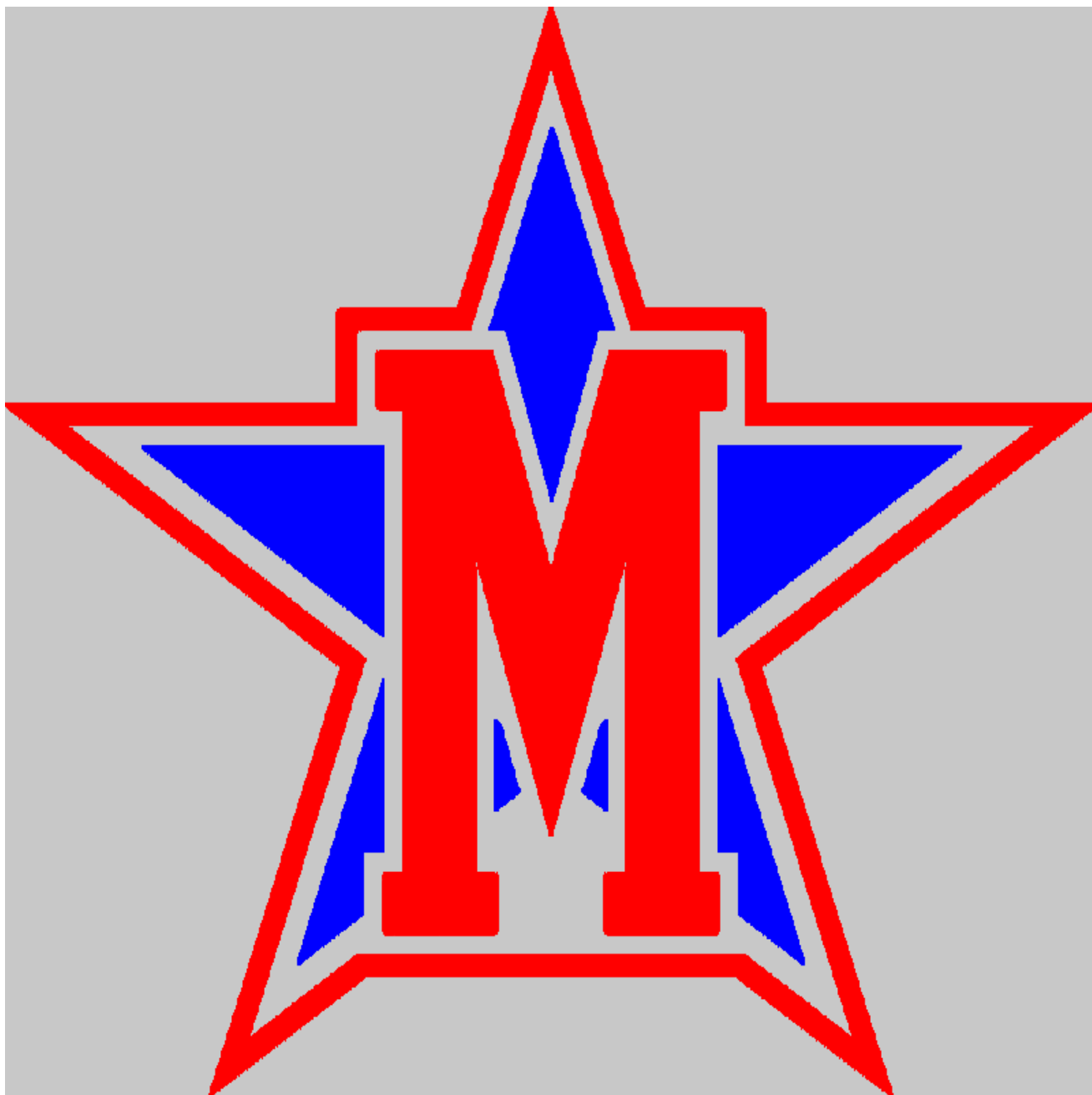


McDowell High School



Student Handbook

2024-2025

Every student graduates with a plan for a successful future.

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McDowell High School Contact Information

McDowell High School
600 McDowell High Drive
Marion, NC 28752
Phone: (828) 652-7920
FAX: (828) 652-1101

School Improvement Plan

Social Media Sites:

Web Site: www.mhs.mcdowell.k12.nc.us

[Facebook: MHSTitans](#)

Twitter: [@MHSTitans](#)

Instagram: @MHSTitans

Google +: <https://plus.google.com/109057296568764212668/>

Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/mhstitans

Remind101: @mhstitans

Administrative Team

Principal:

Melora Bennett - (melora.bennett@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Assistant Principals:

Heather Jimenez - 11th Administrator (heather.jimenez@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Jennifer Wallace- 10th Administrator (jennifer.wallace@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Kenneth Samuelson - 9th Administrator (kenneth.samuelson@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Leadership Team - Thomas Young & Brian Franklin - Grade 12

Administrative Support Staff

Melonie McKinney–Administrative Assistant/Payroll
(melonie.mckinney@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Debra Rector – Student Information Services (debra.rector@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)
– Bookkeeper

Karin Conley – Receptionist (karin.conley@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Julie Kirk – Student Services Assistant (julie.kirk@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Tonya Biddix- Attendance (tonya.biddix@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Joe Cash - High School Athletic Director (joe.cash@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Student Services

Patrick Halsell - Student Last Name of A - D (john.halsell@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Lindsay Williams - Student Last Name of E - K (Lindsay.williams@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Monica Veronie - Student Last Name of L - Q (monica.veronie@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Ra’Chelle Roberson - Student Last Name of R - Z (rachelle.roberson@mcowell.k12.nc.us)

Crystal Turner - School Nurse (crystal.turner@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Sherri McCoyle - School Social Worker (Sherri.Mccoyle@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Media and Technology

Eve Walker - Innovation and Digital Learning Coordinator and Media Coordinator
(eve.walker@mcdowell.k12.nc.us)

Additional Information Sources

Sign In/Sign Out of School – Karin Conley

College or Career Planning – Student Services, Pat Gross,

Chromebooks/Instructional Technology- Eve Walker

Tech Support- Pearl McKinney

Illness at School – Office/School Nurse- Crystal Turner

Job Info – Student Services or Pat Gross

Lost and Found – Main Office
Lunch Program – Jennifer Banks
Parking – Thomas Young
Personal Issues – Student Services
School Video News – Eve Walker
Bus Transportation – Ken Samuelson
Yearbook –Taylor Lunsford
School Resource Officers – Tre Spearman & TBD
Scheduling – Student Services and Administration
DMV Driver Eligibility – Karin Conley and Debra Rector
Registration – Student Services by appointment / Julie Kirk
Driver’s Education – Thomas Young
Facility Usage – Melora Bennett

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To The Titans of 2024 -25

Welcome to McDowell High School!

Whether you are coming to us for the first time or as returning upperclassmen, we are glad you have chosen to join us. We offer a variety of challenging courses including: distance learning, NCVPS, exciting CTE offerings to start you on a career path, AP courses and a strong partnership with McDowell Tech to offer community college class opportunities.

Our faculty and staff are committed, dedicated, friendly, caring and competent as we strive to teach, share, and afford students the freedom to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment. I hope that you find our school to be both student centered and student led and we strive constantly to place students in a position to be successful.

This handbook can be a road map to success for you. Please read and become familiar with it. It is more than a collection of rules and regulations, it is a guide to activities and happenings here. It will answer most of the questions that you have concerning our school. If there are other questions, please feel free to contact one of the administrators. Our mission is to help you succeed. We do that as a team, a community committed to each and every student's success. Please accept that challenge and work with us to have a great high school experience filled with Titan Pride!

The rules and policies set forth in these pages are necessary as a code of student behavior and will be enforced.

Have an education filled year.

Melora Bennett, Principal

Heather Jimenez, Assistant Principal

Kenneth Samuelson, Assistant Principal

Jennifer Wallace, Assistant Principal

Thomas Young - Leadership Team

Brian Franklin - Leadership Team

VISION STATEMENT

Every student graduates with a plan for a successful future.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of McDowell High School is to prepare all students for college and careers by providing world class opportunities through rigorous learning, experiences, and technology. As a community, we will inspire students to achieve a successful future through goal setting, responsibility, organization, tolerance, and interpersonal communication.

MHS SCHOOL MOTTO

Pathway to World Class Opportunities and Excellence

2024-2025 Traditional School Calendar



AUGUST 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
6	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 WD-1	16	17
18	19 WD-2	20 PD-1	21 PD-2	22 WD-3	23 WD-4	24
25	26 1	27 2	28 3	29 4	30 5	31

SEPTEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 H-1	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

9/2 - Labor Day

OCTOBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 H-2	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 WD-5	28 H-3	29 H-4	30

11/11 - Veteran's Day
11/28, 29 - Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

12/24, 25, 26 - Christmas

JANUARY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1/1 - New Year's Day
1/20 - MLK Jr. Day

FEBRUARY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3/24-3/28 - Spring Break

APRIL 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

4/18 - Good Friday

MAY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

5/26 - Memorial Day

JUNE 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Workdays	
1	08/15/2024
2	08/19/2024
3	08/22/2024
4	08/23/2024
5	11/27/2024
6	01/06/2025
7	02/14/2025
8	04/21/2025
9	06/09/2025
10	06/10/2025
11	06/11/2025
12	06/12/2025

Professional Development	
1	08/20/2024
2	08/21/2024
3	02/17/2025

Holidays	
1	09/02/2024
2	11/11/2024
3	11/28/2024
4	11/29/2024
5	12/24/2024
6	12/25/2024
7	12/26/2024
8	01/01/2025
9	01/20/2025
10	04/18/2025
11	05/26/2025

Annual Leave	
1	12/23/2024
2	12/27/2024
3	12/30/2024
4	12/31/2024
5	01/02/2025
6	01/03/2025
7	03/24/2025
8	03/25/2025
9	03/26/2025
10	03/27/2025
11	03/28/2025

Hours: 1056	
Reg: 1025	
SD	178.00
PD	3.00
WD	12.00
AL	11.00
H	11.00
215.00	

08/26/2024: First Day of School for Students
06/06/2025: Last Day of School for Students

Remote learning day at Nebo, North Cove, Marion, and EMMS due to polling sites at schools

Approved: 3/11/24

Inclement Weather Make-up Plan:

Calendar dates are subject to change if inclement weather necessitates such and make-up days may occur on Saturdays.

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McDowell County Schools Inclement Weather Policy

What You Should Know

When there is the threat of snow or ice, what do you need to know before your student heads off to school? McDowell County Schools is very concerned about the safety of all of our students and staff.

There are several factors that are considered when determining to close or open the schools for the day. One is the varying road conditions throughout the county. One area might have treacherous road conditions and another part of the county may not. Another factor is the time of day. Many of the buses begin their routes shortly before 6:00 AM. Once the buses depart, we can communicate with the buses and recall them to their point of origin.

Any decision regarding the closing of school prior to opening will be made before 6:00 AM. If no decision can be made with confidence before 6:00 AM, the beginning of the school day may be delayed. Any delays will be announced as soon as possible.

Sometimes it is necessary to close the schools early due to changing weather conditions. If this is the case, the students will be released as soon as possible.

The following radio and television stations will broadcast weather information and the schedule for the next day:

Radio: WWNC (**570 AM**) Asheville; WBRM (**1250 AM**) Marion; WMNC (**1430 AM**) Morganton; WKSF (**99.9 FM**) Asheville

Television: WBTV (**TV 3**) Charlotte; WYFF (**TV 4**) Greenville; WSPA (**TV 7**) Spartanburg; WSOC (**TV 9**) Charlotte; WLOS (**TV 13**) Asheville

Additionally, the information will be posted on the McDowell County Schools Website (<http://www.mcdowell.k12.nc.us>) and the McDowell County Schools Weather Line (652-3869).

BELL SCHEDULES

(Regular Day, Half Day, Two-Hour Delay, and Three-Hour Delay)

2024 - 2025 MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY SCHEDULE

There is no Titan Pride Homeroom on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday

First Bell rings at 8:00 AM

Sprint Bell - 8:04 AM

1st period begins 8:05 AM/Tardy bell rings

1st period ends 9:42 AM

Sprint Bell - 9:45 AM

2nd period begins 9:46 AM/Tardy bell rings

2nd period ends 11:20 AM

Sprint Bell - 11:23 AM

3rd period begins 11:24 AM/Tardy bell rings

- 1st lunch: 11:24 AM 11:50 AM Tardy 11:54 AM
- 2nd lunch: 11:59 PM 12:24 PM Tardy 12:30 PM
- 3rd lunch: 12:34 PM 12:59 PM Tardy 1:06 PM

3rd period ends 1:24 PM

Sprint Bell - 1:27 PM

4th period begins 1:28 PM/Tardy bell rings

4th period ends 3:00 PM/Release bell rings

Notes: All lunch assignments subject to change according to lunchroom crowding

2024-2025 WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

Students will attend Titan Pride Homeroom on Wednesday

First Bell rings at - 8:00 AM

Sprint Bell - 8:04 AM

1st Period begins 8:05 AM/Tardy bell rings

1st Period ends 9:23

Sprint Bell - 9:27 AM

Titan Pride begins 9:28 AM

Titan Pride ends 10:13 AM

Sprint Bell - 10:17 AM

2nd Period begins 10:18 AM

2nd Period ends 11:40 AM

Sprint Bell - 11:44 AM

3rd Period begins 11:45 AM

1st Lunch - 11:40 AM - 12:06 PM Tardy at 12:10 PM

2nd Lunch - 12:11 PM - 12:36 PM Tardy at 12:40 PM

3rd Lunch - 12:41 PM - 1:07 PM Tardy at 1:11 PM

3rd Period ends 1:32 PM

Sprint Bell - 1:36 PM

4th Period begins 1:37 PM

4th Period ends 3:00 PM

***Notes:**All lunch assignments subject to change according to lunchroom crowding*

Half-Day Schedule

First Bell – 8:00

8:04 - Sprint Bell

1st period – 8:05 – 8:50

8:53 - Sprint Bell

2nd period – 8:54 – 9:44

9:47 - Sprint Bell

3rd period – 9:48 – 10:38

10:42 - Sprint Bell

4th period (Bag Lunches) – 10:42 – 11:30

11:30-Dismissal

2 Hour Delay Schedule

First Bell – 10:00

10:04 - Sprint Bell

1st Period – 10:05 – 11:00

2nd Period and Lunch – 11:04 (Tardy Tone) – 1:05

11:00 – 11:23 – 1st Lunch

11:30 – 11:53 – 2nd Lunch

12:00 – 12:23 – 3rd Lunch

12:26 – 1:05 – Go back to 2nd Period

1:08 - Sprint Bell

3rd Period – 1:09 – 2:05

2:08 - Sprint Bell

4th Period – 2:09 – 3:00

3 Hour Delay Schedule

First Bell – 11:00

11:04 - Sprint Bell

1st Period and Lunch – 11:05 – 1:00

11:00 – 11:23 – 1st Lunch

11:30 – 11:53 – 2nd Lunch

12:00 – 12:23 – 3rd Lunch

12:26 – 1:00 – Go back to 1st Period

1:03 - Sprint Bell

2nd Period – 1:04 – 1:40

1:43 - Sprint Bell

3rd Period – 1:44 – 2:20

2:23 - Sprint Bell

4th Period – 2:24 – 3:00

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Grading System

Students are graded on the basis of their individual ability as demonstrated by standardized tests, teacher's tests, daily work, projects, observations and conferences. Our goal is to place each student in the academic level class that is appropriately challenging to that student.

The grading system is as follows:

A 90-100 Superior

B 80-89 Above Average

C 70-79 Average

D 60-69 Below Average

F Below 60 Unsatisfactory

INC Incomplete

FF Lost Credit

Report Cards

Report cards are issued to every student at the end of each nine-weeks grading period. The report card will identify the student's grades, cumulative absences for each class and academic progress comments, if the subject teacher feels these are appropriate. At the end of each semester a final semester exam and a final semester grade will also be documented. Parents should keep up with their student's progress in school, anticipate when report cards will be issued and expect to see grades each grading period. Copies of report cards not given to parents by students will be made available to the parent/guardian through Student Services or any administrator, if requested.

Parents will have access to PowerSchool which will enable them to continuously monitor students progress. For further information regarding Parent Portal, please contact Debra Rector in the main office at (828) 652-7920.

Progress Reports

At the midpoint of each grading period, progress reports will be provided to students in

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each of their classes. Though each teacher should contact parents when a student is not progressing satisfactorily, parents/guardians are encouraged to anticipate when progress reports should be sent and to discuss academic progress with their child on a regular basis. Each teacher will develop a plan to ensure that progress reports are seen by the student's parent/guardian.

Parents will have access to PowerSchool which will enable them to continuously monitor students progress. For further information regarding Parent Portal, please contact the main office.

Parent Conferences

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to meet with their child's teacher(s) to discuss academic progress or other issues of concern regarding their child's educational performance. Parent conferences can be scheduled during a teacher's planning period or with all of the student's teachers after 3:15. To schedule a parent conference, please contact the student's counselor in order to set up the conference.

Transcripts

Each year, Student Services will give each student an unofficial transcript, which will be used to check academic progress and set academic goals for the next year.

Official transcripts can be obtained by going to [Need My Transcript](#).

*** Note – There is a seventy-two hour waiting period for transcript orders.**

Click [here](#) in order to obtain additional information regarding the Student Services office.

Promotion Guidelines

Promotion from grade 9 to grade 10 will require successful completion (passing grades) in a minimum of six (6) units from the required and elective course areas.

Promotion from grade 10 to grade 11 will require a minimum of twelve (12) units from the required and elective course areas.

Promotion from grade 11 to grade 12 will require a minimum of twenty (20) units from

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among the required and elective areas.

Graduation requirements for Students Entering Ninth Grade 2013-later

Please see your Guidance Counselor or refer to the following link:

[NCDPI Graduation requirements online document](#)

Graduation requirements for Students Entering Ninth Grade 2013-later

Local Graduation requirements [School Board Policy 3460](#)

Career Pathways

Please refer to the [NCDPI website](#) for information regarding the CTE Career Clusters. For additional information, students will need to meet with their Guidance Counselor.

Graduation Policies

No student may participate in graduation ceremonies unless all credit requirements as established by the Board of Education have been fully and completely attained at the time of graduation exercises. No one will be able to walk across the stage unless he/she has met all requirements. It is the intention and purpose of the McDowell County Board of Education that only students who have fully met the requirements for the diploma or the certificate be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremonies. The administration may adopt other appropriate and reasonable restrictions upon participation in graduation ceremonies provided that such restrictions meet the following criteria:

1. The restriction is properly and openly publicized or otherwise made known to students and parents.
2. Where possible and practical procedures shall include ample warning to parents and the students of possible loss of privilege. This policy is intended to preserve the dignity and prestige of the graduation ceremonies as they are designed to honor significant and culminating student achievement.
3. **All debts to the school must be paid prior to students participating in graduation ceremonies.**

Graduation and Baccalaureate Ceremonies

Graduation and Baccalaureate ceremonies are optional functions offered by the school. Students are encouraged to participate in these ceremonies. However, to insure the dignity of these programs, students who wish to participate in these ceremonies must attend all announced practices.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The Board of Education wishes to recognize those students who have attained and maintained superior levels of academic achievement. As part of that recognition, a valedictorian and salutatorian will be named each year from the graduating members of the senior class. The valedictorian shall be the member of the senior class with the highest cumulative GPA through eight semesters of high school. The salutatorian will be the student with the second highest GPA through eight semesters of high school. To be considered for these awards, a student must have attended McDowell High School for

their entire senior year and have met all graduation requirements. One exception to this final requirement would be if a family physically moves into the McDowell School District after the first day of the student's senior year. Students who open enroll or transfer to McDowell High School from a non-accredited alternative educational setting after the first day of the student's senior year are not eligible for these awards. These awards will be presented during graduation ceremonies.

Graduation Ceremony Information

Graduation Honor Cords

Meaning	Color
National Honor Society	Gold Stoles
Honor Graduate (Grade Point Average of 3.9 or above)	Red (Double) Cords
Career and Technical Education Honor Society	White (Double) Cords
International Thespian Honor Society	Gold (Double) Cords
Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society	Royal Blue and White Cords
Tri-M National Music Honor Society	Pink Cords
Varsity Athletics	Red, Blue, and Silver Cords
DECA	Blue and White Cords
Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) Officer	Navy Blue and Maroon Cords
Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) Honors	Royal Blue and Orange Cords
Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)	Royal Blue and Gold Cords

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Journalism	Maroon Cords
McDowell County Sheriff's Office Explorer Program	Olive Drab Green and Old Gold Cords
Naval Science	Silver and Navy Blue Cords
Peer Group Connection (PGC)	Kelly Green Cords
Red Cross Blood Donor or Volunteer	Red (Single) Cords
Student Council	Silver Cords
Athletic Excellence	Red, Silver and Blue Cord

Alma Mater

The first official performance of the McDowell High "Alma Mater" was on November 11, 1976, during a McDowell High School Band Concert. The first live performance of the McDowell High "Alma Mater" took place during a football game in the fall of 1976. The words were composed by Mrs. Alice Ostrom, a noted North Carolina poet, and Angela Israel, a student of Captain Ostrom. The musical score was composed by Capt. Ralph K. Ostrom, Ret. In addition to having served as band director at Marion High, Captain Ostrom studied with the United States Army Band and was director of the Tenth Division Band Training School. Captain Ostrom died in December, 1984, at the age of 76.

Alma Mater Lyrics

Amidst the mountains blue
Our alma mater stands
Where echoes fill our dreams
Of peace throughout the land
Though time should part our ways
Our hearts still turn to you
McDowell High we raise our shield
And pledge our trust anew

Returned Checks

If a check is returned without payment (non sufficient funds) a \$25 NSF fee will be charged to the payee. This NSF fee will be kept at the location to offset bank fees, service charges, handling and processing. A letter will be sent to the payee notifying them of the returned check and the NSF amount due. Additional check payments will not be accepted until the outstanding amount is paid. Once this has been cleared by the payee, they may continue to pay amounts due by check. If a second NSF check is received by a payee, no additional payments will be allowed by check. The payee will be notified via letter of the loss of check privileges

Liability for Money Owed to the School

Any money owed to the school for books, damage fees, or any other reason must be paid promptly. A record of debts owed will be kept and must be paid prior to the graduation ceremony.

Attendance and Tardies

McDowell High School will continue to emphasize productive use of instructional time. Teaching and learning are priority activities at MHS. In order for students to benefit from our strong emphasis on instruction, they must attend class regularly and be on time. Students are to observe the following procedures.

Early Dismissal

- A. Students will be allowed to sign out under the following conditions:
 - 1. Students are checked out over the telephone for the following reasons: A) doctor appointment, B) Dentist appointment, C) Court appearance. These appointments will need to be verified by an appointment card, receipt of payment or other documentation. If the documentation is not presented, the student will be considered to have left campus without permission. Check outs for personal business or events deemed non-emergency will require the parent or guardian listed on the student's personal information data card to pick them up personally. All students must be checked out in the office by a parent or designated adult.
 - 2. Students are to come by the principal's office, pick up a checkout notice from the secretary, and sign the sign-out sheet provided. A note must be brought back to the receptionist for the early dismissal to be excused.
 - 3. All students will be required to sign-in and sign-out using the Identi-Kid Security System which is located in the main office.
- B. Students who are 18 years of age or older must also have parental or guardian permission to check out of school even though they are 18 years of age.
- C. Students must NEVER leave campus without permission from the principal's office--by an administrator.

Tardies

Tardies to School and Class: The philosophy of the school is to foster teaching and learning. This cannot take place if students are not in class. If students arrive late to class, they interrupt the learning process. Acceptable tardies to school include medical excuses from a doctor or a dentist, or court appointments. Other tardies may be excused at the discretion of the administration. Students need to stop in the office when they arrive at school and use the Identi-Kid Security System to get a photo identification tardy slip made before going to class. After the 4th tardy to class, students will be referred to the office for disciplinary measures.

Student Illness at School

If a student becomes ill at school, a school official will notify the parent/guardian.

Students who are ill should report to the school secretary (or nurse) in the main office and remain there until picked up or sent back to class. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO GO TO THE RESTROOM TO STAY IF THEY ARE ILL.**

Absences

- A. Each teacher will keep an attendance record for each student in his/her class.
- B. A student must be present 75% of the class period (one hour) to be counted present for the class.
- C. Teachers will inform students of the importance of the instructional period. If students are absent from class, work made up outside the regular classroom does not provide the same opportunity for learning as work done during the regular class period.
- D. Excused Absences: Acceptable absences from school include medical excuses from a doctor or a dentist, or court appointments. Other absences may be excused at the discretion of the administration. These absences will be coded as medical.
- E. Pre-Arranged Absences: If a student must be absent for a day or more, they must bring a note from home stating the reason and the dates of the absences. The administration will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.
- F. Part-Day Absences: Once a student has arrived on school property during the school day, whether or not the instructional time has begun, the student becomes the responsibility of the school. Any student who comes on the campus must have special permission from the proper school authority in the office before leaving.
- G. Unexcused Absences: Students who are out of school for any reason other than those stated in the Appeal Policy (see Part a, 1-9) shall receive an unexcused absence.

Compulsory Attendance

As required by law, every parent or guardian residing within the school system and

having charge or control of a child between the ages of 7 and 16 years shall cause such child to attend school continuously for a period of time equal to the amount of time that the public schools are in session.

1. A student absent from school shall on his/her return to school provide a written excuse from a parent, guardian, or doctor stating the dates and reasons for absence.
2. If a written excuse is not submitted by the **third day** of attendance following the absence, the absence shall be considered **unexcused**, which shall be considered a truancy. **Excessive absences may lead to loss of credit.**
3. Parents will receive a telephone call when students are absent from a class. For students under the age of 16, the school shall notify the parent, guardian or custodian by mail that he or she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted after the 6th and 10th unexcused absence, if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the state and local board of education. The principal shall notify parents and take all other steps required by G.S. 115C-378 for excessive absences.

***Students with excused absences due to documented chronic health problems could become exempt from this policy.**

Attendance Records

1. Accurate records of student's absences and tardies are the responsibility of the teacher of the individual classes.
2. Classroom absences shall be reported to the principal's office upon the fourth and sixth unexcused absences.
3. Accumulated absences shall be recorded on the student's report card and on his/her attendance record.

Regulations and Procedures for Grades 9-12

1. Every student is expected to be present and on time every day.
2. Attendance is an essential element in the learning process. The primary responsibility of school attendance rests with students and parents. Because high

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school students receive 90 minutes of instruction in each class, good attendance is crucial. Based on these considerations, students missing more than six (excused/unexcused) days per nine weeks will not receive credit for the course and Loss of Credit (FF) will be recorded for the grade unless the time is made up.

3. Forfeiture of Credit for Non-Attendance

Forfeiture of credit for non-attendance will occur when a student accumulates more than (6) absences (excused/unexcused) in a nine weeks grading period in any class.

a) Students will not be counted absent or tardy when participating in school functions.

b) Suspensions will show in the total number of absences.

c) Students designated as homebound/medically fragile shall have the same status as students in attendance at school.

4. Forfeiture of Credit Procedures

Upon exceeding the sixth (6) absence per semester, the student forfeits credit for that grading period for the class/classes in which the excess absences have occurred. The student must continue in the class, must behave appropriately, and complete all required work. (More than 15 absences require Summer School).

Notification of Parents:

During each semester the school will notify parents as follows:

On the seventh (7th) absence, a form letter notifying the parents of loss of credit will be sent by mail. The letter will inform parents that credit will not be restored for students who have seven or more absences unless the student completes the attendance recovery program sponsored by the school system. The letter will also note that a request for an appeal must be filed within 10 school days of notification of loss of credit.

Automated calls will be made daily when students are absent from classes.

Grievances

1. A Student who believes an absence has been incorrectly ruled unexcused may appeal to the principal to have the absence reconsidered.
2. A student has the right to file a grievance according to the grievance procedures found in this handbook and in the Board of Education policy 5000 series policy 1742/5060.

Attendance Recovery at MHS

1. Attendance is vital.
2. Attendance is taken by class period.
3. Students receive an FF/Loss of Credit after receiving over 6 absences in any class. (Attendance is taken by class period)
4. Once a student has lost credit, the student will meet with the Attendance Secretary and/or Student Services to be entered into the Attendance Recovery Platform.

Students losing credit in the 2024-2025 school year will have this option:

Attend Summer School for credit recovery

Testing for College Bound Students

Most colleges require entrance tests prepared by one of the two national testing programs: (1) The SAT of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) or the American Testing Program (ACT). Refer to the college catalog of the institution to which you plan to apply to determine which entrance test to take and when to take it. Each student. Each student is responsible for determining which test he/she should take and register for it as required. Registration materials for all tests are available in the Student Services office.

SAT Date:

SAT Saturday Testing
Test Date - October 5, 2024

See your counselor if you need assistance
registering for this test.

ACT Date:

ACT Saturday Testing
Test Date-
See Pat Gross for registration information

**ACT will be given to all 11th grade students
enrolled at McDowell High School.**
Test Date-Spring 2024

PreACT provides students with a realistic ACT test experience.

PreACT™ Empowers 10th-grade Students with a Unique Practice Experience for Taking the ACT® Test. **This will be administered to all 10th grade students in October of 2024.**

PSAT/NMSQT MHS will provide students with an opportunity to take the PSAT. Sign up for this test will be in September of 2024 and the **PSAT will be on October 22, 2024.** Students must take the PSAT/NMSQT in the fall of their junior year to qualify for National Merit Scholarships.

ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) test dates will be announced at a later date. See Rachelle Roberson in Student Services for additional information.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

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In 2024-2025 , McDowell High School will offer these Advanced Placement Courses: AP Pre Calculus, AP Calculus AB and BC, AP Language and Composition, AP Literature, AP Environmental, AP Biology, AP United States History, AP Government, and AP World History. This is a national cooperative educational endeavor offering college level course work at the secondary level. Participating in colleges grant credit and appropriate placement to students who have done well on the AP examinations. All MHS students are eligible to take these courses if they meet the grade level and prerequisite requirements. **All AP exams will be administered during the spring semester of 2025. Students will register to take the test at the beginning of their AP course(s). Any student who does not take the exam after registration will be assessed a \$40 cancellation fee that must be paid prior to graduation.**

Required Assessments

NC Check Ins and End-of-Course Tests, CTE Post Assessments, ACT Workkeys, and Teacher Made Exams- January and June

PreAct - Fall (grade 10) and ACT - Spring (grade 11)

Scholastic Requirements for Athletic Participation

Students participating on high school athletic teams must have passed a minimum of three out of four courses and have been in attendance 85% of the time (77 out of 90 days) during the preceding academic semester. If students are registered for five classes (extra class at MTCC), they must pass a minimum of four out of five classes each semester.

Additional Academic Information

Specific academic information on a variety of programs and procedures are available in the Student Services office. See your counselor for information related to the **North Carolina Scholars Program**, the **UNC Admissions Requirements**, guidelines for **Weighted Courses**, **McDowell Technical Community College Cooperative Program** or **College Transfer Program**, **Governor's School**, **NCAA Athletic Clearinghouse Requirements**, **North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics**, and the annual **College Career Night** at the Asheville Mall.

Academic Honors

(The National Honor Society)

Membership in the National Honors Society is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a high school student and one that represents hard work and commitment to excellence. Membership is based upon four qualifications. These are scholarship, character, service, leadership; teacher recommendations are an important aspect of the selection for membership. To be eligible for election to membership the candidates must be juniors or seniors and must have been in attendance for at least one semester or more at McDowell High School. Election to membership is by chapter council, which consists of the principal and members of the faculty council chosen by the principal. A National Honor Society member must maintain the standards for membership in order to remain a member. Listed below are four qualifications upon which membership for juniors and seniors is based.

Scholarship: A student must have a 3.9 or higher overall scholastic average. In addition to the grade point average, a student must meet certain course requirements:
College Requirements for Induction:

- 3 Units of English
- 3 Units of Social Studies
- 3 Units of Math (having taken one course that has Math III as a prerequisite)
- 3 Units of Science (which include Earth/Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or Advanced Science)

Course Requirements for Continued Membership:

- 1 Unit of English
- 2 Units of Foreign Language
- At least 1 additional Advanced, Advanced Placement (AP) or college level course in the area of Math, Science, English, Social Studies, Computers, or Foreign

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Language.

Leadership: A student must show leadership qualifications in school and community.

Character: A student must be of good moral character. Aspects of character include honesty, responsibility, fairness, courtesy, cooperation and tolerance. Continued membership of students who have office referrals requiring disciplinary action resulting in ISD constitute removal from that office. If elected to an office, offenses resulting in ISD constitute removal from that office. Disciplinary offenses that result in OSS referrals constitute grounds for disqualification and dismissal from the chapter.

Service: A student must be able to render service to his fellow man. Service also includes contributions made to school, classmates and community.

The National Honors Society meets once a month in Mrs. Hudson classroom (C31). Attendance at these meetings is required. Failure to attend NHS meetings results in a student being listed as not in good standing. The status of not in good standing results in the losing of the National Honor Society Cord which is worn during graduation.

* The annual induction ceremony is held each spring and seniors who meet the requirements after their junior year will be notified of membership in the fall of their spring year.

The CTE Honor Society

The CTE Honor Society requires that members and prospective members meet the following guidelines:

1. Has taken or is in the process of taking a minimum of two units of vocational credit.
2. Has a 3.0 or above overall GPA
3. Has a 3.5 or above CTE GPA
4. Exhibits good conduct.
5. Mandatory attendance at the induction ceremony.

Junior Marshals

Junior Marshal nominees demonstrate commitment to academics and integrity. Nominees must have earned the top twenty-five GPA positions in their class. In the

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event of a grade-point tie, there may be more than twenty-five Marshals.

No student will be nominated to serve as a Junior Marshal if he/she has violated the Honor Code or has presented serious discipline problems. Marshals are expected to participate in both the Baccalaureate and Commencement services during the graduation process.

Because Junior Marshals assist during graduation exercises, appropriate dress will be required. Parents and Marshals will be notified of this singular honor in a timely fashion in order to acquire the proper attire and make plans to attend the ceremonies.

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Carver in C-12.

Code of Student Conduct:

School-Wide Discipline Plan

Introductory Statement

McDowell County Schools Student Code of Conduct

McDowell High School will operate on the premise that every student has the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach. As in any society, it is necessary to have certain rules and regulations that must be obeyed. Eighteen-year-olds have adult rules; however, all students will be governed by the same rules. In order to guarantee the excellent learning climate you deserve and we expect, the following rules and methods of discipline will be enforced.

Any student found on school grounds outside of regular school hours without permission of a school official may be subject to discipline. This could include school suspension, out of school suspension, trespassing charges, and include law enforcement. School officials reserve the right to modify or alter methods of discipline at any time.

Methods of Discipline

Restitution

Restitution refers to the act of correcting a disciplinary infraction by restoring that which had been harmed. Through restitution a student should be able to restore a situation to its former condition or position. Teachers and administrators may assign restitution to correct minor infractions or the discipline code. Students who fail to complete the assigned restitution will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Lunch Detention

Students will get their lunch and report to ISD to complete their detention time.

In-School Detention

In-School Detention (ISD) is an alternative to Out-Of-School-Suspension (OSS). A student is excluded from attending regular classes but not from attending school and is required to do assignments developed by his/her teachers. Principals and Assistant Principals shall notify parents in writing whenever a student is assigned to ISD. NOTE: ALL SCHOOL RULES APPLY IN ISD.

1. Students can be assigned a partial or full day of ISD at administration's discretion.
2. If a student is absent while assigned ISD or is dismissed during the day, the

student must report to ISD upon returning to school to complete the remaining assigned ISD time.

3. If a student and his/her parents decide that it would be in the best interest of the student to take a day of OSS instead of ISD, the student will be required to complete this ISD assignment upon returning from OSS.
4. All work must be completed before a student is released from the ISD program. Failure to complete work in a timely manner will result in extended ISD or be suspended out of school.
5. The student will be counted present at school while serving ISD and will get credit for completed assignments.
6. If the student fails to comply with ISD rules, he/she may receive extended ISD or be suspended out of school.

Rules for In-School Detention include:

1. Completion of all assigned work.
2. No talking.
3. Remain seated.
4. No sleeping.

Alternative to Suspension

The Alternative to Suspension (ATS) program is designed to give the student an opportunity to address the decisions that led to his or her suspension and an opportunity to repair his / her relationship with the school community.

1. Students who have been suspended may be assigned up to half of their suspension in the Alternative to Suspension Program.
2. Students and Parents will be provided with the ATS contract detailing ATS guidelines and expectations.
3. Students remain in the ATS classroom during this time.
4. Students will complete work as well as work from the ASPIRE program depending upon reason to be placed in ATS.
5. If a student fails to comply with ATS guidelines, he/she will serve the remainder of his/her time as Out-of-School Suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-School Suspension(OSS) is a means of discipline as prescribed in the school-wide discipline plan. While certain discipline offenses require OSS as the consequence for the first infraction, the administration wishes to reserve OSS as a final resort to correct problems with student discipline.

1. Students receiving OSS are not allowed on school grounds or at any school

function during the days or nights of the suspension.

2. Upon returning to school students have days equal to the suspension to make up work missed during suspension. Student and parent or guardian MUST meet with the Principal the morning of return.

Confiscation

Any student's property, which disrupts the learning environment, will be removed from that student's possession.

Isolation

The teacher has the authority to remove disruptive or dangerous students. Students may be removed from regular class activities and placed under adult supervision.

Parent Contact/Conference

Teachers, counselors and administrators may contact parents by telephone or letter in an effort to inform parents of student misconduct which should be brought to their attention. They may also request a parent conference.

Personal Intervention

When a pupil experiences repeated problems in school, school officials may refer the student to a school counselor and/or psychologist.

Student Conference

Conferences may be held between a student and teacher. If a problem becomes more serious, an administrator may confer with the student and/or teacher.

Suspension from Extracurricular Activities

A student may be suspended from participating in any or all extra-curricular activities, including graduation and baccalaureate.

Suspension from Bus Privileges

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. A student may be suspended from bus privileges if the student does not meet the requirements for riding a bus or for other violations of the standards of expected behavior.

Suspension from Parking Privileges

Parking on campus is a privilege, not a right. A student may be suspended from parking on campus.

Long Term Suspension

A long-term suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for a full 365. A 365 day suspension may be imposed for certain offenses as specified in Policy 4300 in “Standards of Expected Student Behavior/Engaging in Antisocial Behavior/Assault, Injury and Weapons and Weapon Like Item.” A 365-day suspension must be approved by the Board of Education prior to its implementation.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from the school and all rights and privileges related to school attendance. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the board may expel a student who is fourteen years of age or older if the student’s behavior indicates that his/her continued presence in school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees.

Discipline Level System

Failure to follow documented school rules will result in consequences as outlined in the following level system.

Note:

ANY ACT COMMITTED BY A STUDENT THAT IS NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED WILL BE HANDLED INDIVIDUALLY BY THE ADMINISTRATION. ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MODIFY ANY OF THE CONSEQUENCES OR SEQUENCES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Expectations of Students

All students are expected to come to class with paper, pencil/pen, and required work materials. Students should participate appropriately in class so that learning time is maximized for all students. Students are to be alert and awake in their classes. Also, all students are expected to be self-disciplined and serious concerning their education. Students are to maintain academic integrity by doing their own work or citing the work of others in an appropriate manner. Failure to meet these expectations will result in consequences from the classroom teacher according to the teacher's classroom discipline plan. Students who repeatedly hinder learning in the classroom, jeopardize academic integrity, or come unprepared to learn will be referred to an administrator who will assign Temporary Suspension until an administrator can have a parent conference.

Referral Process

When a student is referred to the office for a general rule violation:

1. A student/administrator conference will be held to discuss the referral.
2. If a violation has taken place, discipline will be given in accordance with school policy.
3. All students will be given a copy of the discipline referral documenting the infraction and discipline consequences.
4. Parents/guardians of offenders will be contacted by an administrator to inform him/her of their child's inappropriate behavior and the potential consequences.

Below is the link to the McDowell County Schools Student Code of Conduct. McDowell County Schools focuses on our students, their safety and overall success.

[McDowell County Schools Student Code of Conduct](#)

Please note the following:

- Except in extreme incidents, administration expects faculty members to follow the discipline matrix shared at the beginning of school which means that teachers must go through the identified interventions before referring most incidents to administration. This excludes serious infractions such as fighting, drugs, bullying, etc.

- **The Administration reserves the right to determine consequences based on the seriousness of a particular infraction and/or previous discipline record of the student who commits the offense.**
- Students who are absent from ISD will make up their ISD time upon returning to school.
- Serious incidents of classroom disruption may be referred to administration upon the 1st offense.

Attendance-Related Discipline Offenses

1. Leaving school grounds without permission.
2. Failure to follow sign-in and sign-out procedures.
3. Truancy-absent from school without parental knowledge.
4. Class Cut-students who fail to report to their assigned class and students who are out of class for more than ten (10) minutes.
5. Cutting or Skipping class
6. Tardy to Class-students are expected to report to first period by 8:05 A.M. Failure to do so results in a tardy to school. Students arriving after 8:05 must sign-in at the Main Office and provide a note from their parent/guardian or doctor's office. A tardy resulting from a doctor's appointment, court appearance, or circumstances beyond the student's control, will not be subject to this tardy policy provided the students presents acceptable documentation to the Main Office personnel. Each student who signs in at the Main Office will receive a note admitting the student to class. Students will be required to use the Identi-Kid Security System.

Offenses Related to Misuse of Electronic Devices

McDowell County Schools Cell Phone Policy can be located on page 8 of the MCS Student Code of Conduct.

[McDowell County Schools Student Code of Conduct](#)

It is the policy of McDowell High School and the McDowell County School Board that the use of cell phones (including text messaging) **is strictly prohibited during instructional time.** Cell phones must not be visible or audible during instructional time. Teachers and administrators may authorize individual students to use the devices for instructional purposes, provided that they supervise the students during each use. Students needing to place an emergency call should secure a pass from their teacher and use the designated telephone in

the Student Services office.

Cell phones may be visible during non-instructional time such as lunch and hallways.

External Audio Devices

Student possession and/or use of external audio devices (ie. Bluetooth speakers) on school grounds or the school bus are prohibited.

Other Electronic Devices

Student use of electronic devices including, but not limited to, CD's, MP3 Players, IPODS in the classroom is prohibited during instructional times.

Missing Class Without Permission

When a student is in school he/she is expected to be in each class regardless of his/her standing in class (failing or loss of credit). Failure to be in class will result in consequences as outlined in the School-Wide Discipline Plan. This includes, but is not limited to, class cuts, leaving class without the teacher's permission and arriving to class more than ten minutes late without a valid note.

Possession and Use of Tobacco Products

McDowell High School is a tobacco-free campus. In accordance with NC General Statute 115C-407, tobacco products are not to be used on campus by anyone at any time. Specifically, students will not be permitted to use or possess tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia while on school grounds, in the school building, on buses, or during any time when students are under the direct administrative jurisdiction of the school, whether on or off the school grounds. This includes e-cigarettes.

Student Dress Code Policy

STUDENT DRESS CODE (Policy #4316-R)

The following dress code applies to students at **ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN MCDOWELL COUNTY:**

1. The length of dresses, skirts, and shorts must reach at least **mid-thigh**.
2. Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at the waist.

3. Undergarments must not be exposed.
4. The following clothing and/or items are not allowed:
 - See-through clothing
 - Tops that expose the front, back, and/or side of the torso, including slit sides, completely bare shoulders, spaghetti straps, halter tops, muscle shirts, half shirts, etc.
 - Pants or shorts that have holes above mid-thigh
 - Spike bracelets or necklaces
 - Bedroom shoes/slippers
 - Pajamas
5. Hoods that cover the face and bandanas are not to be worn in the school building during the instructional day. Items worn may be confiscated by the administration.
6. No clothing disruptive or detrimental to the instructional process is allowed. This includes attire that displays alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco products or promotes violence, hatred, or intolerance.
7. Shoes are to be worn at all times.
8. Sunglasses are not to be worn in the school building.

*School officials have the authority and responsibility to determine whether a student's appearance satisfies the intent of this policy. **Anything that disrupts the learning environment will be deemed unacceptable.** The administration will ask the student to change or adjust clothing as necessary. The administration has the final authority to deem attire as appropriate. Students are required to follow the dress code outlined in their school handbook.

NOTE:

- The administration shall have the authority to determine when personal appearance and dress style do not meet school standards. In these instances, the administration may require the student to either change clothing or be sent home.
- The administration may allow exceptions to this dress code only on special occasions, such as holidays, pep rallies, and special performances. The administration may further prescribe additional dress requirements appropriate to certain classes, such as physical education, career and technical education (CTE), and science classes.

Public Display of Affection

While high school clearly offers a social element, public displays of affection between students have no place during school hours. Public displays of affection will be limited to holding hands.

Student Misconduct

Though teachers have implemented a code of conduct in their classrooms, some behaviors distract so greatly from the learning environment that the student must be removed from the classroom or hallways. In these cases the nature of the disruption calls for administrative assistance.

1. Willful act of disruption of school or behavior that has increased potential harm to students or staff.
2. Vulgarity, profanity, or inappropriate gestures directed toward another student or staff.
3. Forgery, including forging school forms, forging parent signature, forging faculty/staff signature.
4. Failure to pay for lunchroom items. For clarity, all food/drink items in the cafeteria must be clearly visible on the lunchroom tray at all times; otherwise, it gives the impression of theft.
5. Repeated disruptions to class even after teacher or administrator has contacted the parent or guardian.
6. Disrespect shown toward official visitors, whether they be observers, speakers, entertainers, or other honored guests of McDowell High School.
7. Possession of pornographic materials (printed or electronic)
8. Defiance of any school official-failure to comply with reasonable requests of teacher, staff, or administrator.

If you encounter problems dealing with other students, it is recommended for you to consult an administrator or a Student Services counselor before the problem gets out of hand and you are unable to handle the situation without making a poor choice.

Computer-Related Disciplinary Offenses

The McDowell County Board of Education recognizes the importance of electronic resources to learning and it is the intention of the Board to ensure widespread access to these resources for students and staff. It is essential that computers and networks be protected from misuse and abuse by users so they can serve their instructional purpose. Engaging in behavior that damages communications equipment and/or programs or

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interferes with use of electronic resources by others will not be tolerated.

These procedures will be implemented in conjunction with the applicable school and district discipline policies contained in the student handbook and/or district policy manuals (i.e. “cyberbullying” is bullying). It is understood that each case of inappropriate use is subject to administration review to determine if there is a need for further action including possible suspension or expulsion.

Note: In sections relating to penalties below, restriction of computer privileges means that the student may be allowed to participate in closely supervised, teacher-led computer activities with direct relevance to the North Carolina Course of Study; no independent research or activity will be allowed. In sections relating to penalties below, any traditional discipline procedure supported by current school district policy may include, but is not limited to detention, out of school suspension, or expulsion.

All Computer related offenses should be reported to the Digital Learning Coordinator. The Digital Learning Coordinator will investigate the infraction, determine what level of the infraction, and will administer restrictions to use or involve administration.

For General Violations

It will be at the discretion of the controlling authority (teacher or site administrator or both) to determine if a general violation of acceptable use has occurred. General violations are violations that do not fall under the definition of serious violations. If a general violation has occurred, the following will be used to provide consistency in disciplinary action taken, yet allow for differences in disciplinary actions available in the various buildings and grade levels. The teacher or librarians’ in-class disciplinary actions should be based on the rules they publish for their classes.

Serious Violations

Serious violations are those that substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the orderly process in the classroom, the school, or any school-related activities and may include criminal activity. Serious violations will be handled on a case by case basis by the school administrator and/or superintendent. Offenses of this nature need not follow the escalating procedure listed above due to the overriding need to protect computer-users, equipment, resources, data, and services. Serious violations may result in, but are not limited to the following

consequences based on the rules they publish for their classes.

General Rules for Computer Usage

The following guidelines apply for all computer usage in McDowell County Schools, and will help ensure that computers are only used for curriculum and work-related purposes. Other guidelines may be added at the discretion of the school Technology Committee.

Students may not:

1. Have food and/or drinks in close vicinity to computer equipment.
2. Play games on school system computer equipment unless directly related to class assignments.
3. Use computers without permission.
4. Intentionally alter the desktop in any way, including adding/deleting icons, changing wallpaper or screensavers, or changing settings or resolution.
5. Intentionally disconnect any peripheral such as a mouse, keyboard, printers, monitors, or speakers.
6. Turn a computer off or on or restart it without permission.

Serious Computer Usage Violations

Students may not:

1. Intentionally access inappropriate materials on the Internet.
2. Use communication applications, such as instant messaging software, threaded discussions and chat rooms unless directly related to class assignments and used with the knowledge and supervision of a teacher.
3. Change or modify any software settings.
4. Install, uninstall or copy software unless serving as lab technicians and under the supervision of a teacher.
5. Possess virus creating software, software containing sexually explicit graphics or violent content, or software designed to obtain passwords.
6. Delete files, folders or directories from a hard drive or floppy disk without the author's permission.
7. Download files unless part of a class assignment.
8. Browse or modify any configuration on a computer without permission of the teacher.
9. Be in DOS unless part of a class assignment and under the supervision of a teacher.
10. Should not access another student's chromebook or teacher computer for

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any reason.

Note: Any act such as deleting or altering network files or configurations, planting a virus on a network, running software designed to access passwords, or performing any act which leads to significant damage to network operations may result in OSS, referral to law enforcement and expulsion for up to 365 days.

If abuse of computers, peripherals or networks causes damage, which is permanent or requires repair or replacement, the student will be liable for any changes and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

McDowell County Public School System Access to Electronic Resources/Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

The McDowell County Board of Education recognizes that access to electronic resources, including access to the internet is now a fundamental to the preparation of successful citizens. Furthermore, we recognize that emerging technologies allow information to be accessed, analyzed, evaluated, communicated and transferred in ways which, if used effectively and appropriately within a school environment, dramatically enhance the administrative, teaching, and learning opportunities for students, administrators, faculty and staff. This affording students the opportunity to construct meaning from assignments and share that meaning with others rather than simply submitting an assignment or project to the teacher.

The Board supports access by students and staff to appropriate electronic network resources and encourages staff members to seek development activities, which augment their ability to utilize the available resources effectively with students.

To enhance student learning and teaching, electronic resources will be used:

1. To support the McDowell County Schools' Curriculum, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study/Common Core, the Career & Technical Education Program of Study, and the "Future Ready Students" goals and objectives of the North Carolina State Board of Education.
2. To demonstrate, promote, and practice accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and communicating information appropriately and effectively.
3. To demonstrate, promote, and practice lifelong learning.

While we believe that access to electronic resources is a fundamental part of every child's education and that the benefits to students far exceed the disadvantages, we

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support and respect each family's right to deny electronic services to their student by submitting an "opt-out" form.

Each child will be given access to a personal or class electronic mail account, a school web portal account, the Internet, and a network/computer login unless the parent or guardian completes the *Parental Request to Deny Access to Electronic Resources Form*.

This form is available online and at each school and can be completed and returned to your child's principal at any time.

NOTE: Any electronic file or application created using McDowell County Schools' electronic resources are the property of McDowell County Schools.

Acceptable Use

McDowell County Schools' computers and networks are to be used in a responsible, efficient and legal manner. Use of computers and networks to access resources and facilities is limited to McDowell County Schools' administrative, instructional, or limited non-academic purposes. (Personal use for non-academic interests such as reading news feeds or sending personal mail is a lower priority, and is allowed so long as it does not displace or disrupt instructional activities, research, or administrative tasks.)

Inappropriate use of computers and networks will result in disciplinary action and possible limitation of user privileges.

A good rule to follow is never view, send or access materials, which you would not want your parents or teachers to see. Here are some additional rules to follow:

1. Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work
2. Do not damage or alter a computer's network in any way
3. Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing unauthorized software, shareware or freeware
4. Do not use computers or the network for commercial or campaign purposes
5. Do not store, view, send or display offensive messages or pictures
6. Do not display or share your password or offer access to any person via your account
7. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number of those of other students or colleagues
8. Do not waste limited resources such as bandwidth, disk space or printing capacity
9. Do not trespass in another's files, folders or work
10. Do not be a "Cyberbully" (i.e. bullying by posting slanderous comments on, or by uploading embarrassing or harassing photographs or videos to, social networking sites)
11. Do not use network resources , personal computers, calculators, handhelds,

- wireless messaging devices, scanners, digital cameras, or camcorders to cheat or plagiarize, for unauthorized surveillance, or to avoid performing assignments
12. Do notify an adult or superior immediately if you encounter materials or actions which violate the rules for appropriate use
 13. Do be prepared to be held accountable for your actions

In addition, all applicable laws and board policies apply. Any use that violates state or federal laws is strictly prohibited. General school rules for behavior and communications apply as outlined in Board Policy 4300, Code of Student Conduct.

Internet Access

The use of the Internet is an integral part of learning and teaching. Through the Internet, students, teachers and staff are able to access current information from news media, businesses, libraries, educational and research institutions, government agencies and a variety of other sources. In addition, students, teachers and staff may benefit from engaging in communications with individuals and groups around the world via blogs, wikis, chats, podcasts, rss feeds, webinars, video-conferencing and electronic mail, as well as from participating in projects with other schools. It is important that students know where and how to find content relative to their needs and that they gain skills for collaboratively constructing, using and communicating knowledge safely and effectively. The board believes that the educational opportunities provided through access to the Internet far outweigh the possibility that users may encounter inappropriate material. However, users (and parents of users, if the user is under 18 years old) must be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may not be related to the educational program or may contain items that are inappropriate, inaccurate, defamatory, illegal or offensive. The school system does not condone the use of such materials and will take reasonable precautions to prevent students from having access to inappropriate materials, such as violence, nudity, obscenity or graphic language that does not serve a legitimate pedagogical purpose.

The school system will install or will ensure that its Internet service provider installs a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access to audio or visual depictions that are obscene, that are considered child pornography or that are harmful to minors. School officials may disable such filters for an adult who uses a school-owned computer for bona fide research or other lawful educational purpose. The school system will not seek to limit access to the Internet for the purpose of restricting access to political ideas or social perspectives if the limitation is due to a school system official's disapproval of the ideas involved.

The Board denies responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its Internet access services.

Electronic Mail

Students will be assigned individual or group “student-specific” Gaggle™ email accounts, depending on grade level, which incorporate electronic content filtering (text and images) and human monitoring. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. Individuals designated by the superintendent have access to electronic mail systems. The school district may monitor electronic communication to ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to authorities.

Web Portal

The web-based school/school system content/learning management system fosters improved communication between parents, students and staff and allows access to system, school, course and personal resources including electronic lockers, calendars, announcements, message boards, quizzes and chats. A user account is required in order to utilize the advanced features of the system. The school system makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for this service.

Privacy

No right of privacy exists in the use of technological resources. The Gaggle™ email accounts assigned to students incorporate electronic content filtering (text and images) and human monitoring. Individuals designated by the superintendent have access to electronic mail systems. School system administrators or individuals designated by the superintendent may review files, monitor all communication and intercept email messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure compliance with board policy and applicable laws and regulations. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to authorities. The school system will monitor online activities of minors who access the Internet via a school-owned computer.

Personal Websites

Though the school system generally does not monitor students’ Internet activity conducted on non-school system computers during non-school hours, when the student’s online behavior has a direct and immediate effect on school safety or maintaining order and discipline in the schools, the student may be disciplined in accordance with board policy (see the Student Behavior Policies in the 4300s).

Vandalism Liability

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, hide, remove or destroy equipment, programs, and/or data files. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading of any computer materials without permission. Any user who damages equipment or systems by malicious, negligent or irresponsible conduct shall be financially liable for the cost of repairs. The Board may seek criminal prosecution and take legal action.

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when a system involves many users. Students identifying a security problem or risk should immediately and discreetly notify a teacher. Do not demonstrate the problem to others.

Management and administration of computer and network access, user accounts, usernames and passwords, is the domain of the McDowell County Schools' Technology Department or superintendent's designee.

Account owners are responsible for all actions and functions performed under his/her account. Unauthorized access to any computer account, system, program, file, user area or other private repository is prohibited. To preserve the security of accounts, users are expected to act responsibly by:

- Logging off the computer, network or online applications when not in use
- Reporting breaches of network security to a teacher or principal/supervisor

District administrators and/or individuals designated by the superintendent may review files and electronic communications at any time to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly. Files stored on district computer equipment or web portals are not guaranteed to be private. Note that any electronic file or application created using McDowell County Schools' electronic resources are the property of McDowell County Schools. All users have the responsibility to protect the privacy of other users. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activity may be reported to authorities.

Offenses Related to the MHS Honor Code

The Honor Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at McDowell High School to obey

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and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code. The Honor Code is directed specifically at academic processes and prohibits cheating and plagiarism under the section entitled, Honor Code violations.

Why Have an Honor Code?

At McDowell High School, we envision a learning environment in which freedom and dignity for every individual allows the growth of lifelong learning. Real and lasting learning does not occur unless a learner experiences personal success, develops self-motivation and becomes an independent thinker through honest efforts. Therefore, we believe that violating the honor code prepares a student for failure. By establishing this honor code, faculty and administration at McDowell High School indicate their commitment to eliminate all acts of violating the honor code and to deal with offenses in a firm and decisive manner. It is our goal to foster self-respect, as well as mutual respect, and to encourage students to develop their abilities, individual judgment and a sense of moral and social responsibility so that they might become useful members of society.

Honor Code Violations

1. Using another person's work as your own.
2. Allowing another student to copy your work.
3. Copying information from another student's test, examination, theme, book report, term paper, homework, class work, or any other assignment, and using it as your own.
4. Plagiarizing: Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas, expression, or words without giving the original author proper credit. Each teacher will present specific and detailed information about plagiarism. One example of plagiarism would be: presenting information in your research paper that you have learned from one of the sources that you read. In presenting this information you neglect to give credit to the original author by citing that thought using the prescribed MLA format. This would be a violation of the Honor Code. There are other examples that will be covered by each teacher when they bring a paper in their class.
5. Preparing for cheating in advance. Such action involves the possession or use of a test or notes during a quiz, test, or examination.
6. Talking or failing to follow teacher directions during a test.

What are the Responsibilities of Individual Teachers?

It is the responsibility of each teacher to carefully explain to every class what is expected in completing homework and all other assignments. If collaboration is

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allowed on any assignment, the teacher will make that clear to students. This will also be communicated to the students in writing as part of the academic plan given at the beginning of the year. Each teacher will present specific and detailed information about plagiarism.

What are the Responsibilities of Individual Students?

It is each student's responsibility to adhere to this code. If there is a question as to what constitutes an honor code violation, the student must seek answers from the appropriate teacher. When a student turns in an assignment, test, or final draft of a paper, he/she is affirming that the work is original and that any information from other sources is properly acknowledged (MLA format). It is the responsibility of the student to always follow the directions of the teacher for the given assignment.

How Will Honor Code Violations Be Proven?

Honor Code violations may be proven under any of the following conditions:

1. A teacher or administrator or designee personally observes an act of violating the honor code as defined above.
2. A student admits to a teacher that he/she has committed an honor code violation.

When a teacher determines to his/her satisfaction that an honor code violation has taken place, he/she will report the violation to the principal, or his designee, who will take appropriate action.

Note: For the purpose of determining the correct punishment level, honor code violations accumulate during 9th - 12th grade but do not become a part of the student's permanent record.

What is the Student Procedure for Appeal?

1. The student may request a review before the honor code review committee to appeal the decision of the principal or designee.
2. The student may appeal the decision of the honor code review committee to the Superintendent of Schools.
3. The student may appeal the decision of the Superintendent to the McDowell County Board of Education.

Who Makes Up the Committee?

1. The principal or designee who will conduct the hearing.
2. A guidance counselor
3. Two teacher representatives from CTE.H.S. and N.H.S. , the department

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- chair of the teacher involved or designee.
4. A student body officer.

Serious Student Misconduct

Drugs and Alcohol

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, selling or being under the influence of any of the following substances:

1. narcotic drugs;
2. hallucinogenic drugs;
3. amphetamines;
4. barbiturates;
5. marijuana or any other controlled substance;
6. synthetic stimulants, such as MDPV and mephedrone (e.g., “bath salts”), and
7. synthetic cannabinoids (e.g., “Spice,” “K2”);
8. any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified or unfortified wine or other
9. intoxicating liquor; or
10. any chemicals, substances or products procured or used with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration or euphoria or otherwise altering the student’s mood or behavior.

Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs. Students may not participate in any way in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property.

Possession or use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is not in violation of this policy if such drugs are possessed and used in accordance with policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students. The principal may authorize other lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy, such as for approved school projects.

Weapons

The board will not tolerate the presence of weapons or destructive devices, bomb or terrorist threats, or actions that constitute a clear threat to the safety of students or employees. Any student who violates this policy will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

Prohibited Behavior (Weapons and Weapon-Like Items)

Students are prohibited from possessing, handling, using or transmitting, whether concealed or open, any weapon or any instrument that reasonably looks like a weapon or could be used as a weapon.

Weapons include all of the following:

- a. loaded and unloaded firearms, including guns, pistols and rifles;
- b. destructive devices as described in subsection B.2 of this policy, including explosives, such as dynamite cartridges, bombs, grenades and mines;
- c. knives, including pocket knives, bowie knives, switchblades, dirks and daggers;
- d. slingshots and slingshots;
- e. leaded canes;
- f. blackjacks;
- g. metal knuckles;
- h. BB guns;
- i. air rifles and air pistols;
- j. stun guns and other electric shock weapons, such as tasers;
- k. icepicks;
- l. razors and razor blades (except those designed and used solely for personal shaving);
- m. fireworks; and
- n. any sharp pointed or edged instruments except unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for preparation of food, instruction and maintenance.

Examples of other objects that may be considered weapons are box cutters and other types of utility blades and blowguns.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to possess, handle or use any of the weapons or weapon-like items listed above. A student who finds a weapon or weapon-like item, who witnesses another student or other person with such an item, or who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to possess, handle or use such an item must notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

This section does not apply to board-approved and -authorized activities for which the board has adopted appropriate safeguards to protect student safety.

Bomb Threats

Students are prohibited from making, aiding and/or abetting in making a bomb

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threat or perpetrating a bomb hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device designed to cause damage or destruction by explosion, blasting or burning is located on school property.

No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a bomb, make a bomb threat or perpetrate a bomb hoax must notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

Terrorist Threats

Students are prohibited from making, aiding, conspiring and/or abetting in making a terrorist threat or perpetrating a terrorist hoax against school system property by making a false report that a device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening injury to another person is located on school property. No student may knowingly or willfully cause, encourage or aid another student to make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax. Any student who becomes aware that another student or other person intends to use a device, substance or material designed to cause harmful or life-threatening illness or injury to another person, make a terrorist threat or perpetrate a terrorist hoax must notify a teacher or the principal immediately.

Clear Threats to Student and Employee Safety

Students are prohibited from engaging in behavior that constitutes a clear threat to the safety of other students or employees. Behavior constituting a clear threat to the safety of others includes, but is not limited to:

- a. theft or attempted theft by a student from another person by using or threatening to use a weapon;
- b. the intentional and malicious burning of any structure or personal property, including any vehicle;
- c. an attack or threatened attack by a student against another person wherein the student uses a weapon or displays a weapon in a manner found threatening to that person;
- d. an attack by a student on any employee, adult volunteer or other student that does not result in serious injury but that is intended to cause or reasonably could cause serious injury;
- e. an attack by a student on another person whereby the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury, such as broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injuries, laceration requiring stitches, loss of

consciousness, or significant bruising or pain; or whereby the victim requires hospitalization or treatment in a hospital emergency room as a result of the attack;

- f. any intentional, highly reckless or negligent act that results in the death of another person;
- g. confining, restraining or removing another person from one place to another, without the victim's consent or the consent of the victim's parent, for the purpose of committing a felony or for the purpose of holding the victim as a hostage, for ransom, or for use as a shield;
- the possession of a weapon on any school property, including in a vehicle, with the intent to use or transmit for another's use or possession in a reckless manner so that harm is reasonably foreseeable;
- i. taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody or control of another person or persons, by force, threat of force, or violence, or by putting the victim in fear;
- j. any unauthorized and unwanted intentional touching, or attempt to touch, by one person of the sex organ of another, including the breasts of the female and the genital areas of the male and female;
- k. the possession, manufacture, sale or delivery, or any attempted sale or delivery, of a controlled substance in violation of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes;
- l. any behavior resulting in a felony conviction on a weapons, drug, assault or other charge that implicates the safety of other persons; and
- m. any other behavior that demonstrates a clear threat to the safety of others in the school environment.

Assaults, Threats and Harassment

The board will not tolerate assaults, threats or harassment from any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

1. Assault

Students are prohibited from assaulting, physically injuring, attempting to injure or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause injury to any other person. Assault includes engaging in a fight.

A student will not fight or attempt to cause bodily harm to another student through physical contact. If a student is attempting to involve another student in a fight, the other student should walk away and report it to a teacher or

administrator. A student who instigates a fight or who conveys messages between two students that result in a fight will be subject to the same consequences as the student(s) who is/are actually involved in the fight. If a student fights another student on campus the student will be charged with either disorderly conduct: disruption of the school day.

2. Threatening Acts

Students are prohibited from directing toward any other person any language that threatens force, violence or disruption, or any sign or act that constitutes a threat of force, violence or disruption. Bomb and terrorist threats are also addressed in policy 4333, Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats and Clear Threats to Safety.

3. Harassment

Students are prohibited from engaging in or encouraging any form of harassment, including bullying of students, employees or other individuals on school grounds or at school-related functions. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcome and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. The hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident if sufficiently severe.

Harassment and bullying are further defined in policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying. Complaints of harassment will be investigated pursuant to policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure. For incidents of misbehavior that do not rise to the level of harassment, see policy 4310, Integrity and Civility, which establishes the expectation that students will demonstrate civility and integrity in their interactions with others.

Theft, Trespass, and Damage to Property

The board will not tolerate theft, trespass or damage to property by any student. Any student engaging in such behavior will be removed from the classroom or school environment for as long as is necessary to provide a safe and orderly environment for learning.

1. Theft

Students are prohibited from stealing or attempting to steal school or private property and/or from knowingly being in possession of stolen property.

2. Damage to Property

Students are prohibited from damaging or attempting to damage school or private property.

3. Trespass

Students are prohibited from trespassing on school property. A student will be considered a trespasser and may be criminally prosecuted in any of the following circumstances:

- a. the student is on the campus of a school to which he or she is not assigned during the school day without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school;
- b. the student is loitering at any school after the close of the school day without any specific need or supervision; or
- c. the student has been suspended from school but is on the property of any school during the suspension

Tobacco Products

The board is committed to creating safe, orderly, clean and inviting schools for all students and staff. To this end, the board supports state laws that prohibit the sale or distribution of tobacco products to minors and that prohibit the use of tobacco products by minors. The board also supports state and federal laws that prohibit the use of tobacco products in school buildings, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board. For the purposes of this policy, the term “tobacco product” means any product that contains or that is made or derived from tobacco and is intended for human consumption, including electronic cigarettes and all lighted and smokeless tobacco products.

In support of the board’s commitments and state and federal law, students are prohibited from using or possessing any tobacco product (1) in any school building, on any school campus, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board, including school vehicles; (2) at any school-related activity, including athletic events; or (3) at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of school personnel, including during school trips.

Arson:

The creation of a fire on school property will result in a suspension for up to 365 days.

Gang-Related Activity

The board strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment. Gangs and gang-related activities have proven contrary to that mission and are prohibited within the schools. A gang is any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. The violence and crime that accompany gangs pose a serious threat to the safety of students and employees of the school system. Even absent acts of violence or crime, the existence of gang-related activity within the schools creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility that obstructs student learning and achievement. Thus, the board condemns the existence of gangs and will not tolerate gang-related activity in the school system.

Gang-related activity is strictly prohibited within the schools. For the purposes of this policy, “gang-related activity” means: (1) any conduct that is prohibited by another board policy and is engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang or as a result of the student’s gang membership; or (2) any conduct engaged in by a student to perpetuate, proliferate or display the existence of any identified gang.

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

1. wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs or other items with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
2. communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.) with the intent to convey membership or affiliation in a gang;
3. tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey membership or affiliation in a gang (see policy 4330, Theft, Trespass and Damage to Property);
4. requiring payment of protection, insurance or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity (see policy 4331, Assaults, Threats and Harassment);
5. inciting others to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity (see policy 4331);
6. soliciting others for gang membership; and
7. committing any other illegal act or other violation of school system policies in connection with gang-related activity.

Disruptive Behavior

An orderly school environment is necessary for teachers to be able to teach and

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for students to be able to learn. Students are encouraged to participate in efforts to create a safe, orderly and inviting school environment. Students also are entitled to exercise their constitutional rights to free speech as a part of stimulating, inviting educational environment. A student's right to free speech will not be infringed upon; however, school officials may place reasonable, constitutional restrictions on time, place and manner in order to preserve a safe, orderly environment. Principals and teachers have full authority as provided by law to establish and enforce standards and rules as necessary to create orderly schools and classrooms.

Students are prohibited from disrupting teaching, the orderly conduct of school activities, or any other lawful function of the school or school system. The following conduct is illustrative of disruptive behavior and is prohibited:

1. intentional verbal or physical acts that result or have the potential to result in blocking access to school functions or facilities or preventing the convening or continuation of school-related functions;
2. appearance or clothing that (1) violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school; (2) is substantially disruptive; (3) is provocative or obscene; or (4) endangers the health or safety of the student or others (see policy 4316, Student Dress Code);
3. possessing or distributing literature or illustrations that significantly disrupt the educational process or that are obscene or unlawful;
4. engaging in behavior that is immoral, indecent, lewd, disreputable or of an overly sexual nature in the school setting;
5. failing to observe established safety rules, standards and regulations, including on buses and in hallways; and
6. interfering with the operation of school buses, including delaying the bus schedule, getting off at an unauthorized stop, and willfully trespassing upon a school bus.

Student Searches

School administrators have the authority to conduct reasonable searches and seize materials in accordance with this policy for the purpose of maintaining a safe, orderly environment and for upholding standards of conduct established by the board or school. This policy does not apply to investigations conducted by law enforcement officials or to investigations conducted exclusively for the purpose of criminal prosecution. Any school official carrying out a search or seizure is expected to be knowledgeable about the constitutional rights of students and the appropriate procedures for conducting the search or seizure.

A search of a student is lawful if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law or a school rule. A search of a student is permissible in scope when measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Reasonable suspicion is not required if a student freely, voluntarily and knowingly consents and agrees to the search of his or her person or personal effects.

A student's failure to permit reasonable searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered a violation of the expected standard of behavior, and appropriate consequences may be imposed.

Personal Searches

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law or a school rule.

If a frisk or "pat down" search of a student's person is conducted, it must be conducted in private by a school official of the same gender and with an adult witness present.

If the school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student has on his or her person an item imminently dangerous to the student or to others, a more intrusive search of the student's person may be conducted. Such a search may be conducted only in private by a school official of the same gender, with an adult witness of the same gender present, and only upon the prior approval of the superintendent or designee, unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by the delay that might be caused by following these procedures.

Use of Metal Detectors

A metal detector may be used to search a student's person and/or personal effects whenever a school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of a weapon. The search must be conducted by a school official. The search will be conducted in private, when feasible.

A school official is authorized to conduct general searches of students and other persons and their personal effects with a metal detector before the person may gain entry to the school campus or any school-sponsored extracurricular activity. The search must be conducted in accordance with procedures established by the superintendent or designee.

Prior to conducting general searches, school administrators must: (1) demonstrate to the superintendent the need for general searches based upon a pattern or expectation of violence or disruption; and (2) provide written notice, if feasible, to students and

parents of the school policy governing general searches, but not of specific times when or places where searches will be conducted. Any search conducted pursuant to this policy must be conducted by a school official.

Desk and Lockers

Student desks and lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. However, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their desks and lockers. Student desks and lockers may not be used to store illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials. Inspections of desks and lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason consistent with board policies or school rules at any time, without notice, without consent and without a search warrant. A student's personal effects found in a desk or locker, such as backpacks, gym bags or purses, may be searched only pursuant to guidelines for personal searches described above.

Searches of Student's Motor Vehicles

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not of right. School officials have authority to patrol student parking lots at all times to maintain safety in the parking lots. The interior of a student's motor vehicle parked on the school premises may be searched if a school official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating a law or a school rule.

Use of Trained Dogs for Student Searches

With the prior approval of the superintendent, school officials may use trained dogs in inspections for illegal materials in school facilities, on school grounds and in school parking lots. All dogs must be accompanied by a qualified and authorized trainer who is responsible for the dog's actions and who is able to verify the dog's reliability and accuracy in sniffing out illegal material. Trained dogs may sniff lockers, student motor vehicles and other inanimate objects. Such inspections are not considered searches and do not require notice or consent.

Vandalism

Vandalism is the willful destruction of school property, equipment or materials. The board will not tolerate vandalism and may seek criminal prosecution and take any legal action available for recovery of the loss. All losses that may be due to vandalism will be reported and recorded in accordance with procedures established by the superintendent. The principal shall notify the superintendent or designee immediately

of any forceful entry that results in theft and/or damages to school property.

Sexual Harassment

The McDowell County Board of Education believes that all employees and students are entitled to work and study in school-related environments that are free from sexual harassment. To this end, the Board prohibits employees from engaging in sexual harassment and advises employees that when evidence of sexual harassment is established, disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal.

1. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
 - Submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term condition of an individual's employment, evaluation, academic progress, or completion of a school-related activity; or
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or, in the case of the student, submission to or rejection of such conduct, is used in evaluating the individual's performance within a course of study or school related activity or
 - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or a student's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations
2. Advances or propositions
3. Continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body
4. Sexually degrading words used towards an individual or to describe an individual
5. Displaying sexually explicit objects or pictures in the workplace

Students

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school system employees and students are never appropriate, whether or not they are consensual or otherwise outside the definition of sexual harassment. Employees engaging in inappropriate relationships with students will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

A student who believes that he/she has suffered sexual harassment may report the matter to the school principal.

Grievance Rights

The board strives to resolve concerns and complaints of students and parents whenever possible. To this end, the board has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concerns through processes established in board policies. Policy 1742/5060, Responding to Complaints, identifies these different processes, including a mechanism for resolving complaints in an informal manner.

While the board encourages resolutions of complaints through informal means, it recognizes that, at times, a formal process may be necessary for certain types of complaints or if the informal process did not produce satisfactory results. This policy provides a complaint procedure that may be used as described below.

Any parent or student who has questions about the options for proceeding with a complaint or concern may contact the principal or the superintendent for further information and copies of all applicable board policies.

Filing a Grievance

1. Whenever a student or parent or guardian believes that he or she has been adversely affected by a decision of a school employee, the student or parent or guardian may file a grievance as provided in this policy.
2. A grievance must be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. For a grievance submitted after the 30 day period that claims a violation, misapplication or misinterpretation of state or federal law the superintendent or designee shall determine whether the grievance will be investigated after considering factors such as the reason for the delay; the extent of the delay; the effect of the delay on the ability of the school system to investigate and respond to the complaint; and whether the investigation of the complaint is necessary to meet any legal obligations. However, students, parents and guardians should recognize that delays in filing a grievance may significantly impair the ability of the school system to investigate and respond effectively to such complaints.
3. A student or parent or guardian who has a grievance must provide the following information in writing to the principal: (1) the name of the school system employee or other individual whose decision or action is at issue; (2) the specific decision(s) or action(s) at issue; (3) any board policy, state or federal law, state or federal regulation, or State Board of Education policy or procedure that the parent or guardian or student believes has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated; and (4) the specific resolution desired. If there is not a specific decision

or action at issue and no concern that state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, then the procedure established in policy 1742/5060 is appropriate, and the principal shall address the concern following that policy.

4. Even if the principal is the employee whose decision or action is at issue, the student will submit the grievance first to the principal in order for the principal to address the issue within the formal process. If, however, the grievance claims that a state or federal law has been misapplied, misinterpreted or violated, the student may submit the grievance directly to the superintendent or designee.
5. If a student wants to initiate a formal grievance regarding a decision by the superintendent that directly and specifically affects the student, the general process described in this policy will be used, except that the grievance will be submitted to the director of human resources, who shall forward the grievance to the board chairperson.

Investigation

1. The principal shall schedule and hold a meeting with the student and/or parent or guardian within five school days after the grievance has been filed with the principal. The student may be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or other person who is in a position of loco parentis to the student.
2. The principal shall conduct any investigation of the facts necessary before rendering a decision.

Response by Principal

1. The principal shall provide a written response to the written grievance within 10 days of the meeting. The response will include the principal's decision regarding resolution of the grievance and the basis for the decision. In responding, the principal may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.
2. A copy of the grievance and the principal's response will be filed with the superintendent.

Response by Superintendent

1. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the grievant may appeal the decision to the superintendent. The appeal must be made in writing within five days of receiving the principal's decision.
2. The superintendent may review the written documents and respond or the superintendent may schedule and hold a conference with the grievant, principal and any other individuals the superintendent determines to be appropriate

within five school days after receiving the appeal. The student may be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or other person who is in a position of loco parentis to the student.

3. The superintendent shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal. In responding, the superintendent may not disclose information about other students or employees that is considered confidential by law.

Appeal to the Board

1. If the grievant has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant will have the right to appeal a final administrative decision to the board of education (see subsection E.5.a, Mandatory Appeals, below). If a grievant has not alleged such specific violations, he or she may request a board hearing, which the board may grant at its discretion (see subsection E.5.b, Discretionary Appeals, below).

Mandatory Appeals

1. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance and has alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, the grievant may appeal the decision to the board within five days of receiving the superintendent's response.
2. A hearing will be conducted pursuant to board policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board.
3. The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

Discretionary Appeals

1. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the superintendent's response to his or her grievance but has not alleged a violation of a specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation, State Board of Education policy or procedure, or local board of education policy or procedure, then within five days of receiving the superintendent's response, the grievant may submit to the superintendent a written request for a hearing before the board of education.
2. If the full board will be meeting within two weeks of the request for a hearing, the board will decide at that time whether to grant a hearing. Otherwise, the board chairperson will appoint a three-person panel to review the request and

determine if a hearing should be granted. The panel will report the decision to the board. The board may modify the decision of the panel upon majority vote at a board meeting.

3. If the board decides to grant a hearing, the hearing will be conducted pursuant to board policy 2500, Hearings Before the Board.
4. The board will provide a final written decision within 30 days of the decision to grant a hearing, unless further investigation is necessary or the hearing necessitates that more time be taken to respond.

Notice

The superintendent or designee is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents and school system employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating grievances.

Records

Appropriate records shall be maintained in accordance with state and federal law.

Safe Schools Plan

The following Safe Schools Plan is developed in accordance with statutory requirements in G.S. 115c-105.47(b).

Goals of The Safe Schools Plan

North Carolina General Statute 115c-105.45 states: “The General Assembly finds that all schools should be safe, secure, and orderly. If students are to aim for academic excellence, it is imperative that there is a climate of respect in every school and that school is free of disruption, drugs, violence and weapons.” It is the goals of the administration and faculty at McDowell High School that the students and faculty have a safe and orderly environment in which to study and work. It is with this in mind that we established the following goals for McDowell High School:

1. To establish a climate of order and respect.
2. To create schools free of disruptive acts, drugs, violence and weapons.
3. To address the needs of students who are at risk of academic failure.
4. To provide a curriculum that will be challenging for students at all levels of academic achievement.
5. To identify and meet the needs of students who are at risk of engaging in disruptive and disorderly behavior.
6. To maintain a safe physical environment.

Measurable Objectives

1. McDowell High School will conduct fire drills each month to ensure that students are aware of the exit routes to take in each of their classes.
2. McDowell High School will have a plan to deal with bomb threats that will communicate the threat to the faculty and will allow for evacuation of both students and staff to insure safety.
3. McDowell High School will have an emergency plan to deal with tornadoes and will practice this drill at least one time per year.
4. McDowell High School will develop a progressive discipline plan that will deal with student misbehavior and will finally remove students who refuse to abide by the rules and who might be a danger to other students. The more dangerous the offense, the more harsh the penalty. Violent acts will be punished with out of school suspension for the first offense.
5. Students who have exhausted all disciplinary options will be considered for alternate learning settings.
6. McDowell High School will have a weapons policy that is in compliance with North Carolina State Law and demands that the removal from school of any

- student caught bringing a weapon to school.
7. McDowell High School will have a checkout procedure in place that helps prevent students from leaving campus without permission.
 8. McDowell High School will have a policy that requires all visitors to report to the office before going to any other part of the school.
 9. The administration of McDowell High School will be equipped with radios that will allow them to stay in constant communication if the need arises. A base unit in the office will allow the secretary to reach any of the administrators in case of an emergency. This will allow us to react to an emergency in a timelier manner.
 10. McDowell High School will have a counselor who will train students and staff in the use of conflict resolution or mediation as a means of diffusing problems and situations that could result in disorderly, disruptive, or violent behavior.
 11. McDowell High School will establish baseline data to measure the effectiveness of efforts to assist students who are academically or behaviorally at risk.
 12. McDowell High School will provide programs, strategies, and activities that promote academic effort and good behavior/citizenship.
 13. McDowell High School will provide a program that will allow students who have lost credit due to poor attendance make up with time and work and will allow them the opportunity to regain their credit.
 14. McDowell High School will provide a program that will allow students to bring up a failing grade for a six week grading period by giving them remediation and extra work after school hours.
 15. McDowell High School will have a method of evaluating the condition of the school facility and will provide appropriate maintenance to ensure that our facility is clean and in good repair at all times.
 16. McDowell High School will offer an advanced and Advanced Placement course of study for students who need a more rigorous challenge academically.
 17. McDowell High School campus will be closed and locked during the night hours to prevent any vandalism.
 18. McDowell High School will have a working security gate at the bottom of the hill near West McDowell Middle School. From 8:00 am - 3:00 pm the gate on the Bojangle's Hill will be locked. All traffic will be directed to the main security gate near West Middle School during this time.
 19. Flower/balloon deliveries and food deliveries are **not** permitted on school grounds.
 20. McDowell High School students will be provided a copy of the rules and regulations for the school, and they will be asked to listen as the rules are read and then to sign that they have heard and understand what they have heard.

Transportation

(School Bus Requirements)

School Bus transportation is provided for many McDowell County students. This transportation is a privilege. This service exists not only for the elementary, junior high and high school-aged youth to and from school, but also is available for instructional field trips, athletic trips, and special after-school activities.

In addition, school buses transport children from their base schools to other locations where particular educational programs are available. As a result, the county's school buses travel thousands of miles annually in service to the youth of McDowell County.

Riding the school bus, for whatever purpose, is a privilege. Should this privilege be abused, it may be revoked for a specific period of time or permanently. The safety and well being of the driver and passengers cannot be jeopardized for any reason. The jurisdiction of the school extends to the stop where the students wait for the bus. Those few students who do not subscribe to the rules governing behavior on the school bus will not be allowed to ride.

The following acts are illustrative of behavior that interferes with the orderly operation of school buses and are prohibited:

1. Delaying the school bus schedule
2. Tampering with or damaging the bus
3. Refusing to meet the bus at designated stops
4. Unauthorized leaving of the bus when in route
5. Distracting the driver's attention while the bus is in operation by playing, throwing trash, paper, or other objects, or otherwise displaying distracting behavior.
6. Failing to observe established safety rules and regulations.
7. Committing offensive actions towards others both inside and outside the bus.
8. Violating any other expected standard of behavior while on the bus.
9. No food, drinks, or other items may be eaten or otherwise consumed while riding the bus. This includes chewing gum and tobacco. (THIS IS A STATE LAW)
10. Going to the student parking lot after exiting the school bus or before boarding the school bus will result in a \$10.00 student fine.

*Fighting on the bus will result in the student being suspended from school. Possession of tobacco products, profanity, refusing to obey instructions or any other bus infraction deemed serious enough may also result in I.S.D. or O.S.S.

Automobiles on Campus

(Accidents on campus are not investigated by our SRO. The NC Highway Patrol will be contacted)

All students who drive to school must have a valid North Carolina driver's license and have insurance coverage. Neither the Board of Education nor the school is responsible for any vehicle, or its contents, parked on campus.

Students need to understand that parking on school property is a privilege, not a right, afforded to students. Certain conditions are attached to privileges. Students who fail to uphold these conditions will be subject to loss of parking privileges, monetary fines, and disciplinary actions. Students who wish to park on campus must be willing to observe the following rules:

Students who wish to park on campus must be willing to observe the following rules:

1. **Park vehicle immediately upon arrival on campus each day. Immediately after parking, leave the parking lot and go into the school building. Do not return to a vehicle without written permission from a school administrator and an escort, unless leaving for a pre-authorized reason.**
2. **Parking Pass Fees- \$40.00 throughout the year.**
3. Display parking tag on the mirror of the vehicle. Numbers must be visible at all times.
4. Registering another student's vehicle to your permit is not allowed.
5. Park in the designated parking spot that matches the number on the parking tag.
6. Drive cautiously and will not exceed the posted speed limit.
7. Obey all laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the operation and parking of motor vehicles as established by the state, county, school system, and high school.
8. Will not bring onto school grounds nor keep in vehicle, while it is on school grounds, any prohibited or controlled substances, such as beer, wine, alcohol or drugs, nor any gun, explosives, blackjack, weapon, vapes or tobacco.
9. Will allow school officials to open, enter and search vehicles for any reason at any time.

10. Only one permit will be sold to any student.
11. When a student gets a ticket, he/she must pay the ticket within one week of the date on the ticket.
12. **When a student gets their 5th ticket, the parking permit will be suspended for two (2) weeks. If he/she drives during the suspension, driving privileges could be suspended for the rest of the school year.**
13. Cars parked in restricted areas may be towed away.
14. Cars not displaying a permit may be towed away,
15. **Any tickets issued after five could result in driving privileges being suspended for the remainder of the school year.**
16. If a student drives to school without permission from the principal or without having a parking permit, then they jeopardize being allowed to purchase a parking permit and monetary fine.
17. If a student loses his/her parking tag or it gets stolen, they must purchase another tag.
18. If a student continues to be tardy to school, the student's permission to drive to school and park may be suspended and eventually revoked.
19. Fabrication of a student parking permit will result in loss of parking privileges for the remainder of the school year.
20. If a student is parked in handicapped parking space, the security guard will notify the sheriff's department.
21. Repeated violations may lead to revocation of driving privileges on campus, referral to the McDowell County Sheriff's Department and/or disciplinary action.
22. The principal may prohibit any student from continuing to bring a vehicle to school if the student drives in a careless, reckless, or irresponsible manner while on campus, or otherwise fails to observe these regulations.
23. A student's vehicle may be subject to search by proper school officials if there are reasonable grounds to believe that drug, alcohol, firearms, stolen property, tobacco, or other contraband might be present in the vehicle.
24. If a student drives off campus without the permission form from the office the following actions will be taken:
Violation(s) may result in Parking Permit suspensions or revocation.
25. Violations of the following types **will** result in punitive action in addition to citation:
 - a. Speeding or spinning tires
 - b. Driving on Grass
26. All students leaving campus in a personal vehicle will stop and check in with security guard or risk revocation of parking permit if leaving campus before 3:10

27. All students leaving school in a personal vehicle at the end of the school day must have written permission to turn left toward West Jr. High. No student will be to turn left until after 3:25 PM.
28. All students are expected to be out of the student parking lot by 3:30 PM each day unless the student is participating in a school sponsored activity. Failure to leave the parking lot by 3:30 may result in a parking fine.
29. Loitering in the parking lot after arriving on campus in the morning may result in a parking fine.

Driving on campus while privileges are revoked or suspended could result in suspension for the remainder of the school year.

Note: All parking fees are non-refundable for all suspensions of on-campus parking privileges.

North Carolina Driver's License Eligibility Requirements for Students

The revocation of a student's driving permit or license could result if a student is unable to maintain adequate academic progress or drop out of school. This new legislation is directed to all North Carolina students under the age of 18 who are eligible for a driving permit or license.

There are several changes in the procedures regarding how a student obtains and retains his or her driver's permit and license. The Division of Motor Vehicles will not issue a driver's permit or license. The Division of Motor Vehicles will not issue a driver's permit or license without a Driving Eligibility Certificate.

Adequate academic progress will be evaluated at the end of each semester. A student must pass 3 out of 4 courses each semester if the school is on the 4 x 4 block schedule. If the student is attending day school and extended day school they must pass 70% of all courses. These are the requirements for a student to be eligible to receive a Driving Eligibility Certificate. Students who do not meet these criteria will be reported to DMV and will have their permit or license revoked. For more information, please see Mr. Cole.

"Lose Control, Lose Your License Guidelines"

The law will suspend a student's permit or license for one year. The legislation directs public schools, community colleges, and nonpublic schools to notify the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles whenever a student is given an expulsion/suspension for more than 10 consecutive days or an assignment to an alternative educational setting for more than 10 consecutive days, or for one of the following reasons:

1. The possession or sale of an alcohol beverage or an illegal controlled substance on school property.
2. The possession or use on school property of a weapon or firearm that resulted in disciplinary action under G.S. 115C (dl) or that could have resulted in that disciplinary action if the conduct had occurred in a public school.
3. The physical assault on a teacher or other school personnel on school property.

What is school property?

The physical premises of the school, school buses or other vehicles under the school's control or contract that are used to transport students, and school-sponsored or school-related activities that occur on or off the physical premises of the school.

How will the DMV be notified?

The State-Automated Driver License System (SADLS) will be used to notify DMV.

Who is affected by this legislation?

Students who are at least 14 years old or who are rising 8th graders on or after July 1st, 2003 are subject to this law.

NOTE: Students who are 18 years old cannot be charged under this law.

Media Center

The purpose of the McDowell High Media Center is to support the instructional program by providing information in a variety of formats for teacher and student use. Resources in the library focus specifically on the units of instruction in grades 10-12.

Hours

7:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m. daily

FOR: Research, Reading, Study, Homework, and Circulation of materials and equipment.

Borrowing

Books-3 weeks

Reference Materials (books and periodicals)-overnight

Audiovisual material and equipment-for assignment

Fines

5 cents per day for 3-week items (10 cents per day for overnights). Students must clear fines before exams each semester.

Resources

The media center has an extensive collection of print and non-print resources to support the instructional program. Among these are books, periodicals, microfiche, videotapes, art prints, and CD-ROM sources available on the NETWORK. No student should for any reason attempt to enter files contained within the NETWORK. Only McDowell High School Personnel are allowed to use these files. Any student found to have entered into, tampered with or “hacked” these files will be subject to disciplinary action.

Orientation

All freshman English classes will have an orientation session at the beginning of each semester. This lesson familiarizes students with the use of our media center, emphasizing network use and the research process. New students may come by for individual orientation.

Student Services

The Student Services Center provides numerous services for all students enrolled at McDowell High School. These services include assistance with educational planning, scheduling issues, post-secondary decision-making, college admissions and financial aid, military options, test registration and interpretation, personal counseling and peer helping. Students who have concerns about home, school, or other personal issues should direct these to one of the counselors or the school social worker who can assist them with resolving these problems.

In order to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to use Student Services and to minimize class time lost, students may schedule appointments before or after school or between class periods directly through Student Services or through the Student Services secretary.

Extracurricular Activities Clubs at MHS

CHESS CLUB: Open to any student who wants to know the fundamentals of Chess. The club meets after school and travels to local competitions for those students who wish to test their skills. **Advisor: Judge Hughes**

MHS GAMING CLUB: This club is for those who want away from the digital gaming and return to the classic board games. Students meet after school to test their wits against one another. **Advisor: Wesley Minish**

DECA: This club is an international student-based organization for students interested in the field of marketing. Students can develop their marketing, management and entrepreneurship skills through classroom instruction, leadership workshops, and through DECA competitions. DECA also engages students with job-shadowing opportunities, civic improvement activities, and exposure to guest speakers from the local community. Dues \$17.00 for State & National, **Advisor: Heather Martin and Todd Queen**

FFA - FFA is a dynamic youth organization that changes lives and prepares members for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. FFA is an intracurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. Our chapter provides many opportunities for students to participate in competitive and leadership development events at the regional, state, and national level. You must be enrolled in an agriculture class (Animal Science, Horticulture or Ag Mechanics) to be a member. **Advisors: Clark Adams and Sophie Voris**

The Environmental Club: Open to any student who has a passion about learning how they can improve the future of our planet. The focus and projects the club decides to complete are student initiated. Some of the projects we have accomplished in the past years are: school-wide recycling program, building a decomposition display board, hiking the Catawba Falls Trail and raising money for the Foothills Land Conservancy. The money will go to help the Conservancy preserve the Catawba Falls Watershed forever. Dues \$1.00, **Advisor: Mrs. Joele Weaver**

Students Who Serve: A volunteering club whose goal is to inform students about the importance of civic responsibility and to improve the lives of others through school and

Every student graduates with a plan for a successful future.

community service projects. These projects will include participation in fundraisers, volunteering our time and labor to school and community groups, and educating younger students about the importance of helping others. Students Who Serve will work closely with the McDowell County Volunteer Center (the Volunteer Coordinator will be here each Wednesday during all lunches). Students must pay \$10 in dues which will help fund our first project of the year. **Advisor: Pat Gross**

FCT stands for Fellowship of Christian Titans. Everyone is invited. We meet every Wednesday morning before school begins, and we have a speech or small group discussion about the Bible and how to deal with things in our lives. **Advisor: Danny Shaw**

Future Business Leaders of America: A premier organization for students preparing for careers in business and the largest student business organization in the world with a quarter of a million members. FBLA prepares students for “real-world” professional experiences. Members gain the competitive edge for college and career success. Members and chapters have the opportunity to compete and win awards on the local, state, and national levels. FBLA, along with corporate partners, offers thousands of dollars in scholarships each year. Students also have the opportunity to travel with the club on the field each semester. Previous trips have been to Charlotte Bobcats Career Day, tour and lunch at the Biltmore Estate, and a campus tour of Western Carolina University. Dues: \$12.00, **Advisors: Courtney Intres and Angie Allison**

HOSA-Health Occupations Students of America: Open to students who are taking Health Sciences Classes, which include: Health Team Relations, Allied Health I, & Allied Health II. We meet only when there is a need during Club Meetings. Activities that we participate in include: Fall Blood Drive, Elect HOSA representatives for the parade and Homecoming, if enough participate, we will have a “float” in the parade, Design and sell HOSA t-shirts, Angel for Christmas, Spring Blood Drive, Basket for Relay for Life. Dues: \$15.00, **Advisors: Jill Crater**

LatinX Club: This club is for any student who has an interest in learning more about the cultures represented in McDowell County and across North Carolina. Members of this club will plan, organize, and carry out a cultural awareness event to which the community will be invited. **Advisor: Pat Gross**

Skills USA: Motto: Preparing for Leadership in the World of Work.

We compete in the area of Trade and Industry that we teach ex: Cosmetology students can compete in color, hair, design, and cut. Masonry competes in building a partial brick wall. Cabinetry builds a specified project, etc. We also can compete in Opening/Closing Ceremonies, Resume', Speeches, etc. Dues: \$21.00 plus \$50.00 for state registration, **Advisor: CTE Teachers**

Titan Theater Co: Titan Theatre Co: The Titan Theatre Company was established in 2007 as an official club. Titan Theatre promotes and facilitates performing arts basics. Students have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of theatre production -- stage direction, acting, set design and construction techniques, lighting, sound, promotion, running crew, costumes, and properties. All productions occur seasonally and after school hours. Dues: \$10, **Advisor: Karah Wilson**

Poetry Slam: The purpose of the poetry slam club is to form a performance poetry team. We will focus on individual and team performance this year. The members will compete in at least one slam and will hopefully do an exhibition or two to drum up some interest in the art. Dues: none, **Advisor: Andrew Ferguson**

Rock School: Rock school takes individual musicians and forms them into a rock band. The goal is to perform once in the fall and two or three times in the spring. Dues: none, **Advisor: Andrew Ferguson**

Blue Crew: Do you have school spirit? Do you want to join your peers in the student section at football games, basketball games, and other sporting events? If you answered yes, then join Blue Crew! There are no dues, but you are encouraged to purchase an official Blue Crew tee shirt to wear to games. Exclusive ticket discounts for games are offered for Blue Crew members only. Blue Crew members show up early and are the last ones to leave...win or lose! We are loud, energetic, and support our team with respect and dignity toward others. **Advisor: Kendall Waugh**

Science Olympiad: Science Olympiad is a competition event that starts in October and lasts till Feb or April depending on if we advance to the State competition. Some of the different events are forensics, dynamic planet, bottle rockets, elastic launched gliders, and fossils. This club can only take 36 students and they are chosen based on experience, work ethic, and attitude. To be on a team, you must be able to stay 1 to 2 days a week after school to practice. The more events you are in the more you will need to be available to practice. There is a \$10 materials fee for this club. **Advisor: Joele Weaver**

New clubs may be added with a sponsorship of a faculty member and approval of administration at the beginning of the school year (First ten days) ; not in the middle of the school year.

McDowell High School Student Council

McDowell High Student Council is a year-long honors course designed to develop quality student leaders and foster a positive school environment. Students will actively learn leadership skills through daily classroom assignments, teamwork, planning and facilitating school and community activities such as homecoming week activities, Trunk-R-Treat, Mr. MHS, and Prom. Students will also be heavily involved in community service projects in our school and community.

Scholarship: Students must have and maintain a 3.0 GPA or above to run for class officer positions and a 3.5 overall for Student Body positions.

Decorum: In addition to the academic requirements, students must also maintain good social and behavioral standards throughout their tenure. Student Council members are expected to be role models inside and outside of school. Students who have office referrals requiring disciplinary action resulting in ISS constitute removal from their office. Disciplinary offenses that result in OSS referrals constitute grounds for disqualification and dismissal from Student Council.

Student Events

Homecoming Dance/Prom Attendance Requirements

The Homecoming and Prom dances celebrate the beginning and end of the school year, respectively. While it might seem like these events are just dances, they serve very important roles for our school. Homecoming week is a time to welcome McDowell High School alumni back to their alma mater and honor their legacy to our school and community. Prom, on the other hand, is a celebration for Seniors which marks the resolution of their high school careers. Accordingly, these dances are immense privileges and attendance is contingent on the following criteria:

1. Student must have no more than one course failure, including MTCC courses for the current semester.
2. Must not have credit losses due to attendance for the current semester.
3. Must have no out-of-school suspension (OSS) days for the current semester.
4. Must have fewer than three (3) in-school-suspension (ISS) days for the current semester.

Homecoming/Prom Court Eligibility

Students may only be on **one** (1) court (Homecoming or Prom, not both) from their Freshman to Junior year. Seniors, however, regain their eligibility to be on either court even if they were already on a court their Freshman to Junior Year. Although the court is open for all students, the following criteria must be met to be eligible:

1. Must not have any course failures, including MTCC courses.

2. Must not have credit losses due to attendance.
3. Must have no out-of-school suspension days for the current school year.
4. Must have fewer than three (3) in-school-suspension days for the current school year.

*****The School Administration shall have final approval of the Homecoming or Prom Court and have the right to remove any candidate who would not exemplify the highest standards of the school.*****

Homecoming Dance/Prom Guest Approval Requirements

For guests that attend a different high school*: The requesting student (MHS student) must complete a physical guest approval form for their guest. Guests will retrieve a signature from their school's administration agreeing to their good standing. Once MHS administration reviews and approves the guest, the requesting student may purchase a ticket for their guest. Students who have not completed this process shall not purchase a ticket for outside guests. Likewise, forms turned in after the deadline will not be accepted and the student shall not buy a ticket for an outside guest. Outside guests are required to bring their I.D. and ticket to be admitted to the dance.†

***A different high school refers to schools that are not McDowell High School. Although McDowell Early College and McDowell Academy of Innovationl serve McDowell County Schools, they are outside schools and will thus require guest forms to be completed for guests that attend those schools.**

For guests that do not attend a high school:** The requesting student (MHS student) must complete the electronic guest approval form for their guest. The following information is mandatory for a guest to be approved: guest's full name as it appears on their state-issued identification card; guest's physical address; guest's date of birth.

People over the age of twenty by the time of the event will not be allowed to attend the event. Once a background check has been completed and administration approves the guest, the requesting student may purchase a ticket for their guest. Students who have not completed this process shall not purchase a ticket for outside guests. Likewise, forms turned in after the deadline will not be accepted and the student shall not buy a ticket for an outside guest. Outside guests are required to bring their I.D. and ticket to be admitted to the dance.†

† Freshmen are not permitted to attend prom and their guest form will be rejected.

****Guests that do not attend a high school or individuals who have graduated (excluding MHS mid-year graduates), attend college, are homeschooled, or**

are otherwise not currently enrolled in a high school. Background checks are therefore required in lieu of administration screening.

Mr. MHS Pageant

Mr. MHS is an annual all-male pageant and variety show that raises money for three families in need in our community. For almost a decade, local businesses in McDowell County have become sponsors for this event and have helped dozens of families pay medical bills, rent, and much needed home repairs. The pageant itself is half fashion show and half-variety show that leaves audiences in awe of the talents of MHS students. The Mr. MHS pageant is a fun way to give back and it makes a profound impact on our community. In order to be eligible to compete, the following criteria must be met:

1. Must not miss more than two (2) contestant meetings.
2. Must not miss more than one (1) dance rehearsal unless otherwise approved by the Student Council Advisor.
3. Must raise and turn in \$200 to the Student Council advisor no later than four (4) weeks prior to the pageant.
4. Must not have credit losses due to attendance.
5. Must have no out-of-school suspension (OSS) days for the current school year.
6. Must have fewer than three (3) in-school-suspension (ISS) days for the current school year.

Mr. MHS Pageant Escort Eligibility

1. Must not miss more than one (1) escort meeting.
2. Must raise and turn in \$100 to the Student Council advisor no later than four (4) weeks prior to the pageant.
3. Must not have credit losses due to attendance.
4. Must have no out-of-school suspension (OSS) days for the current school year.
5. Must have fewer than three (3) in-school-suspension (ISS) days for the current school year.

***** McDowell High School Administration reserves the right to remove any student from a school sanctioned event if at any time that student: attempts to bypass any of these rules; disrespects teacher chaperones; or otherwise behaves inappropriately.*****

Sports at MHS

Every student graduates with a plan for a successful future.

Fall Sports

Football: Darrell Brewer	Girls Tennis: Kaitlyn Helton-Parker	Girls Golf: Tony Davis
Volleyball: Leslie Hester	Cheerleading: Reagan Spearman	Boys Soccer:
	Cross Country: Missy Redmon	

Winter Sports

Girls Basketball: Zack McCartha	Boys Basketball: Brian Franklin
Wrestling: Chad Davis	Swimming: TBD

Spring Sports

Baseball: Alex Smith	Softball: Catriona Young Kasey Gardin	Girls Soccer: Crystal Kilgore
Boys Tennis: John Wells	Boys Golf: Tony Davis	Track: Missy Redmon (Girls) Bill Taylor (Boys)

Note: Usage of tobacco products by ANYONE on campus for ANY event held on school grounds is strictly prohibited in accordance with § 115C-407.

Tobacco Use and Products

Every student graduates with a plan for a successful future.

Note: Usage of tobacco products by ANYONE on campus for ANY event held on school grounds is strictly prohibited in accordance with § 115C-407.

The board of education promotes the health and safety of all students and staff and the cleanliness of all school facilities. The board believes that the use of tobacco products on school grounds, in school buildings and facilities, in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board, or at school-related or school-sponsored events is detrimental to the health and safety of students, staff and school visitors. To this end, and to comply with state and federal law, the board adopts this tobacco-free policy that prohibits smoking and the use of tobacco products as follows. For the purposes of this policy, the term “tobacco product” means any product that contains tobacco and is intended for human consumption, including all lighted and smokeless tobacco products.

1. All employees and other persons performing services or activities on behalf of the school system, including volunteers and contractors, as well as students and visitors, are prohibited from using any tobacco products at any time in any school building, in any school facility, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the school board.
2. In addition, persons attending a school-sponsored event at a location not specified in Subsection 1 above are prohibited from using tobacco products when (a) in the presence of students or school personnel, or (b) in an area where use of tobacco products is otherwise prohibited by law.
3. Nothing in this policy prohibits the use of tobacco products for an instructional or research activity conducted in a school building, provided that such activity is conducted or supervised by a faculty member and that the activity does not include smoking, chewing or otherwise ingesting tobacco.
4. The administration will consult with the county health department and other appropriate organizations to provide employees with information about support systems and programs to encourage employees to abstain from the use of tobacco products. The school system may, from time to time, provide free non-smoking programs and services to employees of the school system after the regular school day.
5. The principal of each school and other school personnel responsible for school facilities shall post signs in system facilities in a manner and location that adequately notify staff, students and visitors that the use of tobacco products by any person is prohibited at all times in or on school property.
6. The superintendent and designees shall ensure that adequate notice of this policy is provided to students, parents, school personnel, and the public.
7. All school personnel are required to adhere to and enforce this policy and other policies, rules or regulations addressing the use of tobacco products.

Cafeteria

General Information:

The following rules should be adhered to regarding the school child nutrition program:

1. Students have lunch during a designated time during third period. Also, students must remain in these designated areas during lunch: cafeteria, commons area, and media center (with a pass from a teacher).
2. Students are expected to maintain appropriate respect for themselves and others in the cafeteria as well as all other areas of the school.
3. There is to be no breaking or pushing in lunch lines.
4. Always remove all paper and dishes from the table when finished.
5. Everyone should return his/her own tray to the washing station. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.
6. No food or drinks are to be taken from the lunchroom to any other area of the building.
7. Everyone is expected to use good manners and act in a manner becoming of McDowell High School students.
8. Students will not be permitted to sit on lunchroom tables. This includes before and after school, during break period and during lunch period.
9. Failure to pay for lunchroom items will result in disciplinary action. For clarity, all food/drinks items in the cafeteria must be clearly visible on the lunchroom tray at all times; otherwise, it gives the impression of theft.
10. Students may bring lunch for themselves but may not bring food in from other places for their friends.

Free or Reduced Lunch Program

Students from families whose income is within the present scale of the federal lunch program are eligible for free or reduced lunches. Information on this program will be provided to all students at the beginning of the school year. Questions regarding the program should be directed to the cafeteria manager. Information is available online through the school and county website.

Breakfast and Lunch will be free for the 2024-2025 school year

Breakfast

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria each morning from 7:40-8:00 am.

Lunch

The daily schedule includes a twenty-five minute lunch period for students. Three lunch periods will be used to accommodate the increased pupil enrollment at McDowell High School and give each student enough time to be served and then to eat lunch. (See times on Daily Bell Schedule) Students are permitted to prepay for lunch. Those interested should see the cafeteria manager to deposit money into their account. If a student wants extra milk or snack items they can purchase these.

Miscellaneous

Telephones

Telephones in the various offices throughout the school are off-limits except for the student phone located in the Student Services office. Telephone calls will be limited to three minutes. The telephone may be used before school, during break and lunch, and after school except in the event of an emergency or illness.

Request for Student Assignments

All requests for student assignments must be made through the Student Services Office and may be picked up 24 hours after the request is made.

Hall Passes

Class change time and break are provided for students to go to their lockers, the restroom, and for arrival to their next class. If a student is in the hall during class time, it is his/her responsibility to get a hall pass from the teacher prior to leaving class.

McDowell High School is not responsible for items lost or stolen on school grounds.

Insurance

The school encourages all students to purchase school insurance. Information is available online through the school and county website.

The procedure for handling claims whenever anyone is injured are as followed:

1. Report the accident to the principal's office immediately. Claims must be submitted to the insurance company within 90 days.
2. Students will need to pick up an insurance form from the school secretary and take it to the doctor who provides the service.

Skateboards

Skateboards of any kind are not permitted at McDowell High School. Any student bringing skateboards on the McDowell High School Campus will be subject to discipline.

Student Messages

1. We will be unable to deliver messages to students, except in cases of an emergency. We understand that parents may feel the need to get in touch with students during the school day, but we cannot stop the instruction of the other students in the class for any reason other than an emergency.
2. The nature of the emergency must be specified to a school official before

classroom activities will be interrupted. Under normal circumstances, emergencies exist when conditions arise that make it impossible or impractical to delay the message until later.

3. Arrangements for routine matters such as rides to and from school, car and house key delivery and pick up, job times, meeting places, etc. should be made before students arrive at school.
4. Parents/Guardians are advised to not call or text your child's cell phone during the school day. (8:00 am - 3:00 pm)

Substitute Teachers

Substitute Teachers are to be accorded the same respect as regular classroom teachers. Any student failing to maintain a proper relationship with a substitute teacher will be dealt with according to McDowell High School's Disciplinary Procedures.

Posters and Announcements

1. All posters/announcements to be displayed at McDowell High School must be approved by an administrator.
2. The individual(s) posting the poster/announcement are responsible for the removal of them.

Insufficient Check Charges

There will be a \$25.00 charge for any check made out to McDowell High School that doesn't clear the bank.

Parental Notification of Rights Under FERPA

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning

alleged failures by McDowell County Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

According to FERPA, information designated as directory information may be released by the district without parental consent, provided annual notification has been given. Directory information is information that is generally considered NOT harmful or an invasion of privacy if released.

In addition, Federal No Child Left Behind legislation requires McDowell County Schools provide military recruiters, upon request, with 3 directory information categories-names, addresses, and telephone listings-unless parents have advised McDowell County Schools in writing that they do not want their student's information disclosed to the military. Traditionally, military recruiters only request this information for current 11th and 12th grade students.

Directory information may include, but is not limited to, the information listed below:

Name of Student	Grade Level
Address of Student	Major Field of Study
Telephone Number of Student	Date and Place of Birth
Photographs	The most recent educational agency or institution attended
Audio Recordings	Weight and height of members of athletic teams
Video Recordings	Degrees, honors, and awards received
Dates of Attendance	Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

Schools do use discretion when releasing directory information and will not release such information if it is the principal's judgment that releasing such information would not be in the best interest of the student.

Please consider very carefully any decision to withhold "directory information". If you inform McDowell County Schools in writing not to release information, any requests for such information from an individual or entities not affiliated with McDowell County Schools shall be refused.

FOR EXAMPLE: REFUSAL COULD MEAN NO INFORMATION TO NEWSPAPER, SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER, ANNUAL PUBLISHER (NO PICTURE OR NAME IN THE ANNUAL), NO INCLUSION IN ANY SCHOOL NEWS RELEASE (EXAMPLE: HONOR ROLL), ETC.

Any parent/guardian or eligible student (18 years of age or older), who wants to withhold the release of directory information entirely, or who only wants to withhold the release of directory information to the military must notify the principal of the school where the student is enrolled, in writing, within 14 days of the student's first day of school. A request to withhold directory information does not carry over from one school year to the next or from one school to another.

Request to Withhold Directory Information forms are available on McDowell County Schools' website and at your child's school.

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

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. 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 U.S. Department of Education (ED) program.
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 - Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, antisocial, 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 parent; or
 - Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of-
 - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. 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.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

McDowell County Public Schools (MCPS) will develop and adopt policies, in

consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. MCPS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. MCPS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities of surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. MCPS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planning activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review and pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- 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.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, S. W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Discrimination Policy

We at McDowell High School are committed to a policy of nondiscrimination. No course at McDowell High School will be denied to any student due to sex, socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, race, color, religion, or handicap. Some courses may require supplementary materials, such as workbooks, lab kits, etc. No students will be denied enrollment or access to these materials due to financial status.