

2016-2017

Parent & Child Handbook

Mt. Pleasant Independent School District



"Every CDC child will be successful"



**1602 West Ferguson Road
Mt. Pleasant, Texas 75455**



Table of Contents

PREFACE	5
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	6
Vision	6
Mission.....	6
DFPS- Minimum Standards Information	6
Programs	6
Head Start.....	6
Early Head Start.....	6
Pre-Kindergarten.....	7
Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities.....	7
MPISD Extended Day Program(s).....	7
Northeast Texas Workforce Development Board Child Care Services	7
ELIGIBILITY	8
SELECTION OF CHILDREN	8
ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES	8
SECTION 1: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	9
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	9
Working Together.....	9
Parent Involvement Coordinator.....	10
PARENTAL RIGHTS.....	10
Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights.....	10
Opting Out of Surveys and Activities.....	10
Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff.....	11
Reviewing Instructional Materials.....	11
Displaying a Student’s Artwork and Projects.....	11
Accessing Student Records.....	11
Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student.....	11
Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom.....	12
Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags.....	12
Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct	12
School Safety Transfers	12
Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings	12
Providing Assistance to Students Who have Learning Difficulties or Need Special Education Services	12
Parents of Students with Disabilities	13
Services for Students with Disabilities/Speech Pathology	13
Request for the Use of a Service Animal.....	13
Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students	13
Parents of Students Who Speak a Primary Language other than English	14
Accommodations for Children of Military Families	14
Student Records	14
Directory Information	16

Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes.....	16
Release of Student Information	16
SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS.....	17
ADULT LITERACY..	17
ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE.....	17
Compulsory Attendance.....	17
Exceptions to Compulsory Attendance.....	18
Failure to Compy with Compulsory Attendance.	18
Attendance Policy and Procedures.....	18
Parent’s Note After An Absence.....	19
Doctor’s Note After An Absence for Illness.....	19
ACADEMIC PROGRAM- MPISD Child Development Curricula	19
BULLYNG	19
CELEBRATIONS AND PARTIES.....	20
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	20
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.....	22
COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS	22
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	23
CONDUCT	23
Applicability of School Rules	23
Corporal Punishment.....	23
Disruptions.....	23
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS	24
COUNSELING	24
Personal Counseling.....	24
Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment	24
DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION.....	24
Discrimination.....	25
Harassment.....	25
Sexual Harassment.....	25
Retaliation	25
Reporting Procedures.....	25
Investigation of Reported Harassment.....	25
DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS	26
School Materials	26
Nonschool Materials...from parents and others	26
DRESS AND GROOMING	26
Appropriate Dress	27
Allowable.....	27
Not Allowable.....	27
ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES.....	27
Mobile Telephones.....	27
Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunication Devices	27
Possession and Use of Other Electronic Devices	28

Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunication/Electronic Devices.....	28
Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources	28
Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources	28
FAMILY SERVICES	29
FEES	29
FUND-RAISING	29
GANG-FREE ZONES	29
HARASSMENT	29
HAZING	30
HEALTH- RELATED MATTERS.....	30
Bacterial Meningitis.....	30
Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)	31
Other Health-Related Matters	31
Vending Machines	31
Tobacco Prohibited.....	31
Asbestos Management Plan.....	32
Pest Management Plan.....	32
HOMELESS STUDENTS.....	32
HOME VISITS AND CONFERENCES.....	32
IMMUNIZATION	32
Required Immunization.....	33
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES	33
Questioning of Students.....	33
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS.....	33
MEDICINE AT SCHOOL.....	34
Psychotropic Drugs.....	35
Students and Asthma.....	35
Students with Diabetes.....	35
Extended Child Care - Medication Procedures.....	35
Illness Exclusion Policy.....	35
Parental Notification.....	36
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.....	36
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS.....	37
PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE.....	37
PRAYER.....	37
RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL	37
REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES.....	38
RETALIATION.....	38
SAFETY	38
Field Trips and Water Activities.....	38
Animal Safety	38
Accident Insurance.....	38
Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies.....	38
Emergency Medical Treatment and Information.....	39
Emergency Procedures/Injuries.....	39
Emergency School-Closing Information	39

Emergency or Disaster Information.....	39
Snacks and Meals.....	41
Cafeteria Services	41
STANDARIZED TEST.....	41
Child Screening and Assessment.....	41
SCHOOL FACILITIES	42
Use By Students Before and After School.....	42
Conduct Before and After School.....	42
Library.....	42
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	42
SUMMER SCHOO-BILINGUAL.....	42
TARDINESS.....	43
TRANSFERS.....	43
TRANSITION.....	43
TRANSPORTATION.....	43
School-Sponsored Trips.....	43
Buses and Other School Vehicles.....	43
Arrival and Departure	44
When a Child is Returned to School	45
Bus Tags	45
Medication Procedures for Students that Ride the Bus	45
VANDALISM.....	45
VIDEO CAMERAS.....	45
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL	46
General Visitors.....	45
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL.....	45
GLOSSARY	46
ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT STAFF.....	48
APPENDIX II: Acknowledgment Form- Amendment.....	49



PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2016–2017! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together will make this a wonderful and successful year.

The Mount Pleasant Independent School District (MPISD) Child Development Center (CDC) Parent/Child Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you, your child, and family will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I— PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES — will assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

Section II—OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS — is organized alphabetically and by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “the student’s parent” is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student.

Parents should become familiar with the MPISD *Student Code of Conduct*, which is a document adopted by the board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found at the MPISD Central Support Services offices and CDC Family Services Office or online at www.mpisd.net.

The Parent/Child Handbook is designed to be in harmony with board policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect CDC Parent/Child Handbook provisions will be made available to parents through memoranda or other communications.

In case of conflict between board policies or the *Student Code of Conduct* and any provisions of the Parent/Child Handbook, the most recent provisions of board policy or the *Student Code of Conduct* will be followed.

After reading through the handbook, it is advisable to keep it as a reference during this school year. If you have questions about any of the material in this handbook, contact Jamie Cook, Principal/Director; Katie Fite Assistant Principal/Assistant Director of Head Start/Early Head Start or Shonda Brown, Manager of Family/Community Partnerships.

Also, please complete the following required forms during orientation:

1. Parental Acknowledgment Form, regarding distribution of this Handbook;
2. Student Directory Information and Release of Student Information Form.

For more information regarding **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** (beginning on page 9) and **Directory Information** (see page 16).

Please note that references to policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available for review in the MPISD Central Support Services offices or online at www.mpisd.net

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Vision:

Every CDC child will be successful!

Mission:

We will prepare children to be ready for Kindergarten.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards:

All CDC programs are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and follow all Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers. Parents interested in reviewing the Minimum Standards, or review a copy of the most recent licensing inspection reports please contact the Principal at 903-575-2092 to schedule an appointment. To contact the local licensing office, please call 1-800-874-3226 or see the Department of Family and Protective Services website at www.dfps.state.tx.us

The MPISD Child Development Center is home to the following programs:

- **Head Start** is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive medical, dental, social, nutritional and educational benefits for low-income or children with disabilities. Children must be three or four-years-old on or before September 1st, of the ensuing school year. There are 255 openings for three and four-year-old children. Ten percent of the enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities. All Head Start eligible children not accepted in the first cut off will be placed on a prioritized waiting list for Head Start services, and offered an opening in the half-day state Prekindergarten program. Qualification for Head Start services will be verified by using income guidelines determined by the Administration for Children and Families Health & Human Services. Hours begin at 7:30 a.m. until 3:10 p.m., Monday through Friday and services follow the MPISD official school calendar.
- **Early Head Start** is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive medical, dental, social, nutritional, and child development services for low-income infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families. The program is funded to enroll 80 infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, with ten percent of the enrollment reserved for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Qualification and selection is determined by utilizing income guidelines published by the Administration for Children and Families Health and Human Services. Priority selection is given to teen parents enrolled in school. Hours begin at 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday, with childcare services available before and after school. All eligible EHS infants, toddlers, and pregnant women not accepted in the program will be

placed on a prioritized waiting list for EHS services.

- **Prekindergarten** is a state funded program, which provides educational benefits for children who are three or four-years-old on or before September 1st of the ensuing school year and qualify according to state guidelines using the following criteria: 1) is unable to speak and comprehend the English language; or 2) is educationally disadvantaged; or 3) is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 1143a, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control of the child; or 4) is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority; or 5) is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; or 6) is or has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 262.201, Family Code. Prekindergarten classes are available in part day only. Part day hours are 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. or 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m. for 3 year olds and 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. For 4 year olds. Prekindergarten classes are operated Monday through Friday following the MPISD school calendar.
- **Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)** is a government-funded program that provides services to preschool children who have been identified with special needs. These services are provided through the Titus County Shared Services Agreement. The students are placed in the most appropriate or least restrictive environment, which may be a self-contained classroom; an inclusion setting such as a regular Head Start classroom; or a combination of these services. Hours begin at 8:00 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday, and follow the MPISD school calendar.
- **MPISD Extended Day Program** is a district-endorsed program, which provides before and after school services for children who are enrolled in the Prekindergarten and Head Start programs. This program is available for parents who work, attend college or attend training. Enrolled students are provided a snack, recreational time and educational activities. Hours begin at 6:30 a.m. and continue until 5:30 p.m. each day. A parent fee will be assessed.
- **Tuition- based Prekindergarten** is a district-endorsed program which provides preschool care. This program is available for MPISD employees and parents who normally would not qualify for the preschool program. This program is available for a monthly fee.
- **Northeast Texas Workforce Development Board Child Care Services (CCS)** is a State funded program that provides direct child care assistance payments for qualifying families of children currently enrolled in EHS, Head Start, Pre-K, and PPCD programs. This program is available for parents who work, go to school, or attend job-related training. Hours begin at 6:30 a.m. and continue until 5:30 p.m. each day. CCS will determine and assess a parent fee based on the family's income.

ELIGIBILITY

The following documents are necessary to determine eligibility at the time of enrollment. If assistance is needed to obtain certain records, the CDC staff will be available as a resource.

- Proof of Income (2014 Tax Return, W2, SSI, Child Support, TANF and check stubs)
- 2 Proofs of Residency (Gas, Water, Electric, Cable or Satellite Bill)
- Child's Original Birth Certificate
- Child's Social Security Card
- Child's Updated Immunization Record and current Physical Exam
- Parent/Guardian Driver's License or Identification
- TB Skin test and results (12 months and older)
- Medicaid/CHIP/Private Insurance
- Food Stamp Letter and/WIC Card or Letter
- Section 8 Housing (if applicable)
- College Schedule (if applicable)
- Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)/Home Health (if applicable)
- Titus County Shared Services Arrangement (if applicable)
- **COMPLETED** Registration Application

HEAD START SELECTION OF CHILDREN

CDC will obtain a number of applications greater than enrollment opportunities available. The selection criterion is based on Community Assessment with 10% of our Head Start opportunities for children with disabilities. The Priority Screening Instrument is used to determine eligibility of the Head Start and Early Head Start program. The families with the highest points will be considered first. CDC will maintain a waiting list throughout the year to fill vacancies as students withdraw. Income eligible children will remain eligible through Early Head Start or if enrolled in Head Start will remain through the completion of the four year old program.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Applications for registration are taken year around. Parents may pick up a registration packet from a CDC receptionist. An appointment will be scheduled with each parent to complete the enrollment process. The registration process must be completed before child is considered for enrollment. In order to be eligible, the child must be: between the ages of zero to five before September 1st, reside in Titus County, be income eligible, have limited English, or have a diagnosed disability, or be seeking enrollment in the tuition- based program.



SECTION I: PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section of the MPISD CDC Parent/Child Handbook includes information on topics that will be of particular interest to you as a parent.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We at the CDC believe that you the parent are your child's most valuable teacher. Our goal is to partner with you to ensure your child becomes a life-long learner. CDC parent involvement events include organized activities such as parenting classes, nutrition classes, parent workshops, literacy classes, and social activities. The CDC parent involvement calendar and event information will be sent home weekly in each child's folder.

Working Together

Both experience and research tell us that a child's education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

- Advocate for your child and place a high priority on education. Work with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Support your child's learning achievements by sending your child to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Become familiar with your child's school activities including programs offered by the school district.
- Ask questions about educational options and opportunities that may be available for your child and family. You may ask the Principal or staff from Family Services, Education, or Health Services.
- Monitor your child's progress toward school readiness by contacting the teacher, education staff or the principal.
- Attend parent conferences; cooperate with home visits schedules; and request additional conferences if needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, or principal or other support staff, please call the school office at **903-575-2092** for an appointment. The teacher will return your call or meet with you during her/his conference period. Times are also available throughout the school day to accommodate family schedules.
- Become a school volunteer. Regular orientation and training will be offered each Monday at 8:00 a.m. or by appointment. Contact Family Services staff at 903-575-2092 and ask to be transferred for additional information regarding volunteering at the CDC.
- Attend board meetings to learn more about MPISD operations.
 - Participate in CDC parent organizations that may include serving as a:

- Parent Representative on the Head Start/EHS Policy Council to assist with campus-level planning, participation in policy making or other decisions about the program.
- Member on the Head Start/EHS Parent Committee to assist with development of center activities addressing education and healthy development of children.
- Member on the School Readiness Committee to assist the campus, Head Start/EHS, and District with delivering a high-level early childhood program. Contact the Education Services Manager at **(903)575-2092**.
- Member on the campus Health Advisory Services Committee and assist CDC, Head Start/EHS, and district in supporting health education and a safe environment. Contact the Health Services Manager at **(903)575-2092** for further information.
- Parent Representative on the district-level or campus-level site-based decision making committees to assist with the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, contact the Principal at **(903)575-2092**.

Parent Involvement Coordinator

Title I services are provided to children at the CDC with a wide variety of parent involvement activities coordinated by Family Services Specialists. For more information, contact the Principal or Family Services Manager at (903)575-2092 or obtain a monthly calendar of events.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or assessment. As a parent, you will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or assessment that concerns:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
- Income, except when the information is required by law to determine the student's eligibility in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

Opting Out of Surveys and Activities

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child's participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to

protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state or federal law.

Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

Reviewing Instructional Materials

As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, literature, other teaching aids, and instructional materials used in the curriculum; and to examine tests that have been administered to your child. Parents are welcome to attend planning time. A schedule is posted on each teacher's bulletin board.

Displaying of a Student's Artwork and Projects

Teachers display students' work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. The district will seek parental consent before displaying student's artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students or similar artifacts on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication. Parents should address permission for their child through by signing the *Use of Student Work in District Publications Form* during registration.

Accessing Student Records

You may review your child's student records. These records include:

- Attendance records
- Assessment instruments and scores
- Grades
- Disciplinary records
- Counseling records
- Psychological records
- Applications for admission
- Health and immunization information
- Other medical records
- Teacher documentation/evaluations
- Reports of behavioral patterns

Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student

As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the district to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:

- When it is to be used for school safety
- When it relates to classroom instruction, a co-curricular or extracurricular activity
- When it relates to media coverage of the school.

Removing a Student Temporarily from the Classroom

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate will conflict with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.

Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to U.S. and Texas Flags

As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledges of Allegiance to the United States flag or Texas flag. The request must be in writing and submitted to the principal. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows. See Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence on page 34 and policy EC (LEGAL).

Requesting Notices of Certain Student Misconduct

A noncustodial parent may request in writing that he or she be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to your child's misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion. [See policy FO (LEGAL) and the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

School Safety Transfers

As a parent, you have a right to request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the principal to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. For information, see policy FDB.

Requesting Classroom Assignment for Multiple Birth Siblings

As a parent, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, you may request that they be placed either in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after the enrollment of your children. [See FDB (LEGAL)]

Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Need Special Education Services

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with [prior written notice](#) that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights, if they disagree with the district. The district is required to give parents the [Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities](#). Additional information regarding the IDEA is available from the school district in a companion document [A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process](#).

The following websites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

[Texas Project First](#)

[Partners Resource Network](#)

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Persons: Education/Disabilities Manager - Phone Number: (903)-575-2092 or Marilyn Logan- Phone Number (903)575-2000.

Parents of Students with Disabilities

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education services at any time. For more information, Contact the Education/ Disabilities Manager at (903) 575-2092 or the Titus County Shared Services Arrangement at (903) 575-2000.

Services for Students with Disabilities/Speech Pathology

Children with a diagnosed disability will be served through the Titus County Shared Services Arrangement. Many of these children are mainstreamed into Head Start or the Pre-Kindergarten program for part or all of the day.

A Speech Therapist will assist the classroom teacher in identifying children with speech and language impairments. If a child is identified as having a potential speech or language impairment, he/she will be referred to the speech pathologist for further assessments to determine eligibility for services. Many children receive speech services in a group setting.

Other services delivered on campus as determined by the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee, are Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Vision Therapy.

Request for the Use of a Service Animal

A parent of a student who uses a service animal because of the student's disability must submit a request in writing to the Principal at least ten district business days before bringing the service animal on campus.

Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance (to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties Who Need, or May Need Special Education)

If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the district's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for support services that are available to all students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the district must decide if the evaluation is needed. If an evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide consent for the evaluation. The district must complete the evaluation and the report within 60 calendar days of the date the district receives the written consent. The district must provide a copy of the report to the parent.

If the district determines that the evaluation is not needed, the district will provide the parent with a written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parent of his or her rights if the parent disagrees with the district. Additionally, the notice must inform the parent how to obtain a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education is the Education/Disabilities Manager at (903)575-2092.

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. See policy FDB (LOCAL).

Parents of Students who speak a Primary Language Other than English

A student may be eligible to receive services in an ESL, Bilingual or Dual Language program if he or her primary language is not English. These programs are an integral part of the total school program and will use instructional approaches designed to meet the special needs of English language learners. The basic curriculum content of the programs will be based on the essential knowledge and skills required by the state.

Accommodations for Children of Military Families

Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain district requirements, including:

- Immunization requirements
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities
- Graduation requirements
- In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his/her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district
- Additional information may be found at <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/>

Student Records

Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents certain rights of privacy. Before disclosing any personally identifiable information from a student's records, the district must verify the identity of the person, including a parent or the student requesting the information.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records. Release is restricted to:

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights.
- District school officials who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. School officials would include trustees and employees, such as the superintendent, administrators, and principals; teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff; a person or company with whom the district has contracted or allowed to provide a particular service or function (such as an attorney, consultant auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or volunteer); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official in the performance of his or her duties. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; reviewing an educational record to fulfill the official’s professional responsibility; or investigating or evaluating programs.
- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.

Release to any other person or agency will occur only with parental permission, as appropriate. The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school and for students who have withdrawn.

Records may be inspected by a parent during regular school hours. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent or eligible student who provides a written request and pays copying cost of ten cents per page may obtain copies. If circumstances prevent inspection during regular school hours and the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent to review these records. The address of the principal or superintendent’s office is P.O. Box 1117, Mount Pleasant, TX. 75455.

A parent may inspect the student’s records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. A request to correct a student’s record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the district denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student’s record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student’s grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG (LOCAL). A grade issued by a classroom teacher can be changed only if, as determined by the board of trustees, the grade is arbitrary, erroneous, or inconsistent with the district’s grading policy. See Finality of Grades at FNG (LEGAL), Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences on page 34 and Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns on page 19 for overview of the process.

The district’s policy regarding student records found at FL (LOCAL) is available from the principal’s or superintendent’s office or online at: www.mpisd.net

The parent’s or eligible student’s right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as a teacher’s personal

notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher—do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

Parents or eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with federal law regarding student records. The complaint may be mailed to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

Directory Information

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as Directory Information; that may be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student’s directory information may be prevented by the parent. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of your child’s first day of instruction for this school year. See the “Notice Regarding Directory Information” included in this handbook or included in the registration packet.

Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes

The district often needs to use student information for school-sponsored purposes.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use your child’s directory information. This information will not be used for other purposes without the consent of the parent or eligible student, except as described above at Directory Information.

Unless you object to the use of your child’s information for these limited purposes, the school will not need to ask your permission each time the district wishes to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed above.

Release of Student Information

The MPISD CDC transfers student’s information to Titus County elementary schools for transition purposes and to other programs that may benefit the child’s educational progress and development needs. This information will not be transferred or released without a signed consent form by the parent.



SECTION II: OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, school operations, and requirements. Information is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you have a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact the Principal or Family Services at **(903)575-2092**.

ADULT LITERACY

MPISD CDC is in collaboration with Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC) Adult Education Program to provide literacy services for parents of enrolled children. Parents may enroll for classes at the Mount Pleasant Community Adult Education Center. Parents are encouraged to obtain the knowledge and the skills necessary for self-sufficiency.

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day's learning on the previous day's, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences for their child. State laws deal with compulsory attendance and are discussed below:

Compulsory Attendance

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school. State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument.

If a parent chooses to enroll a child under the age of six in an optional preschool public school program (such as public Pre-K or Head Start), all state compulsory attendance laws will apply to that child and families.

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school or from required special programs will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and parents will be subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may impose penalties against parents if a student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days;
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Serve as an election clerk; and
- Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student:

- Is absent from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, or
- Is absent on three or more days or part of days within a four-week period.

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Parents are asked to call the Reception Desk to report the reason for their child’s absence *each day* the child is not in attendance at the Child Development Center (CDC). Children who visited the doctor or dentist should present a doctor/dentist excuse form to the staff member at the front desk.

The CDC Family Services Specialist will contact non-reporting parents or guardians on the *first* day of absenteeism either by phone or in person. When the staff is unable to contact a child’s family by telephone, the following process will begin:

- The Family Services Specialist will attempt to contact the family *daily* for the first *four* consecutive days the child is absent.
- A Family Services Specialist will make a home visit on the *fifth* day following these absences to determine if family assistance is needed.
- Family Services will initiate the automatic withdrawal procedure for the child on the *seventh* day of absences when there has not been sufficient family contact.
- A letter will be sent to inform parent/guardian(s) that once a child is enrolled in school that parents should make every effort for their child to attend class.
- Parents of children that have *ten* or more unexcused absences in a six month period will meet with the attendance committee. The committee members consist of Family Services Manager, Health Manager, PEIMS Coordinator, Enrollment Coordinator, and/or Teacher. The committee and parent will determine a plan to resolve chronic

absenteeism. If unexcused absences continue the child's slot will be considered an enrollment vacancy and parents of the next eligible child from the waiting list will be contacted for an enrollment opportunity.

- Quarterly attendance reports will be reviewed by Family Services Manager.

Parent's Note after an Absence

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—is encouraged to bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence.

Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness

Upon return to school, a student absent one day or more because of a personal illness or doctor/dentist's visit is encouraged to bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. This is classified as an excused attendance.

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's absence from school. See policy FEC (LOCAL).

ACADEMIC PROGRAM-MPISD CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER CURRICULA

Curriculum Plans have been developed for both preschool and Early Head Start children with assistance from parents, staff, and the Education Services Advisory Committee (ESAC). Infant /toddler programs including the Early Head Start and Child Care utilize the *Creative Curriculum and Frog Street* Infant and Toddler Curriculum and developmentally appropriate practices endorsed by NAEYC, Head Start, and the West Ed Infant/Toddler programs. This approach ensures that a curricular approach is designed to meet the individual and rapidly developing needs of infants and toddlers.

The preschool programs including Head Start, PreK, PPCD, Tuition Based and Child Care also implement the *Frog Street Prek*, which serves as the curricular foundation and the basis for daily lesson planning. This curriculum program is a comprehensive, research based curriculum designed to meet the needs of the whole child.

The Plans meet or exceed all regulations and standards set forth by Head Start, NAEYC, Child Care Licensing, and the Texas Pre-K Guidelines. The Plans are used in each classroom to ensure that the needs of the whole child are being met while preparing them for their entrance into Kindergarten.

BULLYING

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of physical harm, or of damage to the student's property, or is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

Bullying could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, assault, demands for money, confinement, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyber bullying."

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or another district employee. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and will take appropriate disciplinary action if an investigation indicates that bullying has occurred.

[Also see **School Safety Transfers** on page 12, **Hazing** on page 30, and policy_FFI (LOCAL).]

CELEBRATIONS AND PARTIES

Individual celebrations (such as a child's birthday) may not be recognized with a party at school or with foods from family kitchens. Gifts and food may not be distributed on campus from individuals. The CDC does not allow invitations to be handed out to individual students while they are at school.

The CDC has classroom celebrations/parties 2-3 times per year. These allowable activities are part of the regular curriculum and focus on learning. Parents are invited to attend and participate, but due to the "food of minimum nutritional value" guidelines, all food must be pre-approved and no candy is allowed. No food on a stick may be served to preschool children.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

A person having cause to believe that a child's physical, mental health, or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report. To make a report call: 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org

In compliance with Texas minimum standards of licensing 746.501 subchapters:

(25) Preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children, including:

(A) Required annual training for employees;

- All employees will receive annual training specifically addressing the prevention and response to suspected abuse and neglect of children. All employees' annual training and the associated requirements will be documented to ensure compliance.
- Employees will be made aware of their legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting and responding to suspected abuse or neglect.
- The Child Abuse Hotline phone number will be provided to all employees and posted in the classroom to ensure that employees can respond to suspected abuse and neglect of children.

(B) Methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;

- All employees will receive annual training addressing the issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including the warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.
- Employees will conduct a regular assessment of children overall appearance and health to identify warning signs of abuse or neglect.
- Parent education events will include training or meetings to address the awareness and identification and the warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.

- Parents will receive a copy of the Child Development Center (CDC) Parent & Child Handbook at the beginning of the school year. This document addresses issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.
- The CDC staff, parents and community will participate in recognition activities regarding Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness in April every year.

(C) Methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of prevention techniques for child abuse and neglect;

- The employees and parent awareness of prevention for child abuse or neglect will be presented but not be exclusive to:
 - Parenting classes
 - Parent involvement meetings and events
 - Employee and parent training for *Conscious Discipline*
 - Implementation of *Conscious Discipline* by employees for behavior management
 - Provision of mental health services, including family counseling for children, parents and the family unit
 - Provision of a center-based computers to access the website (www.txabusehotline.org) for information from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

(D) Strategies for coordination between the center and appropriate community organizations;

- The Child Development Center will maintain Memoranda of Understanding between the early childhood programs and appropriate community organizations to coordinate training and intervention, addressing the recognition, prevention, and intervention for child abuse or neglect.
- The employees will maintain a strong working relationship and communication with Child Protective Services.

(E) Actions that the parent of a child who is a victim of abuse or neglect should take to obtain assistance and intervention.

- Counseling services will be provided for parents so they may obtain assistance and intervention if they become a victim of abuse or neglect.
- Families or children with a need for mental health or counseling services will be provided with responsive referrals for resources in the community.
- The Child Abuse Hotline toll free number (1-800-252-5400) will be posted at the Child Development Center for parents or community members.
- The Child Development Center Resources Guide will be provided to every parent that enrolls their child.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The district has established a plan for addressing child sexual abuse. As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficult sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse, and it is important to be calm and comports if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse, the campus counselor or principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manages early intervention counseling programs. To find out what services may be available in your county, see:

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention and Early Intervention/Programs Available in Your County/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention%20and%20Early%20Intervention/Programs%20Available%20in%20Your%20County/default.asp).

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child sexual abuse:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index.aspx?id=2820>

<http://sapn.nonprofitoffice.com/>

<http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php>

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG Publication/txts/childabuse1.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG%20Publication/txts/childabuse1.shtml)

[http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG%20Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml)

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Usually parent complaints or concerns can be solved by a phone call to the campus or a conference with the Teacher or Principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the district has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG (LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's office, Superintendent's office.

In general, the parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus Principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent in writing to the Superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees through a formalized grievance procedure.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only.

There are two computers located in in both CDC and EHS foyer the for parent use. Parents may use these computers to improve computer knowledge or look for community resources, including job opportunities.

Parents should be aware that e-mail and other electronic communications using district computers are not private and will be monitored by district staff.

CONDUCT

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the board has adopted a *Student Code of Conduct* that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior and consequences for violation of these standards. The *Student Code of Conduct* and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved. Parents should be familiar with the standards set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as written campus and classroom rules.

CDC classroom rules have been developed to achieve the best possible learning environment for all students.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may not be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, Texas Child Care Licensing Standards and accreditation guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Disruptions

Parents, family members, and any adult who participates with a student's educational process at the CDC should be aware that as identified by law, disruptions may not occur on school property and may include the following:

- Interference with the movement of people at an exit, entrance, or hallway of a district building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interference with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Use of force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interference with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to district property.
- Use of force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving district property without authorization from an administrator.
- Disruption of classes or other school activities while on district property or on public property that is within 500 feet of district property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language, or any misconduct.

- Interference with the transportation of students in district vehicles.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his or her child has a contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse (Health Manager or Specialist) or the Principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

The CDC Health Services or the principal's office can provide information from the Department of State Health Services regarding these diseases.

CDC will notify all parents of children in the center in writing, within 48 hours of becoming aware that a child in the center or employee has contracted a communicable disease that the law requires to be reported to the Texas Department of Health.

CDC must provide written notice within 48 hours to the parents of all children in a group when there is an outbreak of lice or other infestation in the group. CDC will either post this notice in a prominent and publicly accessible place where parents can easily view it or send an individual note to each parent.

COUNSELING

Personal Counseling

The Family Services staff is available to provide intervention and make referrals for mental health services. These services are designed to assist children with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, emotional issues, or objectionable behaviors. A licensed professional counselor is available to assist the program with intervention and to provide counseling or mental health services. The staff may also make available information about community resources or make referrals for parents who may have a need for counseling services.

If you wish to meet with the counselor, you should contact your child's teacher or the Family Services Staff for a referral.

Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment

The school will not conduct a psychological or mental health examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent. Parental consent is not necessary when a psychological examination, test, or treatment is required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports. For more information, refer to FFE (LEGAL) and FFG (EXHIBIT).

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and that their welfare is best served when they are free from this prohibited conduct while attending school. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. District employees are expected to treat students with courtesy and respect.

The Board has established policies and procedures to prohibit and promptly respond to inappropriate and offensive behaviors that are based on a person's race, religion, color, national origin, gender, disability or any other basis prohibited by law. [See policy FFH]

Discrimination

Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that it negatively affects the student.

Harassment

Harassment, in general terms, is conduct so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance. A copy of the district's policy is available in the principal's office and in the superintendent's office or www.mpisd.net.

Examples of harassment may include, but are not limited to, offensive or derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee, volunteer, or another student is prohibited.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature.

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, touching private body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person, who makes a good faith report of discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, is prohibited. A person who makes a false claim or offers false statements or refuses to cooperate with a district investigation, however, may be subject to appropriate discipline. Retaliation against a person who is participating in an investigation of alleged discrimination or harassment is also prohibited.

Retaliation against student may occur when a student receives threats from another student or an employee or when an employee imposes an unjustified punishment or unwarranted grade reduction. Retaliation does not include petty slights and annoyances from other students or negative comments from a teacher that are justified by a student's poor academic performance in the classroom.

Reporting Procedures

Any parent who believes that a student or family member has experienced discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, a Family Services Specialist, Principal, or other district employee. The report may be made by the student's parent.

Investigation of Reported Harassment

To the extent possible, the district will respect the privacy of the student; however, limited disclosures may be necessary to conduct a thorough investigation and to comply with law. Allegations will be promptly investigated. The district will notify the parents of any student alleged to have experienced prohibited harassment by an adult associated with the district.

If the district's investigation indicates that prohibited harassment occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the harassment. The district may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint did not rise to the level of harassment prohibited by law or policy.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG (LOCAL).

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

School Materials

Publications and written materials prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with the prior approval of the Principal. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, Parent Newsletters, Health/Safety Newsletters, classroom memos, etc.

A composite MPISD elementary schools yearbook is available to students and parents. A parent may choose to order and purchase the publication for a fee that will be made payable to MPISD.

All school publications are under the supervision of the Principal.

Non-School Materials...from parents and others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the district or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any district premises by any district employee or by persons or groups not associated with the district, except as permitted by policy at GKDA. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization.

To be considered for distribution, any non-school material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the office of Superintendent for prior review. The office Superintendent will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate district complaint policy. See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.

Prior review will not be required for:

- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.
- Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD (LOCAL) or a non-curricular-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB (LOCAL).
- Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All non-school materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from district property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

The district's dress code is established to teach grooming and hygiene, prevent disruption, and minimize safety hazards.

Appropriate Dress

Children attending the CDC should be dressed in comfortable, easily-washed, play clothes. They will often come home with dirt, sand, or paint on them due to the type of learning experiences in which they participate. These activities are an important part of learning, so please do not dress a child in clothes that cannot get dirty. Note the following guidelines for appropriate dress.

- **Allowable**

- Jeans, Pants, Capri Pants, Shorts,
Skirts (with shorts or lycra pants worn underneath)
Tennis Shoes and socks
Boots-rubber or soft sole only

- **Not Allowable**

- NO flip flops. Shoes must fit securely to child's feet
NO frilly dresses, or restrictive clothing
NO oversized or baggy jeans/pants. Pants must fit around the waist.
NO halter tops or midriffs (no stomach or backs showing)
NO tattoos or body piercing
earring(s) on boys
NO fake fingernails
NO high heels, or Sunday shoes
NO skate shoes
NO make-up
NO BACKPACKS: Children are not allowed to bring backpacks to school

Parents who dress children for school in clothing that is not allowable by this procedure will be asked to choose other dress code appropriate clothing for their child.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Mobile Telephones

Texas - House Bill 55 - The law prohibits the use of a wireless communication device (cell phone) within a school crossing zone.

For the safety of families and children, parents must remain free of cell phone use in school zones, in parking lot, and in the center. We value your child and want you to focus on their needs and safety while entering and exiting the center. Children are unpredictable; therefore; parents must hold their hand to reduce danger.

Possession and Use of Personal Telecommunications Devices

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess personal mobile telephones; however, these devices must be in silent mode while on school campuses, while riding school

buses and including during all testing, unless they are being used for approved instructional purposes. A student must have approval to possess other telecommunications devices such as netbooks, laptops, tablets, or other portable computers.

The use of mobile telephones or any device capable of capturing images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms or restroom areas while at school or at a school-related or school-sponsored event.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen telecommunications devices.

Possession and Use of Other Personal Electronic Devices

Except as described below, students are not permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, e-readers, or other electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained. Without such permission, teachers will collect the items and turn them in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact parents to pick up the items.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. The district will not be responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen electronic device.

Instructional Use of Personal Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices

In some cases, students may find it beneficial or might be encouraged to use personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional purposes while on campus. Students must obtain prior approval before using personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices for instructional use. Students must also sign a user agreement that contains applicable rules for use (separate from this handbook). When students are not using the devices for approved instructional purposes, all devices must be turned off during the instructional day. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district's network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a User Agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Unacceptable and Inappropriate Use of Technology Resources

- The district's network filters will be applied to one's connection to the internet and the student will not attempt to bypass them. The student must connect to the school's portal and not their personal connection. Connecting using the student's personal plan may result in charges according to your plan. Please review your plan regarding text messages, as texting may be used to participate in the classroom.
- Students are prohibited from sending, posting, accessing, or displaying electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property, whether the equipment used to send such messages is district-owned or personally owned, if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or other content, commonly referred to as “sexting,” will be disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement. Please review BYOT Student Agreement at www.mpisd.net.

- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn’t intended for my use.

FAMILY SERVICES

Head Start/Early Head Start Family Services Specialists are involved with families on many different levels. As Specialists and families become well acquainted, they will share information and establish a working relationship. A confidential Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) will be developed with each family to acknowledge a goal(s) that the family or guardian has identified. Specialists will assist families to learn how to access resources within the community that are necessary for goal attainment.

FEES

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with federal, state, and local funds and are at no charge to a student, however, Pre-kindergarten children will be expected to provide some school supplies as noted on a published list each year, prior to the first day of school. These supplies are minimal and may include paper, markers, and crayons. If a parent cannot supply these school supplies, they may choose to opt “out” of providing these supplies by contacting the Principal.

Parents may be approached to pay optional fees or deposits, including:

- Voluntarily purchased student or group pictures, publications and yearbooks etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance,
- Child care fees if enrolled in a subsidized or school-sponsored child care or extended-day program.

FUND-RAISING

The children of the Child Development Center do not participate in fundraising.

Parent or school employee groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for some approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the Principal at least 14 days before the event. For further information, see policies at FJ and GE.

GANG-FREE ZONES

Certain criminal offenses, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus location on, or within 1,000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

HARASSMENT

See Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation on Page 24.

HAZING

Hazing is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off campus directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated to, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

Hazing will not be tolerated by the district. If an incident of hazing occurs, disciplinary consequences will be handled in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. It is a criminal offense if a person engages in hazing; solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in hazing; or has firsthand knowledge of an incident of hazing being planned or having occurred and fails to report this to the principal or superintendent.

[Also see Bullying on page 19 and policies FFI and FNCC.]

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Bacterial Meningitis

State law specifically requires the district to provide the following information:

- What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is most common and the least serious. Bacterial meningitis is the most common form of serious bacterial infection with the potential for serious, long-term complications. It is an uncommon disease, but requires urgent treatment with antibiotics to prevent permanent damage or death.

- What are the symptoms?

Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms.

Children (over 1 year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pains, and drowsiness or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny, red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

- How serious is bacterial meningitis?

If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

- How is bacterial meningitis spread?

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs live naturally in the back of our noses and throats, but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, or utensils, or cigarettes).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

- How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

Do not share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for people traveling to a country where there is a high risk of getting the disease. Also, a vaccine is recommended by some groups for college students, particularly freshmen living in dorms or residence halls. The vaccine is safe and effective (85–90 percent). It can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and lasts for up to five years.

- What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?

You should seek prompt medical attention.

- Where can you get more information?

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov>, and the Department of State Health Services, <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)

The CDC schedules at a minimum two campus HSAC meetings per school year to address health, nutrition, and safety issues for children and families. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed to address health-related concerns, procedures, or regulations. Additional information regarding the HSAC is available from the Health/Nutrition/Safety Manager or the Health Plan. See also policies at BDF and EHAA.

Other Health-Related Matters

Vending Machines

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with state and federal food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the Principal. See policies at CO and FFA. The CDC does not have vending machines accessible by students.

Tobacco Prohibited

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by anyone on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. See the *Student Code of Conduct* and policies at FNCD and GKA.

Asbestos Management Plan

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, and is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions, please call (903) 575-2000.

Pest Management Plan

The district applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact (903) 575-2081.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the Family Services Manager at 903-575-2092, the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths for the Child Development Center.

HOME VISITS AND CONFERENCES

Head Start and Early Head Start teachers will make an appointment for two (2) home visits and will request that parents attend two (2) conferences at CDC. The visits are used to share information that will help the child receive the maximum benefit from his or her educational program. A Family Services Specialist will accompany the teacher during visits to follow up on the family goal. Specialists will share upcoming parent involvement events and community resources that may assist the family.

IMMUNIZATION

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services, Immunization Branch, can be honored by the district. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC1946), P. O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidayit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella (German measles), mumps, Hemophilic influenza Type B(Hib), tetanus, pneumococcal (PCV), pertussis, poliomyelitis (polio), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal. The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of State Health Services. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition. For further information, see policy FFAB (LEGAL) and the Department of State Health Services Web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm>.

The MPISD school district requires proof of a TB skin test with results before any child can enter school. This can be administered any time after 12 months of age.

Required immunizations:

AGE	REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS
Birth	Hepatitis B
2 Months of Age	Hepatitis B, DTaP, Hib, IPV, PCV
4 Months of Age	DTaP, Hib, IPV, PCV
6 Months of Age	Hepatitis B, DTaP, Hib, IPV, PCV
12 Months of Age	Hib, MMR, Varicella, PCV, Hepatitis A (a second Hepatitis A dose should be administered 6 months after the first dose.)
15 Months of Age	DTaP
4 Years of Age	DTaP, IPV, MMR, Varicella

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Employees will not be required to obtain any vaccines for employment. Influenza and other vaccines may be purchased using their insurance carrier or may be supplied by the school district or another entity.

Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school, the Principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation. In other circumstances:

- The Principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The Principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the Principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The Principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the Principal considers to be a valid objection.
- For more information, reference to HS/EHS procedures and policies.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

A student with limited English proficiency (LEP) is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student’s parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student.

In order to determine a student’s level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services and a level of proficiency has

been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make these decisions.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

No District employee will give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, or dietary supplements except:

- If the substance is herbal or a dietary supplement, it must be provided by the parent and will be administered only if it is required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

Handling and dispensing of student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, or dietary supplements will follow the following procedures on the CDC campus:

- Prescription medications must be provided by the parent and in the original container with a child proof cap, labeled with the child's name, current date, instructions and name of the physician.
- Non-prescription medications must be in the original container with a written request to administer the medication from a physician. The written request must include dose, frequency, and duration of administration.
- Parent needs to call or send a note each day to inform the nurse when medication was last given.
- The parent or guardian must sign the Parent's Authorization for Dispensing Medication form before medication will be administered.
- Parent or Guardian will bring and pick up the medication at the nurse's office. All medication will be stored under lock and key in the nurse's office. If a child rides the bus, the medication must to be given to the bus monitor.
- If the nurse's office is closed, medication will need to be checked in picked up at the front desk. Medications will then be placed under lock and key.
- Only designated trained staff members will be allowed to give medication.
- Medication that is expired or old will not be given to the child.
- Medications prescribed for once, twice or three times daily will be given at home unless the physician orders are stated otherwise. Parents must administer the 1st dose of a new medication at home.
- Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored away from all food.
- A new release must be signed with each new or additional prescription medication. For medications given routinely, a release must be filled out monthly.

All of the above guidelines must be met before medication can be given at the school. Medications that do not meet these guidelines will be returned home without being administered to the child.

Psychotropic Drugs

A psychotropic drug is a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of a disease or as a component of a medication. It is intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior and is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance.

Teachers and other district employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate; however, they are not permitted to recommend use of psychotropic drugs. A district employee who is a registered nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if appropriate. For further information, see policies at FFAC.

Students and Asthma or Anaphylaxis Medication

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may need a prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events with written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or licensed health-care provider. The school nurse or designated trained staff member will assist the preschool child if there is an emergency or incident that requires this specific medication. If the child is expected to administer the medication, they must demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication including any device required to administer the medication. There is also anaphylaxis medication, with doctor's orders to be used as need if a student or staff member has a severe allergic reaction while on campus. Additional EpiPens are located in two different locations at Early Head Start and Head Start receptionist desk. All staff have been trained to use the EpiPens to assist as needed.

Students with Diabetes

In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use (with adult supervision, including the school nurse) monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. If the child is expected to self-monitor and self-treat, they must demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability to use the monitoring devices and treatment supplies/equipment.

See the school nurse or principal for information. See Policy FFAF.

Extended Child Care Medication Procedure

Extended Child Care will follow all medication administration procedures for students with the exception that medications prescribed three or more times daily may be given at school. In addition, the parent or guardian will pick up the child's medication from the front desk staff where it will be stored under lock and key.

Illness Exclusion Policy

The Child Development Center programs adhere to the guidelines for exclusion of children from licensed centers as identified by the Texas Department of State Health Services. To protect the children in the center, parents are asked NOT to send their child to school if the child shows any of the following signs of illness:

1. The illness prevents the child from comfortable participation in child-care center activities, including outdoor play as determined by Principal/Director, Health Manager or School Nurse.

2. If the illness results in a greater need for care than can be provided without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children in care as determined by the Principal/Director, Health Manager or School Nurse.
3. Temperature greater than 100.4 F and accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
4. Fever with any of these other symptoms: rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, sore throat or swollen glands.
5. Yellow or green discharge from the eyes.
6. Signs and symptoms of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
7. Any child suffering from a communicable disease, as defined by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

In addition to the above list, parents will be notified of the following conditions:

1. If the child has suffered a head injury**
2. When a child cannot use a limb after a fall or injury
3. If child received a deep cut longer than one inch OR deep facial cuts**
4. If the child has problems breathing or has an asthma attack**
5. If the child sustains a broken or loose tooth from a fall
6. If the child has unexpected convulsions**
7. If the child has sudden intense abdominal pain with fever**

** Indicated conditions may require calling EMS or transporting the child to the appropriate medical facility.

Parental Notification:

After CDC staff ensures the safety of the child, CDC will notify the parent immediately after a child:

- Is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional; other than school staff
- Has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the center due to environmental health concern;
- Has been involved in any situation that places the child at risk. For example, a caregiver forgetting a child in a center vehicle or not preventing a child from wandering away from the child-care center unsupervised; or
- Has been involved in any situation that renders the child-care center unsafe, such as a fire, flood, or damage to the child-care center as a result of severe weather.

CDC will notify the parent of less serious injuries in writing or when the parent picks the child up from the center. Less serious injuries include, but are not limited to minor cuts, scratches, and bites from other children requiring first-aid treatment by employees.

With your cooperation, all of the children will be healthy and safe. We want all of the children in class every day, so we must take these health measures to ensure everyone remains healthy.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, the Mount Pleasant Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, or disability in

providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district staff members have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of gender: Principal Jamie Cook at (903)-575-2092
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Principal Jamie Cook at (903)-575-2092
- All other concerns regarding discrimination: See the Superintendent Mr. Judd Marshall.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS

Each student enrolled in Early Head Start, Head Start, and Prekindergarten will be required to have a physical exam according to the THSteps Medical Checkups Periodicity Schedule. EHS and Head Start children will be required to have a dental exam every 6 months. The physical and dental exams must be turned in to the Health Manager. During the school year, a vision and hearing screen will be conducted on Head Start students enrolled in the three and four-year-old programs by the Health Staff, if not completed on physical.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Each school day, students may recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge. See Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags on page 11.

PRAYER

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. The school will not encourage, require, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

For the safety of your child, you must designate which adults have permission to “release to” for your child. This list is generated at the beginning of the year, and you may update, or add to the list at the time by completing an “Information Change” **form at the front desk a CDC or EHS.**

For your child’s safety, Changes to “release to” **WILL NOT** be taken over the phone.

Because class time is important, doctor’s appointments should be scheduled, if possible, at times when the student will not miss instructional time.

A student who will need to leave school during the day, the parent must contact the campus or send a note from home on the morning of the appointment. The parent must follow the campus sign-out procedures before taking their child from the campus.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the classroom staff will take the child to the school nurse for consultation. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student’s parent.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Progress reports of your child's performance are issued quarterly. Progress Reports may be discussed with the child's teacher during regularly scheduled home visits or parent conferences. Additionally, a parent may schedule a conference with your child's teacher by calling (903)-575-2092.

RETALIATION

See Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation on page 23.

SAFETY

Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the district. Although the district has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of the students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Field Trips and Water Activities

CDC parents will be notified in writing prior to field trips or water activities. Water activities include sprinklers and slip n slides. Parents are always welcome to assist with activities and can choose for their child not to participate. Safety precautions will be taken to ensure children have a safe enjoyable learning experience.

Animal Safety

To have an animal visit the center requires permission from the Principal in advance. If an animal is on the premises, CDC will:

- Notify parents in writing when animals are or will be present;
- Ensure the animals do not create unsafe or unsanitary conditions;
- Ensure that children do not handle any animals that show signs of illness, such as lethargy or diarrhea; and
- Ensure that caregivers and children practice good hygiene and hand washing after handling or coming in to contact with an animal and items used by animal, such as water bowls, food bowls, and cages.

Accident Insurance

Soon after the school year begins, parents will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost accident insurance that would help meet medical expenses in the event of injury to their child.

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

From time to time, students, teachers, and other district employees will participate in drills of emergency procedures. When the alarm is sounded, students should follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Continuous Alarm Signal (Fire)	→	Leave the building
Verbal Intercom Announcement	→	Return to the classroom

Verbal Intercom Announcement (Tornado/Severe Weather/Intruder)	→	Move quietly but quickly designated locations
Verbal Intercom Announcement	→	Return to the classroom

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.).

Emergency Procedures/Injuries

- For minor injuries – i.e. minor cuts, bruises, easily accessible foreign bodies in eyes or ears, staff that has had pediatric first aid training will provide first aid.
- For emergencies – i.e. lacerations, fractures, and seizures, staff should utilize their first aid training. A staff member should stay with the child while another staff member notifies the parents or guardian. If unable to contact the child’s family, a staff member will utilize 911 services to transfer the child to the hospital. A staff member will remain with the child until the parent or legal guardian assumes responsibility for the child. The child’s information about allergies and any other condition that would aid in their treatment will be taken with them.
- For severe medical emergencies – i.e. internal bleeding, poisonings and unconsciousness, 911 will be called. Appropriate care will be given to the child until emergency services personnel have arrived. Parents will then be notified of the situation.
- An injury report form will be completed as soon after the incident as possible. Copies will be distributed to the parent or legal guardian and placed in the child’s comprehensive folder.

Emergency School-Closing Information

During registration and throughout the year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early because of severe weather or another emergency.

In the event of weather that could close schools, information is reported to local television channels and local radio stations as following K-LAKE- 97.7, STAR- 95.9 and 96.9, and television channel 54 for official announcements by the district. Please listen to those stations rather than calling the school district office or school for information. If weather worsens after classes have begun, school may be closed. Parents will also be notified through school messenger phone, text and email messages. Please ensure accurate phone numbers and email address on file to receive notifications.

Emergency or Disaster Information

Should an emergency or disaster situation arise in the Mount Pleasant area while school is in session, you should be aware that the schools have made preparations to respond effectively to such situations. In the event there should be a major disaster during school hours, your student(s) will be cared for at school. The Mount Pleasant Independent School District has prepared an emergency operations plan which has been formulated to respond to a major catastrophe.

Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency so please read and understand the following responsibilities that you as a parent, guardian, or care-giver must assume.

- Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
- In the event of a serious emergency, students will be kept at their schools until they are picked up by an identified, responsible adult who has been identified as such on the Individual Emergency Release Information which is required to be filled out by parents at the beginning of the school year. Please be sure you consider the following criteria when you authorize another person to pick up your child at school:
 - He/she is 18 years of age or older.
 - He/she is usually home during the day.
 - He/she has transportation or could walk to school to pick up your child.
 - He/she is known to your child.
 - He/she is both aware and able to assume this responsibility.
 - He/she has a valid identification
- Tune your radio or television stations for emergency announcements. If students are to be kept at school, radio and TV stations will be notified. If electrical service is not affected, information will be relayed as well through the school district's Internet web site, www.MPISD.net In addition, information regarding day-to-day school operations will be available by calling the District's Administrative Office at (903)575-2000.
- Impress upon your children the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of emergency.
- Students will be released only to parents and persons identified on the School District Emergency Release Information. During an extreme emergency, students will be released at designated Reunion Doors located on school campuses. The CDC Reunion Doors will be 1602 West Ferguson Road which are the front double doors on the south side of the building. The Early Head Start Reunion Doors will be 201 Gibson Street which are the front double doors on the east side of the building. Watch for a sign or staff at the front of the building that identifies Reunion Doors.
- Parents should become familiar with the School Emergency Disaster Plan and be patient and understanding with the student release process. Because local telephone service may be disrupted, also list an out-of-state contact (if possible) on the emergency card, as calls may still be made out of the area while incoming calls are affected.
- The decision to keep students at school will be based upon whether or not streets in the area are open. If this occurs, radio and TV stations will be notified. In the event that a natural disaster takes place during the time that students are being transported, students will be kept on the bus and the driver will ask for assistance through radio contact with the school and MPISD personnel. Any child who is home waiting for the bus will not be picked up (if roads are impassable) and remains the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- In the event a natural disaster occurs in the afternoon, the driver will make every attempt to continue delivering the students to their homes. Should road conditions prevent the driver from delivering students to their home or school in the morning, the students will

be delivered to the nearest school site and that school will communicate with the home school to inform them of the students' whereabouts.

- In case of a hazardous release event (chemical spill) near the school area, Shelter-in-Place procedures will be implemented to provide in-place protection. All students and staff will clear the playgrounds and fields, report to their rooms, and all efforts will be made to prevent outside air from entering classrooms during the emergency. "Shelter-in-Place" signs will be placed in classroom windows or hung outside classroom doors during a drill or emergency. Students arriving at school during a Shelter-in-Place drill or event should report to the school office or to a previously designated area at the school because classrooms will be inaccessible. When the dangerous incident has subsided, an all-clear signal will be given.
- Please discuss these matters with your immediate family. Planning ahead will help alleviate concern during emergencies.

SNACKS AND MEALS

All food and drinks served at the CDC follow USDA guidelines for nutrition. "In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326- W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer." Notifications and contact information for USDA programs are posted where meals are served. Children receiving cafeteria meals are not allowed to bring any food to school, or take any food out of the school. Any special need relating to medical or religious reasons or the Individualized Classroom Plan (IEP) goals will be addressed on an individual basis.

Diets that are specified for medical reasons require a prescription from the child's physician. The requirements and limitations should be included in a letter or prescription that will be provided to the Health/Nutrition/Safety Manager who may be contacted at (903)575-2092.

Cafeteria Services

The campus participates in the National School Lunch Program and the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP) which offers students nutritionally balanced breakfast, lunch, and snacks on a daily basis. .

Breakfast, lunch and snack will be served daily free of charge to children who are accepted in the Child Development Center. Breakfast is served from 7:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., lunch is served from 10:25 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. and snack is from 2:15 – 3:30 (or according to the class schedule).

The district follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value being served or sold on school premises during the school day. For more information, see policy CO (LEGAL).

STANDARIZED TEST

Child Screening and Assessment

In addition to routine assessments and other measures of achievement, students at the Child Development Center may take some or all of the following tests.

DENVER II	m-CLASS CIRCLE	E-LAP
PRE-IPT	LAP-3	ASQSE (complete by the parent)

Parents are welcome to review screening and assessment material and results with their child's teacher, principal, or Education/Disabilities Manager. Call for an appointment at 903-575-2092.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Use by Students Before and After School

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place. Arrangements must be made by the parents prior to utilizing their service.

The following areas are open to students before school beginning at 6:30 a.m.

- Extended Child Care room designated at CDC for preschool children, infants and or toddlers.
- Unless the teacher overseeing the activity gives permission, a child will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless enrolled in an approved child care class, students must leave campus immediately.

Conduct Before and After School

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on district premises and at school-sponsored events off district premises, such as a field trip or family event. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the *Student Code of Conduct* or any campus procedures developed for disciplinary purposes.

Library

The library is a learning laboratory with books, audio books, learning centers, and other materials available to support the curriculum and classroom activities. The library is open for parents' use during regular school hours, Monday through Friday.

All parents or family members must obtain a library card before any library book or material may be issued for personal use. Parents may check out five library items, including books per week.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The campus provides special programs or referrals for homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities. The campus staff of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A parent with questions about these programs should contact the CDC at (903)-575-2092 or the MPISD administration at (903)575-2000 and ask that their call be transferred to the appropriate staff member responsible for a particular special program.

SUMMER SCHOOL-BILINGUAL

Summer School Programs will be offered for students who have completed the 4 year old Head Start or PreK programs who are limited English proficient (LEP students, in accordance with 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 89.1250, Required Summer School Programs. This code requires districts to provide a summer school program for limited English proficient (LEP) students who will be eligible for admission to kindergarten and first grade at the beginning of the next school year.

Additional summer school programs will be offered upon availability of funding and student's needs. If and when such programs are available, parents will be notified by the classroom teacher.

TARDINESS

Late arrivals to school result in your child missing valuable classroom time. The MPISD Child Development Center school day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Repeated tardiness will require a parent conference with the Principal, Family Services staff or Education Services staff.

TRANSFERS

See School Safety Transfers, on page 11 and Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Student Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education, on page 13 for other transfer options.

TRANSITION

Transition is a very important component for children enrolled in CDC programming.

- Transition into EHS entails moving from a variety of locations and situations into the center-based setting. Children transition or move out of the program when the child turns three. Along the way children and families will receive support that enables them to move easily and with the least amount of disruption to their lives. The EHS staff will assist families in all transitions.
- Transition of families and children into preschool programs, including Head Start, Prekindergarten, and PPCD will occur from EHS, the community, other child care centers, Early Childhood Intervention, and home environments. These families will be assisted in many ways by CDC staff. Orientation, open house, home visits by staff, and parent/teacher conferences promote easy transitions by allowing families a time to visit and ask questions as they share their goals for their children.
- Children exiting the CDC programs will experience Kindergarten preparedness activities prior to exiting the program. Information for each child will be aggregated in the cumulative folders and distributed to the appropriate elementary campus in the district or county with the parent/guardian's permission

TRANSPORTATION

School-Sponsored Trips

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by Durham transportation services to and from the event. The Principal, however, may make an exception if the parent makes a written request that the student be released to the parent.

CDC children occasionally take field trips to off campus locations in our community. A notification will be posted on the classroom door at least 48 hours before each trip, and will include the date, time, location, and purpose. Parents are invited to participate in fields trips, but are responsible for their own transportation.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is provided at no cost to students. Current bus routes and any subsequent changes are maintained in the school's computer system. Further information may be acquired by contacting the Durham Transportation Director at (903)575-2090. When riding in

district approved vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the *Student Code of Conduct* Students must:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Be released and signed out to the parent or approved adult only.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Wear and remain in the approved seat belt/harness system at all times.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Not put head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window, hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus.
- Observe all applicable classroom rules.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

Students will not be transported in a MPISD van or passenger car as a means of regular transportation to and from school temporarily or permanently.

Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; and bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

Arrival and Departure

- Parents may choose to bring their child to school, or to have him/her ride the bus from the bus stop nearest the family's home. A child may be brought to school no earlier than 7:30 a.m., and should be picked up at 3:00 p.m. or students may ride the bus to their designated bus stop. If the child is brought to school, please have him/her arrive no later than 8:00 a.m. unless he/she has a doctor or dental appointment.
- If there is an emergency, which prevents parents from picking the child up on time, please notify the school office immediately so alternate plans may be made. If your child will not ride the bus home at 11:00 a.m., you must call the center by 10:00am. If your child will not ride the bus home at 3:00 p.m., you must call the center by 2:00pm.
- For the safety of your child, parents or an approved adult should escort their child to and from the bus unloading area ensuring that they get safely across the street/roadway to load or unload. Do not walk behind the school bus at any time. Always cross the street in front of the bus at least 10ft. away from the bus. Buses will load/unload children at the nearest location to the child's residence. The driver will not wait to load/unload the bus if an adult is not present at the corner when the bus arrives. If an adult is not present at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the Child Development Center and it will be the responsibility of the parent to pick the child up at the campus.
- If your child will not be riding the bus on any particular school day, it is your responsibility to contact Durham by 6:30 am. If the bus comes to your house and your child does not ride: (1) City residents after (3) three consecutive days the bus will not return to your residence until the school is contacted to resume services and (2) County residents after (2) two day the bus will not return to your residence until the school is contacted to resume services. The Durham Transportation Services can be reached at

(903) 575-2090. All transportation changes must be made on Thursday by 3:00 a.m. and will take effect the following Monday.

- An adult must be present to assist the student on and off the bus. (Please be sure that the names of all persons the child can receive the student are on the Release List with the school.) The driver must directly release the child to an adult and the adult will sign the child out or the child will be brought back to the school. Leaving the door open to the home or standing in the front entry of the home is not acceptable nor may other children or siblings receive the preschool student at the bus stop.
- Buses do not enter mobile home parks or apartment building parking lots. Children will not be loaded or unloaded at business residences.
- All children are expected to follow bus protocol for safety and parents should constantly remind their child(ren) about seat belt safety and proper behavior on the bus.
- Children will not be shuttled in or out of assigned attendance zones.

When your child is returned to school:

- When a parent is not at the bus stop, the child will be brought back to the school. The parent will be contacted by CDC personnel and counseled about the importance of ensuring that an adult is waiting for each child. The parent will be responsible for picking up the child at the school.
- If a child is brought back to the school (3) three times, transportation privileges may be suspended for (1) one week. After one week's suspension, transportation privileges will be resumed. If the parent is still having difficulty meeting the bus, they will be counseled, given the option of child care or being picked up daily by 3:00 p.m.

Students are not allowed to board the bus without a bus tag

For the child's safety, a personalized bus tag is issued for each bus rider and it is the responsibility of the parent to send the bus tag back to the school on a daily basis. Please ensure that he/she wears the bus tag to school each morning. This will help the school personnel place each child on the appropriate bus.

Medication Procedure for Students that Ride the Bus

The parent or guardian must give the medication directly to the Bus Monitor and must meet all procedural guidelines for handling medications, see *Medicine at School* on pg. 33. Do not put medication in the child's backpack, pocket or jacket. While on the bus all medication will be stored under lock and key. When child returns home on the bus, the Bus Monitor will return the medication directly to the parent or guardian at the child's destination.

VANDALISM

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and for years to come—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated.

VIDEO CAMERAS

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student and parent behavior on buses and in common areas on campus.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

- **General Visitors**

Parents and others are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the reception area with a valid identification. Technology is used to help protect children and staff from sex offenders, domestic disputes offenders and other trespassers. Adults must have a valid identification to be screened before gaining access to the building.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted with approval of the principal and teacher. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for the program and must attend an orientation for volunteers offered each Monday morning at 8:00am. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

A student may be withdrawn from school only by a parent or legal guardian. The school requests notice from the parent/guardian at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent should sign a withdrawal form from the Attendance/PEIMS Clerk.

GLOSSARY

ARD is the Admission, Review, and Dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student's parents are part of the committee.

Attendance Review Committee is responsible for reviewing a student's absences when the student's attendance drops below 90 percent of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit lost because of absences.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student's parent directs the school not to release directory information.

IEP is the written record of the Individualized Education Program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student's present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student's progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; accommodations for state or district wide tests, etc.

LAT stands for Linguistically Accommodated Testing, which is an assessment process for recent immigrant English language learners who are required to be assessed in certain grades and subjects under the NCLB Act.

NCLB Act is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

SHAC stands for School Health Advisory Council, a group of at least five members, a majority of whom must be parents, appointed by the school board to assist the district in ensuring that local community values and health issues are reflected in the district's health education instruction.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined to be eligible for special education services under the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), general educational with appropriate instructional accommodations will be provided.

Student Code of Conduct is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board; identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a DAEP. It outlines conditions for expulsion and for suspension, and states whether self-defense is a consideration in suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses notice to the parent regarding student's violation of one of its provisions.

MPISD CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
Administrative and Support Staff
2016-2017

Principal/Director	Jamie Cook
Assistant Principal/Assistant Director	Katie Fite
Family/Community Partnerships Manager	Shonda Brown
Family/Community Partnerships Specialists	Alma Ramírez Ariadna Morales Taneshia Stanton Judy Retana Jaqueline Aguilar Belinda Phelan
Health Manager <i>Health/Nutrition/Safety</i>	Angie Ayers
Health Staff	Blanca De La Riva (LVN)
Education/Disabilities Manager	Betsy Fluellen
Education/Disabilities Support Staff	Donna Fridia Jenny Cunningham
PEIMS Clerk	Cissey Hughes
Enrollment Coordinator	Phyllis Hurd