachers.
- Be responsible with school and personal materials.

*School Responsibilities:*

Our school will support each students' learning and...

- Provide information to families about curriculum, academic assessments and expectations, and the Title I program at the start of each school year.
- Communicate student progress on a regular basis.
- Support each student's learning by providing additional instruction/materials as needed.
- Provide information and/or workshops to parents as requested.
- Schedule parent-teacher conferences every fall and spring.
- Provide families opportunities to participate in his/her child's education and events.
- Communicate important information in a format and language parents can understand.
- Conduct parent surveys to identify goals and make improvements to Title I program.
- Provide a fall and opportunity to participate in District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) meetings to plan, review, and improve parent engagement.