



MASON EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER 2025-2026 STUDENT HANDBOOK



Serving Learners in Grades PK-2

Main Office | (513) 398-3741 • Preschool Office | (513) 229-4578
Fax | (513) 398-2169 • Preschool Fax | (513) 398-3847 • Attendance | (855) 339-9012
1st & 2nd | 9:20 a.m. - 3:50 p.m. • A.M. Preschool & Kindergarten | 9:20 - 12:05 a.m. • P.M. | 1:05 - 3:50 p.m.

Mason Early Childhood Center • 4631 Hickory Woods Dr. • Mason, OH 45040

[Arabic Translation](#)

[Chinese Translation](#)

[Hindi Translation](#)

[Japanese Translation](#)

[Korean Translation](#)

[Russian Translation](#)

[Spanish Translation](#)

[Uzbek Translation](#)

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ABOUT US

Mason Early Childhood Center

"Childhood is a Journey ... Not a Race"

4631 Hickory Woods Drive

Mason, Ohio 45040

Main Office:	513-398-3741	Attendance Line (K-1-2):	855-339-9012
Fax:	513-398-2169	Attendance Line (Pre-K):	855-339-9012
Preschool Office:	513-229-4578	Health Services:	513-770-2045
Preschool Fax:	513-398-3847	SafeSchools Alert	1-855-4ALERT1 x 1059
Extended Care:	513-229-4200	Website:	https://mecc.masonohioschools.com

Mason Early Childhood Center Administrative Staff

Melissa Bly	Principal
Blake Barnett	Assistant Principal
Tina Darling	Assistant Principal
Joycelyn Senter	Assistant Principal

Mason Early Childhood Center Support Staff

Carly Powell	Learning Experience Designer
TBD	Learning Experience Designer
Sarah Bowser	School Counselor
Katie Brown	School Counselor
Ashley Goheen	School Counselor
Molly Goodfriend	Prevention and Wellness Counselor
Patty Gast, RN	Health Services Coordinator
Beth Cain, RN	Health Services Coordinator
TBD	MECC Prevention and Wellness Designer
Mary Eck	PK-6 Resource Coordinator
DeeDee Walker	PreK-4 Special Services
TBD	Student Transportation
Michelle Fischley	Admin Assistant - Preschool
Cara Zestermann	Admin Assistant - Kindergarten/Student Attendance
Sarah Dowers	Admin Assistant - 1st Grade
Denise Gidley	Admin Assistant - 2nd Grade

Central Office 211 N. East Street, Mason, OH 45040

Phone: 513-398-0474

Mason City Schools Administrative Staff

Jonathan Cooper	Superintendent
Amy Brennan	Deputy Superintendent
Shaun Bevan	Treasurer
Todd Petrey	Chief Operations Officer
Laura Blessing	Chief Talent Officer
Tracey Carson	Public Information Officer
Christine McCormick	Innovation Systems Officer
Jody Bergman	Special Education Supervisor
TJ Glassmeyer	Learner Well-Being & Supports Supervisor
Krissy Hufnagel	PK-6 Learning Experience Supervisor
Milena Varbanova	English Learner Programs Supervisor
Nicole Dietrich	Gifted Programs Supervisor
Rachel Tilford	Office of Child Nutrition Supervisor
Jerry Pennington	Buildings & Grounds Supervisor
Adam Clary	Transportation Director
Robyn Jordan	Learner & Family Engagement Administrator

Board of Education

Desiree Batsche
Charles Galvin
Ian Orr
Matt Steele
Connie Yingling

WELCOME

The MECC Message, Beliefs, Mission Statement and Philosophy can all be found online [here](#).

Dear Parents,

It is our privilege to welcome you to the Mason Early Childhood Center (MECC). MECC serves Mason City Schools' students in preschool, kindergarten, first grade and second grade. This setting provides a unique opportunity to meet the needs of every child based upon sound, developmentally appropriate practices and a wide variety of instructional programs. MECC is committed to creating a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of our students, their families and community.

The MECC staff encourages parents to become actively involved in their child's school experience. We believe that when the home and school work together as collaborative partners, we can achieve shared goals for our children.

This handbook has been compiled to provide you with a readily available source of information regarding the operations of the school. We hope the information provided in this handbook will answer your questions. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any member of the MECC team. We look forward to working with you and your child throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bly
Principal

Blake Barnett
Assistant Principal

Tina Darling
Assistant Principal

Joycelyn Senter
Assistant Principal

ABOUT MASON SCHOOLS

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Mason Early Childhood Center serves the district's preschool, kindergarten, first and second grade students. In early childhood, our focus is on educating the whole child. Our content focuses on the social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the individual child—with equal consideration for each of those needs. Students are immersed in engaging academics and encouraged to make choices in their learning, while building strong habits of mind. Students have many opportunities to develop as creative problem solvers, risk takers, and independent thinkers. They have experiences in physical education, art, music, DREAM Center (Library and Innovation), STEAM Studios (1st and 2nd only), and My Mason Journey (2nd only).

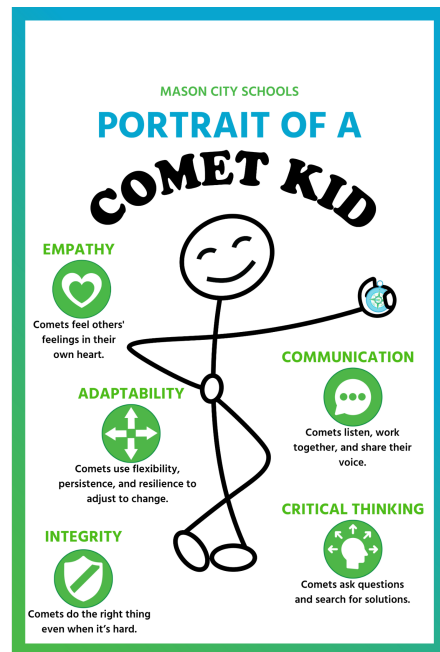
BELIEFS

We Believe:

- Every child can learn and children learn in different ways.
- Children learn by taking risks.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Parents are an integral part of their child's education.
- Success fosters a positive self-esteem and a positive self-esteem promotes learning.
- **Culture** - Collectively build an engaging, inclusive, and positive culture
 - View Mason City Schools [Culture](#) Beliefs, Behaviors and Expectations (BBE)
- **Inclusive Excellence** - Deepen appreciation for diversity and commitment to equity, inclusion, and justice
 - View Mason City Schools [Inclusive Excellence Guide](#)
- **Personalized Learning** - A progressively learner-driven design where learners deeply engage in meaningful, authentic, and rigorous challenges to demonstrate desired outcomes.
 - View Mason City Schools [Personalized Learning Guide](#)

COMET KID

MECC uses our school mascot, the Comet Kid, to help teach children about what it means to be learners who exhibit adaptability, communication, integrity, empathy, and critical thinking. These characteristics are part of our district Portrait of a Comet and MECC is the beginning of that student learning. Lessons are taught in the general education classroom through Launch as well as in all areas of the school as Comet Kid is referred to frequently in all areas of a student day.



LAUNCH

Teams of educators, staff, students and community members have worked together for several years to refine our shared approach to using these rocks and [Mason's Potrait of a Comet](#).

We believe that to build a culture of learning around our 3 Big Rocks, students must experience the values in their day to day experiences, as well as, receive direct instruction on how they can embody the values of the rocks for themselves and others.

Teachers intentionally build the values of the 3 Big Rocks into daily learning experiences whenever possible, intentionally building a common language of comet culture, inclusive excellence, and engaged and self-navigating learners.

In addition, this learning occurs during universal learning experiences that engage our learners in specific focused lessons that are built upon the foundation of the 3 Big Rocks. These experiences are delivered

in common **LAUNCH** lessons that occur during morning meetings and other shared moments throughout the day.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Mason Early Childhood Center is to educate the whole child within the context of a nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment.

PHILOSOPHY

MECC embraces the [Responsive Classroom](#) approach to working with children. It is a way of teaching that emphasizes social, emotional and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal of the Responsive Classroom philosophy is to create a safe, challenging and joyful classroom where children experience success both academically and socially.

SUPPLIES & FEES

Fees are charged for consumable materials. A fee of \$50 will be charged for a personal learning device. The Mason City School District accepts MasterCard or Visa for payment of fees via [PaySchools Central](#), exact cash, or checks made payable to our school. We appreciate your efforts to pay these fees as early in the school year as possible. If your family is experiencing financial difficulty, please reach out to your school administration or the district [Prevention and Wellness](#) team.

[Mason City Schools 2025-2026 School Calendar](#)

[Mason City Schools 2025-2026 Preschool Calendar](#)

SCHOOL CALENDAR DAYS YOU SHOULD KNOW

At Mason City Schools, we believe how we start and finish the year matters. That's why we've created intentional experiences that build connection, joy, and confidence for students and families from the first hello to the final goodbye of each school year.

MCS Day 1 - Phase In Start for Students

To help students begin the year with confidence, Mason uses a phased start called MCS Day 1. Students attend in smaller groups so staff can build strong relationships, provide extra support, and create a calm, welcoming environment.

MCS Day 2 - All K-12 Students Come to School

All students in Grades K–12 attend together and begin a regular school schedule.

FAMILY ORIENTATION

Kick off the year with a warm welcome! Family Orientation is a joyful opportunity for families and students to visit classrooms, meet teachers, and get ready for a fantastic school year. These Welcome Days help make the transition back to school smooth, supportive, and exciting.

JOURNEY DAYS

Experience learning beyond the classroom! On Journey Days, students do not report to school, but instead step outside the traditional school day to participate in hands-on, meaningful experiences tailored to their passions and pathways. Whether exploring careers, volunteering in the community, expressing creativity, or focusing on wellness, these student-centered days foster growth, curiosity, and connection. Contact your child's school to discover the unique Journey Day experiences planned this year.

HOLIDAYS – No School for Students

The following dates are holidays when all Mason City Schools are closed.

**District offices may be open with limited hours during break periods; see notes for full closures.*

- Labor Day
- Fall Break*
*District and school offices closed on Thursday and Friday
- Winter Break*
*District and school offices closed on Dec. 24, 25, 31 & Jan 1
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Spring Break*
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day

REQUIRED SCHOOL FORMS

[Final Forms](#) provides families opportunities to complete student forms electronically - rather than with paper. Once families and students complete an online process, administrators, teachers, and nurses can login to the system to view, manage and input relevant data.

Parents or Guardians must complete the following forms in [Final Forms](#):

- **Emergency Medical Authorization Form**
Authorizes the provision of emergency treatment for children who become ill or injured while under school authority, when parents or guardians cannot be reached. Forms must be completed in order for students to attend field trips.
 - **Handbook Receipt Signature Form**
Indicates that parents or guardians have received, read, understood and agreed to abide to the policies and procedures contained in this school handbook.
 - **Network Agreement**
Indicates that parents or guardians have received, read, understand and agree that their child shall comply with the terms of the District's Agreement for student's access to the District Computer Network and the Internet. In accordance with [COPPA](#), the district may act as the parent agent to allow students to access education-specific resources.
- **NOTE:** All address and transportation changes must be submitted through [Final Forms](#).

ATTENDANCE

REPORTING AND MONITORING STUDENT ABSENCES

It is the obligation of the parent/guardian, to report the child's absence or late arrival each day.

- Families should contact the school within one hour from the start of school on the day of the absence.
- **There are 3 ways to let us know your child is absent:**
 - **Call 855-339-9012**
 - **Visit go.schoolmessenger.com**
 - **Use the School Messenger App.** (*Download from the App Store or Google Play*)
- It is encouraged that you turn in a medical excuse whenever possible.
- The parent/guardian should provide written documentation to the attendance office (notifying the teacher does not excuse the absence) in advance, in regards to any absences due to an upcoming

out of town/vacation trips.

- The parent/guardian and not the school maintains responsibility to make certain the doctor's note and/or vacation note was submitted to the proper school attendance authority in a timely fashion.
- If the parent/guardian fails to contact the school and school personnel have to initiate contact with the parent/guardian via phone call and they DO NOT make direct contact with a parent/guardian the absence will be considered unexcused until a parent/guardian makes direct contact with the attendance office to verify the student's absence.
- If your family requires translation support to communicate attendance information, please contact Cara Zestermann (ZestermannC@masonohioschools.com).

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DISMISSAL

It is important that children attend school for the entire school day. We realize, however, that arriving late or leaving early is sometimes unavoidable. Please accompany your child to the office if they arrive after 9:20 a.m. (or 1:05 p.m. for afternoon preschool and kindergarten) and sign him/her in on the appropriate form. We will remove his/her name from the absence list and send the student to class.

If you find it necessary to request early dismissal for your child, a note from the parent should be received *in advance of any early dismissal*. Children will be dismissed early only through the office and not at the classroom door. The safety of each child is our first priority, thus a child being dismissed early must be signed out in the office and identification of the person picking up a child is required before the child is released. Early Dismissals and changes need to be communicated with the main office no later than 2:45pm. The main office can be reached by phone 513-398-3741, by emailing rovitoj@masonohioschools.com or by sending a written note in your child's backpack.

Minutes/Hours of School Day Missed (Excused and Unexcused)

We are required by state law to track student absences in minutes/hours throughout the school year. All missed instructional time is included in absence totals. A student who is late to school or leaves early, formerly termed tardy or early dismissal, is missing instructional time and is now considered absent for the number of minutes/hours in a given school day.

The state legislature set the following thresholds and associated requirements.

Habitual Truant (unexcused absence)

- Absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse;
- Absent 42 or more hours in one school month without a legitimate excuse;
- Absent 72 or more hours in one school year without a legitimate excuse.

When one or more of Habitual Truant (unexcused absence) thresholds are met the following steps will be followed by all Mason City Schools:

- Within 7 school days of the triggering absence, the district will do the following:
 - Select members of the absence intervention team;
 - Make 3 meaningful attempts to secure the participation of the student's parent or guardian on the absence intervention team.
- Within 10 days of the triggering absence, the student will be assigned to the selected absence intervention team;
- Within 14 school days after the assignment of the team, the district will develop the student's absence intervention plan; and
- If the student does not make progress on the plan within 61 days or continues to be excessively absent, the district will file a complaint in the juvenile court.

Excessive Absence (Excused absence)

- Absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse;
- Absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse. family

When one or more of the Excessive Absence thresholds are met the following steps will be followed by all Mason City Schools:

- Notify the parent/guardian in writing
- Evaluate if an Attendance Intervention Plan is needed

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An absence will be considered unexcused if the family does not communicate with the school, the absence does not meet the criteria listed above, or 15 absences have been previously excused and a doctor's note has not been provided. The school administration will make the final decision whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Any absence will be excused with a note from a doctor. Additionally, 15 absences may be excused with family communication. For the purpose of excusing absences "Family Communication" is defined as directly contacting the building attendance office or using the attendance line/School Messenger App to report an absence. After 15 absences have been excused with family communication, a doctor's note will be required to excuse any further absences. See below for more information.

MEDICALLY EXCUSED ABSENCES

Medical excuses are acceptable documentation of an absence to school following a personal, in-office or hospital examination by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or dentist. Physicians/dentists may only excuse absences to school for the specific date(s) the student was under his/her direct medical care - during which the student was medically unable to attend school. Excessive medical excuses may result in the school contacting the physician's office for additional medical documentation.

EXCUSED ABSENCES WITH FAMILY COMMUNICATION

In addition to the “Medically Excused Absences” discussed above the school will excuse 15 additional absences with family communication. In order for an absence to be excused the family must directly communicate to the school the reason a student is absent and provide documentation as requested. This can be done by contacting the building attendance office or using the attendance line/School Messenger App. Families should communicate with the school on the day an absence occurs before the start of the school day. Once 15 absences have been excused a doctor's note will be required.

Types of absences that will be excused with family communication:

- Personal illness or injury
- Illness or death in the family
- Funeral of immediate family member or relative
- Religious holiday
- Military Provision. Students may receive up to five additional excused absences per school year for the purpose of attending the deployment or return of a military parent/sibling.
- Appointments for court
- Pre-approved absences approved in advance by the principal (See Below)
- Emergencies and other reasons deemed good and sufficient by the principal

PRE-APPROVED ABSENCES/PLANNED ABSENCES

Regular attendance by all students is very important. In many cases, irregular attendance is the major reason for poor schoolwork; therefore, all students are urged to make appointments, do personal errands, etc., outside of school hours. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips and vacations when school is out of session, in order to avoid disrupting their child's education.

The Superintendent/designee may excuse students from school for short-term trips or vacations, provided that adequate prior notice is provided, arrangements are made with the teachers of the student(s) to complete work covered during the period of absence, and provided that the student's work is passing and complete to that point in time. When the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts will be made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent. At the same time, the responsibility for such absence resides with the parent(s), and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be retaught by the teacher. After returning from an absence a student will have 10 days to make up any missed assignments.

Excused absences for trips or vacations will be approved under the following conditions:

- The parent/guardian must complete a [vacation request form](#) 5 days in advance of the vacation to the building principal.
- Trips/vacations lasting less than 15 school days will generally be approved. Any absences after the 15th day will be considered unexcused.
- The district will only excuse a total of 15 absences per school year for each student. If a student is approved for a 15 day vacation then any additional absences upon their return will be considered unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided.
- No special education services will be provided on days when students are voluntarily absent to go on trips or vacations.
- Students who are voluntarily absent for trips or vacations during district or statewide testing will be provided the opportunity to make up tests in the same manner as other students absent during

testing. Students who are unable to make up tests administered during vacations or trips shall be considered to have opted out of testing, which could affect promotion or graduation.

- Parents who plan to take lengthy trips or vacations are encouraged to seek alternative education options, including enrolling at the location of the trip, homeschooling.
- Students who have been truant for more than 10% of the required attendance days of the current school year and who have failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas in the current grade are prohibited from being promoted to the next grade level unless the principal and the teachers of the failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level.

Absences that are not excused as set forth in this guideline shall be treated as unexcused absences. Unexcused absences will result in the District following its absence prevention and truancy policy and processes. If a student legitimately withdraws from the school district while truancy proceedings are underway or if a student is no longer a resident of the district, then the district has no further responsibility to continue those truancy proceedings.

MOVING, CHANGE OF ADDRESS, AND/OR EMERGENCY INFORMATION

If moving out of the Mason School District, please notify the guidance office if you are moving to another school district. We will send you a [withdrawal form](#) to be completed and returned before you move. This will allow us to send your child's records to his/her new school.

For change of address within Mason, you will need to [update address information, including proof of residency, and transportation information in Final Forms](#). Any necessary transportation changes will take 3 business days to complete.

It is extremely important that emergency information is kept up-to-date at all times for the safety of your child. If, at any time during the school year, you change your address, daytime phone number, or preferences for emergency contacts please update in [Final Forms](#).

COMMUNICATION

Throughout the year, there are many ways and opportunities to learn about MECC activities, your child's progress and other general information.

- **Family Orientation "Welcome Days":** Your child will have an opportunity to see their classroom and learning environment during Family Orientation. Notification of dates and times will be sent prior to the Family Orientation.
- **Conferences:** Your child's teacher will advise you how to schedule a one-time conference for your child. Additional conferences may be arranged upon the request of parents or teacher.
- **Progress Reports:** Preschool, kindergarten, first and second grade students receive work progress updates via work sent home and on Seesaw regularly after the first 6 weeks of school. Parents can access [Seesaw](#) at any time to see updates. A printable grade report is available on MasonConnects at the end of each grading period (October, January, March, June).
- **Classroom News:** Your child's teacher will share information on a regular basis through such means as a class newsletter, class Facebook page update, weekly email, etc
- **Weekly Mason Connects Newsletter:** Your child's principal will share building wide information through a weekly newsletter via email.

- **Ongoing Communication Opportunities:** One of the goals of the MECC staff is to establish open and frequent communication between home and school. If you have questions or concerns, we encourage you to first contact your child's teacher by telephone or email. The building administrators may also be contacted for additional support with communication between parents and staff members.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTICE TO PARENTS

In compliance with O.R.C. 3313.536, Mason City Schools maintains an Emergency Management Plan that will be deployed should an emergency present itself. Part of that plan is to notify families of the best known facts about the emergency, how the event is likely to affect the ability to have school, and plans for families to reunite with students. In the event of an emergency, families will receive notification by one or more electronic communication tools including text, phone call, or email. One communication from the school is expected but circumstances may dictate follow-up communications are necessary. The District may also post information at its website, www.masonohioschools.com, and utilize mass media outlets including television, radio, and social media. IT IS A FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY to ensure the District has appropriate contact information and that communications are directed to both parents or guardians as appropriate. Changes to parent or guardian information may be made by emailing the correct information to data@masonohioschools.com.

CUSTODY RECORDS

It is important that families provide an up-to-date copy of custody papers to be kept on file at MECC. If you have not given a copy of your documentation to the school, or have had a change, please [update Final Forms and upload signed court documentation](#).

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

We appreciate parents' interest in their child's education and their desire to be involved and informed. School information will be provided to the custodial parent and will also be shared with the non-custodial parent when complete information is provided. Release of a child to a non-custodial parent cannot be denied by the school without court documentation. It is the parents' responsibility to provide the school with the appropriate documents. Please make certain that the office has a copy of the most current custody papers.

DELAYS AND CLOSINGS

It is important that parents plan ahead for how your family will proceed if there is a school delay or cancellation, or an emergency closing after children have arrived at school. Your children will adjust to the immediate situation better if you have reviewed your plans ahead of time. As soon as a decision is made to delay or close school, a message is immediately posted on our website at www.masonohioschools.com, local radio and television stations are notified, and the district (or your school) will call up to two designated telephone numbers relaying the latest information using our emergency phone call system.

As soon as a decision is made to delay or close school, a message is immediately posted on our website at www.MasonOhioSchools.com. Local radio and television stations are then notified, and the district (or your school) will call designated telephone numbers relaying the latest information using our emergency phone call system. Feel free to also check our Mason City Schools [Facebook](#). Feel free to also check our Mason City Schools [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for additional updates.

During inclement weather, please visit www.MasonOhioSchools.com for the most up-to-date information. Mason City Schools' website is always updated *before* a call is made to media outlets, or to parents and staff.

Below are some general guidelines the district will attempt to follow when using the emergency phone call system during inclement weather.

Before Midnight

When possible, we will attempt to make the decision to delay school by 10:00pm, and will use the emergency phone call system to call your home phone by 10:30pm.

After Midnight

If we need to make the decision to delay or cancel school after 12:00am, we will use the emergency phone call system to call your home no earlier than 5:30 a.m. *Calls may take up to an hour to be delivered.*

There is a Mason County School district in Kentucky. If listening to the radio or television during inclement weather conditions, do not confuse Mason County with Mason City Schools' announcements. Our district is always announced as MASON CITY SCHOOLS.

MECC DELAY SCHEDULE

TWO HOUR DELAY Morning Preschool and Kindergarten

Start Time	11:20 am (bus pick up two hours later than normal)
Dismissal	1:05 pm (bus drop off one hour later than normal)

Afternoon Preschool and Kindergarten

Start Time	2:05 pm (bus pick up one hour later than normal)
Dismissal	3:50 pm (normal drop off)

First Grade and Second Grade

Start Time	11:20 am (bus pick up two hours later than normal)
Dismissal	3:50 pm (normal drop off)

Extended Care operates as usual.

First and Second Grade Morning Enrichment classes begin 2 hours later than normal.

When reviewing this delay schedule, please consider any special arrangements that may apply to your family and/or your child. These may include areas such as child care, time of lunch and snacks.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA gives parents or students over age 18 certain rights with respect to education records, including the right to refuse to allow Mason City Schools permission to release any or all of the types of information listed below about the student as directory information.

The types of information listed below have been designated as directory information by FERPA and Mason City Schools Board of Education Policy and may be disclosed throughout the school year without prior notification:

- Student's name
- Address

- Date and place of birth
- Telephone number (only for school/parent school/club directories)
- Major field of study
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance
- Awards received
- Honors
- Scholarships
- Date of graduation
- Student photograph

During the school year, Mason City Schools publishes many editions of school publications, as well as maintains its website at www.MasonOhioSchools.com and other official school sites including social media sites. The district is also covered by the local media, including the *Today's Pulse*, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, *CenterPoint Magazine*, *Mason Deerfield Magazine*, and other regional and national media.

If a parent or eligible student refuses to allow Mason City Schools permission to release any or all of the types of information about the student as directory information for the current school year, the parent or eligible student must notify Mason City Schools in writing by returning [Mason City Schools Information and Photo Release form](#) to your child's school two weeks after school begins. Failure to return the form will be considered implied permission to use/release directory information as identified.

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED).
- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sexual behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships: Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility;
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use – protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

Mason City Schools has adopted policies and procedures to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure or use of personal information for marketing sales, or other distribution purposes. Mason City Schools will notify parents and eligible students of these policies annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Each school will also directly

notify parents and eligible students before the dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

MASONCONNECTS

In addition to communication updates from the building and district, MasonConnects provides information such as schedules, report cards, assessment results, IEPs, 504s, gifted, WEPS, and guardian contact information. All important resources are linked from the MasonConnects menu (waffle icon in upper right-hand corner).

MasonConnects Link: <https://masonconnects.abre.io/>

If you don't have access and need a student access key, please email support@masonohioschools.com. To update guardian contact information, [**submit change along with signed court documents in Final Forms.**](#)

SAFE SCHOOLS TIPLINE

Safety is one of our district's top priorities. To help safeguard our school community, our district uses SafeSchools Alert, a tip report service that allows students, staff and parents to submit safety concerns to our administration three different ways:

1. Phone: 513-972-4910
2. Text: 513-972-4910
3. Email: 1059@alert1.us
4. Web: <https://mason-oh.safeschoolsalert.com/>

You and your child can easily report tips on bullying, harassment, acts of bias, self harm/suicidal ideation, drugs, vandalism or any safety issue you are concerned about through SafeSchools Alert. Every tip SafeSchools Alert receives about our district is immediately logged in the system and our administration is notified so that they can investigate and take appropriate action. And, tips may also be submitted anonymously if you prefer. Together, using SafeSchools Alert, we can make our district a safer place to work and learn!

SCHOLOGY/SEESAW

Seesaw (grades PK-2) and Schoology(grades 3-12) is the online platform where Mason City Schools teachers, students, and families collaborate . It allows users to create, manage, and share content. Seesaw & Schoology are known as a Learning Management Systems (LMS) that use a cloud based storage system for managing an online classroom.

At MECC, Teachers use Seesaw to deliver digital assignments, allow students to record video/capture images of work, and share their learning with the class and their families. Families are encouraged to view the work students are sharing to have a glimpse into their learning. Teachers will provide feedback on the work, so that you are better able to support your child's learning at home.

Beyond MECC, Students transition to Schoology. Teachers use Schoology as an online grade book, post discussion questions, homework, files, links, and other information. Students are able to access all class information, take quizzes and tests, upload files through an online dropbox, participate in class discussions, stay organized with a school calendar, download and print files from home, and much more. Families are able to observe their child's assignments and calendars while staying involved in their education.

TALKING POINTS

TalkingPoints is a messenger tool that allows Mason City Schools staff to connect and communicate with families across any language. Staff can text families (using a phone or internet-connected device) in their native language. Our school uses Talking Points to stay connected with families, to communicate about closures and delays, bus information, and in the event of an emergency. **This service helps us send announcements by text.**

Verify your cell phone number is correct in [Final Forms](#).

SCHOOLINKS

The SchoolLinks K-5 program is designed to help students begin to discover their interests and strengths, and explore career areas that align with these attributes. SchoolLinks provides an interactive and engaging experience, supporting students as they uncover their purpose and potential. At Mason City Schools, SchoolLinks is accessible to students and their parents from 2nd to 12th grade.

All features of SchoolLinks are designed with students in mind, ensuring they are user-friendly and easily comprehensible for elementary students.

Using SchoolLinks, elementary students and parents can:

- Engage in age-appropriate lessons to identify strengths and interests.
- Participate in content and activities that support career exploration.
- Create a digital portfolio that grows with the student throughout their K-12 journey.

PEACHJAR

Peachjar provides mobile-friendly electronic flyer distribution where families can have district-approved eflyers delivered by email once a week, and can view all school-approved eflyers on the district website. Peachjar allows families to register online for events or After School enrichment programs with a "Sign Up Now" button. Requires non-school sponsored organizations to pay a fee for events that are not free.

GENERAL INFORMATION

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are very meaningful for young children and may be recognized by parents in a variety of ways at MECC. If you choose, you may send a treat (non-food is preferred) to school for your child to share with his or her classmates. If you choose to send an edible treat, all edible treats must be "store bought" with an ingredient label and individually wrapped (i.e. small candy bars or fruit snacks). This requirement is in place for the safety of all students at MECC. *It is also the school's policy not to have "parties" at school. Please do not send in invitations for your child's personal birthday party.*

MEAL ACCOUNTS

MECC first and second graders eat in the school's cafeteria. The MCS Student Nutrition Program is governed by the USDA & National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and must meet Federal guidelines.

Meal Pricing

USDA Waivers for free meals have expired. Meals will no longer be free for all students. Free and reduced-price meal benefits are available for eligible families, please see FREE and REDUCED-PRICE MEAL PROGRAM below.

School Year 2025-2026 Meal Pricing

- Assorted drinks and snacks offered a la carte at various prices

What Makes A Meal

- **Lunch** consists of 5 food components: grains (part of entrée), protein (part of entrée), fruits, vegetables and milk. Under National School Lunch Program guidelines, students must choose at least 3 of the 5 listed food components and one must be a fruit or vegetable.
- **Breakfast** consists of a hot or cold entrée, fruit/fruit juice and milk. Students are offered 1 cup of fruit/fruit juice as part of the meal and must select at least ½ cup fruit/fruit juice.

Payment Options

- **PaySchools Central** - <https://www.payschoolscentral.com> Allows pre-payment using any major credit card. This program will show daily purchase history as well as allow for auto replenishment of funds if desired. Mobile apps are available in the Apple App Store and Google Play.
- **Checks or Cash from students** can be taken from students at the register (include student identification number on check). **No change will be given, all funds will be applied to the student's lunch account for future purchases.** Checks can be mailed to the Student Nutrition Office, 211 North East St., Mason, OH 45040 (include student identification number on check).
- **Drop Box** - A payment drop box is located by Registration at the Mason Central Administration Building, 211 North East St.
- At this time, we are unable to take payments over the telephone for student lunch accounts.

Free And Reduced-Priced Meal Program/Fee Waivers

- Families are encouraged to [apply](#) for the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program on the online application on the PaySchoolsCentral website or app.
- Paper copies of the application are available at the school office or the Student Nutrition Office in the Mason City Schools Central Office at 211 North East Street; Mason, OH 45040.
- Completed applications may be turned in to any school office, turned into a teacher, or at the Mason City Schools Central Office..
- Families must reapply for free and reduced benefits each year.
- For fees to be waived we must receive the Fee Waiver Consent Disclosure Form. For families that apply online the Fee Waiver Consent Disclosures are included in the application.

Charge Policy

Families are expected to pay for student's meal purchases. Should a student come to school with no packed lunch or no money for lunch the student will be allowed to charge only a meal (breakfast and lunch) up to the amount of \$15. Parents will be contacted by email to inform of the negative balance. Negative balances should be paid within 5 days of the occurrence.

Menus

Menus are always available at MasonOhioSchools.com.

Menus are subject to change based on product availability. Due to expected supply chain difficulties the menu may change on a daily basis. Please check the website each morning.

Allergies, Dietary Restrictions And Account Management

A link to interactive menus will be posted on the Student Nutrition webpage at Masonohioschools.com. This resource will allow you to sort menu items to determine allergens present.

To notify our department of life-threatening allergies, dietary restrictions or account purchase restrictions please submit a Meal Account & Food Allergy Management Form located on our website. A Doctor's note may be required for severe allergies that would require alteration of the meal pattern that is required by USDA.

The Student Nutrition Office may be contacted with questions at 513-336-6526 or emailed at foodservice@masonohioschools.com.

LIBRARY/DREAM Center

Grades 1 & 2

The MECC Library/DREAM Center reopened in 2023 with a redesign to meet the needs and interests of young children growing up in the Information Age. Our Library/DREAM Center is the hub of learning within our school community and is designed to meet the needs of children growing up in a world in which literacy in all of its forms is critical. With that in mind, we created a space in which children had the opportunity to learn, wonder, create, and explore, while learning the skills of collaboration, critical thinking, and communication.

Within this space, students in first and second grade engage in STEAM experiences as part of their Specials Rotation. During this time, they have the opportunity to explore learning in coding and robotics, building and engineering, creating and making, and producing (video and print production).

The library section of the space is filled with engaging literature that pulls students into the world of reading. Students in first and second grade have the opportunity to check out books weekly and then snuggle up in a cozy space to enjoy their choices for a bit before returning to their classroom. If your child's library/DREAM Center day falls on a "non-school day" (e.g. a holiday), his/her book will be due at the next regularly scheduled session or anytime before that. Students who return books on their library day will be able to check out a new book. If a student does not return his/her book on library day, then they will have the opportunity to choose a second book to take home. If two books are forgotten, then students will receive a reminder and will not be able to check out books until they are returned or replaced. Books can be returned at any time, and a student does not have to wait until their next library day. There will be times each day that classroom teachers can send students to return late books (or books they finished early) and they will be allowed to check out a new book.

Kindergarten

In kindergarten - DREAM spaces are embedded into the Kindergarten Learning environment. Between each pod of 4 classrooms you will find a "Launch Pad" that includes coding, building and making, and other

choices to engage students in the development of the inquiry process. And as for books, the librarians make a special trip with the “Book Bus” to kindergarten each week. Kindergarten students choose a new book each week to enjoy with you at home.

Preschool

Our Preschool Program has their own, preschool sized library encompassed within the preschool wing. Students check out books weekly with the support of their classroom teachers.

SPECIALS CLASSES

K-2 Students at MECC have the opportunity to engage in a variety of special area classes designed to provide students with engaging exposure to learning beyond the core academic curriculum. These classes allow students to begin to develop their Portrait of a Comet skills, reflecting on their strengths and interests and learning more about who they are as learners. Specials offered at MECC are:

- **Art:** In K-2 art, students are encouraged to explore and generate original artmaking ideas, engage in self-directed play with materials, and use the elements of art. They are also guided to express their ideas, explore a variety of materials and tools, and connect their personal experiences with art.
- **Music:** In K-2 music, students focus on developing foundational music skills through creating, performing, responding, and connecting. Kindergarten begins with experiencing and moving to music, first grade introduces simple improvisation and rhythm reading, and second grade builds on these skills with more complex patterns and understanding music's emotional and cultural contexts.
- **PE:** In K-2 PE, students develop foundational motor skills through various locomotor and non-locomotor activities, such as walking, running, balancing, and exploring rhythmic movements. They also begin to understand and apply basic movement concepts related to body awareness, space, effort, and relationships.
- **STEAM:** In grades 1-2, students develop skills such as digital storytelling, the engineering design process, creative use of physical materials, and coding and robotics. For grades K-2, the skills focus on following instructions, experimenting with materials, using digital tools for storytelling, and solving basic problems with support and increasing independence.
- **My Mason Journey:** Second grade students develop their Portrait of a Comet Skills as they are empowered to find their 'true north' through self-discovery and goal setting, while also growing an understanding of the importance of sharing their stories and becoming 'difference makers' prepared and ready to make an impact on the world.

K-2 students visit special area classes in week-long rotations. Teachers will share the specials rotation schedule for their class with families.

Second Grade

Second graders engage in 5 specials: Art, Music, PE, STEAM, and My Mason Journey. They will visit each class for a week, and then rotate to the next class. Throughout the year, they will have 7 week long engagements in each special.

First Grade

First graders engage in 4 specials: Art, Music, PE, and STEAM. They will visit each class for a week, and then rotate to the next class. Throughout the year, they will have 8 week-long engagements in each special.

Kindergarten

Kindergartners engage in 3 specials: Art, Music, and PE.. They will visit each class for a week, and then rotate to the next class. Throughout the year, they will have 9 week-long engagements in each special.

LOST & FOUND

Lost and Found items are located in containers in the main hallway in front of the library. When you are in the building, please check to see if these items belong to your child. **You can help us return lost articles by marking all of your child's clothing/belongings with his/her name.** Items not claimed by the end of each semester will be donated to charity.

RECESS

Outside recess will be scheduled as weather permits. Dry weather conditions with a temperature of 20 degrees or above generally indicate an outside recess for students. Wind chills are also factored into decision making. Please dress your child accordingly. MECC is a "recess before lunch" building.

PLAYGROUND and TOY RULES

1. Students are not allowed to bring dangerous or distracting articles to school such as guns, knives, water guns, firecrackers or other toys. We discourage students from bringing personal items to school such as collections, pictures, etc. Students take personal responsibility for the safety of their property.
2. Student cell phones and other personal communication devices at school are discouraged. If a student has a phone, it must remain off and in the student's backpack at school and on the bus, unless it is being used for learning purposes under staff supervision.
3. Video game use is permitted on some buses. No sound is permitted. Games with an ESRB rating above E (Everyone – ages 6 and older) are not permitted. Games must remain in backpacks and off during the school day, including during recess.
4. Every student is responsible to every teacher or staff member at all times and is expected to behave in a respectful manner.
5. No rock or mulch throwing is allowed on school property.
6. Students should be respectful to peers, all staff and school property.
7. No rough play.

Swings: Only forward motion, not sideways. No jumping out of swings.

Yard Rules: No climbing trees. Stay away from the school building and windows. No tackle football.

Equipment: No dangerous activities on playground equipment.

Slides: No unsafe behavior on slides.. Students must go down the slides and not climb up them.

Games: No games involving chasing and catching other students. No rough play.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Student pictures will be taken in the fall. We will be using a prepay system. Specific information about pictures will be sent home in advance.

STAFF DIRECTORY

View our school's [Staff Directory](#) for school and district employees' email, phone number and extension, and biographical information.

HEALTH SERVICES

CLINIC

The school clinic is staffed by [Health Services Coordinators](#) (Registered Nurses), and is available for students who require first aid, students who require medication, or students who become ill during the school day. **The clinic does not serve the same purpose as a physician's office and it is recommended that you consult your family physician if you suspect illness.**

If your child has medical needs, such as an allergy or chronic illness, please contact the Clinic to discuss the specifics of your child's medical/health condition. For more information, please call 513-770-2045 and speak with one of MECC's Registered Nurses.

When a student visits the clinic, they will receive a note so that you are aware of his/her visit. Students will be assessed for severity of symptoms. Observations that warrant dismissal include: injury requiring physician evaluation, temperature > 100 degrees, vomiting, or signs of infection/communicable illness. Complaints of discomfort where the above parameters do not apply will be treated with comfort measures. Parents will be contacted if a persistent complaint is voiced, regardless of the student's physical symptoms. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or classroom phones to contact parents regarding illness. Students dismissed due to illness must be seen by the Health Services Coordinator.

A number of [Health-Related Forms](#) are available on the district website.

DISPENSING MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Mason City Schools Health Services staff follows state and federal law regarding the administration of medications in the school setting. The following guidelines for both prescription and nonprescription medications are mandatory:

1. Medications should be administered before or after school whenever possible.
2. Physician **and** parent/guardian signatures are required on the "[Dispensing Medications at School](#)" form supplied by the school district. A form created by a physician's office or healthcare facility will also be accepted if all information required on the school district form is duplicated on the alternate form, including dosage, frequency, route and potential side effects. All forms are void at the close of the current school year.
3. Medications must be in their original container (either manufacturer or prescription) and clearly marked with the child's name, dosage and instructions.
4. Medication route must be oral, topical, inhalation, ophthalmic/otic, rectal, gastrointestinal, or subcutaneous/intramuscular injection. Intravenous infusion/medication administration will not be performed or supervised by Mason City Schools' employees.

5. Students are not to be in possession of any medications unless authorized by physician signature to carry an EpiPen, Metered Dose Inhaler or Glucagon (per ORC 3313.718, 3313.716 or 3313.7112). Medication cannot be sent to school or on the bus with your child.
6. The parent/guardian is responsible for supplying adequate quantity of medication for dispensation and for retrieval of excess medication at the close of the school year. Medications will not be stored over summer. All forms are void at the close of the current school year.
7. It is recommended that parents/guardians who administer medications to their child on school grounds do so in the clinic or office areas of the building, avoiding hallways, cafeteria or other areas where the general student population is present.

EPINEPHRINE AUTOINJECTORS

Students have the right to possess and use an epinephrine autoinjector to treat anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions). The right applies at school or at any activity, event or program sponsored by or in which the student's school is a participant. Epinephrine autoinjectors are prescription medications. A statement which complies with State law and is signed by a physician or other individual licensed to prescribe medication must be received by the Health Services Coordinator. The statement must include permission for the student to possess the epinephrine autoinjector and, if applicable, the prescriber's acknowledgement that the student is capable of self-administering the medication. **Additionally, a second autoinjector must be provided by the parent and stored in the building's Health Services office per State law.**

EMERGENCIES

If a child is injured, the child will be taken to the clinic where first aid will be administered by the Health Service Coordinator. It is **extremely important** that your child's medical information is kept up-to-date and that the office has current daytime phone numbers and emergency contact names on file.

HEALTH SERVICES FORMS

An electronic [Emergency Medical Authorization](#) is required to be on file for all students within 5 days of the first day of attendance in the new school year and can be completed by logging in to Final Forms. Health information updates and an electronic parent signature are required each school year in Final Forms and before your child may leave the campus or attend field trips. *Please provide the most current phone numbers and email addresses in Final Forms* to ensure correct contact information is available to the Health Services staff. Additionally, the Health Services department offers forms specific to student medical needs, including individualized healthcare plans for: [asthma/allergies \(MCS-210\)](#), [food allergies \(MCS-239\)](#), [diabetes management \(MCS-240\)](#), [seizures \(MCS-241\)](#) and [other chronic medical conditions](#). These forms are available via the [Health Services](#) links on the district's website. For children with life-threatening food allergies, parents should also complete the [Meal Account and Food Allergy Management Form](#) located on the child nutrition website or call child nutrition at 513-336-6526.

It is important that parents/guardians provide their [student's medical history](#) as well as information on current medical treatments or conditions. If your child has medical needs such as an allergy or chronic illness, please contact the school nurse to discuss concerns. Additionally, it is imperative that any change in contact information for parents/guardians should be communicated to the school as soon as possible.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization Requirements for 2025-2026

In accordance with Ohio Department of Health guidelines, Mason City Schools requires certain immunizations to minimize the spread of preventable illnesses in schools and provide students with a healthier learning environment. Immunizations are required for each student unless the parent/guardian(s) file an exemption based on personal, medical or religious objection. The District may also require tuberculosis examinations in compliance with law. Students failing to initiate or prove receipt of an immunization shot or series **within 14 days after entering are not permitted to return to school.**

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The MECC staff is trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness. The staff will observe each child daily as they enter the group. The following precautions will be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

- The parent will be notified immediately of the child's condition.
- A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or guardian.

FEVER: If your child's temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, they should remain home until they have been without fever for a **full 24 hours** without fever reducing medicine. Remember, fever is a symptom indicating the presence of an illness. Tylenol or Motrin may temporarily reduce the fever, but they do not cure the illness.

CHICKENPOX: Symptoms include a skin rash consisting of small blisters which leave scabs. A slight fever may or may not be present. There may be blisters and scabs all present at the same time. Your child should remain home until all blisters have scabbed over, usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the first crop of blisters.

COMMON COLD: Symptoms include an irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes, sneezing, chilliness, and general body discomfort. Your child should remain home if symptoms are serious enough to interfere with the student's ability to learn. Consult your child's physician if symptoms persist beyond 7-10 days or a fever develops.

FLU: Symptoms include an abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache and sore muscles. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and the child is without fever for 24 hours.

HEAD LICE: Lice are small, grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits firmly attach to the hair shafts, close to the scalp. Nits are much easier to see and detect than lice. They are small white specks usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Following lice infestation, your child may return to school after receiving treatment (according to physician's instructions).

IMPETIGO: Symptoms include blister-like lesions which later develop into crusted, pus-like sores. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and sores are no longer draining.

PAIN: If your child complains, or behavior indicates, that they are experiencing persistent pain, they should be evaluated by a physician before attending school.

PINKEYE: Symptoms include redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching, matter draining from one or both eyes, and/or dried crusts on the eyelids. Your child should remain home from school until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours, have been seen by a physician and have no drainage from the affected eye(s). Spread of infection can be minimized by keeping the hands away from the face, good hand washing practices, using individual washcloths and towels, and *not* touching any part of the eyes with the tip of the medication applicator while administering antibiotic ointment or eye drops.

SKIN RASHES: Skin rashes of unknown origin should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school. When the doctor approves a return to school, please send a physician's note to the clinic.

STREP THROAT/SCARLET FEVER: Strep throat begins with a fever, sore/red throat, pus spots on the back of the throat, and tender swollen glands of the neck. Scarlet fever shows the same symptoms as strep throat with the addition of a strawberry appearance to the tongue and a skin rash. High fever, nausea, and vomiting may also occur. Your child should remain home from school until 24 hours of antibiotic therapy has been administered and no fever or vomiting has occurred for 24 hours. Most physicians will advise rest at home for 1-2 days after a strep infection.

Antibiotics ordered for strep infections are to be taken until all medication is gone. Only when these directions are followed correctly is the strep bacteria completely eliminated from the body, no matter how well the child feels after the first few days of receiving medication.

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA (INTESTINAL VIRAL INFECTIONS): Symptoms include stomach ache, cramping, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. Your child should remain at home until vomiting, diarrhea, or fever has ceased for a **full 24 hours**. If your child has any of these symptoms during the night, they should not be sent to school the following day.

Note to Parents/Guardians: In any potential illness situation, good hand washing is always the best first line of defense. Please encourage your child to practice thorough hand washing, particularly before meals and after sneezing or coughing.

PHYSICALS

Preschool students must have an annual physical with immunizations on file at MECC. An updated physical must be turned in to MECC on the anniversary date of the last physical. A preschooler entering MECC as a new student **must** have the following screenings prior to admission: vision, hearing, height, weight, dental, lead and hemoglobin or hematocrit level.

Kindergarten students are required to have a 5-year physical with updated immunizations. Failure to provide proper immunization records will result in exclusion from school.

First and Second grade students are required to have immunization records that are current or "In Process".

VISION AND HEARING

Once the school year is underway, the MECC Health Service Coordinator will assess vision and hearing for all Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade students and all new students to MECC. Should there be a concern, parents will be notified of the results of this screening. If you wish to decline routine vision and hearing screenings, please notify in writing your health services coordinator in your child's building.

PARTNERS

PTO (PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION)

PTO is an organization which enables parents and teachers to work together. One of the goals of the PTO is to provide volunteers for classroom activities, Field Day, picture days, book fair, and Welcome Day. Another important function of the PTO is to raise funds for programs, supplies and equipment not included in the school budget.

Our PTO is as strong as its membership. By becoming a member of the PTO community you have the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between school and home. Follow MECC PTO via their [Facebook](#) page and visit the Mason Early Childhood Center calendar for a schedule of events. If you have any further questions, please contact the PTO at meccpto@masonohioschools.com and they will help to get you involved. Please participate in the PTO and become a part of the MECC Team.

COMET CUPBOARDS & COMET CLOSETS

Each week, over 150 Mason students facing food insecurity are supported with weekend food through the Comet Cupboard. Comet Cupboards offer discreet, in-school access to nonperishable meals and personal care items. Comet Closets provide new and gently-used clothing, spirit wear, and winter coats.

Need food or other resources?

Connect with Mason City Schools Resource Coordinators:

Preschool - 6th Grade - Mary Eck - eckm@masonohioschools.com

7th - 12th Grades - Chloe Socha - sochac@masonohioschools.com

Want to help?

VOLUNTEER

Comet Cupboard is a volunteer-driven organization, led by local Girl Scouts and Comet Cupboard Coordinators Casey and Brian Moran. Please email cometcupboard@masonohioschools.com to volunteer and learn more about getting involved and serving our commUNITY! The Comet Cupboard always needs support, and items can be dropped off at our schools. The Comet Cupboard always needs cereal bars and Mac & Cheese Cups. Items can be dropped off at Mason Intermediate school for distribution to our in-school Comet Cupboards.

DONATE

This community-driven effort is sustained by donations. Contributions are tax-deductible and can be made through [Pay Schools Central](#) or checks made out to the Comet Cupboard and mailed to 211 North East St, Mason, OH 45040.

MASON SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

The [Mason Schools Foundation](#) is a non-profit organization funding innovative programs that help to bridge the gap between what the school district can fund and what students need to truly excel. The Foundation accepts donations from individuals, estates, companies and organizations, and donations are tax-deductible. The Foundation also conducts various fundraising activities, including a wonderful Reading Challenge for grades PS-6, and an annual Gala.

Since its inception in 2008, the Mason Schools Foundation funds \$100,000 annually in innovative and exciting grants for Mason City Schools, from preschool to high school. Visit www.MasonSchoolsFoundation.org to learn more!

Join us as a volunteer or a donor, and help take Mason City Schools above and beyond!

VOLUNTEERS

There are many ways to be involved at MECC. The classroom teacher, room parent(s) and PTO Volunteer Coordinators will be your main contacts for volunteer opportunities. Please volunteer! Help is always needed and appreciated. *Due to liability and interruption of the learning environment, volunteers are not permitted to bring siblings or other children into the building while volunteering.* Volunteers are required to provide identification and sign in at the main office. All volunteers will wear a visible identification badge while in the building. Depending on frequency and type of volunteering, some volunteers may be required to obtain a [background check](#) through Mason Central Office.

Some of the volunteering opportunities are as follows:

- **Classroom:** Volunteers assist the teacher in the classroom setting supporting students in small groups or in a one-on-one setting.
- **Library:** The library utilizes volunteers on a regular basis. The media assistant and/or the library volunteer coordinator are your contacts for this area.
- **Special Events:** Book Fair, Field Day, Picture Day, Welcome Day, Celebration Days, and the Opening of the school year.
- **At Home Projects:** Volunteers may be asked to donate supplies for classroom or general school use, complete cut and paste projects requested by the teacher, help with Scholastic book distribution and maintaining current and relevant bulletin boards.
- **Cafeteria:** The cafeteria utilizes volunteers on a daily basis. Volunteers assist students who need help during the lunch period.

If you are interested in volunteering at Mason City Schools, complete the Volunteer Form on our website.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The [MECC preschool program](#) is in session Monday through Thursday. The preschool calendar can be found on the [MCS website](#). Each classroom is a multi-age grouping that provides programming for children three through five years of age. The classroom population is comprised of typically developing children and children with identified special needs. The MECC Preschool program matches MECC programming in providing safe return to school options for families.

The curriculum in the preschool is guided by Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards. The curriculum, Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPSi), is designed to meet the needs of the whole child and addresses all areas of development: social/emotional, cognitive and physical. Teachers plan and prepare curriculum based on the understanding that children construct knowledge about their world as they engage in meaningful interactions with people and objects in the environment. Teachers in these child-centered rooms believe in the inherent ability of children to be active learners and to make purposeful choices in the environment.

The preschool curriculum emphasizes the value of social interaction and provides opportunities for children to interact with peers and adults throughout the day. The multi-age class groupings promote social

interactions among children of varying developmental levels. Through a variety of social experiences, young children are provided with opportunities to discuss ideas, express feelings and participate in conflict resolution. In addition, children learn the importance of understanding others and cooperating in a group setting.

The preschool environment and curriculum is planned and prepared to involve children both physically and mentally in their own learning. Daily schedules and routines are predictable and help provide a sense of order and security to young children. The typical day provides a balance of quiet and active experiences as well as individual, small group and whole group activities. Children become actively involved in activity areas/learning centers during “Choice Time”, an uninterrupted block of time during the preschool day. Choice Time provides children with the time they need to move, touch and explore their classroom. As children move among classroom activity areas/learning centers, they are encouraged to make meaningful choices and decisions. During Choice Time, teachers interact with individuals and small groups of children, helping to facilitate discovery, learning, problem-solving and acquisition of concepts.

Activity areas/learning centers typically found within the preschool classroom include: writing, dramatic play, art, painting, computer, sensory table, blocks, games, listening, puzzles, books, math games and snack. Opportunities are also provided for children to participate in music, science, sensory experiences and movement activities. The materials within each area are multi-level and may be used in different ways by children of various developmental levels. For example, the puzzle center may have puzzles with knobs, 6 piece puzzles, 12 piece puzzles and large floor puzzles in order to meet the needs of all learners.

All furniture and materials within the preschool setting were carefully chosen to enhance the learning experiences of our preschool-aged children. Children have a voice in selecting and designing learning experiences in each center. All students visit the preschool motor room daily which supports the intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of students. Our new preschool playground was developed with stakeholder feedback to be an inclusive environment fostering a balanced experience of play and motor development.

In conclusion, classroom teachers frequently use a strategy known as “thematic teaching” to present and integrate concepts across curriculum areas. These themes, typically two to three weeks in duration, are often related to social studies and science concepts and are supported by quality children’s literature. Examples of such themes include autumn, transportation and community workers.

Teachers will support learners in navigating routines, play, social interactions, learning activities and snack, and encouraging playskills with adult facilitation to create safety for adults and students in a developmentally appropriate environment.

PROGRAM

The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children under age 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. EPSDT is key to ensuring that children and adolescents receive appropriate preventive, dental, mental health, and developmental, and specialty services. Our Mason City Schools District Resource Coordinator is available to support you in accessing resources.

- Early: Assessing and identifying problems early
- Periodic: Checking children's health at periodic, age-appropriate intervals
- Screening: Providing physical, mental, developmental, dental, hearing, vision, and other screening tests to detect potential problems
- Diagnostic: Performing diagnostic tests to follow up when a risk is identified
- Treatment: Control, correct or reduce health problems found

Special Education Programming: If you have concerns regarding your child's development, you can contact Julie Cooper, Preschool Psychologist, for information regarding evaluation for special education services. Part C authorizes federal funding for early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three years, and Part B, Section 619 authorizes supplementary grants to states for preschool programs serving children with disabilities ages three through five.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the MECC preschool is to provide services to children, ages three to five, with identified disabilities, as required by Public Law 99-457, in an integrated setting with typically developing peers.

PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The educational philosophy of the MECC preschool program is based upon constructivist theory and the concept of "developmentally appropriate practice" as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In NAEYC's view, programs that follow this practice provide learning experiences and activities that are both age-appropriate and individually appropriate for each learner.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

The preschool program enrolls children three through five years of age. **Typically developing children must be three on or before August 1st of the school year, toilet trained and NOT of kindergarten age (age 5 by August 1st).**

Admission preference is given to siblings of currently enrolled MECC preschool students who reside in the Mason City School District. In addition, if twins or triplets apply for admission, either all siblings will receive a placement or all will be placed on the waiting list.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT/DISCIPLINE (PER STATE OF OHIO)

1. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
3. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.
5. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself/herself or his/her family or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
9. Separation, when used as a discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
10. The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

The MECC Preschool program has adopted the Responsive Classroom Approach and all preschool teachers have received the full training in this approach. Students need to feel a part of their learning community and be immersed in the learning around social-emotional development. Staff will discuss class rules, follow a predictable schedule, and guide children through modeling and role playing. Students will receive constructive and timely feedback that is developmentally appropriate and guides children to internalizing being an active part of their learning community. Teachers will use approaches such as; verbal redirection, visual cues, gestural cues, conferring with children about situations and role playing solutions, giving children the appropriate language to use to solve problems, identifying their feelings and coping strategies, and positive reinforcement for positive choices using encouragement (I notice...).

[Reporting Child Abuse Required Policy](#)

LICENSING

The MECC preschool is licensed by the State of Ohio Department of Education (ODE). It is evaluated by ODE annually to ensure compliance with state standards and regulations. If you have any concerns about the MECC preschool, please inform your child's teacher and/or a building administrator. If you have continued concerns, you may report them to ODE at 614-466-0224. The ombudsman's phone number is 877-644-6338. Our licensing record is available from the Ohio Department of Education upon request.

PRESCHOOL SNACK

A snack will be served during each preschool session by Mason City Schools Food Services. These snacks typically consist of food items such as crackers, fruit, vegetables, juice and milk. We do not serve peanuts or products containing peanuts. **Please notify your child's teacher and the school nurse, in writing, of any known food allergies or dietary restrictions.** In addition, please complete the "Parental Assistance Form" annually to alert the Child Nutrition Department of any dietary restrictions.

PRESCHOOL STAFF

There is a lead teacher and a teaching assistant in each preschool classroom. The lead teacher is a college graduate and holds certification/licensure as required by the State of Ohio. The lead teacher and teaching assistant work closely to plan and provide learning experiences for young children. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech/language pathologists, and psychologists are also available to support children who have identified special needs.

The preschool staff is recruited, employed, assigned and evaluated in accordance with adopted Mason Board of Education policies and without discrimination on the basis of age, race, national origin, sex or disability. Preschool staff must pass a criminal background check as required by State of Ohio law.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition for the 2025-2026 school year is \$365 per month. The tuition fee is waived for children with identified disabilities. *Tuition is due on the first school day of the month, September to May.* Acceptable forms of payment include checks made payable to **Mason City Schools** or online credit card payments using [PaySchools Central](#). If tuition is not received on the first school day of the month, a fee of \$15 will be assessed. No deductions are made for vacations, illnesses, snow days, etc. *Failure to pay a month's tuition by the due date will result in the student being excluded from the preschool program until the past due amount is paid in full.*

There is a \$150 snack fee for all students. *The snack fee is due by the first day of preschool.* If your snack fee is not paid by September 1st, an additional \$10 fee will be assessed monthly. Your checks or money orders should be made payable to Mason City Schools' Office of Child Nutrition.

If you have concerns related to tuition, device fee and/or the snack fee, please contact the preschool administrative assistant and/or a building administrator.

SAFE & INVITING SCHOOLS

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL-BASED THERAPY PREVENTION EFFORTS

Protecting our students and staff will always be our top priority. Still, there is no guarantee that any school will be completely safe from crime, violence, or disaster. We believe school safety is a complex, community issue that needs a multi-faceted approach with input from students, staff, parents, residents, law enforcement, and government and mental wellness partners.

District Safety Program & Practices

Mason has implemented several new initiatives in recent years to increase the safety of our schools. That work is ongoing, and our safety plans are never “finished products.” Our safety protocols are reviewed regularly by our District’s Safe and Inviting Schools Council which meets at least four times a year and is made up of staff, parents, community members, and Mason Fire Department and Mason Police Department officials.

Some aspects of our district safety plan are visible to the public, while others are not. Some of our current practices include:

- Partnering with the City of Mason to ensure law enforcement presence in each school. The City of Mason’s Campus Safety Team consists of full time and part time Police Officers, DARE and School Resource Officers, firefighters and security personnel.
- Ensuring secure entries at all schools. Our front line staff are important members of our safety and security team, and that is why we require visitors to check into offices and remain in their line of sight while waiting.
- Giving card access points at each school for staff
- Providing a direct surveillance feed to the Mason Police Department in emergency situations.
- Equipping our schools and buses with cameras.
- Using [MARCS radios](#) to alert all local and county police in the event of an emergency, and district two-way radios in schools in the event of cell phone outage.
- Regularly scheduled [ALICE](#) active assailant professional development and drills. The City of Mason and the District regularly conduct joint active assailant drills that helped both organizations practice and improve our emergency response capabilities
- Communicating with parents by phone using School Messenger and/or text in the event of an emergency using [Talking Points](#).

Prevention Efforts

We strongly believe that we can better inoculate Mason City Schools against violence by creating schools where students feel safe and supported. Some of our investments in mental wellness and prevention include:

- **Anti-Bullying Efforts.** Keeping our schools safe means growing students who stand up to bullies, and who are not afraid to ask for help. Board Policy JFCF outlines that bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. If your child (or another student) is being bullied or harassed, please report the behavior to the Principal or the Safe Schools Tipline.

STEP UP & REPORT AN ACT OF BIAS

- In Mason City Schools, every Comet (student, staff, community member) is called to Step Up Against Bias. Acts of racism, sexism, ableism, classism, homophobia, religious intolerance, and other forms of harassment hurt our Comet Culture and have no place in our schools. Even when an act of bias is unintentional, the impact remains the same. Working together to challenge bias and respond is a crucial step toward creating the safe learning community that every Comet deserves. If you or your child has experienced or witnessed an act of bias, please use the [Safe Schools tipline](#) to report.

The MCS Bias Acts Reporting Team (which includes Central Office and School administrators) receives a notification each time there is a tip. If you are willing to share your contact information, a member of the team will connect with you about your report, and offer support within 48 hours. You may, however, choose to leave an anonymous tip.

SAFE SCHOOLS TIPLINE

Safety is one of our district's top priorities. To help safeguard our school community, our district uses SafeSchools Alert, a tip report service that allows students, staff and parents to submit safety concerns to our administration. Please visit www.masonohioschools.com for more information.

You and your child can easily report tips on bullying, harassment, drugs, vandalism or any safety issue you are concerned about through SafeSchools Alert. When you submit a tip, be sure to use our district's identification code: 1059 in your communication. Every tip SafeSchools Alert receives about our district is immediately logged in the system and our administration is notified so that they can investigate and take appropriate action. And, tips may also be submitted anonymously if you prefer. Together, using SafeSchools Alert, we can make our district a safer place to work and learn!

PREVENTION AND WELLBEING TEAM AND RESOURCES

At Mason City Schools, we believe in educating the whole child by helping students believe in who they are and who they can become. We provide supports to foster their educational and social-emotional learning. We believe in building meaningful relationships with every student and helping them take care of themselves mentally, physically, and emotionally. Mason City Schools Prevention and Wellbeing Department, works in collaboration with the Student Services Department, and is a multidisciplinary team ready to support the needs of all students. The team works to promote student, staff and community wellness through resource and program development, as well as, continuing to build community wellness partnerships.

In addition to our internal team, our partnerships with Mindpeace, 1N5, Joshua's Place and Cincinnati Children's Hospital support these goals by providing access to therapeutic supports and services for students and families.

District Prevention and Wellness Team	
Amy Dobson, Learner Well-Being & Supports Supervisor	dobsona@masonohioschools.com
Laura Martin, Prevention & Wellness Coordinator	martinl@masonohioschools.com
Mason Early Childhood Center School Prevention and Wellness Team	
Sarah Bowser - 2nd grade Counselor	bowzers@masonohioschools.com
Katie Brown - 1st Grade Counselor	brownk@masonohioschools.com
Ashley Goheen - Kindergarten Counselor	goheena@masonohioschools.com
Molly Goodfriend - Prevention & Wellness Counselor	goodfriendm@masonohioschools.com
Alexis Reyna, Prevention and Wellness Designer	reynaa@masonohioschools.com
Mary Eck, PK-6 Resource Coordinator	eckm@masonohioschools.com

Prevention and Wellness Designers

Prevention and Wellness Designers evaluate building level needs, create and align programming with district rocks, analyze program effectiveness, build capacity of staff, and train staff in a variety of mental health topics. They work in collaboration with building counselors, school psychologists, administrators, intervention specialists, and contracted clinicians to build a tiered system of intervention to increase access to care. In addition, they assist building teams in developing plans for transitioning students back from clinical care to help ensure a successful reintegration within the school environment.

School Counselors

Mason City Schools has 21 School Counselors throughout our district who are available to work with students and families on an ongoing basis. Each school provides counseling services to help students with social-emotional skill development, problem-solving, healthy decision-making, crisis intervention, conflict resolution and substance abuse prevention. School counselors help keep students emotionally healthy and ready to learn. Counselors also regularly engage in college and career planning with students and their families.

School Psychologists

The district has 10 school psychologists who play an integral role in our schools - promoting mental wellness and preventing maladaptive behaviors for students. They partner with families, teachers, school administrators and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school and the community.

Therapy Dogs

Mason City Schools has partnered with several foundations including the [Love Like JJ Foundation](#), [Mason Schools Foundation](#), and [Shine Like Sable Foundation](#) to provide at least one [Circle Tail](#) therapy dog in each of our schools. Mason's therapy dogs help all of our Comets by lifting moods, relieving anxiety, and providing students and staff a warm, fuzzy shoulder to lean on.

Meet our schools [Therapy Dogs](#).

Cincinnati Children's Hospital

CCHMC is honored to partner with Mason City Schools to improve access to care within the community. School Based Mental Health Services offer Individual therapy services to students in the school setting. This optional and confidential service is offered in addition to existing services provided by school counselors and psychologists. Independently Licensed Clinicians deliver these services in the school setting and are trained to work with various challenges facing youth, such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, major life changes and difficulty with social relationships.

School-based therapists are available to provide care either through sessions held during the school day or through Telemedicine based on family preference. For those families that select Telemedicine services, the patient will receive a secure link to access that they can access on their computer or tablet to have a video session with their provider. You will still receive the same level of care from our providers you'd receive in an in-person clinic visit.

All types of sessions are billed to the student's medical insurance. CCHMC accepts a wide range of insurance carriers, and families are encouraged to check with their providers about the specifics of their coverage. Assistance may be available for families experiencing financial difficulty.

Parents, teachers, and students can contact school counselors to make student referrals for services. The decision to participate in therapeutic services is ultimately that of the student's family. To discuss services available or with questions regarding services, contact your child's grade level counselor or prevention and wellness designer for assistance.

Mindpeace Partnership

Mason City Schools collaborates with Mindpeace, a non-profit organization that helps align the partners, infrastructure and processes for children's mental health solutions between schools and local agencies. According to Mindpeace, mental illness affects approximately one in every five children and less than 25% of children are able to access mental health care.

1N5 Partnership

The mission of 1N5 is to prevent suicide by erasing the stigma of mental illness and promoting optimal mental wellness. They achieve this mission through education and stigma reduction, community engagement, policy and advocacy, and measurement and data work.

Joshua's Place

Joshua's Place exists to help individuals and families overcome the barriers in their lives that cause instability. We believe every person has tremendous value and worth. We work to preserve that worth by only doing help that preserves dignity and promotes personal engagement.

Crisis Contact Information

***If your child is at immediate risk for harm to self or others, call 911 or take them to the nearest emergency room.

- Children's Hospital Liberty Campus
 - 7777 Yankee Road, Liberty Township, OH, 45044
 - 513- 803-9307

***If your child is not at immediate risk, however you are unsure how to proceed you may contact any of the following:

- Children's Hospital Psychiatric Intake Response Center **(513) 636- 4124**
- Warren County Crisis Hotline **1 (877) 695-6333**

***If you are looking for non-emergency resources you may contact:

Your child's School Counselor

Cincinnati Children's Psychiatric Intake Response Center **(513) 636-4124**

Lindner Center of Hope **(513) 536-4673**

Solutions Community Counseling **(513) 228-7800**

Talbert House **(513) 932-4337**

Beech Acres Parenting Center **(513) 231-6630**

CODE OF REGULATION FOR CONDUCT OF PUPILS

The District K-12 code of conduct outlined below has been developed in a way that is comprehensive and intended to categorically cover any behavior(s) that may need addressed for students in grades K-12.

1) Disruption of School: Students shall not, by the use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or any other means (whether in person, in writing, or digitally) cause disruption or obstruction to the normal operation of this school or any other school or school district.

2) Harassment: Students shall not harass other students, school employees, persons who are guests of the school, individuals attending or participating in school sponsored events (regardless of the event's location), or persons conducting business for the school. This category also applies to remarks or actions of a sexual, racial, ethnic, disability-based, or religious nature that are deemed offensive. Harassment is defined as any activity that is unwanted or unwelcome, including, but not limited to, unwanted touching, verbal comments, unwanted body contact, and exposure to physical gestures, body movements, or visual or auditory material which would be perceived by a reasonable person as offensive.

3) Threats: Students shall not, through verbal, written, technological, or any other means, make statements that physical or emotional harm may come to another person, property, or to an institution.

4) Use of Obscene Language/Materials: Students shall not use, distribute, or publicize any obscene, vulgar or profane language, make inappropriate gestures, or possess vulgar materials.

5) Pornographic Material and Sexting: The possessing, receiving, requesting, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of nude, obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfers or otherwise may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person possessing, taking, disseminating, or sharing nude, obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs may also be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

6) Attendance: Students shall comply with state attendance laws including, but not limited to, truancy or missed instructional time from a specific class or school. No student shall leave school property or an assigned educational location once they have come under the supervision of a school employee, prior to specified dismissal times, without official permission.

7) Forgery: Students shall not misrepresent a signature on any document whether paper or digital.

8) Damage of Property: Students shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school or personal property. Students shall not touch or handle another person's property without their authorization. Students shall be responsible for any damages they cause to school equipment, materials, or facilities.

9) Assault: Students shall not act or threaten to act in such a way as to cause physical injury to other students, any school employee, or other persons.

10) Insubordination/Disrespect: No student shall fail to comply with any lawful instructions or requests of District personnel (including, but not limited to teachers, substitute and student teachers, principals, or other authorized personnel) during any period of time when they are properly under the authority of such school personnel. No student shall fail to provide information, or supply false information, to District personnel when it is requested.

11) Inappropriate Communication: Student shall not engage in any kind of communication (whether in person, in writing, or digitally) that is inappropriate to staff and/or students including but not limited to profanity, slurs on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, appearances, physical handicaps or defects, mental handicaps, nationalities or communication considered slanderous or degrading in nature.

12) Dangerous Weapons and Instruments: Students shall not use, possess, handle, distribute, sell, or conceal any dangerous weapon or instrument on school property, in a school vehicle or at any school-sponsored activity. Firearms (including starter pistols), objects that are indistinguishable from and/or represented as firearms, explosives, incendiary devices, and knives (any object with a blade and a handle) are considered dangerous weapons. Other instruments/devices may also be defined as dangerous weapons depending on their use or intended use. Should a student have knowledge of a weapon or dangerous instrument on school property, in a school vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity and not report it to a school employee, the student may be held to the same disciplinary measures as that of the perpetrator.

13) Narcotics, Alcohol, and Drugs: Possessing, using, actual or attempted transmitting, buying, selling, or supplying of mood-altering chemicals, illegal or illicit drugs, or look-alike substances or related paraphernalia on school premises is an obstacle to that objective and an interference with the rights of other students to receive quality academic instruction.

Except to the extent permitted by a lawfully obtained prescription, no student shall possess, handle, transmit, conceal, use, distribute, supply, make arrangements to purchase or sell, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, narcotic, or other controlled substance. This also applies to "look-alike". No student shall likewise possess, handle, etc., any drug-related paraphernalia used for the packaging, conveyance, dispensation, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or narcotics.

14) Tobacco: The use and/or possession of tobacco/nicotine as well as vaporizers and associated products by students, is prohibited on school property and at school-sponsored events, regardless of location.

15) Theft: Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Students shall not take ownership of items of others. The principal may exercise the prerogative of reporting thefts to local authorities.

16) Cheating/Plagiarism: Students shall not give or receive unauthorized information regarding class work or class activities, misrepresent the results of assignments, or give or receive unauthorized assistance on assignments.

17) Dress Code: Dress and appearance must not include materials that are lewd, offensive, vulgar, or promote or refer to alcoholic beverages, drugs, acts of violence, or weapons.

18) Inappropriate Display of Affection: Students shall refrain from displays of affection, including inappropriate physical contact.

19) Unauthorized or Unsupervised Areas: Students may not be in areas for which they have not been authorized or areas that are unsupervised.

20) Bullying and Hazing (Initiations): Students shall not engage in bullying or hazing. Bullying is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student and/or staff more than once, including *violence in a dating relationship*. Bullying is an “imbalance of power” in which one or more students single out a child and engage in behaviors intended to harm that child. A bully will frequently target the same victim repeatedly over time. Bullying can inflict physical harm, emotional distress and/or social embarrassment or humiliation. Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

21) Improper Use of Technology: Use of technology that causes a disruption of the school day is not permitted. This includes all electronic communication that is not for school purposes. For specific information, please reference the Network Access Agreement.

22) Horseplay: As a general rule, students should not touch each other, or act in an inappropriate/disruptive manner.

23) Physical Altercation: Students shall not touch another student with the intention of causing harm, which includes fighting.

24) Driving: Students driving a vehicle on school property shall follow all rules and regulations established by the school district and traffic laws.

25) Gambling: Gambling or the possession of gambling devices are prohibited. Included in this prohibition are students who assist, or in any way participate, in the violation of this rule.

26) Merchandising: Students shall not offer any items for sale to other students without the approval of a building administrator. Included in this prohibition are those students who assist, or in any way participate in the violation of this rule.

27) Bus: Students are expected to follow the rules of the bus as assigned by Mason City Schools.

28) Lunch Misconduct: During scheduled lunch times, students are not to leave the cafeteria without permission. Students are to keep the area where they are eating clean and dispose of all trash appropriately.

29) General Misconduct: Students may not engage in other conduct violations not covered in the above rules but determined to be counter to general student expectations.

Consequences Assigned:

Logical consequences are directly related to student's behavior and aim to teach responsibility and the impact of their actions. Here are some examples: apology and repair, loss of privileges, time out, reflective activities, activity restrictions, temporary removal from classroom or activity.

Disciplinary actions may include but not be limited to: Call Home, Lunch Detention (DT), In-School Discipline (ISD)

All infractions covered in the Code of Conduct are subject to any of these consequences, however, the final disposition will depend upon the severity of the infraction, attitude and cooperation of the student(s) involved, and student's discipline history.

HAZING AND BULLYING

Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence

The prohibition against hazing, dating violence, harassment, intimidation or bullying is publicized in student handbooks and in the publications that set the standard of conduct for schools and students in the District. In addition, information regarding the policy is incorporated into employee handbooks and training materials. The District does not tolerate hazing, dating violence, harassment, intimidation or bullying on District property or at any school-sponsored event, regardless of whether the event occurs on or off District property (including on school buses and other school-related vehicles). Students who engage in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from school. The District's commitment to addressing such prohibited behavior involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a school atmosphere in which hazing, harassment, intimidation, dating violence and/or bullying will not be tolerated by students, staff, staff or administration.

For purposes of this policy, the term "hazing" means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of intimidation to any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

For purposes of this policy, the term "harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any unprovoked and intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once or deemed repetitive and the behavior both:

1. Causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. For purposes of this policy, harassment and intimidation include violence within a dating relationship.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Harassing, hazing, dating violence, bullying and/or intimidating behavior and/or dating violence by any student/school personnel in the District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Hazing, harassment, bullying and/or intimidation, dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any District publication; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to District e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop.

Hazing, harassment, bullying and/or intimidation or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and/or attacks;
2. Threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as “cyber bullying”), such as the following:
 - A. Posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
 - B. Sending abusive or threatening emails, web site postings or comments and instant messages;
 - C. Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online and
 - D. Using web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals, e-mails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.
 - E. Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes hazing or bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS FOR REPORTING ISSUES

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with families in identifying and resolving any problems or complaints throughout the district. Most questions are best answered by communicating directly with the educator in charge of the class or program. If it is not resolved at that level, you should connect with the administration. If you feel like your complaint has still not been resolved, you should communicate with the Board of Education. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it is referred to the administration for study and possible solution. (Board Policy KLD). The easiest way to communicate is via email and a phone call is the next preferable way. Visit our [Staff Directory](#) for a list of staff emails. You can view the additional protocols for reporting issues [here](#).

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. Formal Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence. The reports should be written. Such written reports must be reasonably specific including person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation and/or bullying and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

2. Informal Complaints

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s) and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

3. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaint is reviewed and reasonable action is taken to address the situation, to the extent such action (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation and/or bullying.

4. False Complaints

Students are prohibited from knowingly making false complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Students found responsible for deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to a full range of disciplinary consequences.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

1. Teachers and Other School Staff

- A. Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation and/or bullying, as defined above, promptly notify the building principal/designee of the event observed and file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed. Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation and/or bullying promptly notify the building principal/designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, they prepare a written report of the informal complaint which is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day.

In addition to addressing both formal and informal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of harassment, hazing intimidation and/or bullying in other interactions with students.

School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying.

2. Administrator Responsibilities

A. Investigation

The principal/designee is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation or bullying. Under the direction of the building principal/designee, all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint is limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

B. Non-Disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation and/or bullying, dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the behavior, its prohibition and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating and/or bullying.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring some cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

C. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide a basis for disciplinary action.

In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

Report to the Custodial Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the custodial parent or guardian of the perpetrator, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification.

Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from new or additional harassment, intimidation or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

Reports to the Victim and his/her Custodial Parent or Guardian

If after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of the finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator.

Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

School administrators shall notify both the custodial parents or guardians of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the custodial parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

All court orders regarding reporting will be followed.

Police and Child Protective Services

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply.

The District must also investigate incidents of harassment, hazing, bullying and/or intimidation, dating violence for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of District policy or regulations, even if law enforcement and/or the public children's services are also investigating. All District personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.

BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS CHART

Rough Play	Fighting	Teasing	Harassment	Bullying
Usually friends; peers have a relationship Intention is to have fun, not to intimidate or provoke Can be repeated due to the relationship Facial expressions reflect enjoyment: smiling, neutral face, laughter Involves physical aggression	Usually not friends Intention is negative, aggressive, or to inflict injury or discomfort Can vary, but often is equal relatively between peers of similar size, physical ability, and power Facial expressions reflect anger: staring, furrowed eyebrows, tense, hostile Involves physical aggression	Between peers of similar size, physical ability, and power Intention is to irritate, not intimidate Stops when one of the peers expresses their displeasure Facial expressions reflect irritation or annoyance (implied) Involves verbal but not physical aggression	Words, conduct, or action directed at a specific person Intention is to alarm, annoy, or to cause substantial distress Justification can be repeated Based on actual or perceived: Race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, or sexual orientation Involves verbal or non-physical aggression	Imbalance of power between the people involved Intention is negative, aggressive, to disturb or to cause harm, intimidate, or insult Involves a pattern of behavior that is repeated or very severe Involves aggressive behavior (could be verbal, doesn't have to be physical) Implies both physical and non-physical aggression (implied)

4 Factors of Bullying:

1. Involves an **aggressive behavior**
2. Typically involves a **pattern of** behavior **repeated** over time
3. **Imbalance of power** or strength
4. **Intended to cause harm or distress**

COMMUNICATION USING PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Cell Phone Policy

We have many guidelines in place to ensure that students are able to access information and develop content that supports students' personal learning goals. Our school is committed to helping students set healthy boundaries for themselves when it comes to technology, personal accessibility, and screen time.

Students' cell phones and other personal communication devices including Smart Watches are unwelcome at school unless specifically given permission for use by a staff member. Cell phones should remain on airplane mode/Do Not Disturb or turned completely off - and should be kept in students' backpacks.

If a staff member sees a cell phone, it will be confiscated and safely stored on the teachers' desk or in the front office.

DRESS GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL

Mason City Schools expects that all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or any school sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the District's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire

resides with the student and their family. The school district is responsible for ensuring that student attire does not interfere with health and safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization of any group based on race, sex, gender identify, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size.

Students MUST wear:

- A shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms)
- Pants/Jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress, shorts)
- Shoes

Students CANNOT wear:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting/suggesting drugs, alcohol, vaping or paraphernalia (or any illegal item or activity).
- Clothing that contains sexually suggestive language, pictures, or inappropriate language or name brands associated with sexually suggestive content or any images that may interrupt the educational process
- Clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands and visible straps are allowed.)
- Shoes with wheels
- Swimsuits
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous

Please Note: *Due to concerns for student safety in class and during recess, the wearing of flip flops is **strongly discouraged** at MECC. Students are **not allowed to wear flip flops** in Physical Education classes.*

EMERGENCY DRILLS

It is required by law to conduct fire, tornado, and safety drills at regularly scheduled times throughout the school year.

STEWARDS OF CHILDREN

In 2011, Mason City Schools became the first Ohio school district to require that each one of its employees participate in Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children child sexual abuse curriculum. Stewards of Children is a national sexual abuse prevention program designed for youth-serving organizations. It educates adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child sexual abuse, and equips and empowers adults to keep children safe. All Mason City Schools staff (administrators, teachers, aides, substitutes, bus drivers, etc.) and any school volunteer who has one-on-one access to children receive Stewards of Children Training. In addition, the district created and implemented a Safety Audit Checklist and adopted several procedure changes to enhance its ability to identify and respond to child sexual abuse.

TOYS AND GAMES

Ideally, toys and electronics should remain at home. If a child needs an item for use during a bus ride, or for a daycare situation, the item must fit into the child's lap, may not obstruct any view and must be unbreakable. **In addition, State of Ohio law prohibits balloons and glass on a school bus.**

If a child carries electronic games onto the bus, which are typically expensive, the responsibility for these items rests with parents. **Toys and all electronic devices (i.e. iPads, gaming systems) will remain in the child's backpack at school, unless otherwise specified by the classroom teacher.** It is recommended that such items be labeled with the child's first and last name. When students are able to play outside on the playground, there are recess items available for students (balls, jump ropes, chalk, etc). Students should not bring personal items to school for recess.

TITLE IX

The Title IX Coordinators serve as the grievance officers and coordinate the District's efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Title IX, including any complaint under Title IX. They are vested with the authority and responsibility for investigating all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedures set forth in the accompanying regulation and staff and student handbooks. Any investigatory responsibilities of the Title IX Coordinator may be delegated to a designee trained in Title IX compliance and procedures.

Mason City Schools' Title IX Coordinator:

Name: Laura Blessing
Title: Chief Talent Officer
Address: 211 North East Street
Phone number: (513)398-0474 extension 20107
Email: blessingl@masonohioschools.com

Reports may be made in person or made 24 hours a day via email, phone, or mail.

UNATTENDED VEHICLE/CAR IDLING

All cars should be parked in a designated parking spot. It is illegal to leave a car idling in front of our school building. Please be sure your car is turned off before entering the building. Also, please bring children into the building with you when visiting. Never leave them unattended in a motor vehicle for even a short duration.

Please note: Parking is prohibited in the circular driveway in front of MECC. This area is a fire lane and is clearly marked as a no parking zone.

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS

In order to protect the safety of our students and employees, caregivers are encouraged to limit visits to school as much as possible, including limiting visits to drop off forgotten items. Visitors and volunteers are required to sign in at the office upon arrival, present a valid form of identification and wear a visible identification badge while in the building.

TECHNOLOGY

INTERNET SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12

Network Access Agreement

The following guidelines and procedures shall be complied with by staff, students or community members who are specifically authorized to use the District's computers or online services.

1. Use appropriate language. Do not use profanity, obscenity or other language that may be offensive to other users. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
2. Do not reveal your personal home address or phone number or those of other students or colleagues.
3. Note that electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private. Technology coordinators have access to all messages relating to or in support of illegal activities and such activities may be reported to the authorities.
4. Use of the computer and/or network is not for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
5. The network should not be used in such a way that it disrupts the use of the network by others.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be property of the District.
7. Rules and regulations of online etiquette are subject to change by the administration.
8. The user in whose name an online service account is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. Users shall keep personal account numbers and passwords private. They shall use this system only under the account numbers issued by the District.
9. The system shall be used only for purposes related to education or administration. Commercial, political and/or personal use of the system is strictly prohibited. The administration reserves the right to monitor any computer activity and online communications for improper use.
10. Users shall not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco nor shall they promote unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or Board policy.
11. Users shall not view, download or transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit or that could be construed as harassment, intimidation, bullying or disparagement of others based on their race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, economic status, military status, political beliefs or any other personal or physical characteristics.
12. Copyrighted material may not be placed on the system without the author's permission.
13. Vandalism results in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes uploading/downloading any inappropriate material, creating computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment or materials or the data of any other user.
14. Users shall not read other users' mail or files; they shall not attempt to interfere with other users' ability to send or receive electronic mail, nor shall they attempt to read, delete, copy, modify or forge other users' mail.
15. Users are expected to keep messages brief and use appropriate language.
16. Users shall report any security problem or misuse of the network to the teacher, his/her immediate supervisor or building administrator.

CHROMEBOOK/IPAD REPAIR COST SCHEDULE

If a student's device is broken by the student (ex: dropped, stepped on, pencil tip placed in audio jack, keys picked from keyboard, etc.) your child's technology fee assessed covers all labor and support for district-owned devices. The only cost charged to the family is the cost of the part(s) needed to complete the repair.

***We highly recommend a hard case for all student Chromebooks and to keep the iPad case on the device at all times.

It is essential, if your child receives a gently used Chromebook, that all damage is assessed and documented in the Media Center/Dream Lab/Learning Commons, so your child does not get a fee assessed.

Part (district covers labor cost)	Cost
Chromebook Screen	\$30
Chromebook Top Cover	\$30
Chromebook System Board	\$115
Chromebook Keyboard	\$40
Chromebook Camera	\$12
Chromebook Bottom Cover	\$30
Chromebook Bezel	\$20
Chromebook Palm Rest	\$25
Chromebook Charger	\$25
iPad Glass	\$50
iPad LCD (digitizer)	\$100

TECHNOLOGY FEE

The \$50 Technology Fee covers the cost of a device for your child, labor for any repairs they require for the district-owned iPad or Chromebook, software, apps, and hardware used in the classroom as well as common areas such as the Learning Commons, Dream Lab, and Media Centers. As part of the \$50 technology fee assessed, there will always be one device available for your child.

If your child chooses to bring their own device, it will likely work with most resources but we cannot guarantee or support these devices. For this reason, we recommend a district-owned device.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES & LEADERSHIP

AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

The After School Enrichment Program provides fun after school activities for students in grades 1 and 2 at MECC. Classes are offered in four week sessions, six times a school year. Students who sign up for classes will be asked to pay a fee to cover the expenses of the programs. Popular programs such as Basketball, Chess, Cooking/Cupcakes, Arts/Crafts, Minecrafts, iPad Adventures and Legos have been offered. ASEP's goal is to provide our students with an introduction to something new and fun or even build upon a skill that you already have, improve self-esteem, provide a positive and safe environment and allow students to form new friendships after regular school hours.

Contact Lori Howard, for more information at howardl@masonohioschools.com or call 513.398.5025 extension 39230.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

A well-rounded education includes a wide variety of opportunities. View a [current list](#) of non-school and school sponsored activities and events.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

The MECC [Extended Care Program](#) is for those children whose parents are not able to be home before or after the regular school hours. This program is ONLY for those children who attend the Mason City Schools. The program is held in the cafeteria area, gym and on the playgrounds at MECC. Morning kindergarten students are eligible for before school care and afternoon kindergarten children are eligible for after school care. There is no mid-day care for kindergarten students. Each school site is equipped with toys, games, arts and craft materials, and homework supplies. Snacks will be provided daily in both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Rate charts and additional information is available on the [Extended Care Program](#) page at www.MasonOhioSchools.com.

The Extended Care Program operates from 6:15am until the opening of school and from the closing of school until 6:00 pm every day that MECC is in session. Parents may register their children for the am session only, the pm session only, or for both sessions. Please contact MECC Extended Care at MECCextendedcare@masonohioschools.com or the Assistant Student Activities Director, Lori Howard at HowardL@masonohioschools.com if you have any questions.

COMET CARE

Comet Care is an extended day care for Kindergarten students before and/or after their kindergarten session at MECC. Although not registered with a curriculum through the State of Ohio, our Comet Care staff will work with students to cultivate Kindergarten learning with themed weeks, activities, crafts, and group activities. Our department's hope is that Comet Care will further enrich Kindergarten students with activities and play that is relevant to their school learning.

Spots will be filled on a lottery basis with registration and supply fee payment made in full.
Program Information

AM Kindergarten Students

If care is needed prior to the start of the school day (9:20am) students enrolled in Comet Care will attend the extended care program at MECC, located at Mason Early Childhood Center, 4631 Hickory Woods Drive. This student activities program is open from 6:30am - 9:20am. There is not a separate charge for this service.

If before school care is not needed, students will ride the bus, or be dropped off as a car rider to MECC for their morning Kindergarten class.

After their AM Kindergarten class at MECC (12:05pm), students enrolled in Comet Care will be bused to Mason Central, 211 North East Street, for the remainder of the day. Parents/guardians will need to pick up no later than 6pm from Mason Central.

PM Kindergarten Students

Comet Care students will be dropped off by a parent/guardian to Mason Central, 211 North East Street, by 9am. The school bus will pick the students up and take them to MECC for their PM Kindergarten class that starts at 1:05pm. Comet Care students will remain at MECC until they are picked up by a parent/guardian no later than 6pm. If after school care is not needed, students can ride the bus home or be picked up as a car rider at the end of the school day.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is \$165 per week paid in advance. Payment is due weekly on Friday for the following week. A \$75 registration fee will be due within 48 hours of acceptance into the program. Payment and registration details will be provided to those that are notified of acceptance. Other fees, a \$165 refundable deposit will be required before the start of school as well as a \$25 supply fee. The first week's tuition will be due by the second Friday, August 5th. **Part-time tuition is not offered.** However, if you are looking for a part-time option you can always look at the student activities extended care program.

Transportation

Transportation to and from MECC and Mason Central will be provided via Mason City Schools transportation department. The transportation department will determine what bus number each student will ride. Bus information will be available in late July. All staff will work with transportation to ensure all students make it safely to their destination.

Snacks & Food

Lunch must be provided from home each day. A light breakfast and an afternoon snack will be offered by the program. We do follow the guidelines set forth by the MCS food services department. If your child has food allergies or sensitivities, you are welcome to send in your own breakfast/snack.

Other Information

Both MECC and Mason Central are secure buildings. Only parents/guardians and additional authorized people will be given access codes to gain entry into the buildings.

Questions can be directed to howardl@masonohioschools.com 513-398-5025 ext. 39230 or pieperk@masonohioschools.com 513-398-9035 ext. 40014.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Students' experiences are enhanced by serving their school and community. Mason students in grades k-12 participate in service learning activities and projects.

View a [current list](#) of school sponsored and non-school sponsored activities and events.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

DISTRICT-WIDE ASSESSMENTS

Assessments provide important information to our teachers about students' learning needs. Teachers use a variety of classroom assessments for different purposes, but a few assessments are given district-wide to all students at certain grade levels. Kindergartners take the KRA each fall, Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. First and second graders participate in Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) three times each school year. This assessment is used to measure student growth, inform classroom instruction and identify students in need of support or enrichment. It is an online assessment given in the classroom.

In addition to MAP, all second graders will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) as a screening for gifted identification. Districts are required to give a gradewide assessment once during the K-2 grade band and once during the 3-6 grade band. Students identified in the 95th percentile and above on their composite score will be eligible for gifted services.

In accordance with Ohio State Law, all students in kindergarten will be screened for Dyslexia in January using MAP Reading Fluency. Families of students who are flagged for having dyslexia markers will be notified and engaged in designing a plan for intervention.

Students identified as English language learners will participate in the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) during the winter/spring. This Ohio Department of Education-required assessment is used to measure students' yearly progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

GRADING EXPECTATIONS

The primary objective of grading is to accurately report student progress toward District-adopted grade-level standards. These standards are based on Ohio's Content Standards and national standards that reflect sound learning theory. Since students learn at different rates for a variety of reasons, it is essential that students and parents receive accurate feedback on progress toward these learning goals.

Purposes of Grading:

- Communicate the performance of students to their parents and others
- Provide information for student self-evaluation
- Document students' performance to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs
- Help guide instruction

Principles of Grades:

We believe that grades should be:

- Accurate
- Fair
- Specific
- Meaningful
- Timely
- Supportive of Learning

Students in Preschool, kindergarten, first and second grade receive a standards-based report card with numerical marks/descriptors that indicate progress toward the standards as described in the charts below. Some exceptions to the grading system described may be made in the areas of support education instruction as noted in the Individual Educational Plan and in some instances of beginner English Language Learners.

GRADING in Kindergarten - Students will receive a standards based report card. The marking key is as follows for all areas:

3	Achieving the standard: Student independently and consistently demonstrates successful mastery of the grade level/developmental expectations.
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2	Progressing toward the standard: Student demonstrates gradual progress toward grade level/developmental expectations through multiple exposures.
1	Working on prerequisite skills for understanding the standard: Student is working on foundational skills towards understanding the grade level/developmental expectations.
(blank)	Not Assessed at this time

GRADING in First and Second Grade - Students will receive a standards based report card. The marking key is as follows for the areas of reading, writing, and math:

4	Extending and demonstrating deep understanding of the standard: Student independently extends beyond achieving the grade level/developmental expectations by consistently applying his or her learning through innovative approaches in a variety of situations.
3	Achieving the standard: Student independently and consistently demonstrates successful mastery of the grade level/developmental expectations.
2	Progressing toward the standard: Student demonstrates gradual progress toward grade level/developmental expectations through multiple exposures.
1	Working on prerequisite skills for understanding the standard: Student is working on foundational skills towards understanding the grade level/developmental expectations.
(blank)	Not Assessed at this time

GRADING in First and Second Grade - Students will receive a standards based report card. The marking key is as follows for the areas of social studies, science and special areas.

3	Achieving the standard: Student independently and consistently demonstrates successful mastery of the grade level/developmental expectations.
2	Progressing toward the standard: Student demonstrates gradual progress toward grade level/developmental expectations through multiple exposures.
1	Working on prerequisite skills for understanding the standard: Student is working on foundational skills towards understanding the grade level/developmental expectations.
(blank)	Not Assessed at this time

PROGRESS REPORTS

Preschool, kindergarten, first and second grade students receive work progress updates via work sent home and on Seesaw regularly after the first 6 weeks of school. Parents can access [Seesaw](#) at any time to see updates. A printable grade report is available on MasonConnects at the end of each grading period (October, January, March, June). You can find reports posted in the File Attachments sections of Mason Connects. (Log into Mason Connects - Click Students on left panel - click on the student card - scroll down

and attachments are on the bottom right.) If you have any difficulties logging in, please send an email to support@masonohioschools.com. Please include your student's Name and student ID in the email, along with the trouble you are having.

CHILD IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

The Mason City School District conducts an ongoing awareness campaign to identify students with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of the Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA), the Ohio Revised Code and the State Board of Education's rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities.

Each public school district, Ohio's special educational regional centers, and the Ohio Department of Education work collaboratively to identify children with disabilities, birth through age 21, who may be in need of special education services. For children birth to three, a disability means an established condition known to result in delay or a documented developmental delay. For children ages three to five, a disability means that a child has a documented deficit in one or more of the following developmental areas: communication, vision, hearing, motor skills, social/emotional behavioral functioning, self-help skills, or cognitive skills. For school-age students, a disability means that a student has been identified as having one or more of the following conditions: autism, deaf-blindness, hearing impairment including deafness, intellectual disability (ID), multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and/or visual impairment including blindness.

Once the school district is notified regarding a child who is suspected of having a disability, the child's parent(s) are contacted and informed of their rights as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA) and arrangements are made with the parents to evaluate the suspected disability. Please contact Mason City Schools Student Services at 398-0474, ext. 20151 if you have questions about Child Find.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

[ESL services](#) are provided for English Learners who qualify. Services are provided based on the results of the state's language assessment that is administered to all students who have another language in the home. For additional information, please contact Mason's ESL Supervisor, Milena Varbanova, at varbanovam@masonohioschools.com or 513-398-0474 Ext: 24008

GIFTED EDUCATION

The identification of gifted students in Mason follows a process in accordance with state law. You may visit the Mason City Schools' [District Gifted Website](#) to learn more about the services offered at each grade level. If you have questions or need additional information about gifted education, please call 513-398-0474, ext. 24007.

INTERVENTION SPECIALISTS

The intervention specialists in our building work with parents and teachers to choose the most appropriate methods and place for helping children with special needs. These special needs are identified by an extensive curriculum based assessment and/or multi-factored evaluation. The purpose of the intervention specialist is to focus on the area of need to see that progress is made as determined by an individual

education plan. Each intervention specialist will focus their work and attention on a specified list of students and teachers.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

An occupational therapist can provide consultation to teachers or therapy to children with identified disabilities to develop or restore motor functions which may be delayed or impaired. Adaptive equipment may also be developed.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

A physical therapist can provide consultation to an identified handicapped child as prescribed by an evaluation. Adaptive equipment may also be developed.

READING INTERVENTION

A supplemental reading program is available to students in grades kindergarten through second grade. Qualification for supplemental reading is determined by student reading data.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The school psychologist consults with parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, students, and community agencies to collaboratively develop interventions for supporting the individual needs of children with academic and/or behavioral concerns. The school psychologist is also available for educational, social, emotional, and behavioral assessment.

MECC School Psychologists:

Lindsay Callahan, K - Email: callahanl@masonohioschools.com Phone: 513-398-3741 Ext:

Julie Cooper, PK- Email: cooperj@masonohioschools.com Phone: 513-398-3741 Ext: 82432

Regina Stauder, Gr. K - Email: stauderr@masonohioschools.com Phone: 513-398-3741 Ext. 81126

Christen Stidd, Gr. 1 & 2 - Email: stiddc@masonohioschools.com Phone: 513-398-3741 Ext: 81124

SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING SERVICES

MECC has speech and language pathologists to provide services in speech and language development to those children in need. The speech and language pathologists also provide screenings (to identify speech and language problems), consultation, and intervention-based services when needed. Health Services provide hearing screenings in order to identify hearing problems.

TRANSPORTATION

BUS RIDERS

Bus transportation is provided for all MECC students. Kindergarten and Preschool students will be provided busing for the 9:20am arrival and 3:50pm dismissal bus routes, but must attend their appropriate session in order to receive busing at our midday dismissal and arrival times. First and Second grade students will be transported in the morning and afternoon. Extra attention by teachers and many volunteers from the PTO during the first two weeks of school ensures that all students understand how

to board their correct bus. We are all concerned with bus safety. Please help us keep students safe by reinforcing the importance of appropriate bus behavior with your child.

Based on the Ohio guidelines for [Driver-Designated Place of Safety](#), students should arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled time and be ready and waiting to board the bus. Playing in parking lots and/or around moving traffic (buses and cars) is unsafe. If you choose to drive your child to their bus stop, they should be in their DPS and out of the car prior to the arrival of the school bus. State law requires all bus drivers to assign each student a **Designated Place of Safety (DPS)**, a place where students are to stand to wait for the bus in the AM and return to in the PM and wait for the bus to depart the area. The purpose of the DPS is to reduce the potential of a student being struck by a distracted motorist during the loading and unloading process. If you choose to drive your child to his/her bus stop, they should be in their DPS and out of the car prior to the arrival of the school bus. Caregivers are required to be at bus stops for pick up or drop off. If a caregiver is not present, the bus driver/transportation department will make every effort to contact the family. If the bus driver completed their route and the transportation department made contact with the family, the bus may return to the student's assigned bus stop. If transportation cannot reach the family during drop off, the student will be returned to Mason Early Childhood Center.

If your child has not been assigned a DPS by their bus driver, please contact the Transportation Office.

Bus Expectations

We emphasize and enforce the following bus behaviors and policies:

1. Wait at the Designated Place of Safety that has been assigned by the MCS Transportation Department Bus Drivers.
2. Obey the driver at all times to insure the safety of all children
3. Respect all children and adults on the bus
4. Sit in your assigned seat at all times
5. Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself
6. Use appropriate language
7. Talk quietly to your neighbor
8. District staff is not responsible for items left, lost or broken on buses. This includes items such as toys, electronic devices, iPods, iPads and/or cell phones.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR RULES FOR SCHOOL BUS RIDERS

In Mason City Schools, #CometCulture doesn't stop in the buildings. Each of us, (student drivers, bus aides, transportation administrators) all must own our 20 square feet, and ensure that we are owning the moment by taking responsibility for our actions. By having positive and appropriate conduct on our school buses, students can enjoy a safe and inviting transport to/from school. Behavior that distracts the driver can become a serious hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle and jeopardize the safety of all passengers.

Drivers help students understand the following guidelines to maintain a safe and inviting environment on the bus, as well as at bus stops.

- Students must arrive at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus and observe the Designated Place of Safety ([see ODE Guidelines](#)) established by the bus driver.
- Students must take their seats quickly and remain seated at all times.

- Students may not eat or drink on the bus.
- Students may not fight or engage in horseplay on the bus or when getting on or off the bus.
- Students should use inside voices while on the bus.
- Students may not use obscene language or gestures.
- Students should keep all belongings and parts of their body inside the bus at all times.
- The aisle must remain clear at all times, allowing the driver to safely view behind the bus while driving.

When a student does not display proper conduct on a bus, the driver will work with them to correct behaviors, such as moving a student's assigned seat and/or calling the parent. Non compliance will result in the school administration becoming involved in the discipline process, with a written report submitted. Our goal is to partner with our families to provide safe transportation for our children.

School Bus Discipline Reports: Children who do not follow expected behavior on the Mason City School buses will receive a Discipline Report. Building administrators will be notified by the Transportation Department and the student will meet with a building administrator. Parents will receive notification of Discipline Reports. Students who receive Discipline Reports may be suspended from the school bus for a period of time. Building administrators will notify parents should this occur.

Bus Stops: Each student shall be assigned and required to use a specific school bus stop, except in unusual circumstances as approved by the school bus owner or designee. Students shall be assigned a designated place of safety on the residence side of the roadway on which the vehicle is scheduled to stop. Bus drivers must account for each student at the designated place of safety before leaving, and students are not to leave the stop for home until the school bus has departed.

Bus Tags: At Student Orientation in August, children will be given a bus tag identifying their bus number and other pertinent information. ***Please place bus tag on your child's backpack for the entire school year.*** This is very important in order to help your child know what bus to ride to and from school. Bus tags help us get the children to the correct bus and enable the bus drivers to learn the names of the children they transport. **Any changes must be made in Final Forms, please do not write changes on your student's bus tag.**

Changes with Bus Transportation: We ask that each child follow their assigned bus schedule throughout the year. We understand that due to an unforeseen emergency a child may need to take an alternate bus route. If this were to occur, please send a note notifying the office of the change. Please be sure to include the date, teacher's name, student's **first** and **last** name, student ID number, requested bus/stop, and person who will be getting your child off the bus. Your child's classroom teacher will forward the note to the office for approval and the office will issue a Bus Pass which the student will present to the driver when boarding the bus. Please do not make transportation changes directly with the bus driver. These changes must be made through the school office.

Please note: we cannot send children home with other children on different buses.

Call-In Changes: In the event of an unforeseen change in transportation, the office must be called by **11:25 am for AM preschool and kindergarten students and 2:45 pm for first and second grade students and PM preschool and kindergarten students.** Please be considerate of teachers, and the interruption that last minute changes create, and make every effort to keep these to a minimum. We have precautionary measures in place to expedite a timely, orderly and safe dismissal of so many young students. ***Please plan accordingly.***

CAR RIDERS

In order for your child to be an occasional car rider home from school, **you must send a note to the main office**, via your child's backpack, stating that the student will be a car rider. You can also do so by calling 513-398-3741 or by emailing rovitoj@masonohioschools.com. To ensure adequate information is provided, please be sure to include the date, teacher's name, student's first and last name, student ID number and full name of pick-up person. **Office dismissals are only permitted before 3:30 pm. Please note: if you pick your child up before MECC dismisses, it is considered an "early dismissal" and affects your child's attendance record.**

Any unexpected emergency call-ins must be received by 11:25 am for morning preschool and kindergarten students and 2:45 pm for afternoon preschool, afternoon kindergarten, first and second grade students. In order for our staff to expedite a timely, orderly and safe dismissal of so many young students, we must have precautionary measures in place. ***Please plan accordingly.*** A written note is always preferred and helps all staff to be properly informed. ***Do not rely on emailing or calling the teacher for a car rider change because a teacher may be absent or not available to read the email or listen to the voicemail during school.***

Please note that the best way to make sure your child arrives at school on time is to use bus transportation. If you choose to drop your child off as a car rider, please follow the steps below.

Drop-Off Procedures: Preschool, kindergarten and the majority of first grade that are located on the South side will enter through door B-2 on the South side of MECC. The south end of the building is located to the left as you face MECC from Hickory Woods Drive. Families assigned to the south entrance will enter off of Hickory Woods Drive, bear left and follow the car rider signs to the marked doorway(s). **Please do not enter or exit off of Mason Road as this is a bus driveway.** Students should be seated in the back seat, on the curb side, of the vehicle. Prior to reaching the car rider curb, students should be unbuckled, ready to exit. MECC staff will meet your child at the car during arrival.

The remainder of first grade students and all of second grade students will enter through **Door D-2** on the North side of the building. The north end of the building is located to the right as you face MECC from Hickory Woods Drive. Families assigned to the north entrance will enter off of Hickory Woods Dr., near Terrace Dr., and follow the car rider signs to the marked doorway. Students should be seated in the back seat, on the curb side, of the vehicle. Prior to reaching the car rider curb, students should be unbuckled, ready to exit. MECC staff will meet your child at the car during arrival and bring your child to the car during dismissal.

If you arrive at the car rider drop off doors and staff are not present, your child is tardy (9:20 for am arrival and 1:05 for pm arrival). Please come to the front entrance and escort your child into the building to be signed in and receive a pass to class. Please do not leave your child at the car rider door after 9:20am. Doing so would create a very unsafe situation for your child.

Pick-Up Procedures: Car Rider dismissal procedures vary depending on your situation. For safety and efficiency, **"everyday car riders"** (permanent car riders Monday-Friday for K-2 students or Monday-Thursday for Preschool students) will be dismissed via the North and South car rider lines (12:05pm or 3:45pm). Permanent school issued cards are provided for these families that only use car rider for transportation home.

All other non-permanent car riders (occasional or on a schedule that is not every day) must be signed out by parents.

- You will park and walk up to an outdoor check in desk/area and present your picture ID. There will be a check-in desk at both the north and south car rider doors. The desk will open at 11:55 am for AM dismissal and at 3:40 pm for PM dismissal.
- Those picking up Preschool, Kindergarten, and most of First Grade will use South Door B2
- Those picking up 1st from 400 or 500 classrooms and all of 2nd grade will use North Door D2

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Times

Drop-Off

AM Preschool and Kindergarten: 9:05-9:20 am via the South car rider loop

PM Preschool and Kindergarten: 12:55-1:05 pm via the South car rider loop

First and Second Grade: 9:05-9:20 am via the North or South car rider loops (dependent on room location)

Pick-Up

AM Preschool and Kindergarten: 12:05-12:15 pm via the South car rider loop (everyday car riders) or Door B-2 (for all others) for ID check

PM Preschool and Kindergarten: 3:45-3:55 pm via the South car rider loop (everyday car riders) or Door B2 (for all others) for ID check

First and Second Grade: 3:45-3:55pm via the North or South car rider loops (everyday car riders) or Door B2/Door D2 (for all others) for ID check

If you need a few moments to help your child buckle in, please pull forward or into a parking space to do so. This will allow all students to dismiss in a timely manner. Also, if your child is a permanent car rider, you will receive 2 car rider identification cards. One is for your car window. The other will be collected by a staff member to line up the students, then returned daily. **The card must be displayed on a daily basis. All individuals picking up car riders, both permanent and temporary, will need to have a picture identification ready on a daily basis.**

WALKERS AND BIKE RIDERS

Students who live in nearby neighborhoods may walk or ride a bike to MECC. **Students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.** For the safety of your child, they must be escorted all the way to the assigned North or South entrance of the building.