

**SCHOOL
DISTRICT
OF MERCER**



Student Handbook

Home of the Tigers

Effective: September 1, 2023

MERCER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

To all students we assign the responsibility of good citizenship. Support all functions of the school with honesty, courtesy, and enthusiasm. Study diligently so you may profit from and contribute to the classroom environment. Work continually for self-improvement in all tasks that confront you. Fulfilling these goals will result in a productive, enjoyable, school experience.

GENERAL STATEMENT

The district has various policies that guide school rules. All district board policies are available for student/parental review. Many policies specifically address the rules of this handbook in more detail. Policies are also available on the Mercer School website; www.mercer.k12.wi.us

SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Buses leave at approximately 3:40 p.m. Students who walk, ride bicycles, drive, or are transported by parents to school should arrive no earlier than 7:45 a.m. We ask that students who do not come to school by bus arrive no earlier than 7:45 a.m. Elementary (Pre-K-6) students will enter the building and store their belongings and then meet other classmates at their designated table in the cafeteria. Breakfast will be served for those wishing to eat starting at 7:45 a.m. Students must leave the building by 4:00 p.m. unless they are participating in a supervised school activity such as extra-curricular events or the after-school program, or if they're working with a staff member. Because of limited or no supervision, students are discouraged from being at school before 7:45 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m. The school assumes no liability of or supervision for unattended students before 7:45 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m. unless directly involved in a school-sponsored activity.

MERCER SCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:10	All students report to cafeteria for announcements
8:10-8:57	First Hour
9:02-9:49	Second Hour
9:54-10:41	Third Hour
10:46-11:33	Fourth Hour
11:35-12:05	Lunch
12:05-12:52	Fifth Hour
12:57-1:44	Sixth Hour
1:49-2:36	Seventh Hour
2:41-3:30	Eighth Hour

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Parents who pick up or drop off their children by car between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m. or 3:15 and 3:40 p.m. must use the parking spaces and not the bus lane marked at the main entrance. If elementary students arrive late to school, parents MUST accompany their children to the office or call the office. Parents picking up their children at the end of the school day should use the main entrance door only to wait by the office corridor.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is a responsibility that should be shared by parents, students, and the school.

Section 118.15 of the Wisconsin Compulsory Attendance Law states that “any person having under his control a child who is between the ages of 6 and 18 years shall cause the child to attend school regularly during the full period and hours, religious holidays excepted, that the public school in which the child is enrolled is in session until the end of the school term, quarter or semester of the school year in which the child becomes 18 years of age.” It is the legal responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure the child’s attendance.

Any student who is 18 years of age must comply with ALL school rules in the building and on school property. Students 18 years of age, regardless of their residency (with or without a parent(s)/guardian, unless there is proof of emancipation), will be held accountable for meeting attendance stipulations or be considered truant. Any 18-year old who encourages a minor to become truant may be charged with contributing to the truancy of a minor.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

1. Parents/guardians are expected to provide a written/telephone explanation of a student’s absence(s) in advance of the absence or upon the student’s return to school.
2. If students fail to provide an excuse, a phone call or a delayed written excuse will be necessary to verify the absence.
3. A **doctor’s excuse** may be required for an absence due to illness, after five (5) consecutive days.
4. Students leaving the building during the school day must obtain administrative and parent approval. Students are to sign out in the office before leaving and upon returning. Students leaving the building without permission will be disciplined and open campus privileges will be revoked.

TRUANCY

A student is considered habitually truant when they are absent without an acceptable excuse all or part of five or more days in a school semester. Each school district determines what constitutes “part of a day.” Mercer School District defines “part of a day” as one hour or more. Our biggest concern is that your student may fall behind. We want to help with improving your student’s attendance and avoid other negative consequences. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility, under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(1)(a) and (am), to cause the child to attend school

regularly. If you fail to do so, you may be subject to penalties under Wis. Stat. § 118.15(5). Such penalties may include:

- For the first offense, a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment for not more than 30 days or both.
- For a second or subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days or both.
- You may be required to perform community service work for a public agency or a nonprofit charitable organization in lieu of the penalties listed above.
- You may also be ordered to participate in counseling at your own expense or to attend school with your child, or both.

ABSENCE vs. PARTICIPATION

A student must be in school **all day** to participate in an extra-curricular event. However, participation may be approved by the school administrator/principal in advance, if extenuating circumstances prevent compliance. This rule does not apply to any event scheduled for a Saturday or during a school holiday.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students are allowed the same time to make up the work as the time missed from class due to absence. Generally, teachers will provide assignments to parents when a student misses two (2) or more days. Parents should request assignments or check online for them.

TARDY TO SCHOOL

When a student is late for school, he/she must report directly to the office. The office will record the tardiness as unexcused or excused and send the student to the first-hour class. If a bus is late, an announcement will be made.

PICKING UP STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL

Whenever picking up your child before normal dismissal time, you must call the office first so we can have your child ready for you and provide a written note for your child's teacher and attendance secretary. A written note to the office is also needed for bus students who will have a special reason for not taking the bus home on a given day. This is our way of knowing that the child has left the school with an authorized person. Permission to leave the school property must be obtained from the office. Parents must sign their child out at the office. Upon returning, students must report to the office and obtain an admittance slip to enter class.

VISITORS

Visitors to Mercer Public School are to get permission from the office before touring the building. Permission will not be given for classroom visitation by minors or students from other schools except for noon hour with prior approval from administration and by registering in the office upon entering and leaving the building. The guests, including parents, must receive permission from the

office and are subject to individual teacher permission for visits. Any person who does not register with the school office is on school property without proper authorization. Persons will be asked to identify themselves properly and obtain permission to be on school grounds. Persons not following this procedure will be asked to leave the school grounds. If the unauthorized person refuses to leave the school grounds or creates any disturbance, the building District Administrator should request aid from the police. Visitors are asked to provide their current driver's license to be approved for entry into the building during the school day. All visitors over the age of 18 are required to be approved through the Raptor visitor management system with a valid ID.

INTAKE OF NEW STUDENTS/TRANSFERS

New students wanting to enroll in Mercer Public School must come to the school office to register. Transcripts, immunization documentation, and other required forms must be obtained before the student(s) attending school. There may be a minimum of two days from the time of registration or a call notifying the school that you wish to enroll your child before a student can begin attending school.

TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

To speed up the records transfer process, any student who is withdrawing from school or who are transferring to another school is requested to follow this procedure:

1. Provide a written statement from the parent/guardian regarding withdrawal or transfer.
2. Attend a conference with the student, a teacher, and the guidance counselor.
3. Secure a withdrawal slip from the office.
4. Report to all teachers, librarians, and counselors for their clearance: books returned, fines paid, lunch balance paid, etc.
5. Return the completed withdrawal form to the main office and make the final check-out.

Note: If a student is transferring to another school, that school will request a transcript of his/her records from Mercer School when enrolling there.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS/EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

In the event of a tornado or other disaster warning, parents should not send their children to school. When deemed necessary to close school due to inclement weather or other emergencies, the local radio and television stations will be notified. In the event of severe weather or other school emergency, school officials and emergency services need to be able to use the school telephones immediately. Therefore, parents should not call the school at such times. In some situations of severe weather, phone service may be down and not available to the public. School closings or late starts will be announced over the following television and radio stations:

STATION	CITY	FREQUENCY
WCQM (FM)	PARK FALLS, WI	98.3
WIMI (FM)	IRONWOOD, MI	99.7
WJMS (AM)	IRONWOOD, MI	590

WUPM (FM)	IRONWOOD, MI	106.9
WRJO (FM)	EAGLE RIVER, WI	94.5
WJFW-TV	RHINELANDER, WI	Channel 12
KBJR-TV	DULUTH, WI	Channel 6

Parents should have an advance plan for their children in cases when school will be closed and this plan should be discussed with the student so the school will know whom to contact and students know where to go should school be dismissed early. Parents of PreK-6 grade students should inform individual classroom teachers and the office at the beginning of each school year what that plan is and what phone number(s) is(are) to be called. Please make sure enrollment forms are always up to date with current phone numbers. Middle school and high school students may be released from school without parental notification by school staff. The school is unable to notify every parent individually. Tune in to the local radio/television stations for school closing announcements. The school will be in session the next scheduled school day unless prior closing notification is released through the above-mentioned stations and available on the school emergency number.

EMERGENCY PLANS DURING SCHOOL DAY

During emergencies that occur while school is in session which results in students being kept in classrooms or taken to tornado shelter areas or other designated evacuation sites off school property, no one except emergency personnel can enter the building. Parents will not be able to call the school office or their children or enter the site(s) to pick up their children unless notified and requested to do so. All students, regardless of age, are required to remain in the building or designated emergency location with school staff the entire time and will be under the direction of school personnel and/or authorities.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information forms are to be filed in the main office each year. If there are revisions during the year, please provide an updated address, phone number, place of employment, and emergency contact person.

MEDICATION

According to Wisconsin Statutes, school personnel is unable to administer any medication without a doctor and/or parent's consent in writing. When medication must be administered during school hours, the Mercer School District requires that medication must be supplied in a properly labeled container. School personnel will not administer medication arriving in improperly labeled or unlabeled containers. The medication shall be kept in a locked storage area and disposed of at the end of each school year if not picked up by a parent/guardian.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM

Students are encouraged to participate in the school Breakfast and Lunch programs. Breakfast will be served every morning before school starting at 7:45. A hot lunch program is available for all students. Mercer School District is participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program which allows us to offer breakfast and lunch to all students free of charge. All families are asked to complete the Alternate Household Income Application. The applications support Mercer School in securing state and federal grants.

Each student has been issued an individual hot lunch PIN (number). He/she should not reveal this number to other students.

STUDENT INSURANCE

The Mercer School District as a service provides accident insurance coverage through the MUTUAL OF OMAHA SPECIAL RISK SERVICES for all students. This is a secondary insurance policy to the student's parent's health insurance policy.

Students in school, on school grounds, or in groups participating in school-sponsored or scheduled activities are covered. All accidents or injuries must be reported immediately to the teacher, supervisor, coach, or office personnel so accident forms can be completed. Failure to do so may deprive the student of benefits. The school cannot accept responsibility for coverage of accidents that were not reported. A licensed physician, surgeon, or chiropractor must perform the treatment. It is recommended that this be done as soon as possible. Eyeglasses and contact lenses are not covered. The claim form consists of two parts. The school fills out Part A only, which verifies the accident. Part B is completed by the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s). The claim must be filed with the parent/family or group carrier before it is sent to MUTUAL OF OMAHA SPECIAL RISK SERVICES. Contact the school office for the claim form and instructions.

STUDENT WORK PERMITS

Work permits are required for minors. Every employer must obtain a work permit for each minor under 16 before he/she permits the minor to do any work. No permit is required for agriculture, domestic services outside of school hours, and volunteer work for nonprofit organizations where no employer-employee relationship exists. Before a work permit can be issued, the following requirements must be presented to the permit office:

1. Proof of age - birth certificate
2. Letter from employer stating his/her intention to employ the minor
3. Letter from parent or guardian consenting to the employment
4. The required fee of \$10.00

BUS SAFETY AND BUS REGULATIONS

School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. The conduct expected on the bus is the same as in the classroom. Any misconduct on the part of a student, therefore, falls under the district's discipline policy and may result in the suspension of bus privileges. These rules also apply to any school-sponsored trip.

Bus rules:

- Do not cross between the buses at any time.
- Walk the sidewalks near the buses.
- Be careful when getting on or off the bus.
- All students must assist in keeping riders safe and the bus sanitary.
- Older students should look after the safety and comfort of the younger students.
- Nothing shall be thrown in or out of the bus.
- Riders must stay in their seats while the bus is in motion.
- The bus driver may assign riders to designated seats.
- Written notice is required for unusual drop-offs or other passengers.
- Do not drive or park in the designated bus loading area between 7:45-8:15 a.m. and 2:45-3:30 p.m.
- Riders to extra-curricular activities are expected to return on the bus unless approved in advance.

STUDENT VEHICLE USE

Students generally are allowed to drive and/or ride vehicles (cars, bicycles, ATVs, snowmobiles) to school in compliance with established vehicle regulations. Motorized vehicle use during the school day must be approved by the administration. It is recommended that students who ride their bicycles to school lock them in the bike racks provided. No bicycles are to be used in the playground area or ridden during the school day. The school is not responsible for students' bicycles.

Because buses are provided for all students at Mercer School, driving or riding a vehicle to school is a privilege, not a right. Students must obey all traffic laws, school rules and must exercise good driving sense if they intend to keep this privilege. The school will not excuse absence or tardiness due to vehicle troubles. Students driving and parking their vehicles at or near school do so at their own risk. Mercer School is not liable for any damage/theft/injury incurred while using one's transportation to and from school.

Students must comply with the following regulations to be allowed the privilege of driving to school:

1. Students in the school area must drive reasonably and prudently. Driving onto unauthorized school property areas is prohibited. Unlawful acts will be reported to the police.

2. Driving or parking in the bus loading/unloading area is discouraged between 7:45-8:15 a.m. or 2:45-3:45 p.m.
3. Students may not use vehicles, sit in them, or ride in non-student vehicles during the school day. This includes the lunch period. Students driving or riding without office permission will be disciplined.
4. Students may leave the campus in vehicles in two official ways:
 - a. work experience
 - b. with permission of the office for doctor appointments, unusual circumstances, etc. (permission must be obtained by written consent from the parent/legal guardian); the student must sign out in the school office.

The policies and regulations related to student vehicle use apply to student use of any motorized vehicle. State, county, and local ordinances violated by unauthorized riding or driving on school property will result in authorities being contacted. Any damage/theft/injury resulting from the use/misuse of motorized vehicles while on school property shall be the responsibility of the owner/operator.

OPEN CAMPUS

Students in good standing in grades 9 – 12 will be permitted off-campus during their lunch period. However, due to student driving issues, tardiness, and poor academic performance, this privilege can be taken away. Student conduct off-campus must be respectable. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of open campus privileges and the discontinuance of this open campus policy. Driving or riding in cars is not allowed during the lunch period without administrative approval. Parental requests for students to drive for errands generally are not to be granted due to monitoring difficulties.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Eating is only allowed in the lunchroom unless special permission is granted. When lining up for lunch, students are expected to keep hands and feet to themselves and respect personal space. When guests or teachers are present, students should allow the adult/guest to precede them in the lunch line. Students are expected to display appropriate table manners and clean up their lunch area when finished.

Eating or drinking beverages during the designated lunch period is confined to the cafeteria.

Consuming food and beverages, unless approved by a staff member as a special event or part of an IEP or doctor's medical excuse, is not allowed in classrooms or the gymnasium.

DESIGNATED AREAS

In most instances, both elementary school and high school students enjoy the same facilities except:

1. Middle and high school students should not use the elementary corridor for regular passing, nor may they exit the building for lunch from the elementary wing or tech ed room.
2. Middle and high school are not allowed in the elementary school washrooms.
3. Elementary students should not use the high school corridor for regular passing.

LOCKERS

Grade 4-12 students are assigned school lockers. Elementary students may bring their locks and must leave the combination or extra key with their classroom teacher. Grade 7-12 students will be issued a school combination lock for personal use. These students must use the school's locks. Other locks will be removed immediately. All lockers are to be locked when not in use. Students may not share lockers with friends and should be careful not to let other students know their combinations. Students who move or switch lockers with another student will lose the privilege of having an assigned locker.

LOCKER SEARCHES

Lockers are the property of the school. Students, lockers, and personal receptacles are subject to search. Under Wisconsin Statute 118.325, an official, employee, or agent of a school district may search a pupil's locker as determined necessary or appropriate without the consent of the pupil, without notifying the pupil, and without obtaining a search warrant by an Administrator with one witness. Students are responsible for the care and cleaning of this locker inside and out. Refrain from using adhesive decals that could damage the paint and from defacing lockers in any way. If the locker is damaged in any way during the school year, report this damage to the office. If the damage is not reported, the student to whom the locker was assigned will be held accountable and fined.

If personal property of value must be brought to school, the student should bring items to the main office to be locked in the safe until the end of the day.

BACKPACKS, BAGS, AND PURSES

Backpacks, book bags, and purses may be taken to school but will not be allowed into any classrooms. Computer bags to protect student computers are the only bags allowed in the classroom. All bags of any kind must be kept in lockers during the school day. Students must get a pass from a teacher to access their personal belongings as needed from their lockers.

TELEPHONES, CAMERAS, TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Landline phone calls from school are discouraged but may be permitted for good reason. The office phone only must be used for verification that a student is going home during the day or for other emergencies. Incoming calls, except for emergency messages to students, are discouraged as well.

Students are permitted to use cell phones during passing times, breakfast and lunch periods, and in the classroom as directed by their teacher for instructional purposes. Students must check their cell phones with the classroom teacher upon entering the classroom. Students who do not comply with these standards will have their cell phones confiscated and must have a parent pick them up in the main office.

Staff members will refer all students out of compliance to the District Administrator's office.

1st Violation: A warning will be issued and the phone will be turned into the office.

2nd Violation: Phone turned in to office and student loses phone privileges at school for one week; parent contacted to pick up the phone.

3rd Violation: Phone turned in to the office for a parent to pick up; loss of phone privileges at school for one month.

Subsequent Violation(s): Meeting with parents; loss of privilege to bring the phone to school for the remainder of the year. Failure to adhere to consequences may result in suspension and expulsion hearing.

TEXTBOOK CARE

Students are expected to take good care of the school's books. No marking of any kind will be tolerated in any schoolbooks. Fines will be imposed for books damaged through marking, tearing, or excessive abuse. Fines may range up to the full value of the book. All books will be examined when they are returned in the spring.

FEES AND FINES

Fines will be assessed for lost or damaged books, equipment, property, etc. Restitution may include payment through arranged work in the building. Amounts may range from partial to full assessments of the value of the book, equipment, or property. Damage fines must be paid by the end of the school year. Fees and payments for uniforms or other extra-curricular items must be paid in full before the student taking part in or ordering more uniforms in any subsequent sport/activity. Report cards and certificates of attendance will be withheld if fees/fines are not paid.

STUDENT ACCESS TO NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES/COMPUTER USAGE

Access and usage of all network and computer equipment and systems is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility. Students are required to follow the guidelines as set forth by the procedures outlined in Board Policy #363 and Procedure #362.1P. The Internet contains many valuable resources and learning opportunities. Responsible schools recognize the dangers that exist online and take steps to minimize those dangers. It is widely held that no system is completely foolproof, but Mercer School will take every reasonable precaution to keep its learning environment as safe as possible. Students are not permitted to:

- Display or transmit offensive messages or inappropriate pictures
- Display, record, or transmit obscene language
- Harass, insult, or attack others
- Violate copyright laws
- Use others' passwords
- Trespass in others' folders, work, or files
- Intentionally waste limited resources
- Use the network for commercial purposes
- Violate of state or federal laws or regulations
- Damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- Use an account other than their own or misrepresent their identity

Violations regarding computer or Internet use may result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action to include but not limited to:

1. Loss of access—the time to be determined by the administration.
2. Further disciplinary action against the student, including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion from school.
3. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.
4. Assessment of costs attributed to repair or restoration of damaged computers, systems, or networks.

All students will be informed by staff of their responsibilities as users of the District network before gaining access to that network, either as an individual user or as a member of a class or group. Parent permission is required for all students. A computer use form is attached to this handbook and must be signed by the student and parent and returned to the district office before students are allowed computer or Internet access.

No Expectation of Privacy

The school unit retains control, custody, and supervision of all computers, networks, and Internet services owned or leased by the school unit. The school unit reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including email and stored files.

Prohibited Uses

Examples of unacceptable uses that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Accessing Inappropriate Materials** - Accessing, submitting, printing, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning, or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, and/or illegal materials.
2. **Illegal Activities** - Using the school unit's computers, networks, and Internet services for any illegal activity or activity that violates other Board policies, procedures, and/or school rules. The school unit assumes no responsibility for the illegal activities of students while using school computers.
3. **Violating Copyrights** - Copying or downloading copyrighted materials without the owner's permission. The school unit assumes no responsibility for copyright violations by students.
4. **Plagiarism** - Representing as one's work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, etc.). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher, and Web site must be identified.
5. **Copying Software** - Copying or downloading software and/or music without the express authorization of the Technology Coordinator. Unauthorized copying of software is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. The school unit assumes no responsibility for illegal software copying by students.
6. **Non-School-Related Uses** - Using the school unit's computers, networks, and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain, commercial, advertising, or solicitation purposes, or for any other personal use not connected with the education program or assignments including downloading music or shopping on websites.
7. **Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access** – Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission, and/or accessing other users' accounts.
8. **Malicious Use/Vandalism** - Any malicious use, disruption, or harm to the school unit's computers, networks, and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses. Any user identified as a security risk for having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to district computers.
9. **Unauthorized Access to Blogs/Chat Rooms/** - Accessing chatrooms or newsgroups.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATION

A **minimum of 25 credits** and 4 years of full-time attendance is required for graduation. Each student's course of study must be approved by the school counselor and or administration. Parents and students should contact the guidance counselor to be sure the student is meeting the established requirements during their high school career.

REQUIRED COURSES

English	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Physical Education	2 credits
Personal Finance	.5 credit
Health	.5 credit
Electives	9 credits

COURSE ALTERNATIVES

Various course alternatives, including distance learning, correspondence courses, and attendance at a college/technical school, are available to supplement the regular curriculum at Mercer. If a situation arises in which the school supports a correspondence course, the student must still pay for the course and textbook fees initially. Once the student completes the course, Mercer School District will reimburse his/her registration costs. See the administration or counselor to explore course alternatives.

COURSE CHANGE/WITHDRAWAL

Course changes will only be made for educational reasons and require a parent/guardian signature as well as a guidance counselor and administrator consent. Students and/or parents must arrange a scheduled appointment with the guidance counselor to discuss reasons and the ability to withdraw or transfer into another course.

Students may withdraw from courses without academic penalty by obtaining a course withdrawal form from the office. The course withdrawal deadline for the first semester and second-semester courses is within the first 5 days from the start of classes. Once approval is granted, all textbooks and other course materials should be returned immediately.

HONOR ROLL

The purpose of the honor roll is to recognize students who have achieved a high academic standing. Every nine weeks the honor roll will be published for students in grades 4 – 12 who have averaged a 3.0-grade point average (GPA) or above in all subjects. Students averaging a 3.5 GPA or above will receive high honor roll status.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

Nominations for the National Honor Society of the Mercer School District will contain the following criteria:

Service—this quality is defined as voluntary contributions made by students to the school or community, done without compensation and with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.

Leadership—student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, promoters of school activities, idea-contributors, dependable, and a person who exemplifies positive attitudes about life. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school or community activities while working with or for others.

Character—the student of good character upholds principles of morality and ethics, is cooperative, demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others, and generally maintains a good and clean lifestyle.

Scholarship—students who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or better (on a 4.0 scale) meet the scholarship requirement for membership. These students are then eligible for consideration based on service, leadership, and character.

REPORT TO PARENTS

Each school year is divided into two semesters, which consist of two nine-week periods. Report cards will be issued to students approximately one week after the close of each nine weeks. Report cards will be supplemented by parent/teacher conferences on a scheduled basis.

Progress reports are available at the mid-point of each grading period. Parents also have Internet access to their student's grade reports at all times. Parents/guardians of 4-12 grade students will be issued a user name and password to access the district's computerized grading system, available for viewing at <https://mercercpowerschool.com/public>. Parents/guardians will be notified by individual teachers via telephone or written communication of a student's failing grade or when a student is in danger of failing at any given time during the class term.

A letter system of grading is used: A, B, C, D, and F with pluses and minuses weighted. All incomplete work must be completed within two weeks (10 school days), or a failing grade will be assigned to the incomplete work unless an administrative exemption is approved.

ACADEMIC HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

The Mercer School District intends to encourage standards for homework that will maximize it as a meaningful and reinforcing part of the student's program for learning. No specific guidelines are provided for the amount of time required for homework since that would depend on grade level, student ability, and scope of the lesson or unit, however, a reasonable amount of daily homework should be expected (see Board Policy #2330).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Mercer School Board values academic integrity very highly and does not permit any form of dishonesty or deception that unfairly, improperly, or illegally enhances the grade on an individual or group assignment or a final test. Academic Dishonesty will result in the following action:

First Offense in a Class—the student will receive a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make up the assignment. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian and provide documentation of the offense to the District Administrator.

Second Offense in a Class—the student will receive a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make up the assignment. The teacher will arrange to meet with the parent/guardian, student, and the District Administrator and provide documentation to the District Administrator.

Third Offense in a Class—the student will receive an F for that course for the quarter. The teacher and District Administrator will meet with the parent/guardian and student to discuss the academic dishonesty.

Teachers of any course have the right to add to the above-listed penalties sanctions fitting circumstances relevant to his/her course.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Guidance counseling services are available for every student in school. These services include assistance with educational planning, interpretation of test scores, college applications, career information, academic, home, school, and/or social concerns, and any question the student may feel he/she would like to discuss with the guidance counselor.

FIELD TRIPS

All school regulations apply to students on field trips. Permission slips for each trip must be on file before the trip. A universal field trip form for all local field trips is available to be signed by parents at the beginning of the school year. This form will cover permission for all field trips within northern Wisconsin including travel to the CESA 12 in Ashland and educational opportunities.

FUNDRAISING

All fundraising activities must be approved in written form by the advisor and administration in advance. Board policy limits the number of fundraisers allowed per year. See the fundraising calendar for details each year.

DANCES/SOCIAL EVENTS

1. School dances will be scheduled to end no later than midnight unless otherwise permitted by the administration.
2. Students who come to school dances are encouraged to stay until the end of those events. Students who leave the building will not be permitted to re-enter.
3. All school activities must be chaperoned by the proper advisor/advisors or by alternative adults approved by the administrator.
4. Only Mercer students and their registered guests will be in attendance. Any student desiring to bring a non-school guest must obtain a guest pass from the office before the dance. Guest passes will not be issued at the dance, and unregistered guests will not be allowed to attend.
5. The proper advisor must first clear all school activities. The advisor will, in turn, secure approval from the office and see that the activity is entered on the school calendar.
6. Middle school students are not allowed at high school events, and high school students are not to be at middle school events.

CLUBS, ACTIVITIES, AND SPORTS

Mercer School provides a wide variety of clubs, teams, and activities in which students are encouraged to participate. Girls' sports include volleyball, basketball, track, and cross-country. Boys' sports include cross-country, football, basketball, baseball, and track. Other activities include forensics, Mercer Student Council, National Honor Society, Robotics Honor band, and pep band. Sports teams are subject to the provisions of the athletic code, while individual advisors or organizations may establish codes of conduct.

STUDENT ATHLETIC PHYSICALS

The Mercer School District requires all middle and high school students to have a physical examination card or alternate year card on file with the athletic director before they are allowed to participate in any WIAA approved athletic programs.

ATHLETIC CODE

The athletic code details expectations and additional requirements for athletes. Please note that improper conduct in school and academic grade deficiencies can affect participation in sports.

ATHLETIC CONTEST ADMISSIONS

Admission fees are charged for high school volleyball and basketball events. Ticket prices are determined by individual schools for regular-season games in both basketball and volleyball. Ticket prices will be posted at each event. Senior citizens over 65 years of age may obtain a senior citizen pass to all events in the district office during normal business hours.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR EVENT CONDUCT

Perhaps more than any other time, and by more people, a school's reputation is judged by the behavior of its students at extra-curricular events. Contests at schools are held to acquire a sense of sportsmanship by participants and spectators alike. The visitors are guests to be treated with respect. Booing, hissing, and uncomplimentary remarks are considered unsportsmanlike and will not be tolerated.

All school rules apply to extra-curricular events. Violators of conduct rules may be restricted from extra-curricular activities, assigned detentions, and/or suspended from school. Students may be restricted from participation and attendance in extra-curricular activities.

To ensure that students attending evening events as non-participants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event, especially students in primary grades. The school will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

ASSEMBLIES/GROUP MEETINGS

At assemblies and group meetings, students are to accord guest speakers the utmost courtesy. An outside speaker carries with him/her an impression of the school-based upon the behavior of its students. Talking or disruptions are rude and discourteous and are not allowed.

STUDENT DRESS

The District recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style, free speech, and individual preference. Therefore, the District shall not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices interfere with the educational program, safety, or security of the schools. Accordingly, a student may be excluded from the classroom when the nature of his/her appearance impairs successful teaching, ~~or~~ disrupts the learning atmosphere of the other students, poses safety or security issues, promotes illegal activity or is vulgar, offensive, lewd, or indecent.

In particular, students may not dress in ways that restrict their mobility or vision (e.g., slippers or sunglasses), and they may not wear clothing that is not ordinarily manufactured for public wear (e.g., pajamas, or costumes). Similarly, clothing that may conceal weapons is strictly prohibited and students may not wear clothing with offensive symbols or lettering, or attire that could be considered gang-related. This includes, but is not limited to, clothing that advertises, depicts or

otherwise promotes drug use, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or clothing that features logos or trade names with double meanings or sexual innuendos (e.g., clothing bearing the trade name “Hooters”).

If a student violates this policy, the following steps will be taken:

1. The student will be asked to correct the clothing situation by covering it with another article of clothing or by turning the clothing inside out. The office can also provide a Mercer Tigerwear t-shirt for the day.
2. Parents will be contacted by the District Administrator in cases when students fail to cooperate.
3. Other disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Public displays of romantic affection are not allowed. School is considered to be a place of business (learning) and students are required to conduct themselves in a business-like manner. Romantic displays beyond holding hands (ex: hugging, holding, and kissing) are considered unacceptable in the school building or at all school-related events. Teachers and support staff members will notify the District Administrator/designee and provide students’ names, time, and place of incident and a short description of the incident. Each violation will be recorded in the student’s school record.

Enforcement:

Staff members will refer all students out of compliance to the District Administrator’s office.

1st violation: A warning will be issued. The students will be told to stop the unacceptable behavior by the staff member witnessing the event who informs the office of names and behavior.

2nd violation: The staff member witnessing inappropriate behavior will inform students they need to report to the office where they will meet with the District Administrator. Parents of both parties will be called by the teacher.

3rd violation: The staff member witnessing inappropriate behavior will inform students they need to report to the office where they will meet with the District Administrator. Parents of both parties will need to meet at the school for a conference with the District Administrator.

Additional violations: To be determined by the District Administrator

TARDY TO CLASS

During the day when a student is late for a class, the instructors will handle the tardiness. Tardy students do not report to the office, except at the beginning of the day. Referrals will be issued by

the office upon the third unexcused tardy to school. After the third tardy to the same class, a referral will be issued by that instructor. A referral for each tardy thereafter, in that class will be issued. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in his/her assigned seat when the bell rings. Returning to one's locker to get an assignment due that day, or a pen, paper, etc. is considered tardy. A tardy student will tell the teacher the reason for tardiness. If the teacher does not accept the student's reason, the student will be marked tardy on the attendance record. Teachers may assign penalties and/or detentions to serve in their rooms at their discretion based on repeated occurrences or the length of time the student is tardy.

MAXIMIZING CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Teachers at Mercer School work to create engaging learning experiences for all students. When students are out of class, they miss valuable instruction time and learning is impacted. To ensure they benefit to the maximum extent possible, students are expected to come to class prepared and on time. Adequate time to use the restroom and retrieve school materials is granted during passing periods. To limit time out of the classroom, students in grades 7-12 are issued 2 restroom passes per class each semester. If a student utilizes the restroom after the passes have been utilized, then the student will be assigned an amount of time equal to the time missed in class to be served in lunchtime detention. Exceptions may be granted by the District Administrator on a case by case basis.

RESPECT

All Mercer School employees are to be accorded proper respect and conduct from students. Students are to honor their directives/requests. Issues students have with these directives are to be taken up maturely. Disrespect and threatening language or actions will not be tolerated and will be handled according to the discipline policy. Students also must courteously treat each other and visitors.

VULGARITY/PROFANITY

Inappropriate language in written or spoken form will not be tolerated and will be handled according to outlined school discipline policies and procedures.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Teachers are responsible for teaching classroom rules and expectations to students in their classrooms. Positive behavior is recognized and encouraged by staff.

Teachers are responsible to resolve discipline problems within their classrooms or while supervising students through regular, traditional methods including, but not limited to, one or more of these:

- Hold personal conferences with the student
- Contact the student's parent/guardian
- Consult and seek the guidance counselor's assistance

- Assign detention
- Written behavior reflection
- Loss of classroom privilege
- Submit discipline referral forms
- Refer to the District Administrator when issues cannot be resolved through the prior listed avenues

When persistent classroom discipline problems are not resolved by the teacher’s attempts at correction or in case of a classroom crisis, the issue will be referred to the District Administrator for disciplinary action. For all out-of-class rule violations, disciplinary action may be taken by the individual staff member and/or referred to the District Administrator for follow-up for severe or chronic issues.

When a student is removed from class the teacher shall:

- Send the student to the building administrator or designee and inform him/her of the reason for the student's removal from class.
- Provide the administrator or designee with a written explanation of the reason(s) for removal from class.
- Verbally notify parents/guardians as soon as possible, but no more than 24 hours after the student is removed from class.

The Administrator will:

- Inform the student of the reason(s) for removal from the classroom and shall allow the student the opportunity to share their version of events.
- Provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian conference.
- Determine the appropriate educational placement for the student who has been removed from the teacher's class.

Teacher Managed Teachers are expected to manage the following student behaviors:	Administrator Managed The administrator will manage the following student behaviors:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate language (including profanity) • Tardiness • Preparedness • Calling Out • Put-Downs • Throwing Objects • Refusing to Work • Minor Dishonesty • Minor Physical Contact (horseplay) • Tone/Attitude • Electronic Devices • Food or Drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons • Fighting or Aggressive Physical Contact • Aggressive Language/Threats • Harassment • Major Dishonesty • Truancy • Vandalism • Tobacco/Drugs/Alcohol • Dress Code Violations
Teacher issue a minor incident form	Staff submits a completed referral form to the office

Mercer School Consequences

The following are suggested interventions that may be utilized in correcting a student's inappropriate behavior. The interventions listed are not hierarchical.

Not all intervention strategies for each level need to be utilized.

Teacher-Managed

Level 1: Minimal interference with instructional process based on class and/or school procedures

- *Proximity Control
- *Nonverbal cue to correct behavior
- *Verbal warning to student(s)
- *Conference with student (in classroom or hallway)
- *In-class modified seating
- *In-class time out

Level 2: Repeated interference with instructional process based on class and/or school procedures

- *Minor incident form issued with corresponding parent/guardian contact
- *Peer mediation
- *Referral to School Counselor
- *Detention with the classroom teacher
- *Revocation of open campus privilege – student must remain in the cafeteria
- * Restorative justice

Team-Managed

Level 3: Chronic interference with instructional process based on class and/or school procedures

- *Minor incident form issued with corresponding parent/guardian contact
- *Out of class time
- *Parent/Student/Teacher conference
- *Detention with the classroom teacher
- *Revocation of open campus privilege – student must remain in the cafeteria
- * Restorative Justice
- *Meeting with teacher leader, student, and teacher
- *Referral to the Student Success Team

Level 4: Administrative action

*Office referral (Indicate on a referral if this is a result of repeated Minors)

Disciplinary Action – Discipline for repeated minor infractions of a serious nature shall require a written record to be maintained. Discipline actions can include but are not limited to the following:

Detention (3:30-4:00 p.m.) – Administrators and teachers have the authority to detain pupils for disciplinary reasons. The type of detention issued will be left to the discretion of the administration. Students who fail to serve a detention will be subject to further disciplinary action.

In-School Suspension- This is defined as a student being temporarily excluded from classes yet, reporting to a designated room in the building. This is a violation of the Athletic Code. Students who are on an in-school suspension are also suspended from any athletic or co-curricular activities on the days of the in-school suspension.

Out of School Suspension- This is defined as one of the following: A temporary exclusion from school for a period not to exceed five days, or exclusion in cases being investigated pending expulsion for a period not to exceed fifteen days. Any student that is suspended may not be on any Mercer School District property during the entire period of the suspension. This is a violation of the Athletic Code.

Pre-expulsion Conference- A conference conducted by the District Administrator or his/her designee which may include student, parent, guardian or legal custodian, a psychologist, and a guidance counselor. A student who has been suspended three (3) times in one year shall have a pre-expulsion conference at the third suspension. A pre-expulsion conference may also be convened at the discretion of the District Administrator or his/her designee in the event a student commits a single, but serious infraction.

Expulsion Conference- One possible outcome of a pre-expulsion conference may be a recommendation to the Board of Education for an expulsion hearing. *Parents and adult students (over 18) have the right to appeal a suspension or expulsion.*

Students who do not respond to guidance or minor discipline must accept the consequences of such action. Willful disobedience, open defiance of a staff person's authority, or the use of profane or obscene language or gestures is also sufficient cause for discipline.

Out-of-School Suspensions/Expulsions – In compliance with Section 120.13, Wisconsin Statutes the school board of a common or union high school district may * * *:

(1) SCHOOL GOVERNMENT RULES; SUSPENSION; EXPULSION. (a) Make rules * * * about conduct and dress of pupils to maintain good decorum and a favorable academic atmosphere * * *

(b) The school district administrator or any principal or teacher designated by the school district administrator also may make rules, with the consent of the school board, and may suspend a pupil for not more than 5 school days or, if a notice of expulsion hearing has been sent under par.

(c) 4. or (e) 4. or s. 119.25 (2)(c), for not more than a total of 15 consecutive school days for noncompliance with such rules or school board rules, or for knowingly conveying any threat or false information concerning an attempt or alleged attempt being made or to be made to destroy any school property by means of explosives, or for conduct by the pupil while at school or while under the supervision of a school authority which endangers the property, health or safety of others, or for conduct while not at school or while not under the supervision of a school authority which endangers the property, health or safety of others at school or under the supervision of a school authority or endangers the property, health or safety of any employee or school board member of the school district in which the pupil is enrolled. Prior to any suspension, the pupil shall be advised of the reason for the proposed suspension. The pupil may be suspended if it is determined that the pupil is guilty of noncompliance with such rule, or of the conduct charged, and that the pupil's suspension is reasonably justified.

8.10.01B Parent Notification

The parent or guardian of a suspended minor pupil shall be given prompt written notice of the suspension and the reason therefore. This notice shall be in writing.

8.10.01C Right to a Conference

The suspended pupil or his/her parent or guardian may, within 5 school days following the commencement of the suspension, have a conference with the school district administrator or his/her designee who shall be someone other than a principal, administrator, or teacher in the suspended pupil's school.

Suspension Offenses:

- a. Destruction, defacement, or theft of school or other personal property will result in a minimum of one (1) day out-of-school suspension to be progressive based on the number of offenses and/or severity as determined by the administration.

- b. Use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, non-prescribed mood-altering substances (drugs) on school property or at school-sponsored events. Law enforcement agencies will be notified to investigate and prosecute each violation. Minimum of one (1) day to three (3) day out-of-school suspension to be progressive based on the number of offenses and severity up to a 45-day suspension at the discretion of the administration and board hearing for expulsion proceedings.
- c. Fighting and/or disorderly conduct or improper conduct including personal and physical threats, verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation, offensive gestures, and profanity directed at other students, staff, volunteers/chaperones will result in a minimum of one (1) day out-of-school suspension to be progressive based on the number of offenses and/or severity as determined by the administration.
- d. Possession of a weapon (see Weapons policy). Legal authorities will be called to prosecute each violation. A minimum of a three (3) day out-of-school suspension and possibly an expulsion hearing may be held based on the number of offenses.
- e. Bomb Threat – Legal authorities will be called to prosecute each violation. Up to a 45-day suspension at the discretion of the administration and board hearing for expulsion proceedings.

WISCONSIN STATUTES 120.13 (1)(C)

Before expelling a pupil, the school board shall hold a hearing. Upon request of the pupil, and if the pupil is a minor, the pupil's parent or guardian, the hearing shall be closed.

Grounds for Pupil Expulsion:

1. Repeated refusal or neglect to obey school rules
2. Conduct which endangers property, health, or safety of others, engaged in while at school or while under supervision of school authority;
3. Conduct engaged in while NOT at school or while NOT under the supervision of school authority, which endangers property, health, or safety of others at school or under supervision of school authority;
4. Conduct endangering property, health, or safety of any employee or school board member of the school district in which the pupil is enrolled;
5. That the pupil knowingly conveyed or caused to be conveyed any threat or false information concerning an attempt or alleged attempt being made or to be made to destroy any school property using explosives;
6. If the pupil is at least age 16, conduct repeatedly engaged in while at school or while under supervision of school authority that disrupted the ability of school authorities to maintain order or an educational atmosphere at school or an activity supervised by a school authority and such conduct does not constitute grounds for expulsion under subs 1-5 above.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/HAZING

Harassment is a form of discrimination that violates state and federal laws. It is the policy of the Mercer School District to maintain a learning and working environment and/or academic status that is free from harassment. Harassment is any unwelcome, deliberate, or repeated unsolicited comments, gestures, graphic materials, physical contacts, or solicitation of favors.

Harassment/bullying is verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or working environment or interfering with the individual's learning or work performance; it may consist of a single act or a course of conduct. All students and employees must be allowed to learn and work in an environment free from harassment. Therefore, harassment/bullying is prohibited. Harassing/bullying of other students, including sexual harassment, hazing, or initiation is a serious matter and is not allowed on school premises or during any off-site school activity such as school-sponsored trips and athletic events. "Hazing" includes any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or any pastime or amusement engaged in which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or another person.

Harassment or intimidation can arise from a broad range of physical or verbal behavior which can include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Physical or Mental Abuse
2. Racial Insults
3. Ethnic Slurs
4. Unwelcome Sexual Advances or Touching
5. Sexual Comments or Sexual Jokes
6. Religious Slurs
7. Requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or affecting personnel decision such as hiring, promotion, or compensation or affecting one's academic status.
8. Display sexually explicit or otherwise offensive posters, calendars, or materials.
9. Conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or learning performance or creating an unfriendly or offensive work/learning environment.

Students, parents/guardians, and staff members may file a Harassment Complaint Form on their behalf or behalf of another individual (available in the office or from administration). Any student or employee or representative of the Mercer School District who believes that he or she has been a victim of harassment by a student or employee or representative of the school district, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment should report the alleged acts immediately to the superintendent or human rights officers. The school board shall designate a male and a female as human rights officers for the district.

DRUGS OR ALCOHOL USE

THE USE OR POSSESSION OF INTOXICANTS OR MOOD-ALTERING DRUGS NOT PRESCRIBED BY A PHYSICIAN IS PROHIBITED.

No student shall possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of intoxicants or mood-altering drugs not prescribed by a physician or possess drug paraphernalia at any time on school premises or at a school-related activity.

Students of the School District of Mercer who violate the provisions of the paragraph above shall be subject to disciplinary actions under school regulations as follows:

A. FIRST VIOLATION: A student who is found to be in violation before coming to school, while at school, or while involved in any school-sponsored activity shall be suspended for a maximum of up to 45 days and shall not be allowed to return until a conference is held with the student's parent or guardian.

In addition, the student and/or his/her parents may be required to seek counseling and provide written evidence of this counseling to the administration within one month of the first day of suspension. Failure to abide by the counseling requirement shall result in the commencement of expulsion proceedings. Acceptable sources of counseling are as follows:

1. AODA program coordinator (alcohol and other drug awareness)
2. A non-school counselor mutually agreed upon with the district administrator before the onset of the counseling experience

B. SECOND VIOLATION: Any student found to be in violation of this policy for the second time during the school year may be subject to a pre-expulsion meeting with the district administrator and the Mercer Board of Education. At the meeting the student and his/her parents will select one of two possible actions:

1. As a result of the second violation the student will:
 - a. seek and complete an AODA assessment by a bona fide AODA treatment center;
 - b. demonstrate compliance with the treatment program as recommended by said treatment center;
 - c. complete the treatment program; and
 - d. agree to a behavioral contract between the student, school administration, and a representative of the AODA support group as a condition of readmittance to the school.
2. As a result of the second violation, the student may be recommended to the Mercer Board of Education for expulsion from the school district for the remainder of the quarter during which the offense occurs and the next full quarter. In addition, the student and/or his/her parents may be required to seek additional counseling and provide written evidence of this counseling to the district administrator before the conclusion of the period for which the student is expelled. Acceptable sources of counseling are noted

above. Failure to abide by the treatment and/or counseling requirement as herein stated shall result in the commencement of expulsion proceedings as indicated in C below.

C. **THIRD VIOLATION**: The student will be recommended to the Mercer Board of Education for expulsion from the school district.

TOBACCO USE BY STUDENTS

Smoking or use or possession of tobacco products or any vaping product even if it does not contain nicotine in any form by students shall not be allowed in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, or in other areas in which school-sponsored activities are taking place. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action to include possible referral to the police and fines.

ITEMS FORBIDDEN ON CAMPUS

Other items forbidden on campus or at school-related functions on school grounds can include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Wallet chains, toys such as water pistols, super soakers, handheld and other games unless approved by the classroom instructor.
2. Any other items that school officials consider dangerous or hazardous. Spraying perfume, cologne, shaving cream, spray paint, other unwarranted products are prohibited.
3. Roller skates/blades, skateboards may be carried. Their use on campus is prohibited.
4. Bicycles shall be locked at the rack located at the main entrance.

Students found in possession of the above-listed items will be disciplined as determined by the administration and forbidden items are subject to seizure/confiscation. Students, lockers, and personal receptacles are subject to search, and forbidden items are subject to seizure and/or confiscation.

GANG AND GANG-RELATED ACTIVITY

The presence of gangs, gang activities, and gang-like behavior causes disruptions to the learning process and the well-being of the school. This activity, including such examples as clothing, signs, signals, related materials, or expressions, will not be tolerated.

VANDALISM

Students guilty of vandalism will be expected to pay for all necessary repairs or replacement, and students are subject to school discipline and/or criminal prosecution. Reimbursement of the cost of damages must be paid in full each year.

THEFT/MISSING ITEMS

The Mercer School District recommends that students and visitors do not bring items of value to the school. The school will not be responsible for the personal belongings of students, especially of value (money, jewelry, electronic devices such as iPods, cell phones, radios, clothing) when brought to school. Should it be necessary to bring items of value to the school, students can secure them in the main office safe until the end of the day. When an item is reported as missing or stolen on school premises or at a school-sponsored event, the school administration may take a written statement listing the item(s) missing and the events that led to the potential theft or disappearance, which may require that students remain in place until the further investigation or a search can be completed. The administration may determine whether the proper law enforcement authorities will be notified to conduct further investigations if the reported missing item(s) value exceeds \$50.00.

WEAPONS

Under the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, any student possessing a “Dangerous Weapon” as defined in Section 939.22 of the Wisconsin Statutes will be immediately suspended and referred to the local/county law enforcement department and Human Services Department under the provisions of Chapter 48. Parent/guardians and law enforcement officials will be notified in all cases. Weapons will be confiscated. Unless pre-approved, “look-alike” weapons are also prohibited. The act of a student possessing, using, or threatening with intent to use any weapon or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury will result in penalties to include possible suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to the authorities. No one shall possess a dangerous weapon on school property, school buses, or at any school-related event. Possession of a firearm (as defined by Federal Law) while at school or under school supervision requires school boards to expel the student from school.

STUDENT AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS SEARCHES

School officials may search a student’s person or personal belongings if they have a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school and if they have a reasonable suspicion to believe that the search of the person or specific personal belongings will reveal evidence of that violation.

Whenever possible, a search will be conducted by the principal in the presence of the student and a staff member other than the principal. A search prompted by the reasonable suspicion that health and safety are immediately threatened will be conducted with as much speed and dispatch as may be required to protect persons and property.

CASES NOT COVERED BY SPECIFIC REGULATION

It is understood that the rules listed herein are not all-inclusive. The Mercer Board of Education and the administration shall take such action as is necessary to ensure the discipline and orderly conduct of the school. Action may be taken concerning any offense which interferes with the orderly operation of the school, regardless of the existence or nonexistence of a rule covering the offense.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Mercer School District does not discriminate against pupils based on sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap in its education programs or activities. Federal law prohibits discrimination in employment based on age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or handicap. If you feel you have been discriminated against, see the district administrator, principal, or school counselor discuss the situation and/or file a complaint.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The FERPA protects the confidentiality of student educational records. The Act applies to any public or private elementary, secondary, or post-secondary school and any state or local education agency that receives federal funds. Several exceptions allow the release of student records to certain parties or under certain conditions. Records may be released without the student's consent: (1) to school officials with a legitimate educational interest; (2) to other schools to which a student seeks or intends to enroll; (3) to education officials for audit and evaluation purposes; (4) to accrediting organizations; (5) to parties in connection with financial aid to a student; (6) to organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf a school; (7) to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; (8) in the case of health and safety emergencies; and (9) to state and local authorities within a juvenile justice system.

In addition, some records maintained by schools are exempt from FERPA, including (1) records in the sole possession of school officials; (2) records maintained by a law enforcement unit of the educational institution; (3) records of an educational institution's non-student employees; and (4) records on a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a post-secondary institution that are maintained by a health professional. In addition, FERPA allows, but does not require, schools to release "directory information," including students' names and addresses, to the public and was modified in 2002 that high schools are now **required** to provide students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters **unless a student or parent opts out of such disclosure by signing**

Addendum
Title IX
Section 2000 Program
Title IX NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY

**2260 - NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY**

The Board is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students in the District. The Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability ("Protected Classes") in any of its student program and activities. This policy is intended to support and promote non-discriminatory practices in all District and school activities, particularly in the following areas:

- A. use of objective bases for admission to any school, class, program, or activity;
- B. prohibition of harassment towards students and procedures for the investigation of claims (see Policy 5517);
- C. use of disciplinary authority, including suspension and expulsion authority;
- D. administration of gifts, bequests, scholarships and other aids, benefits, or services to students from private agencies, organizations, or persons;
- E. selection of instructional and library media materials in a nondiscriminatory manner and that reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society;
- F. design and implementation of student evaluation practices, materials, and tools, but not at the exclusion of implementing techniques to meet student's individual needs;
- G. design and configuration of facilities;
- H. opportunity for participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities provided that separate programs for male and female students may be available provided comparable activities are made available to all in terms of type, scope, and District support; and
- I. the school lunch program and other school-sponsored food service programs.

The Board is also committed to equal employment opportunity in its employment policies and practices as they relate to students. The Board's policies pertaining to employment practices can be found in Policy 1422, Policy 3122, and Policy 4122 - Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity.

In furtherance of the aforesaid goal, the District Administrator shall:

A. Curriculum Content

- 1. review current and proposed courses of study and textbooks to detect any bias based upon the Protected Classes ascertaining whether or not supplemental materials, singly or taken as a whole, fairly depict the contribution of both sexes various races, ethnic groups, etc. toward the development of human society;

2. provide that necessary programs are available for students with limited use of the English language;
- B. Staff Training- develop an ongoing program of staff training and in-service training for school personnel designed to identify and solve problems of bias based upon the Protected Classes in all aspects of the program;
- C. Student Access
1. review current and proposed programs, activities, facilities, and practices to ensure that all students have equal access thereto and are not segregated on the basis of the Protected Classes in any duty, work, play, classroom, or school practice, except as may be permitted under State regulations;
 2. verify that facilities are made available in a non-discriminatory fashion, in accordance with Board Policy 7510 – Use of District Facilities, for non-curricular student activities that are initiated by parents or other members of the community, including but not limited to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society;
- D. District Support- require that like aspects of the District program receive like support as to staff size and compensation, purchase and maintenance of facilities and equipment, access to such facilities and equipment, and related matters;
- E. Student Evaluation-verify that tests, procedures, or guidance and counseling materials, which are designed to evaluate student progress, rate aptitudes, analyze personality, or in any manner establish or tend to establish a category by which a student may be judged, are not differentiated or stereotyped on the basis of the Protected Classes.

The District Administrator shall appoint and publicize the name of the compliance officer(s) who is/are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with the applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or equal access. The Compliance Officer(s) also verify that proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), is provided to students, their parents, staff members, and the general public.

The District Administrator shall attempt annually to identify children with disabilities, ages 3 - 21, who reside in the District but do not receive a public education. In addition, s/he shall establish procedures to identify students who are Limited English Proficient, including immigrant children and youth, to assess their ability to participate in District programs and develop and administer a program that meets the English language and academic needs of these students. This program shall include procedures for student placement, services, evaluation, and exit guidelines and shall be designed to provide students with effective instruction that leads to academic achievement and timely acquisition of proficiency in English. As a part of this program, the District will evaluate the progress of students in achieving English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, on an annual basis.

Reporting Procedures

Students, parents, and all other members of the School District community are encouraged to promptly report suspected violations of this policy to a teacher or administrator. Any teacher or administrator who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Compliance Officer at his/her first opportunity.

Students who believe they have been denied equal access to District educational opportunities in a manner inconsistent with this policy may initiate a complaint and the investigation process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint will not adversely affect the complaining individual's participation in educational or extra-curricular programs unless the complaining individual makes the complaint maliciously or with the knowledge that it is false.

Title IX Complaint Coordinators/District Compliance Officers (hereinafter referred to as the "COs")

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as the District's "Compliance Officers"

Rena McMurray

District Administrator

715-476-2154

2690 W. Margaret St.

rmcmurray@mercertigers.org

Amanda Kopka

School Counselor

715-476-2154

2690 W. Margaret St.

Akopka@mercertigers.org

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually in the staff and student handbooks and on the School District's website.

A CO will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to student discrimination in educational opportunities under this policy.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

The CO shall investigate any complaints brought under this policy. Throughout the process, as described herein, the CO should keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: a description of the alleged violation, the identity of the individual(s) believed to have engaged in or to be actively engaging in, conduct in violation of this policy if any; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; and a list of potential witnesses.

If the complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the CO shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter the CO will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the report by signing the document.

Upon receiving a complaint, the CO will consider whether any action should be taken during the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further loss of educational opportunity, including but not limited to a change of class schedule for the complainant, tentative enrollment in a program, or other appropriate action. In making such a determination, the CO should consult the District Administrator prior to any action being taken. The Complainant should be notified of any proposed action prior to such action being taken.

As soon as appropriate in the investigation process, the CO will inform any individual named by the Complainant in connection with an alleged violation of this policy, that a complaint has been received. The person(s) must also be provided an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

All investigations shall be commenced as soon as practicable upon receipt of a complaint and concluded as expeditiously as feasible, in consideration of the circumstances, while taking measures to complete a thorough investigation. The complaining party shall be notified in

writing of receipt of the complaint within forty-five (45) days of the complaint and shall reach a determination concerning the complaint within ninety (90) days of receipt unless additional time is agreed to by the complaining party.

The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with any persons named in the complaint;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other evidence presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness which is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the CO shall prepare and deliver a written report to the District Administrator which summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definitions in this Policy, as well as in State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been denied access to educational opportunities on the basis of one of the protected classifications, based on a preponderance of evidence standard.

The CO's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved.

The CO may consult with the Board's attorney during the course of the investigatory process and/or before finalizing the report to the District Administrator.

In cases where no District CO is able to investigate a complaint due to concerns regarding conflicts, bias or partiality, or for other reasons that impair the CO's ability to conduct an investigation, the CO may in consultation with the District Administrator or Board President, engage outside legal counsel to conduct the investigation consistent with this policy.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within ten (10) business days of receiving the report of the CO, the District Administrator must either issue a final decision regarding the complaint or request further investigation. A copy of the District Administrator's final decision will be delivered to the Complainant, and to the Respondent, if any. The District Administrator may redact information from the decision in the event the release of information raises concerns regarding the integrity of the complaint or investigation process. The Board authorizes the District Administrator to consult with legal counsel to determine the extent to which information in an investigation report must be provided to either the Complainant or Respondent.

If the District Administrator requests additional investigation, the District Administrator must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10) business days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the District Administrator must issue a final written decision as described above. The decision of the District Administrator will be reviewed by the Board upon request.

If the Complainant feels that the decision does not adequately address the complaint s/he may appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction by submitting a written request to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Pupil Nondiscrimination Program, or by contacting the DPI Pupil Nondiscrimination Program at (608) 267-9157. Any person, including the Respondent in a complaint, who is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination as a result of a complaint may choose to file a Grievance utilizing the District's grievance procedure as outlined in Policy 3430 or Policy 4430.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report regardless of

whether the member of the School District community or third party chooses to pursue the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board.

Additional School District Action

If the evidence suggests that any conduct at issue violates any other policies of the Board, is a crime or requires mandatory reporting under the Children's Code (Sec. 48.981, Wis. Stat.)(Policy 8462), or threats of violence (Policy 8462.01) the CO or District Administrator shall take such additional actions as necessary and appropriate under the circumstances, which may include a report to the appropriate social service and/or law enforcement agency charged with responsibility for handling such investigations.

Confidentiality

The District will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of any individuals involved in the investigation process.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, however. All Complainants proceeding through the investigation process should be advised that as a result of the investigation, allegations against individuals may become known to those individuals, including the Complainant's identity. During an investigation, the CO will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of an investigation is expected not to disclose any information that s/he learns or that s/he provides during the investigation.

All public records created as a part of an investigation will be maintained by the CO in accordance with the Board's records retention policy (see Policy 8310). Any records which are considered student records in accordance with the state or federal law will be maintained in a manner consistent with the provisions of the law.

Retention of Public Records, Student Records, and Investigatory Records and Materials

All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy shall retain all information, documents, electronically stored information ("ESI"), and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created and received as part of an investigation, including but not limited to:

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/statements;;
- B. narratives of all verbal reports, allegations, complaints, and statements collected;
- C. a narrative of all actions taken by District personnel;
- D. any written documentation of actions taken by District personnel;
- E. narratives of, notes from or audio, video, or digital recordings of verbal witness statements;
- F. any documentary evidence;
- G. e-mails, texts, or social media posts related to the investigation;
 - 1. contemporaneous notes in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.) pertaining to the investigation;
 - 2. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and a narrative of verbal disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of the policies and procedures prohibiting discrimination or harassment;
- H. dated written determinations to the parties;
- I. dated written descriptions of verbal notifications to the parties;
- J. written documentation of any interim measures offered and/or provided to

complainants, including no-contact orders issued to both parties, the dates issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt and

K. documentation of all actions, both individual and systemic, taken to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects.

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal and/or State law (e.g., student records).

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

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Legal 118.13 Wis. Stats.

P.I. 9, Wis. Adm. Code

P.I. 41, Wis. Adm. Code

Fourteenth Amendment, U.S. Constitution

20 U.S.C. Section 1681, Title IX of Education Amendments Act

20 U.S.C. Section 1701 et seq., Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

20 U.S.C. Section 7905, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act

29 U.S.C. Section 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

42 U.S.C. Section 2000 et seq., Civil Rights Act of 1964

42 U.S.C. Section 2000ff et seq., The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq., Age Discrimination Act of 1975

42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended

Vocational Education Program Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services, Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, 1979

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS THAT MUST BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL (student's teacher/advisor):

General Permission Slip

Computer/Internet Use Agreement

Bullying/Harassment Policy

Permission to Release Directory Information

Student Photo and Web site release

Parent's Response Regarding Release of Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education

Permission to Release Students' Special Health Consideration to Staff

Parent/Student Handbook Signature Form

Updated August 28, 2023