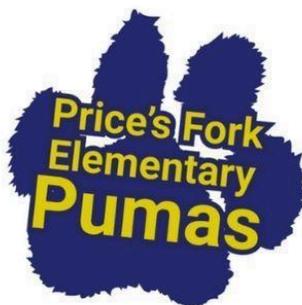
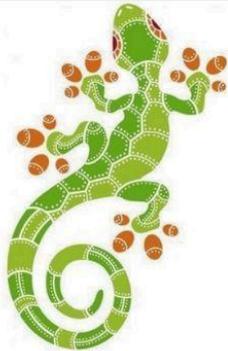
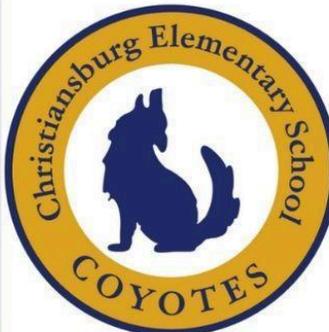


MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT - PARENT HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026



Additional revisions will take place throughout the Summer

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ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY

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

Please understand that 8:45-9:15 is a critical time for teachers to set the tone for the day in their classroom. We respectfully request that you make an appointment with your child's teacher to conference and do not attempt to conference during this morning arrival time.

BUS LANES AT ALL SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED TO CARS.

Students arriving at schools after 9:15 a.m. must be accompanied to the main office by an adult.

**Please also see Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals.*

ASSEMBLIES

Special assemblies and programs are held throughout the year.

ATTENDANCE

Public education is a right available to all young people of school age in Montgomery County. It is provided at considerable expense to parents and other citizens of the county.

Student attendance is a cooperative effort among schools, parents, and students. To achieve optimum learning, good attendance by students K-12 is crucial. Tardies (check-ins) and early dismissals (checkouts) are disruptive to the instructional time of the entire class. Each parent or guardian is responsible for the student's regular and punctual attendance.

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

School personnel shall recognize their responsibilities to motivate students to attend school and to conduct the curriculum in such a manner as to provide for the individual needs of students.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory attendance law.

Compulsory Attendance Procedures

A reasonable effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian of each absent student every day and to obtain an explanation for the student's absence, where there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absence. Any time your student is absent please send a note to the teacher/school.

The following procedures apply when a student fails to report to school for scheduled school days:

Upon Fifth Absence Without Parental Awareness and Support:

After a total of five (5) scheduled school days missed, where there is no indication that the student's parent is aware of and supports the absences, the principal or the principal's designee will make a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent, in person, through a telephone conversation, or through the use of other communications devices to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence and to explain to the parent consequences of continued non-attendance. The principal or the principal's designee, the pupil, and the pupil's parent will develop a plan to resolve the pupil's non-attendance. The plan must include documentation of the reasons for the pupil's non-attendance.

Additional Absences Without Parental Awareness and Support:

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If the pupil is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the pupil's parent, and school personnel have received no indication that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the principal or the principal's designee shall schedule a conference with the pupil, his/her parent, and school personnel. Such conferences may include the attendance officer and other community service providers to resolve issues related to the pupils' nonattendance. The conference shall be held no later than ten (10) school days after the tenth absence of the pupil, regardless of whether his parent approves of the conference.

The conference team shall monitor the pupil's attendance and may meet again as necessary to address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In circumstances in which the parent is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory attendance requirements or the pupil is resisting parental efforts to comply with compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or his designee shall make a referral to the attendance officer. The attendance officer shall schedule a conference with the pupil and his parent within 10 school days and may:

- a. file a complaint with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court alleging that the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in Virginia Code § 16.1-228; and/or
- b. institute proceedings against the parents pursuant to § 18.2-371 or § 22.1-262. In filing a complaint against the parents, the division superintendent's designee shall provide written documentation of the efforts already undertaken to resolve the pupil's absence. If the student's parents have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody arrangement, then both parents shall be notified at their last known addresses.

STUDENT ABSENCES/TARDIES/EARLY DISMISSALS

Student absences, tardies, check-ins, and checkouts will be recorded on a daily basis for each class in the following manner:

- a. A student is counted present only when he/she is present in the classroom or other approved designated area at the time of the tardy bell or is attending or participating in an approved school-sponsored field trip or event.
- b. A student reporting after the tardy bell or after the designated starting time for the class period will be recorded as present and tardy.
- c. If a student is being transported by a County bus or vehicle that arrives late, the student will not be counted as tardy.
- d. A student shall be considered absent when he/she does not report to class during the class period.
- e. A student who reports to the school attendance office late with or without documentation will be marked as a check-in.
- f. A student who requests an early dismissal with documentation shall be marked as a checkout at the school attendance office.
- g. At the beginning of the school year, teachers should inform students of how the tardy policy is implemented in their classrooms for middle and high school students.

Teachers are responsible for initiating the necessary communications with parents any time absences, check-ins or checkouts are jeopardizing the student's progress in class. Absences for each grading period will be reported to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the report card.

For elementary school students a letter may be sent to the parent to encourage improved attendance. Retention may be considered for any student missing twenty (20) days of school.

DOCUMENTING ABSENCES

All absences shall be identified as excused or unexcused. Each student should present to the school attendance office a written note which includes the date(s), cause(s), and the parent's/guardian's signature for daily absences, early dismissal or late arrival of the student. Parental permission for early dismissal must be presented to school officials on or before the day requested. Notes of explanation for student absences or check-ins should be received the day following the absence or check-in.

Absences for any of the reasons listed below shall be excused.

- a. state mandated testing or other school/division testing programs;
- b. school-sponsored field trips or activities;
- c. all VHSL activities;
- d. late bus or buses which fail to run;
- e. conference with guidance counselor, administrator, or other related staff members;
- f. in-school suspension (I.S.S.);

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- g. involuntary court appearance (copy of court order or subpoena required);
- h. death in the family or household (verification may be required);
- i. religious holidays (verification may be required);
- j. college visit or work based learning opportunity (verification required) up to 3 school days;
- k. illness (if over 3 days, the school may require verification);
- l. doctor/dental appointments (verification required);
- m. extenuating circumstances which are determined by the school administration.

Any excessive check-ins, checkouts, or patterns of absences may result in administrative intervention including the development of an attendance improvement plan and/or disciplinary action.

All notes of excuse, requests, or any other correspondence concerning student absences, check-ins, and check-outs shall be preserved for a minimum of sixty (60) calendar days after the close of the school year.

MAKE-UP WORK

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

ABSENCES FOR OBSERVANCE OF A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY

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

A student who is absent in accordance with this policy shall not be deprived of any award or eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right to take an alternate test or examination, for any which he or she missed by reason of such absence. Make-up work shall be completed as described in "Make-Up Work," above.

ABSENCES FOR CIVIC EVENTS

Subject to guidelines established by the Department of Education, one school day-long excused absence per school year for any middle school or high school student in the school division who is absent from school to engage in a civic event shall be permitted and additional excused absences may be permitted for such students who are absent for such purpose. Advanced notice must be provided by the student of the intended absence and the student must also provide documentation of participation in a civic event.

BULLYING

The definition of bullying developed for the Virginia Department of Education, is as follows: "Bullying" means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes cyber bullying.

In addition, our MCPS policy states that "bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument or peer conflict. Students, either individually or as part of a group, shall not harass or bully others. Behaviors associated with bullying include, but are not limited to, intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults. Bullying behaviors may take a variety of forms, including by electronic means such as cell phone, social media, text message and email. Bullying, threatening, intimidation, harassment, or any other activity characterized by targeted, intentionally hurtful behavior (verbal or nonverbal) that results in any physical, social/relational or emotional/psychological harm to another person is not tolerated in any form in any Montgomery County Public School. The principal or his designee shall notify the parent of any student involved in an alleged incident of bullying, as defined herein within 24 hours of learning of the allegation of bullying.

HATE SPEECH

The Montgomery County Public Schools Hate Speech Policy aims to proactively foster an environment where everyone feels safe and included. The MCPS definition of Hate Speech includes As used in the Policy, "hate speech" means any form of expression that

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threatens, abuses, bullies, disparages, or intimidates individuals or groups based on ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Reporting Procedures

1. Reporting by Students: Students who believe they have been subjected to or have witnessed hate speech should report the incident to a teacher, school counselor, or administrator as soon as possible. No student shall be punished for failing to report any hate speech incident.
2. Reporting by Staff: Staff members who witness hate speech or are informed of such must report the incident to the principal or designated school administrator immediately. Failure to do so shall result in disciplinary action as outlined in school policy.
3. Anonymous Reporting: MCPS provides an anonymous reporting system for students and staff to report hate speech without fear of retaliation.
4. Reporting by Parents: Parents of an MCPS student who believes they have been subjected to or have witnessed hate speech should report the incident to a teacher, school counselor, or administrator as soon as possible.

Investigation Procedures

1. Initial Review: Upon receiving a report of hate speech, the principal or designated administrator will conduct an initial review to determine whether the reported speech is hate speech as defined in this policy and the report's credibility.
2. Formal Investigation: If the initial review indicates a potential violation of this policy, the principal or designated administrator will conduct a formal investigation. This may include interviews with the involved parties and witnesses and a review of any relevant evidence (e.g., written statements, digital communications).
3. Confidentiality: The investigation will be conducted in a manner that respects the privacy of all parties involved to the fullest extent possible.
4. Determination: If the formal investigation determines that a student violated this policy, that student shall be subject to discipline as described below.
5. Appeal Process: When disagreement exists with the outcome of the investigation, an appeal can be brought before a three-member appeal committee established by the superintendent for said purpose. A final appeal can be brought before the superintendent.

Disciplinary Actions

MCPS employs a progressive discipline approach to address hate speech policy violations. The following outlines possible disciplinary actions, which may be adjusted based on the severity of the behavior. These disciplinary actions shall be administered according to the procedures in School Board Policy 7-3.1 (Code of Student Conduct) and Policy 7-3.2 (Student Suspension/Expulsion), as applicable.

Elementary School Hate Speech Offenses		
First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning and explanation of the hate speech policy and documentation of the incident. • Restorative practices, such as mediation or conflict resolution, or other means to educate and improve behavior. • Parental notification and a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and school counselor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written warning and documentation of the incident. • Restorative practices, such as mediation or conflict resolution, or other means to educate and improve behavior. • Parental notification and a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and school counselor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written warning and documentation of the incident. • Restorative practices, such as mediation or conflict resolution, or other means to educate and improve behavior. • Parental notification and a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and school counselor. • Development of a behavior intervention plan. • Possible out-of-school suspension (up to 3 days).
Severe or Repeated Offenses		
<p>For severe or repeated violations, the following actions may be taken:</p>		

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- Long-term suspension (more than ten days).
- Expulsion.
- Referral to law enforcement if the behavior constitutes a criminal offense.
- Additional interventions include mandatory counseling or participation in a diversity and inclusion program.

Support for Affected Students

MCPS is committed to supporting students affected by hate speech. Measures that will be taken to assist these students include, but are not limited to the following:

- Providing increased access to counseling services.
- Increasing academic support to ensure their educational progress is not hindered.
- Offering safe spaces where they can discuss their experiences and receive support in a safe environment.

BUS RULES

Bus safety is of primary importance for both students and drivers. Parents are urged to assist school personnel in instructing their children in bus safety and are asked to cooperate with school officials in making our bus transportation system safe and efficient. The following guidelines and rules, if practiced, should strengthen the school bus safety program. However, please know that repeated disregard of these rules could lead to a child needing alternate transportation, often provided by the parent. Siblings will be seated together on the bus.

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

If you need to change your child’s usual dismissal plan, please send a note with your child in the morning. You may also call the school office **before 2:45 p.m. Please do not message teachers or administrators with these changes. We cannot guarantee that messages will be read before dismissal time.**

BUS MISBEHAVIOR

Any behavior that interferes with the orderly transportation of pupils on a school bus. A student is expected to cooperate with the bus driver or other MCPS employee and follow the posted rules on the bus. Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats. Failure to comply with bus rules and directions of drivers or other authorized adults may result in a loss of bus privileges. In those instances

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where students have riding privileges suspended, it shall be the responsibility of the parents (or guardians) of the student to see that their child/children get to and from school safely.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast is served from 8:45-9:15 AM. Breakfast is available free of charge for all students. Students pick up their breakfast on the way in from buses or cars.

Free and reduced lunch applications are available in the office and online. A new form must be completed each year. The MCPS Food Service Department posts each month’s menu on their website.

You may add money to your child’s lunch account using My School Bucks (online), a check, or cash. There is a fee to use My School Bucks. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay all outstanding lunch debt in a timely manner.

Microwave ovens and refrigerators are not for student use. Please do not send food items with your child that need to be microwaved or refrigerated.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

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

CELL PHONES AND OTHER CONNECTED DEVICES

Cell phone use by students during the school day, including but not limited to class time, examinations, and other educational activities, is strictly prohibited. Cell phone use is prohibited during the school day at all school-sponsored activities, both on and off school premises, unless expressly permitted by a staff member with prior permission granted from the school principal for educational or emergency purposes.

Possession of Cell Phones: While students may possess cell phones on school premises, they must be turned off and stored out of sight during the instructional day unless a staff member gives express permission for educational purposes or in cases of emergency.

Consequences for Violations:		
First Offense	Second Offense	Subsequent Offenses
The cell phone will be confiscated, and the student may receive a warning or counseling regarding the policy violation. The parent/guardian will be notified.	The cell phone will be confiscated, and the student may receive disciplinary action, including but not limited to detention, parent/guardian conference, or referral to school administration. Additionally, the student may be required to complete an educational program on responsible technology use.	Progressive disciplinary action will be taken, including but not limited to suspension or other appropriate consequences as outlined in the MCPS Student Code of Conduct. Repeat offenses may result in loss of privileges or alternative educational placement.

Medical Exceptions: Students who require access to a cell phone for medical reasons must provide documentation from a licensed medical professional outlining the necessity of immediate access to a cell phone.

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Upon approval by the school administration, students with documented medical needs may be granted permission to possess and use cell phones as necessary for their medical condition. Accommodations shall be made to ensure the student's access to necessary technology without compromising the educational environment. The school administration will work with the student, parents/guardians, and medical professionals to establish appropriate guidelines for cell phone use in these cases.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER OR EMAIL

If you change your address, phone number or email during the school year, please call your child's school and let them know this. It is important that we always have the most current contact information for you.

CHECKS-MONEY

Please make checks for meals, books, pictures, etc., payable to your child's school. When sending money with children, please put money in an envelope and write your child's name and purpose for which the money is sent.

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

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

CLINIC

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

Any student suspected to have a contagious health condition may be restricted from school at the discretion of the School Nurse. No student will be readmitted to school until the condition has resolved and/or evidence of medical intervention is obtained.

MCPS provides written Exclusion Guidelines for parents and staff in order to prevent spread of communicable disease.

1. Fever - Children with a fever of 100.4 or higher should stay home until fever-free for 24 hours without taking medication.
2. Vomiting - Children who are vomiting will be sent home unless it is due to a diagnosed chronic medical condition. Children who are vomiting are not to be sent home on a bus.
3. Diarrhea - Children with more than one episode of diarrhea will be sent home unless it is due to a diagnosed chronic medical condition. Children with diarrhea are not to be sent home on a bus.
4. Eye Drainage - Exclude from school while symptomatic or until cleared to return by a healthcare provider.
5. Rash - Common infectious diseases with rashes are most contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash will be excused from all school activities until they are under effective treatment/medication and no longer considered contagious. This means the child can return to school only after a health care provider has made a diagnosis and authorized the child's return to school. A written note from the health care provider with a diagnosis of the rash is requested upon the child's return.

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

Lice are a potential problem associated with any elementary school because of the very nature of children's close proximity to each other. The containment and elimination of lice are of paramount importance to us. For this reason, we will adhere to the following procedures when we have identified lice on any child:

1. We will contact the parents of the children having live lice and ask them to take those children home.
2. Parents are required to treat their children effectively before school officials will allow that child to re-enter school. Parents should ensure that all nits are removed from their children's hair by using a fine-toothed comb, which will remove all nits from each individual strand of hair. **Without removing these nits, lice will continue to re-infect that child.**

GIVING MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Administration of medications will be permitted on school property only when medically necessary and under the direct supervision of appropriate staff members. We attempt to discourage the administration of medication during school hours and whenever

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possible, request doses of medication be scheduled other than school hours. The first dose of any newly prescribed medication should always be given at home. For the safety of the students, the following procedures must be followed:

1. If prescription medications are to be given at school, the Montgomery County Medication Permission form must be provided and signed by the doctor/licensed prescriber, and the parent/guardian. It must specify the name of the medication, dosage, and time to be given. A separate medication permission form must be completed for each medication. Please note: Prescription bottles do not take the place of a medication form signed by a physician.
2. If non-prescription medications are to be given at school, the medication permission form must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian, indicating the name, dosage, and time to be given. Non-prescription medications can be administered for no longer than 3 consecutive days, after which time a written order from a physician/other licensed prescriber is required.
3. All medication is to be brought to school by the parent or guardian in the original, properly labeled container. The information on the container must match the information on the medication permission form. If the parent is unable to deliver the medication to the school, he or she must call the school to report that the medication is being delivered by the student. All medication must be accompanied by a medication permission form.
4. Self-administration of any medication, prescription or non-prescription, is prohibited for students in grades kindergarten through eight with one exception. Medications needed in a medical emergency such as inhalers, epi-pens, or glucose tablets may be kept in the possession of a student and self-administered only with a written statement from a physician/licensed prescriber.
5. Sharing, borrowing, or distributing any medication is prohibited and may result in a recommendation of expulsion. Medication permission forms are available in the school office and most local doctors' offices. They can be downloaded from the MCPS website.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USAGE

I will read the rules for using the internet that are given in my handbook and will ask an adult at my school if I do not understand what any of them mean. I also know that if I do not use computers and equipment in the right way, I will have consequences for my choices. I may not be allowed to use computers and equipment again at school. In the event your child's chromebook/charger is intentionally damaged, the family assumes responsibility for the cost of repair or replacement.

1. I will only use MCPS computing systems and/or the network/internet in the manner for educational purposes. I understand that I may be held responsible for any or all damage incurred as a result of my negligent or inappropriate behavior.
2. I will not use language, which may be offensive to other users. I will treat others with respect. The content created will not contain profanity, obscene comments, sexually explicit material, or expressions of bigotry, racism, or hatred.
3. I will not cyberbully. "Cyberbully" means using the computer to threaten, harass, or intimidate another person. I will tell an adult or use a tip line if I see any cyberbullying, cyberthreats, or inappropriate activity.
4. I will not place unlawful information on the network/internet, nor will I use the network/internet illegally in any way that violates federal, state, or local laws or statutes. I will never falsify my identity while using the Internet.
5. I will not use the network/internet for non-school related activities.
6. I will not engage in network/internet activities that cause congestion on the MCPS network.
7. I will not use the network/internet to buy or sell, or to attempt to buy or sell, any service or product.
8. I will not change any computer file that does not belong to me.
9. I will use online materials, including generative AI, in an ethical manner by respecting copyright laws, privacy norms, and the intellectual property rights of others. I will not submit AI-generated work as my own within the school context.
10. I will never knowingly give my password to others, nor will I use another person's password.
11. I will never use the network/internet to send, generate or obtain pornographic or inappropriate material or files.
12. Except for the usual information contained in the headers of my electronic mail, I will never give out personal information such as name, address, phone number, or gender.
13. I will never knowingly circumvent, or try to circumvent, security measures on either MCPS computing systems or on computers at any remote site.
14. I will not attempt to gain unlawful access to another person's or organization's resources, programs, or data.
15. I will not attempt or make malicious content or actions intended to harm or destroy data of another user, including the use of AI tools to create or distribute malicious content.
16. I understand that the school division is not responsible or liable for any harm, damages or charges that result from my use of the school division's technology or network/internet access, including loss of data, interruption of services, corruption of files or programs, purchases, hacking or other violations of this Acceptable Technology Use and Network/Internet Safety Policy.

17. I will report any violations of this Acceptable Technology Use and Network/Internet Safety Policy to an adult or through tip line services.

WEBSITES, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND PUBLICATIONS

School information can also be accessed on any school's website. Each site has useful information such as SOL's from the Virginia Department of Education, staff lists, lunch/breakfast menus, and various links to other informative parenting and teaching sites.

The Montgomery County Public School Policy towards publishing student photographs and student work on the Internet is as follows: "Images may be used on websites, social media and publications with a signed release from the parent or guardian."

In addition, local press such as newspapers and television stations visit MCPS schools on a regular basis. This is a wonderful opportunity for positive publicity for the school. These visits are always arranged by the Director of Communications.

CONDUCT AND CITIZENSHIP

The MCPS Code of Conduct addresses responsibilities for appropriate behaviors in our schools. Students and parents are required to read and discuss the MCPS Code of Conduct. Students have the responsibility to know and conform to the rules and regulations of the school and the Code of Conduct and to accept consequences for their behavior. The Code of Conduct form is included in your online registration materials. Please make sure you discuss the Code of Conduct with your student.

MCPS elementary schools encourage student freedom of expression and creativity. Elementary schools strive to promote good citizenship and provide an atmosphere which is safe, conducive to learning, and encourages personal responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for self, others, and property. Elementary students will be encouraged to express themselves in a fashion consistent with the school's educational mission. Should student expression reflect violence not directly associated with the curriculum, the student will be redirected to a non-violent expression. Disciplinary action may be taken if appropriate.

CONFERENCES

Parents should arrange for scheduled conferences with teachers. Teachers are unable to interrupt instruction or supervision of students without prior notice. All parents are strongly encouraged to meet with teachers during fall and spring conference times. Conferences may be scheduled at other times when either party feels it is necessary. These should be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

2025 - 2026 Conference Week

Fall: October 20th - 24th

Spring: March 23rd - 27th

The education of children is a most important and challenging activity. We know that children learn best when parents and teachers work together. We urge parents to keep in touch with their child's teacher concerning academic progress and emotional growth. When differences of opinions or concerns arise, ***please remember...*** we are on the same side! We will make every effort to address your concerns. We strive to behave in a respectful, courteous manner and request the same courtesy from you. We all want your child to be successful in school. Parents are strongly encouraged to meet with their child's teacher to resolve conflicts. The principal will attempt to mediate conflicts that cannot be resolved otherwise.

COUNSELING

Under MCPS Policy 6-5.1 and pursuant to Virginia law, schools will notify parents in writing of the School Counseling Programs, purpose, and resources available to students.

The goal of the MCPS School counseling program is to support the Standards of Learning by providing guidance to students in their academic, career, and social-emotional development. School counselors collaborate with parents, teachers, administrators and others to promote learning and help students establish and achieve their education, career, and personal goals. School counselors provide leadership to ensure that students benefit from effective strategies and services aligned with the Standards for School Counseling Programs in Virginia Public Schools. The standards are organized by grade level under the following goals.

Personal/Social Counseling, which assists students to develop an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflicts and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities, and aptitudes.

Such programs may be provided either in groups or grade levels in which generic issues of social development are addressed or through structured individual or small group multi-session counseling which focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s) (such as divorce, abuse, or aggressive behavior).

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Parental/Guardian permission is not required for short duration personal/social counseling which is needed to maintain order, discipline, or a productive learning environment. Parents may review any materials to be used in counseling programs by contacting your school's counseling office. In addition, parents may limit their child's participation in counseling programs by providing a request to opt out in writing to the School Principal or School Counselor.

Additional questions may be addressed at the individual school, or the Student Services Office at 540-382-5100.

DELAYED OPENING AND EARLY CLOSINGS
MCPS 2025 - 2026 SEVERE WEATHER CODES

CODE A	<p>Two Hour Delay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two Hour Delay for students ● Staff report two hours late (except Facilities)
CODE B	<p>Work From Home Day - Inclement Weather Assignments for students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School Buildings Closed to Students ● Inclement Weather Day Assignments for students** <p>Twelve (12) month non-instructional personnel consult the MCPS website for arrival time</p> <p>School buildings will be open and available to teachers for them to use school internet and telephones to contact students and/or for planning</p> <p>Teachers may be required to attend scheduled PD and meetings</p>
CODE C	<p>System Shutdown</p> <p>Only essential personnel will need to report to work (essential personnel are designated by each department). Facilities staff will receive communication from Operations regarding work times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>No</u> Inclement Weather Day Assignments ● <u>No</u> meal services

****Inclement Weather Day Assignments for Students (Code B Days)**

On Code B Inclement Weather days, teachers will provide all students with an “Inclement Weather Day Assignment” for them to work on while schools are closed. **This assignment should provide asynchronous instruction in order for instruction to remain on pace.**

- The school’s “Inclement Weather Day Check-in & Attendance” form will become active in Google Classroom each Code B Inclement Weather Day by 5:30 AM
- Students and parents/guardians will complete and submit the “Inclement Weather Day Check-in & Attendance” form by 10:00 AM (students who do not complete the form will be marked as absent)
- Teachers will be required to check attendance and follow up with students marked as absent, as well as to document that they have had interaction with all of their students in classes scheduled to meet that day
- Students will be given the option to request contact from a specific teacher, school counselor, or other school staff member for assistance on the “Inclement Weather Day Check-in & Attendance” form. Staff will contact each student and parent/guardian who requested assistance between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM.

When the decision to close schools due to severe weather is made the day before a weather event, teachers will provide all students with an “Inclement Weather Day Assignment” for them to take home and work on while schools are closed (based on the anticipated number of days schools will remain closed). Teachers will make provisions for students who do not have home internet and ensure that all students have any supplemental supplies necessary to complete assignments.

When the decision to close schools due to severe weather is made on the morning of a scheduled school day (before the school start time), teachers will post an “Inclement Weather Day Assignment” in their Google Classroom for students to work on while schools are closed (based on the anticipated number of days schools will remain closed). Teachers will contact students who do not

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have home internet to provide them with an assignment. Students will not be penalized for work not completed due to lack of supplemental supplies, internet, power, and/or other utilities necessary to complete assignments at home during a Code B day. These students will be provided sufficient opportunity to complete instruction and/or assignments without penalty upon return to school.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Children must bring written permission from a parent or guardian if it is necessary for them to change their normal routine of departure from school. You may also call your school's office **before 2:45**. Please do not email or use REMIND for teachers or administrators with these changes. We cannot guarantee that email will be read before dismissal time. Anyone picking up a student from school must sign the student out in the office. No student shall leave the school grounds during school hours without the approval of the principal or his/her designee. **Parents should make every effort to avoid picking up children during instructional time.** If it is necessary for a child to be picked up, please notify the main office so that you can be assisted. **Students will not be permitted to leave with anyone other than the parent unless the school is notified in writing or contacted by telephone.**

It is highly discouraged to check students out after 3:15 unless for a doctor's appointment. If the student has a doctor's appointment please send a note so we can have the student ready so we do not interfere with bus pickup.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS THAT PROHIBIT TEACHING

Creating Aggravating Circumstances **in Class/School**: Any behavior that impedes academic progress of the student or of other students. The following are examples, not an all-inclusive list: continual talking after being asked to cease, throwing objects not part of supervised school activities, use of accessing music or inappropriate websites, cameras, recording devices, electronic games or other non-instructional articles during regular school hours, gambling, display of pornographic material, etc. may result in suspension.

DRESS CODE

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

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

Shoes

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

Shirts and Tops

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

Shorts and Skirts

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

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

Graphics

- Students shall not wear clothing, jewelry, other apparel and/or decals that advocate violence, alcohol and other drug use and/or distribution; that represent gang activity and/or membership; that advertise obscenities; or that reflect adversely on

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a person's race/ethnicity, color, gender, creed, national origin, physical, emotional, or intellectual abilities; or that would cause disruption to the learning environment at any school.

- Students shall be subjected to the same set of rules and standards regardless of gender.
- Clothing which depicts inappropriate language or scenes may be prohibited at the discretion of the principal.

Hats, Gloves and Sunglasses (this varies per site, please check with your school)

- Hats, hoods on sweatshirts or jackets and caps may not be worn inside the school building.
- Students may not wear gloves or sunglasses during the school day.
- The only exception would be on designated school wide theme days.

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS

Emergency drills and evacuations will be completed as required by the Virginia Department of Education. Typically, this includes fire drills, lockdown drills, earthquake drills, and bus evacuation drills.

Adults will teach students the processes required for each drill and will guide them throughout the exercise. Additionally, directions for evacuating the building during a drill or actual crisis situation are posted in each room.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT - FERPA

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

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

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

FIELD TRIPS

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

The teachers and principal will determine how many chaperones will be needed to adequately supervise students and parents may be asked to help supervise if needed..

504 INFORMATION

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

HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to allow students to practice what has been learned in school in order to strengthen their skills and understanding. Homework should not require excessive amounts of time to complete. A very limited amount of daily homework may be assigned to kindergarten through grade 2 students. Homework may be required of students in grades 3-5 when appropriate. Homework will not exceed 30 minutes. Homework is not graded. We will provide homework for students who are absent on the first day they return from the absence. The due date for make-up homework is based on the number of days the student has been absent.

INSURANCE

Accident and dental insurance is available through the school. Information will be distributed when school opens.

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INVOLVEMENT OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

MCPS EMAIL NOTIFICATION

To receive timely and important announcements from Montgomery County Public Schools including school closing information and breaking news, please subscribe to MCPS email notification system. To subscribe to this service, send an email message to:

<http://forms.mcps.org/delayclosing.asp>

PARTIES

Teachers are requested to protect instructional time by limiting parties. Birthday celebrations in school will be minimal due to time constraints. **Parents wanting to bring treats for special occasions should contact the teacher ahead of time. Families may send in prepackaged snacks. We are unable to share homemade snacks.** There is a wellness policy for Montgomery County Public Schools which guides the types of food items that will be allowed at school. Healthy kids who thrive and learn is our goal!

Invitations – Out of consideration of ALL students in a classroom and at a grade level, students may distribute party invitations at school if their whole class is invited.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

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

RECESS

We believe that outdoor recess is best for students. Parents should send their children to school with the expectation that they will be playing outside during the day. Please remember that temperatures can change drastically from morning to afternoon. Rain, sleet, falling snow or saturated ground conditions may make inside recess necessary. We may also decide that indoor recess is necessary when the wind chill dips below 32 degrees according to weather.com. If the temperature, factoring in wind chill is 32 or above students will go outside for recess.

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

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

REPORT CARDS

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

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

***Subject to change based on dates.**

Interims	End of Grading Periods	Report Cards Home
September 12, 2024	October 11, 2024	October 20, 2024
November 15, 2024	December 20, 2024	January 10, 2025
February 4, 2025	March 7, 2025	March 27, 2025
April 17, 2025	May 23, 2025 (Last Day of School)	Elementary -Last Day of School Secondary -Mail Home

SPECIALITY CLASSES

Students will have a 45 minute specialty class each day. Specialty classes include Art, Music, PE, STEM and Library.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMING (Tier 3) PARENT NOTIFICATION

It is the goal of MCPS to engage, empower, and encourage every student to succeed. Each school's Tier 3 team's approach to help students access necessary resources needed to be successful in both the school and community. Each school's Tier 3 team strives to promote academic, social, and emotional well-being. To ensure this success, individualized services are developed through tiered systems of support.

Tier 3 Teams are created to identify, refer, and engage students. This team is a broad-based, flexible approach to prevention services and supports. **Parent involvement, engagement, and participation is crucial in this process.** The goal of the Tier 3 Team is to build resiliency in youth while empowering them for academic and emotional success. To make a referral or for more information, contact your child's teacher or the Tier 3 Coordinator. If you have any questions regarding the Tier 3 Team process, please contact your school's administrator.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

All allegations of possible or suspected child abuse or neglect are reported to the principal. School staff are mandated reporters and are required to report such cases to the child abuse coordinator of the local Department of Social Services as required by law. This agency determines reasonable cause and seriousness of the reported incidents. Any student needing further information or help should see our school counselor.

TELEPHONE

The office phone is for school business. Students are permitted to use the phone in case of emergency only and under the supervision of school personnel.

TEXTBOOKS

Montgomery County Public Schools buys textbooks for pupils to use at school. No rental fee is charged. However, students are responsible for taking good care of all books and school materials. Students must pay for books and school materials that are lost or damaged.

TOBACCO

Students shall not possess, use, and/or distribute tobacco and/or tobacco products on school property, on school buses, or during activities on or off school property. This includes but may not be limited to any product intentionally inhaled in order to elicit an

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intoxicating effect such as smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, inhalant products such as vapor cigarettes, liquid tobacco, or hookah pipes.

TOYS

Personal items from home such as sports balls, bats, gloves, trading cards, electronic games, dress up items, costumes, and accessories are to remain at home unless a teacher asks to have them in the classroom.

VISITORS

All visitors and volunteers to our schools must have a valid government-issued ID available to scan for entry into our buildings.

All visitors, including parents, to our schools are required to enter the building through the front doors and sign in at the office where you will be given a name tag. Visitors coming to lunch should remain in the lobby for the class' lunchtime and not go to the classroom. Instructional time is protected and conferences with teachers should be **prearranged**. The office staff at your school will call for students from the classroom should an early pickup be necessary.

Due to known and unknown allergies, we discourage outside food/beverages during both classroom and lunch visits. If you are celebrating your child's birthday, please check in advance with the classroom teacher regarding food allergies.

VOLUNTEERS

Our schools encourage parents to volunteer to support the school and its programs. We need and welcome volunteers in our school. Some ways you can help include volunteering at special events, helping in classrooms, participating in PTA sponsored events, attending school sponsored programs, accompanying children on field trips, assisting in the school office, tutoring children and reading to classes.

WEAPONS

NO KNIVES, GUNS or ANY TYPES OF WEAPONS (including toys and look-alikes) are allowed on school property including buses.

PARENTAL RIGHTS IN REFERENCE TO SCHOOL SERVICES

Parent Involvement

The compact can assist you in items you can do at home for the success of the student.

School-Parent Compact

Our school communities include teachers, principal, parents, students, and community partners, who share in the responsibility of educating and supporting each student to succeed in school and become a productive, responsible citizen.

Our schools focus on practicing safely, acting responsively, working together, and showing respect each day at school.

Family/Parent Responsibilities:

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

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

Student Responsibilities:

I will do my best and...

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

School Responsibilities:

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

- Provide information to families about curriculum, academic assessments and expectations, and the Title I program at the start of each school year.

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

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

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. You may contact your principal or Montgomery County Schools or find more information on the Virginia Department of Education's website: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml>

**PARENT’S RIGHT TO REQUEST INFORMATION ON TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS
As Required Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended**

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1111(h)(6)(A) states that as a parent of a student in a Title I school, receiving Title I funds, has the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers instructing your child. Federal law requires the school division to provide you this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child’s classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher’s college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact your child’s school principal.

Sincerely,

Emily M. Altizer

Administrator of Federal Programs, ESL, and Preschool

POLICIES THAT REFERENCE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

[POLICY 7-1.1 EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES](#)

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

[POLICY 7-3.2 STUDENT SUSPENSION/EXPULSION](#)

SAFE SCHOOLS

[Policy 7-3.1: Code of Student Conduct](#)

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