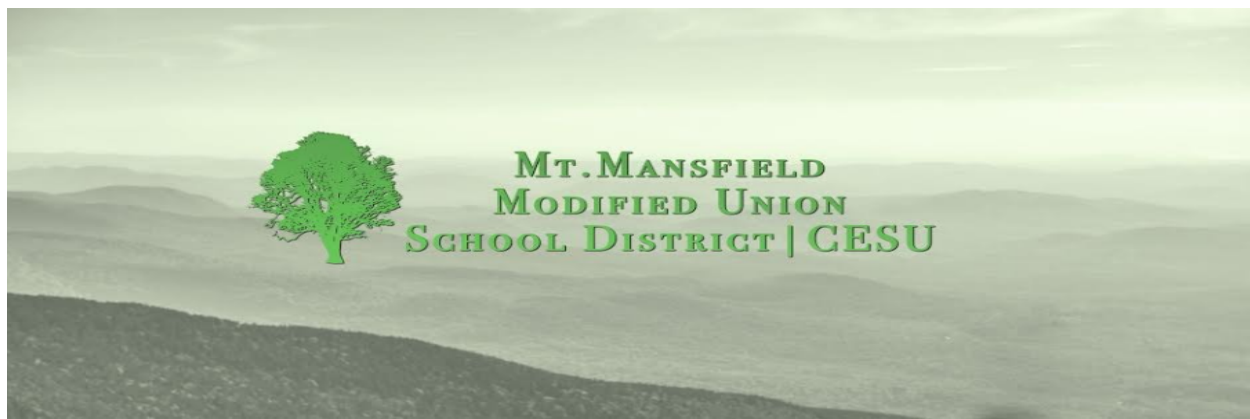




Executive Limitations Monitoring Report
2.1 Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians
John R. Alberghini, Superintendent
June 5, 2017

The Superintendent certifies that the District is not in full compliance with 2.1 Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians. Specified in this monitoring report are areas that are deemed to be in compliance and an area that is not in compliance.

With respect to interactions with students and parents/guardians of the School District or those applying to be students or parents/guardians, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are untimely, unclear, undignified, or unnecessarily intrusive.

General Interpretation

I interpret this policy to necessitate clear, concise, appropriate, respectful and lawful communication throughout the District. To achieve these standards, training, procedures, transparency, planning and leadership are required. I interpret compliance as systematic and effective communication of expectations, values, priorities and practices which afford students and parents/guardians an opportunity to provide input on decisions whenever practical. Further, I interpret compliance as the transfer of meaningful information in a manner which is courteous, relevant and supportive in understanding the rights of students and families.

Accordingly, the Superintendent of the School District shall not:

1. Elicit information for which there is not clear necessity.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to mean that the District shall only collect information that is necessary to provide safe, high quality and inclusive educational environments and to comply with state and federal laws and guidelines.

Evidence of compliance (examples of information collected by the District)

- Immunization records in order to comply with state law and keep the student population safe.
- Free and reduced lunch information to comply with state and federal guidelines.
- Registration information such as parent/guardian address and contact information to facilitate effective communication regarding school matters and in the event of an emergency.
- Special Education and 504 information to comply with state and federal laws and provide eligible students with appropriate educational programs.
- Permission to attend events and functions off school property.
- “My child as a learner” form for placement purposes and to gather information on how to best

- meet the educational and social needs of students.
- Parent/guardian certification to opt out of state testing to comply with federal guidelines.
- Written communication from a parent/guardian not to publish a child's picture and personal information (e.g., name, grade, school).

** For direct inspection of letters and/or forms related to necessary communication, please email the Superintendent.*

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

2. Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing student/family information that fail to protect against improper access to the material elicited.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to mean the District shall have procedures and structures in place to ensure student and family information is stored, handled and shared in a legal and confidential manner.

Evidence of compliance

- Policy [395 Student Records](#) outlines the importance of keeping accurate student records, the District's commitment to confidentiality and the custodian of student records.
- [Guidelines for 395 Student Records](#) details the contents of a student's record, who can view and handle student records and other steps followed to protect a student's confidentiality and comply with state and federal law.
- The District follows state and federal law regarding retention and disposition of student records and utilizes general guidance provided by the AOE (memorandum [HERE](#)).
- Management of student records is part of on-board training for secretaries, principals and counselors.
- School handbooks include sections on FERPA rights, privacy and student records.
 - Example, [MMUHS Handbook, pgs. 22 and 27](#)

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

3. Fail to operate facilities with appropriate accessibility and privacy.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance as students and community members having access to school facilities regardless of handicapping conditions. Moreover, compliance in this area requires school facilities to offer spaces which allow for privacy when necessary (e.g., private areas for hygiene needs, bathrooms and locker-rooms).

Evidence of compliance

- Facilities Coordinator, Jeff Forward, and Special Services Director, Beverly White, have affirmed there are no specific issues in providing adequate and appropriate access and privacy to students at District schools. Additionally, District buildings have appropriate access for individuals with disabilities.
- District schools offer gender neutral bathrooms.
- Male and Female locker-rooms at MMUHS were renovated the summer of 2016 to increase privacy for students. Shower and bathroom facilities now include private stalls and changing areas.
- Elevators are inspected annually at all District schools.

- The District provides transportation accommodations to students with special health conditions and disabilities.
- District schools offer allergy free zones.

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

4. Fail to establish with students and parents/guardians a clear understanding of what may be expected and what may not be expected from the service offered.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance as the District providing access to policies, procedures and program information so that parents/guardians understand their rights as well as the values, priorities, program options and expectations of the District.

Evidence of compliance

- The District's [required policy section](#) includes policies and procedures for grade advancement, bullying, harassment and hazing, class size, grade advancement, attendance, HIPPA compliance, volunteers, transportation, home study and other information that supports parents/guardians and students in understanding expectations and their rights.
- The [Parent tab](#) on the District and school-based websites offers school options, preK information, bus information, special services information, health information, food service information, curriculum information and other details that provide parents/guardians and students with access to programs and services offered by the District. The District has spent significant time and effort in developing website information.
- MMMUSD's weekly [roundup](#) supplies students, parents/guardians and community members with authentic examples of services, curricular activities, student events, education programs and student work.
- School handbooks outline important programs and services offered at schools as well as school expectation and statements of parent/guardian rights.
 - Example, [Jericho Elementary School Handbook](#)
- The interim [Strategic Plan](#) offers a strategic vision and system priorities.

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

5. Fail to inform students and parents/guardians of this policy or to provide a way to be heard for persons who believe they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their protections under this policy.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance with this policy to mean parents/guardians have access to this policy and other supporting documents and materials which specify their protections and rights under this policy. Moreover, compliance with this policy requires the District to supply methods for parents/guardians to communicate with school personnel if they feel they have not been provided the necessary protections under this policy.

Evidence of compliance

- Evidence of compliance in this section of the policy is included in #4 and #6. I cite #4 and #6 as references in an effort to be concise and eliminate redundancies.

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

6. Fail to provide a process for the effective and efficient handling of complaints and concerns.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to require the District to have a process for hearing and responding to complaints and issues. The District needs to provide an effective way to advance complaints to the person or persons in charge of receiving and responding to complaints and concerns.

Evidence of compliance

- The District has a policy statement and [procedures](#) that outline how complaints will be handled. The policy and procedures are published on the District website and available in paper format upon request. Periodically, the administrative team reviews the steps associated with this policy.
- Special Education affords parents and students the [VT AOE complaint process](#) when there are issues around services, eligibility and/or programming. This information is included in parent rights materials supplied to all parents/guardians with a child who is eligible for special education services or receiving a special education evaluation. In addition, this document is given at least once a year to parents/guardians of students who are eligible for special education services.
- All school-based websites provide principal contact information. The District website supplies a general mailbox for questions and comments as well as contact information for the Superintendent.
- There are procedures for handling discipline appeals as well as due process requirements. This information is published on the school website and included in school handbooks.
- The District's administrator supervision and evaluation rubric includes the following component: **"Communication: Administrator establishes strong lines of communication with and between teachers, students, and parents. The administrator maintains open and effective lines of communication with staff and families."** The Superintendent uses this area of the supervision and evaluation tool to emphasize the importance of discussing matters of concern as well as the steps in resolving complaints and outstanding issues as outlined in the District's complaint procedures.
- The appeal process for harassment, hazing and bullying complaints is published on the website and in school handbooks.
- Meeting with students and parents/guardians who have concerns is a top priority for the Superintendent. The Superintendent has a strong commitment in resolving issues, advocating for students and families when appropriate and spending as much time as necessary to address concerns and resolve complaints. Very few complaints and concerns have gone beyond principals and the Superintendent. This indicates a successful system for handling complaints and a culture that values student and parent/guardian feedback. In a complex organization, this is an area which requires consistent attention and commitment.

**Note: This policy as well as the complaint procedures will be published in all school handbooks next year.*

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

7. Fail to assure a system of communication between the school district and parents that provides for two-way, timely, and full information about academic progress, safety, and other important matters relating to education.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to mean the District has communication structures in place that provide

opportunities for input and feedback, inform parents/guardians and students of academic progress and keep the school community informed about key education conditions and initiatives.

Evidence of compliance

- The District has held in-person informational meetings for parents/guardians on topics such as Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements, middle school and high school mathematics program changes, literacy initiatives and wellness activities.
- MMUHS classes provide students with an opportunity to fill out surveys at the end of courses. Survey data is reviewed by the teacher and supervisors and used to gauge effectiveness and determine teacher goals.
- District schools have parent organizations that support students activities and offer feedback on a range of school matters.
- Students who are not meeting standards at our middle schools receive progress reports in between trimesters. Progress reports outline areas in need of improvement.
- Students who are at-risk and not meeting grade level standards are provided an Education Support Plan. Parents/guardians (and students if appropriate) are part of the team that constructs the plan and determines interventions.
- Parents/guardians are part of the team that develops 504 plans and accommodations for eligible students.
- MMUHS offers a portal to parents/guardians and students so they can track progress.
- Reports cards are provided to parents/families on a trimester basis at the elementary and middle schools and quarterly at the high school. MMUHS also provides progress reports four times a year.
- Students eligible for special education services receive a summary of progress related to their IEP goals when report cards are issued.
- District schools publish newsletters regularly which provide information on education initiatives, curricular programs, student and family events, staffing changes, afterschool opportunities, safety matters, facilities upgrades and administrative requirements. Links to newsletters can be found in Superintendent reports.
- The District utilizes an emergency communication system - BlackBoard Connect. The purpose of the system is to communicate important information during an emergency or weather event.
- Teacher and principal contact information is published on District websites and available upon request.
- Number 4 of this policy also provides evidence of compliance.
- District and school websites include educational initiatives and programs which are taking place across the district. These posts are communicate through social media so that students and parents/guardians are notified in a timely manner. See the [news section](#) of the District website and learn about project-based learning at Smilie.

I report compliance in this section of the policy.

8. Make significant decisions impacting students, parents/guardians and community without seeking and considering their input, where feasible.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to mean the district shall initiate and solicit input from students, parents/guardians and community members prior to advancing and implement significant changes whenever practicable.

I report non-compliance with this section of the policy based on the following:

1. In January of this school year, a decision was made to discontinue using the YMCA as the afterschool provider at UID, UCS and JES. This was done without consulting families and securing their feedback on quality and satisfaction. Several families were upset with the decision and the lack of transparency and communication around this change. Therefore, the District stopped the transition to another after school provider and distributed a survey to garner input from families. This should have happened prior to any decision. The results of the survey prompted the District to reverse its decision. North-end elementary principals are meeting with and working with YMCA representatives to increase enrichment activities and consistency with school expectations and protocols.
2. In 2014-15 the District, made a significant change to the calendar without gathering feedback from parents/guardians. The 2 -hour delay starts included in the school-year calendar created anxiety and frustration for many families. This is not what the District wants for the school community. Feedback should have been garnered prior to this change. During the 2015-16 school year, community forums were held and a survey distributed to parents/guardians. The results of the survey and feedback from community meetings indicated a majority of families had adjusted to the 2-hour delay starts. This should have occurred in 2014-15.

Plan for compliance

Compliance requires training and development of norms for decision making. School administrators make diverse decisions on a daily basis. At times, identifying what is significant can be challenging and unclear. Therefore, the Superintendent will work with administrators during our leadership retreat in June to develop norms and steps for making significant decisions. These structures will provide constituent groups with opportunities for meaningful feedback on topics of interest, keep the school community informed regarding major decisions and build trust and transparency.

9. Allow barriers to exist that unreasonably prevent any student from achieving his/her unique and full potential within the capacity of the school district to provide.

Interpretation

I interpret compliance to mean the District shall not permit biased and irrational conditions to exist which hinder students in achieving their personal goals and full potential.

Evidence of compliance

- 78% of eligible 3-5 year olds participating in high quality preK programs (33% in 2014-15)
- Results of the 2016 American College Test Program (ACT) indicate MMUHS had a five-year high in the percentage of college ready students and significantly outperformed the state and national average.
- MMUHS's 2016 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results were notably higher than state and national averages.
- MMUHS 2016 four year graduation rate was 98% (state average 88%).
- 80% of MMUHS's 2016 graduating seniors enrolled in a two or four year college (state 52%).
- MMUHS had the second highest VT high school proficiency rate in literacy and third highest in mathematics on the 2016 state assessment - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
- Underhill Central School had the highest overall proficiency rate of any VT elementary school on the 2016 state assessment - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
- Smilie Memorial School had the seventh overall highest proficiency rate of any VT elementary school on the 2016 state assessment - SBAC.

- \$25,000 is in the 2017-18 budget to provide economically disadvantaged and at-risk students with safe, healthy and enriching summer and afterschool activities.
- \$40,000 is in the 2017-18 budget for full-day preK for economically disadvantaged and at-risk students.
- \$401,750 is in 2017-18 budget for school-based service that support at-risk students.
- The District funds school-based alternative programs at the elementary, middle and high school level. These programs offer instruction and support to students who require a specialized learning environment.
- The District provides special education services and supports to eligible students.
- The District has invested significant funds in training teachers to differentiate instruction, modify lessons and implement teaching strategies which meet the unique learning needs of students (see [2017 Annual Report](#)).
- The District enforces its [Non-discrimination Policy](#) and follows state and federal law. This information is included in [employee handbooks](#) and in school handbooks. The district has not received a legal complaint or Human Rights Commission inquiry regarding discrimination during this school year.

I report compliance in this section of the policy.