

# **Mount Pleasant Junior High School**



## **Student Handbook 2026-2027**

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## 2026-2027 Board of Education

|                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Dr. Kenny Thompson ..... | President      |
| Luke Anderson .....      | Vice President |
| Juan Duenez .....        | Secretary      |
| Sandy Bible .....        | Member         |
| Buddy Blue .....         | Member         |
| Kim Crabb .....          | Member         |
| Yvonne Hampton .....     | Member         |

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

|                        |                                                 |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Judd Marshall.....     | Superintendent of Schools                       |
| Michael Lide.....      | Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction |
| Craig Bailey.....      | Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources     |
| Dustin Cook.....       | Assistant Superintendent of Student Services    |
| Audra Walker.....      | Chief Financial Offices                         |
| Joe Cluley.....        | Director of Athletics                           |
| Shelley Derrick.....   | Director of Assessments                         |
| Eva Beles .....        | Director of Bilingual/ ESL Education            |
| Kelly Cowen.....       | Director of Communication                       |
| Pamela Jennings .....  | Director of Food Services                       |
| Russell Luck .....     | Director of Maintenance                         |
| Shirley Peterson ..... | Director of State and Federal Programs          |
| Noe Arzate .....       | Director of Technology                          |
| Justin Chambers .....  | Director of Titus County Shared Services        |
| Ronnie Humphrey .....  | Chief of Police                                 |
| Theodus Luckett .....  | Director of Fine Arts                           |
| Hayes Leshner .....    | Director of Safety/Principal of DAEP            |
| Van Bowen.....         | Director of Facilities                          |

| DETAIL BY GRADE STAFF REPORT 2026-2027 |                       |                               |                                                            |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>7TH GRADE TEACHERS</b>              | <b>SUBJECT</b>        |                               |                                                            |
| ASHLOCK, SHEILA                        | ELA                   | BERRY, ASHLEY                 | MATH                                                       |
| DYER, RANDEE                           | ELA                   | AMADOR, DENISE                | MATH                                                       |
| ELMORE, DONNA                          | ELA                   | GONZALEZ, ADAN                | MATH                                                       |
| GRINDER, ABBY                          | ELA                   | LOVELESS, AMY                 | ALGEBRA I                                                  |
| MCCORD, LAUNA                          | ELA                   |                               |                                                            |
| SHEPPARD, APRIL                        | ELA                   | <b>SLAR</b>                   |                                                            |
|                                        |                       | CRUZ, KARINA                  | SLAR 8 <sup>TH</sup>                                       |
| CASTRO, VERONICA                       | DL HISTORY            | PADIN, BRENDA                 | SLAR 7TH                                                   |
| ERICKSTAD, JARED                       | HISTORY               | RIVERA, JENNIFER              | ESL I & II, 7 <sup>TH</sup> & 8 <sup>TH</sup> SLAR/RTI/504 |
| TERREL, TINA                           | HISTORY               |                               |                                                            |
|                                        |                       | <b>7TH &amp; 8TH TEACHERS</b> |                                                            |
|                                        |                       | STUARD, RANDAL                | 7 <sup>TH</sup> & 8 <sup>TH</sup> RESOURCE ELA/SK          |
| STANLEY, JESSICA                       | SCIENCE/ HS ATHLETICS | SALNAVE, MARGO                | 7 <sup>TH</sup> & 8 <sup>TH</sup> RESOURCE MATH INT        |
| MCCLENDON, PEYTON                      | SCIENCE / COLORGUARD  |                               |                                                            |
| SANCHEZ, MARIA                         | SCIENCE DL            | <b>ELECTIVE TEACHERS</b>      |                                                            |
|                                        |                       | RIDEOUT, KACY                 | ART/HONOR ART – 8TH                                        |
|                                        |                       | ANDERSON, CRYSTALLA           | PRODUCTION THEATER                                         |
| CASTILLO MARIA                         | MATH                  |                               |                                                            |
| BIGELOW, BRIAN                         | PRE-ALG               | LUCKETT, KAREN                | JH BAND DIRECTOR                                           |
| REED, GREG                             | MATH                  | BASS, BRIAN                   | BAND                                                       |
| WALTERS, ASHLEY                        | MATH                  | MILES, JOSHUA                 | CHOIR                                                      |
|                                        |                       | RICHARD, CHRIS                | BAND                                                       |
| <b>8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TEACHERS</b>   |                       | DAVIDSON, ERICA               | DANCE/ADT                                                  |
| BERENDT, BRANDY                        | ELA                   | SMITH, ALEXI                  | CHEER/FOWLER                                               |
| MARTIN, LARA                           | ELA                   |                               |                                                            |
| GIBBS, CHRIS                           | ELA                   | JOHNSON, TAYLOR               | GIRLS ATH DIR/PE                                           |
| NEWMAN, RHONDA                         | ELA                   | HALLONQUIST, WILL             | BOYS ATH DIR/PE                                            |
| SMITH, ASHLEY                          | ELA                   | ROLF, ZACHARY                 | PRIN BUS/MARKETING/HS ATH                                  |
| VARGAS, ITZA                           | ELA                   | HINES, JAKYBREIN              | CTE/JH ATH                                                 |
|                                        |                       | GUERRERO, JOEL                | CTE/JH ATH                                                 |
| BOWERS, KENDYL                         | SCIENCE               | WILSON, K.T.                  | CTE/JH ATH                                                 |
| GUTIERREZ                              | SCIENCE               |                               |                                                            |
| RAMIREZ, MARTINA                       | SCIENCE/HS ATHLETICS  | MAYFIELD, JASON               | SOCCER / HS ATH                                            |
| VAUGHN, CHASE                          | SCIENCE/HS ATHLETICS  | MORRIS, JESSE                 | HS ATH/SOCCER BOYS & GIRLS                                 |
|                                        |                       | BURRIS, CELINA                | TENNIS                                                     |
| GARCIA, ESAU                           | DL HISTORY HS ATHLETI | BEARD, ANTERIUS               | JH ATH                                                     |
| GOHMERT, WILLIAM                       | HISTORY /STUDY SKILLS | COOPER, LOGAN                 | COLOR GUARD                                                |
| HENRY, RONALD                          | HISTORY               | MEISINGER, D.J.               | HS ATH/PRIN EX SCI & WELLNESS                              |



|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| REED, CINDY          | HISTORY               | WALKER, JERRY           | ISS                                     |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
| <b>LIFE SKILLS</b>   |                       | <b>ADMINISTRATORS</b>   |                                         |
| ELVINE, SHELIA       | TEACHER               | DUKE, RUSTY             | CAMPUS PRINCIPAL                        |
| MARINO, ANGELICA     | SPED AIDE             | OTERO, NORBERTO         | ASST PRIN 8 <sup>TH</sup> GR DISCIPLINE |
| MILSAP, ALYSSA       | SPED AIDE             | BRANNEN, JERRY          | ASST PRIN 7 <sup>TH</sup> GR DISCIPLINE |
|                      |                       | BERRY, KRISTI           | ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL/TESTING             |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
| <b>AUTISM</b>        |                       | <b>SECRETARIES</b>      |                                         |
| MARR, MARISSA        | TCC TEACHER           | TEJEDA, VANESSA         | CAMPUS SECRETARY                        |
| HERNANDEZ, RACHEL    | AIDE                  | BARRIOS, JOANN          | PEIMS / REGISTRAR                       |
| NEAL, DAISY          | AIDE                  | ORTIZ, VERONICA         | AP SECRETARY                            |
|                      |                       | JACOBO, MAGGY           | RECEPTIONIST                            |
|                      |                       | STEEN, TRUDI            | ATTENDANCE CLERK                        |
| <b>CAMPUS AIDES</b>  |                       | CABRERA, LUPITA         | LPAC CLERK                              |
| FRANKLIN, CIORINTHIA |                       | ERICSTAD, AMANDA        | COPY CLERK/INST. AIDE                   |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       | <b>COUNSELOR</b>        |                                         |
|                      |                       | DAVIS, BLAIR            | 8 <sup>TH</sup> Grade                   |
|                      |                       | MAJORS, CANDICE         | 7 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE                   |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
| <b>COORDINATOR</b>   |                       | <b>DIAGNOSTICIAN</b>    |                                         |
| DELCARMEN, MARITZA   | Communities in School | COTA, LISA              |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       | <b>NURSE</b>            |                                         |
| <b>CAFETERIA</b>     |                       | FOSTER, MARY            | NURSE                                   |
| AYDELOTT, RONDA      | CAFÉ MANAGER          |                         |                                         |
| BROWN, KIZZY         | ASST MANAGER          | <b>RESOURCE OFFICER</b> |                                         |
| ALVAREZ, MARIA       | COOK                  | FRAZIER, TYLAR          | MPISDPD OFFICER                         |
| BANEGAS, NOHEMI      | COOK                  |                         |                                         |
| DORANTES, GLORIA     | COOK                  |                         |                                         |
| GUERRERO, NATALIA    | COOK                  |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |
|                      |                       |                         |                                         |

**MPISD Vision:**

**Every Child has every chance to learn.**

**MPISD Mission:**

**To graduate students with the ability to Read, Think, and Communicate.**

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Mt. Pleasant Junior High School. This Student Handbook is published so that all students at Mt. Pleasant Junior High may have a reference to information that is necessary to the understanding of the daily operation of our school. In order for no misunderstanding to occur, every student must read this handbook in its entirety. Building administrators, counselors, and teachers will be available to help with any clarification when needed.

The goal of Mt. Pleasant Junior High School is EXCELLENCE. This must be a cooperative effort on the part of administrators, teachers, parents, and, you, the students. We earnestly solicit your cooperation in this venture and assure you the results will be well worth the effort.

In order to have a successful year, there must be a positive attitude, high expectations, and a commitment to hard work. The following information, guidelines, and suggestions have been compiled to help you understand:

- What Mt. Pleasant Junior High School is all about
- Expectations of the administrators and teachers
- Expectations for your school day

The Student Code of Conduct for MPISD is available on the MPISD website. The code covers all discipline procedures for Mount Pleasant Junior High School. Please become familiar with the code.

This handbook is the official policy of the Mt. Pleasant Independent School District. Any appeal of these policies should be made through the Principal's Office.

**GOAL:** 100% of our students will grow academically.

**MISSION:** Accelerate Student Performance In Rigorous Education



**Mount Pleasant Junior High**  
**Regular Bell Schedule**  
**2026-2027**



| <b>Period</b>             | <b>7th</b>                                 | <b>8th</b>                                 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>                  | 8:01 – 8:53                                | 8:05 – 8:57                                |
| <b>2</b>                  | 8:57 – 9:48                                | 9:01 – 9:52                                |
| <b>3</b>                  | 9:52 – 10:47                               | 9:56 – 10:51                               |
| <b>4 (8<sup>th</sup>)</b> | 10:47 – 11:17<br>(7TH LUNCH)               | 10:55 – 11:46<br><b>4 (8<sup>th</sup>)</b> |
| <b>4 (7<sup>th</sup>)</b> | 11:21 – 12:12<br><b>4 (7<sup>th</sup>)</b> | 11:46 – 12:16<br>(8TH LUNCH)               |
| <b>5</b>                  | 12:16 – 1:07                               | 12:20 – 1:11                               |
| <b>6</b>                  | 1:11 – 2:03                                | 1:15 – 2:07                                |
| <b>7</b>                  | 2:07 – 2:59                                | 2:11 – 3:03                                |
| <b>8</b>                  | 3:03 – 3:53                                | 3:07 – 3:57                                |



**Mount Pleasant Junior High**  
**Bell Schedule**  
**Early Release 2026-2027**



| <b>Period</b>             |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>                  | 8.01 – 8:31                  |
| <b>2</b>                  | 8:35 – 9:05                  |
| <b>3</b>                  | 9:09 – 9:39                  |
| <b>6</b>                  | 9:43 – 10:13                 |
| <b>7</b>                  | 10:17 – 10:47                |
| <b>8</b>                  | 10:51 – 11:21                |
| <b>4 (8<sup>th</sup>)</b> | 11:25 – 11:55<br>(7TH LUNCH) |
| <b>4 (7<sup>th</sup>)</b> | 11:59 – 12:29<br>(8TH LUNCH) |
| <b>5</b>                  | 12:33 – 1:00                 |



# **Mount Pleasant Junior High**

## **Bell Schedule Late Start 2026-2027**



| <b>Period</b>             |                                            |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>                  | <b>10:00 – 10:36</b>                       |
| <b>2</b>                  | <b>10:40 – 11:16</b>                       |
| <b>3</b>                  | <b>11:20 – 11:56</b>                       |
| <b>4 (8<sup>th</sup>)</b> | <b>12:00 – 12:33</b><br><b>(7TH LUNCH)</b> |
| <b>4 (7<sup>th</sup>)</b> | <b>12:37 – 1:10</b><br><b>(8TH LUNCH)</b>  |
| <b>5</b>                  | <b>1:14 – 1:50</b>                         |
| <b>6</b>                  | <b>1:54 – 2:30</b>                         |
| <b>7</b>                  | <b>2:34 – 3:10</b>                         |
| <b>8</b>                  | <b>3:14 – 3:50</b>                         |

## PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to school year 2026-2027! Education is a team effort, and we know that students, parents, teachers, and other staff members all working together will make this a successful year for our students.

The Mount Pleasant Junior High School Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into three sections:

**Section I**—IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with information all parents will need about assisting their child and responding to school-related issues;

**Section II**—CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION—to provide information to students and their parents about graduation programs, required courses, class rank, and extracurricular and other activities; and

**Section III**—GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS—describing school operations and requirements such as safety procedures, the dress code, and fees that may be charged.

Each section has a Quick Reference component to serve as a guide for day-to-day questions that may arise.

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.

Both students and parents must be familiar with the Mount Pleasant Independent School District Student Code of Conduct, required by state law and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found as a separate document sent home to parents and available in the principal’s office.

The student 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 that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications.

In case of conflict between board policy or the Student Code of Conduct and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of board policy or the Student Code of Conduct that were most recently adopted by the board are to be followed.

We encourage parents to review the entire handbook with their children and keep it as a reference during this school year. If you or your child has questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the counselor, or the principal. Also, please complete and return the parental acknowledgment, student directory information, release of information to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, and consent/opt-out forms so that we have a record of your choices. [See **Obtaining**

**Information and Protecting Student Rights** on page 18 and **Directory Information** on page 26 for more information.]

Please note that references to alphabetical policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current board policy. A copy of the district's policy manual is available online at [www.mpisd.net](http://www.mpisd.net).



## SECTION I

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This section of the Mount Pleasant Junior High School Student Handbook includes information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

#### ***QUICK REFERENCE:***

**Where to look when you need information about ...**

- Parental involvement page 17
- Grading guidelines page 21
- Report cards/progress reports and conferences page 22
- State-mandated tests page 23
- Medicine at school page 23
- Psychotropic drugs page 26
- Steroids page 26
- Student records page 26
- Student or parent complaints and concerns page 28
- Release of students from school page 28

#### ***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT***

##### **Working Together**

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides. Ensure that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects. Be sure your child comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the district. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child. If your child is entering ninth grade, review the requirements of the graduation programs with your child. Monitor your child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed. [See **Academic Counseling** on page 35 and **Academic Programs** on page 29.]
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or

principal, please call the school office at 903 575 2110 for an appointment. The teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 22.]

- Becoming a school volunteer. [For further information, see policy GKG and contact the school office.]
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Parent organizations include: Band Booster, Athletic Booster.
- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact the school office.
- Offering to serve on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the district in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies BDF, EHAA, FFA and **School Health Advisory Council** on page 46.]
- Attending board meetings to learn more about district operations. [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

### **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights**

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—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.
- Sexual behavior or attitudes.
- 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 and will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation. [For further information, see policy EF.]

## **Consent to Conduct a Psychological or Psychiatric Evaluation**

Unless required under state or federal law, a district employee or contractor of the district will not conduct a psychological or psychiatric examination, test, or treatment without obtaining prior written parental consent.

**Note:** An evaluation may be legally required under special education rules or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

## **Consent to Human Sexuality Instruction**

As a part of the district's curriculum, students receive instruction related to human sexuality. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) makes recommendations for curriculum materials, and the school board adopts the materials and determines the specific content of the instruction.

In accordance with state law, a parent may:

- Review, receive a copy of, or purchase a copy of curriculum materials depending on the copyright of the materials.
- Remove their child from any part of the human sexuality instruction without academic, disciplinary, or other penalties.
- Become involved in the development of this curriculum by becoming a member of the district's SHAC or attending SHAC meetings. See the campus principal for details.
- Use the district's grievance procedure concerning a complaint. [See Complaints and Concerns (All Grade Levels) and FNG(LOCAL).]

State law also requires that instruction related to human sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS):

- Present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age
- Devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior
- Emphasize that abstinence, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity
- Direct adolescents to abstain from sexual activity before marriage as the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases
- If included in the content of the curriculum, teach contraception and condom use in terms of human use reality rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates

[See **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**]

## **Consent Before Human Sexuality Instruction**

Before a student receives human sexuality instruction, the parent must give written consent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

## **Consent to Instruction on Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Violence, Dating Violence, and Sex Trafficking**

Before a student receives instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, the district must obtain written consent from the student's parent. Parents will be sent a request for written consent at least 14 days before the instruction will begin.

## **Consent to Provide a Mental Health Care Service**

The district will not provide a mental health care service to a student or conduct a medical screening of a student as part of the district's intervention procedures except as permitted by law. The district has established procedures for recommending to a parent an intervention for a student with early warning signs of mental health concerns, substance abuse, or suicide risk. The district's mental health liaison will notify the student's parent within a reasonable amount of time after the liaison learns that a student has displayed early warning signs and provide information about available counseling options.

The district has also established procedures for staff to notify the mental health liaison regarding a student who may need intervention.

The mental health liaison can be reached at:

Justin Chambers  
Director of Special Education  
2230 N. Edwards Ave., Mt. Pleasant, TX 75455  
jchambers@mpisd.net  
(903) 575-2000

The mental health liaison can provide further information about these procedures as well as curriculum materials on identifying risk factors, accessing resources for treatment or support on and off campus, and accessing available student accommodations provided on campus.

## **Consent to Receive Parenting and Paternity Awareness Instruction If a Student is Under Age 14**

A student under age 14 must have parental permission to participate in the district's Parenting and Paternity Awareness Program (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness-papa/papa-educators/papa-curriculum>). This program was developed by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and the State Board of Education (SBOE) to be incorporated into health education classes.

### **“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**

As a parent, you also 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 law. See policies EF and FFAA.

### **Display of your child's artwork, projects, and other special work products:**

As a parent, if you choose that your child's artwork, special projects, photographs, and the like not be displayed to the community on the district's Web site, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of communication, you must notify the principal in writing.

### **As a parent, you also have a right:**

- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's teachers, including whether the 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.
- To review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.
- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.

- To review your child’s student records when needed. These records include:
  - Attendance records,
  - Test scores,
  - Grades,
  - Disciplinary records,
  - Counseling records,
  - Psychological records,
  - Applications for admission,
  - Health and immunization information,
  - Other medical records,
  - Teacher and counselor evaluations,
  - Reports of behavioral patterns, and
  - State assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.

[See **Student Records** on page 25.]

- To grant or deny any written request from the district to make a videotape or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a videotape 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 or a curricular or extracurricular activity; or
  - When it relates to media coverage of the school.
- To remove your child temporarily from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts 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 and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.
- To request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. 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 56 and policy EC.]
- To request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child

be excused, (2) the district determines that your child has a conscientious objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity. [See policy EHBK]

- To request in writing, if you are a noncustodial parent, that you be provided for the remainder of the school year a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to misconduct that may involve placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or expulsion. See policies FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL), FO(LEGAL), and the Student Code of Conduct.
- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the board or its designee 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. See the superintendent or designee for information. [See policy FDB]
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the district if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See policy FDD(LOCAL)]
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student on the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See policy FDD(LOCAL)]

## ***GRADING GUIDELINES***

In grades 7 – 8, achievement is reported to parents as:

The evaluation of student effort will be recorded numerically on report cards and all records.

## **MARKING AND GRADING POLICIES**

Progress reports are given each 3 weeks. Unit assessments are given periodically throughout the year. They will count as a major grade for the six weeks they tested in.

Semester marks: Add each one of the 6 weeks grade and divide by 3:

### **EXAMPLE**

$$\begin{array}{r} 1^{\text{st}} \text{ 6 weeks grade} = 95 \\ 2^{\text{nd}} \text{ 6 weeks grade} = 93 \\ 3^{\text{rd}} \text{ 6 weeks grade} = 96 \\ \phantom{1^{\text{st}} \text{ 6 weeks grade}} 95 \\ \phantom{1^{\text{st}} \text{ 6 weeks grade}} + 93 \\ \phantom{1^{\text{st}} \text{ 6 weeks grade}} \underline{96} \end{array}$$

284 divided by 3 = Final Semester Grade 95

Yearly Average: First semester grade plus second semester grade divided by two. A student will receive full credit if the yearly average is 69.5 or more. If the average is less than 69.5, the student will fail the subject. **STUDENTS WHO FAIL ONE CORE CLASS WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ASSIGNED TO SUMMER SCHOOL. ADMINISTRATORS WILL REVIEW PROMOTION AFTER SUMMER SCHOOL.**

Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade who fail STAAR will be given tutorials before the next attempt at passing STAAR in those subjects requiring that students pass before promotion. Which will result in attending summer school.

In order for a student to receive credit for a course, he/she must maintain a grade of 70 and have been in attendance 90 percent of the school year.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

Students at Mt. Pleasant Junior High may be required to re-do any assignments or assessments that are not at an acceptable achievement level. Students will only be given one opportunity to retake the assessment. Students must have attempted the assignment to be eligible for Redo. Time will be allotted during the day for re-do.

Students are expected to complete and submit their own original work unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to generate or substantially complete assignments, projects, or assessments is considered academic dishonesty and may result in academic and/or disciplinary consequences consistent with district policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

## **HONOR ROLL**

To make the “A” Honor Roll, a grade of 90 must be maintained in all classes. To make the “AB” Honor Roll, a student may have one grade, ranging from 80-89.

## **REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Report cards with each student’s grades or performance and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every six weeks either electronically via the parent portal or by mail.

At the end of the first fourth weeks of a grading period parents will be given an electronic progress report if their child’s performance in any course (in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies) is near or below 70, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject at the end of a grading period, the parent may be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. [See **Working Together** on page 17 for how to schedule a conference.]



Teachers follow grading guidelines that have been approved by the principal/superintendent and designed to reflect each student's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the district's grading policy. [See policy EIA.]

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the principal in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).

The report card or unsatisfactory progress report will state whether tutorials are required for a student who receives a grade lower than 70 in a class or subject.

### ***STATE-MANDATED TESTS***

In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated tests for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels (such as STAAR: State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) in the following subjects:

- Mathematics in grade 7 and 8
- Reading in grade 7 and 8
- Social studies in grade 8
- Science in grade 8
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law

[See policy EKB.]

### ***MEDICINE AT SCHOOL***

District employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements, with the following exceptions:

- Only authorized employees, in accordance with policy FFAC, may administer:
  - Prescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent, along with a written request.
  - Medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified district employee from the original, properly labeled container.
  - Nonprescription medication, in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent along with a written request.
  - Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

- In certain emergency situations, the district will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:
  - In accordance with the guidelines developed with the district's medical advisor and
  - When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the district's form.
    - A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and a physician or to her licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider and to the school nurse the ability use the prescribed medication including any device required to administer the medication
    - If the student has been prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day, the student and parent should discuss this with the school nurse or principal.

**In accordance with a student's individual health plan for management of diabetes, a student with diabetes will be permitted to possess and use monitoring and treatment supplies and equipment while at school or at a school-related activity. See the school nurse or principal for information. (See policy FFAP) Unassigned Epinephrine Delivery Systems**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized ***[align with policy at FFAC: school personnel and/or school volunteers]*** who have been adequately trained to administer an unassigned epinephrine delivery system to a person who is reasonably believed to be experiencing a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

An "unassigned epinephrine delivery system" is an epinephrine delivery system, including an auto-injector or nasal spray, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the school issued with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of an epinephrine delivery system.

Epinephrine delivery systems include brand-name devices such as EpiPens® and Neffy®.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an epinephrine delivery system at any time to a person experiencing anaphylaxis on a school campus.

The district will ensure that at each campus a sufficient number of school personnel and/or school volunteers are trained to administer epinephrine so that at least one trained individual is present on campus during regular on-campus school hours and when school personnel are physically on site for school-sponsored activities.

Authorized and trained individuals may administer an unassigned epinephrine delivery system to a person experiencing anaphylaxis at an off-campus school event or while in transit to or from a school event when an unassigned epinephrine delivery system is available.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

### **Unassigned Medication for Respiratory Distress**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained school personnel and/or school volunteers] to administer a medication for respiratory distress on a school campus or at a school-related activity to a person reasonably believed to be experiencing symptoms of respiratory distress.

The district will provide at each campus school personnel and/or school volunteers] who are trained to administer prescription medication for respiratory distress during regular school hours.

“Unassigned medication for respiratory distress” means albuterol, levalbuterol, or another medication designated by the executive commission of the Health and Human Services Commission for treatment of respiratory distress, prescribed by an authorized health-care provider in the name of the district with a non-patient-specific standing delegation order for the administration of a medication for respiratory distress, and issued by an authorized health-care provider.

For additional information, see FFAC(LOCAL).

### **Unassigned Opioid Antagonists**

In accordance with Chapter 38, Subchapter E of the Education Code, the board has adopted a policy to allow authorized and trained school personnel and/or school volunteers] at each campus that serves students in grades 6-12 to administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan or Naloxone, to an individual who is reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose.

### ***Physical Fitness Assessment***

Annually, the district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3-12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to obtain the results of their child’s physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year by contacting:

Will Hallonquist

Athletic Coordinator

2801 Old Paris Rd., Mt. Pleasant, TX 75455

lhallonquist@mpisd.net

## ***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.]

## ***STEROIDS***

State law prohibits students from possessing, dispensing, delivering, or administering an anabolic steroid. Anabolic steroids are for medical use only, and only a physician can prescribe use.

Body building, muscle enhancement, or the increase of muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a healthy student is not a valid medical use and is a criminal offense.

## ***STUDENT RECORDS***

Both federal and state law safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older OR who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

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 parental rights have been legally terminated and if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- District staff members who have what federal law defines as a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, and principals), school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, and diagnosticians), or an agent of the district (such as a medical consultant).
- Various governmental agencies or in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school to which a student transfers or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

Release to any other person or agency—such as a prospective employer or for a scholarship application—will occur only with parental or student permission as appropriate.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The principal is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated.

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the district will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. The address of the superintendent's office is 2230 N. Edwards Ave, Mt Pleasant, Texas, 75455.

The address of Mount Pleasant Junior High is:

2801 Old Paris Road, Mt Pleasant, Texas, 75455.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor 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. [See **Report Cards/Progress Reports and Conferences** on page 22 and **Student or Parent Complaints and Concerns** on page 26 for an overview of the process.]

Copies of student records are available at a cost of ten cents per page, payable in advance. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge upon written request of the parent.

## Directory Information

The law permits the district to designate certain personal information about students as "directory information." This "directory information" will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it.

However, release of a student's directory information may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the child's first day of this school year [See the "Notices Regarding Directory Information and Parent's Response Regarding Release of Student Information" attached to this handbook.]

### Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes

The district often requires the use of student information for the following school-sponsored purposes: School officials have a "legitimate educational interest" in a student's records when they are working with the student; considering disciplinary or

academic actions, the student's case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs.

For these specific school-sponsored purposes, the district would like to use the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, and date and place of birth, as well as major field of study; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; grade level; most recent educational institution attended; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and weight and height of members of athletic teams. This information will not be released to the public without the consent of the parent or eligible student.

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 wished to use this information for the school-sponsored purposes listed.

### **Release of Student Information to Military Recruiters and Institutions of Higher Education**

The district is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students' names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the district not to release their child's information without prior written consent. A form has been attached for you to complete if you do not want the district to provide this information to military recruiters or institutions of higher education.

#### **Please note:**

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 district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office [or on the district's Web site at [www.mpisd.net](http://www.mpisd.net)]

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records—such as teachers' 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.

### ***STUDENT OR PARENT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS***

Usually, student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call 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 or superintendent's office [or on the district's Web site at [www.mpisd.net](http://www.mpisd.net)]

In general, the student or 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 to the superintendent. If still unresolved, the district provides for the complaint to be presented to the board of trustees.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

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 must bring a note from his or her parent that morning and follow the campus sign-out procedures before leaving the campus. Otherwise, a student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student should receive permission from the teacher before reporting to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

## **Late Arrival to School**

Students arriving on campus late (8:00) must check in to the assigned class. If a student is more than ten minutes late to a class, he or she will be counted absent. A student must be in the classroom for at least 90 % of the class to be counted present.

## **Tardy Procedure**

A student is tardy if they are not in the classroom when the tardy bell rings. If a teacher causes a student to be late to another class, that teacher will give the student a pass with the date, time, and his/her initials on it. It is imperative that students arrive to class at the designated time. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

[See **Attendance for Credit** on page 43.]

## **Withdrawing from School**

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. The parent may obtain a withdrawal form from the principal's office.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book clearance; to the librarian to ensure a clear library record; to the clinic for health records; to the counselor for the last report card and course clearance; and finally, to the principal. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the student, and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.

A student who is 18 or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature.

## **SECTION II**

### **CURRICULUM-RELATED INFORMATION**

This section of the handbook contains information on academics and school activities, which is of particular interest to students. Students should take the time to review this information with their parents—especially if they are entering 9th grade or are a transfer student. The section includes information on graduation programs and requirements; options for earning course credit; extracurricular activities and other school-related organizations; and awards, honors, and scholarships.

#### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

The school counselor provides students and their parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices; gifted and talented; etc.

#### ***Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Other Work-Based Programs***

The district offers career and technical education programs at MPJH in the following areas:

- Principles of Business and Marketing (8<sup>th</sup> Grade only)
- Principles of Audio Visual (8<sup>th</sup> Grade only)
- Exercise Science and Wellness
- High School Discovery

#### ***Opting Out of Advanced Mathematics in Grades 6-8***

The district will automatically enroll a student in grade 6 in an advanced mathematics course if the student performed in the 60th percentile or higher on the grade 5 mathematics STAAR or in the top 40 percent on a local measure that demonstrates proficiency in the student's grade 5 mathematics course work.

Enrollment in an advanced mathematics course in grade 6 will enable students to enroll in Algebra I in grade 8 and advanced mathematics in grades 9-12.

The student's parent may opt the student out of automatic enrollment in an advanced mathematics course.

#### **CLASS SCHEDULES**

Class schedules will be distributed at orientation. Schedule change requests can only be made during the first two weeks of school. All schedule changes are at the discretion of the principal.

#### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

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



purposes only. Students and their parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail using district computers is not private and may be monitored by district staff.

## **Mt. Pleasant ISD Use of Electronic Systems Information**

### **Acceptable Use**

#### *CQ (Local)*

The use of the network must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Mount Pleasant Independent School District. Use of other organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that Network. Transmission (that is, uploading or downloading) of any material in violation of any national, state or local regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Copyrighted material;
- Abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, illegal material;
- Material protected by trade secret;
- Commercial activities such as conducting private business on the Internet;
- Transmission for advertisement or political use is forbidden.

### **Termination Revocation of System User Access**

#### *CQ (Local)*

The District may suspend or revoke a system user's access to the District's system upon violation of District policy and/or administrative regulations regarding acceptable use. Termination of any student's access will be effective on the date the principal or campus coordinator receives notice of user withdrawal or of revocation of system privileges, or on a future date if so specified in the notice.

### **Consequences of Improper Use**

Violation of MPISD's policies and procedures concerning, the use of computers and networks will result in the same disciplinary actions that would result from similar violations in other areas of MPISD. Improper or unethical use may result in disciplinary actions consistent with the existing Student Discipline Policy and, if appropriate, the Texas Penal Code, Computer Crimes, Chapter 33, or other state and federal laws. This may also require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, hardware, or software costs. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's computer systems and networks.

These policies are subject to modification from time to time.

## **Vandalism**

Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy District equipment or data or the data of another user of the District's system or of any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet is prohibited. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance are violations of District policy and administrative regulations and may constitute criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

Vandalism as defined above will result in the cancellation of system use privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with system restoration, as well as other appropriate consequences. [See DH, FN series, FO series, and the Student Code of Conduct]

## **Information Content /Third Party Supplied Information**

### *CQ (Local)*

System users and parents of students with access to the District's system should be aware that, despite the District's use of technology protection measures as required by law, use of the system may provide access to other electronic communications system in the global electronic network that may contain inaccurate and/or objectionable material.

A student who gains access to such material is expected to discontinue the access as quickly as possible and to report the incident to the supervising teacher.

A student knowingly bringing prohibited materials into the school's electronic environment will be subject to suspension of access and/or revocation of privileges on the District's system and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Disclaimer**

### *CQ (Local)*

The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The District does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the system will meet the system user's requirements, or that the system will be uninterrupted or error free, or that defects will be corrected.

Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third-party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not the District.

The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's electronic communications system.

### **Breach of Computer Security**

*CQ (Local )and CQ (Legal)-47 U.S.C. 254(h)(5)(B)*

Users, including faculty, staff, students, and community members may not use the district electronic resources to access, acquire, and/or bring through the district's network, obscene, offensive, or objectionable material including forwarding jokes or pictures that others might find offensive. The system has been financed by public money and grants and is not intended for the private use of individual staff. Access to Internet sites can and will be monitored and tracked by system administrator.

### **Internet Use Rules – Responsible Use**

*Education Code 32.201*

The following rules are representative of acceptable and responsible use of MPISD's electronic systems.

1. The use of a student E-mail account must be in support of education and/or research as well as remain consistent with the educational objectives of the district. Not everyone is eligible for an E-mail account. Users may **NOT** establish or access "free" E-mail accounts such as *Hotmail*, *Juno*, or *Yahoo*. Your Campus Contact can inform you of your choices regarding student E-mail.
2. Use of any other organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.
3. Use for commercial activities is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: shopping, making reservations, and entering contests.
4. Use of the District network to purchase products is not permitted.
5. The possibility of encountering objectionable material does exist, and the district is not able to completely prevent access to such material. The district has taken measures to subscribe to the Internet through Trillion (affiliated with the Region VIII Educational Service Center). Efforts are made on a regular basis to block such objectionable sites. **However, if a student accesses information or a site with information, that does not have an educational or research purpose, he or she is to exit from the site immediately and inform a teacher or campus designee.** Furthermore, students may be asked by a teacher, librarian, or other faculty member to print a copy of the history of sites that have been accessed during any specific Internet session.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network are assumed to be the property of the publisher and/or sender, and as such are copyrighted. Information cannot be distributed or copied without permission. *CQ (Local)*

### **Security**

**The following are considered inappropriate use of the network:**

Any student who reveals his/her personal home address, home phone number, or the phone number of any other individuals will lose computing privileges. Personal signatures on an E-mail must use the school address only. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and the campus administrator or designee must be notified **immediately** if any individual is trying to contact a user for illicit, illegal, or suspicious activities.

Using another individual's account and password is forbidden. Anyone letting someone else use their account and password will lose his/her network privileges.

You are responsible for the protection of your password. Do not give your account name and/or password to **ANY** other individuals. If you suspect others are using your account, notify your Campus Technology Contact or teacher immediately.

Attempts to logon to the Internet as a system administrator, or to perform system administration tasks will result in cancellation of user privileges.

Any user who is a security risk, or having a history of security problems with other computer systems, may be denied access to district network resources.

Anyone illegally obtaining access to and using other computer systems may be the focus of state or federal investigation and prosecution. Applicable state statutes are *Section 16.04, Unlawful Access to Stored Communications*, and *Section 33.03, Breach of Computer Security*.

If unacceptable or illegal activities take place using your account, you will be held responsible, regardless of whether you personally took the actions. Such activities may result in the loss of your access to the district Electronic Communications System and equipment, and/or other disciplinary actions.

Anyone knowingly having, transporting, or distributing any computer virus will **immediately** lose access to the Internet and all district computer resources.

**The World Wide Web**

The district has created a World Wide Web server that will provide individuals with an Internet account, access to information about the district, and network programs. Students do not have permission to create home pages or directories without teacher review and approval.

Student home pages may not be posted on the district server without teacher review for

content and linkages. Approval must be obtained from the principal and the designated Webmaster prior to posting a student page on the World Wide Web. Student work will be published under the direction of the supervising teacher, and with the acquisition of a signed release form from the student's parent(s) and or legal guardian.

## **Guidelines for Safe Use of Computing Resources**

The possibility of encountering objectionable material does exist and the district is not able to completely prevent access to such material. Efforts are made on a regular basis to block objectionable sites. **However, if a student accesses information or a site with information that does not have an educational or research purpose, he or she is to exit from the site immediately and inform a teacher, librarian, Campus Technology Contact, or Technology Director.**

Using electronic information resources can be of great educational benefit. Students can meet people from all over the world, ranging from scientists to students from other countries. Keep in mind that you cannot see whom you are talking to on the Internet. People may, and often do, misrepresent themselves. Mount Pleasant ISD will take every precaution to supervise student use in order to ensure that Internet access is a positive educational experience. However, many students may also access the Internet from home facilities as well. In order to ensure your safety and positive outcomes from Internet access, MPISD strongly recommends students follow the guidelines that are provided at home, as well as school.

## **Copyright**

*EFE (Local)*

Many people don't realize the legal ramifications of copyright violations. According to the Texas Association of School Boards, the law no longer requires the owner of a work to put a "©" on it to give notice of the copyright. Therefore, one should probably assume that the use of anything on the internet or World Wide Web is restricted unless the author gives notice that it is not. If you are not certain of copyright, do not copy it.

The same can be said for information posted on district web pages. Individuals creating web pages must take extra precautions to prevent the inclusion of copyrighted materials without giving proper credit to the creator of the material.

## **Disclaimer of Liability**

*CQ (Local)*

The district shall not be liable for user's inappropriate use of the district Electronic Communication System. This includes, but is not limited to, violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user's mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The district shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the Internet.

Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material,

or material protected by trade secret. A guiding factor in defining what is obscene may be what is appropriate in a school setting.

[For additional information, see policy CQ.]

## **COUNSELING**

### **Academic Counseling**

Students and their parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, teacher, or principal to learn about course offerings, the graduation requirements of various programs, and early graduation procedures. Each spring, students in grades six through eight will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

To plan for the future, students should work closely with the counselor in order to take the high school courses that best prepare them for attendance at a college, university, or training school, or for pursuit of some other type of advanced education. The counselor can also provide information about entrance exams and deadlines for application, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

### **Personal Counseling**

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should stop by the reception desk and leave his/her name with the receptionist. She will let the counselor know you want an appointment, and you will be called when there is an opening. DO NOT wait around for your appointment. You will be counted as absent from class.

#### **Counseling and Guidance Program**

Contact your school counselor for more information about the campus guidance curriculum.

**Please note:** The school will not conduct a psychological 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 policy FFE and FFG (EXHIBIT).]

### **Bullying**

The district strives to prevent bullying, in accordance with the district's policies, by promoting a positive school culture; building healthy relationships between students and staff; encouraging reporting of bullying incidents, including anonymous reporting; and investigating and addressing reported bullying incidents.

Bullying is defined in state law as a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school

Bullying includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined in state law as bullying that is done using any electronic communication device, including:

- A cellular or other type of telephone
- A computer
- A camera
- Electronic mail
- Instant messaging
- Text messaging
- A social media application
- An internet website
- Any other internet-based communication tool

Bullying is prohibited by the district and could include:

- Hazing
- Threats
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Confinement
- Assault
- Demands for money
- Destruction of property
- Theft of valued possessions
- Name-calling
- Rumor-spreading
- Ostracism

The district will integrate into instruction research-based content designed to reduce bullying that is appropriate for students' age groups.

Students in secondary grades will participate in:

Instruction on the brain's ability to change and grow so the student recognizes bullying behavior can come from a developmental need to acquire more social skills, can change when the brain matures and learns better ways of coping, and is not an unchangeable trait

- Discussions that portray bullying as undesirable behavior and a means for attaining or maintaining social status at school, and that discourage students from using bullying as a tool for social status
- Instruction designed so that students recognize the role that reporting bullying behaviors plays in promoting a safe school community
- The district will use an age-appropriate survey about school culture that includes relevant questions on bullying to identify and address student concerns.

Each campus has a committee that addresses bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will include parents and secondary students. For more information on this committee, including interest in serving on the committee, contact campus principal.

If a student believes that they have experienced bullying or witnessed the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible. Any district employee aware of a report of a bullying incident will relay the report to an appropriate administrator. Procedures for reporting allegations of bullying may be found on the district's website.

A student may anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying by visiting <https://www.anonymousalerts.com/mtpleasantisd/>. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The district will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying.

If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not meet the definition of bullying. The district will provide research-based interventions, which may include counseling options, for students who engage in bullying behaviors, students who are targeted by bullying behaviors, and any student who witnessed bullying behaviors. Any action taken in response to bullying will comply with state and federal law regarding students with disabilities. Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited. Upon recommendation of the administration, the board may transfer a student found to have engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student's parent, the board may transfer the student to another campus in the district. The parent of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus within the district. [See **Safety Transfers/Assignments**]

A copy of the district's bullying policy is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and on the district's website, and is included at the end of this



handbook as an appendix. A student or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal through policy FNG(LOCAL).

[See **Safety Transfers/Assignments, Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (All Grade Levels), Hazing (All Grade Levels)**, policy FFI, the district's Student Code of Conduct, and the district improvement plan, a copy of which can be viewed in the campus office.]

### ***CREDIT BY EXAM— Spanish***

Spanish Credit by Exam will be offered to students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Announcements will be made for students to sign up in the counselor's office. Those interested in Spanish Credit by Exam should be able to read, write, and speak fluently. Students will be given the Spanish II exam upon successful completion of that test they will be administered the Spanish I exam.

### ***EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS***

Participation in school-related activities is an excellent way for a student to develop talents, receive individual recognition, and build strong friendships with other students; participation, however, is a privilege, not a right.

Eligibility for participation in many of these activities is governed by state law and the rules of the University Interscholastic League (UIL)—a statewide association overseeing interdistrict competition. The following requirements apply to all extracurricular activities:

- A student who receives at the end of a grading period a grade below 70 in any academic class—other than a class identified as honors or advanced by either the State Board of Education or by the local board of trustees—may not participate in extracurricular activities for at least three school weeks.
- A student with disabilities who fails to meet the standards in the individualized education program (IEP) may not participate for at least three school weeks.
- An ineligible student may practice or rehearse.
- A student is allowed in a school year up to ten absences not related to post-district competition, a maximum of five absences for post-district competition prior to state, and a maximum of two absences for state competition. All extracurricular activities and public performances, whether UIL activities or other activities approved by the board, are subject to these restrictions.
- A student who misses a class because of participation in an activity that has not been approved will receive an unexcused absence.

**Please note:** Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the Student Code of Conduct or

by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization's standards of behavior.

[For further information, see policies FM and FO.]

## **National Junior Honor Society**

**To qualify for membership, students MUST:**

- Be selected on scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. These characteristics are clearly defined on the application form.
- Have a cumulative grade average of 92 in all core classes.

**Maintenance:**

- Students must maintain the cumulative core average of 92.
- Students must be exemplary in discipline – no ISS
- Students must:
  - Attend all meetings (absences will be excused or unexcused)
  - Participate in ONE chapter community related project (coat drive, can drive, soldiers in need, etc.)
  - Participate in individual community related projects (10 service hours for the school year)
  - Participate in a fundraiser project
  - Pay the required \$10 dues

*Grades will be reviewed each grading period for eligibility. If a student becomes ineligible during any grading period, they will have the following grading period to bring up their cumulative average during a probation period. If the average remains too low, the student will be dismissed from the organization.*

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards.

In grades 7-8, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course-level, grade-level standards (essential knowledge and skills) for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day STAAR is administered the first time.

- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2022-2023 school year must perform satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 8 assessment.

Parents of a student in grade 8 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. Such students will have two additional opportunities to take the test. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the district, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policy EIE.]

A Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) will be prepared for any student in a middle school or beyond who did not perform satisfactorily on a state-mandated assessment or is determined by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year following enrollment in grade 9. The PGP will be designed and implemented by a guidance counselor, teacher, or other staff member designated by the principal. The plan will identify the student's educational goals, address the parent's educational expectations for the student, and outline an intensive instruction program for the student. [For additional information, see the counselor and policy EIF.]

Certain students—some with disabilities and some with limited English proficiency—may be eligible for exemptions, accommodations, or deferred testing. For more information, see the principal, counselor, or special education director.

## ***SPECIAL PROGRAMS***

The district provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the district or by other organizations. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact a school counselor.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED**

Students identified as gifted and talented participate in a program that provides learning opportunities emphasizing one or more of the four core content areas. Teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons may nominate students for GT. Nomination packets are available in the school office. Data collected through both objective and subjective assessments shall be used to determine individual eligibility for the program. Written parental consent shall be obtained before any special testing is conducted. Parents shall be notified in writing upon selection of the student for the gifted program. Questions about the gifted program should be directed to the school counselor.

## **Aiding Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider 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 and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### Special Education Referrals:

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent a prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school

days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

**Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:**

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

Contact Person: Justin Chambers, MS, LSSP, ABSNP

Phone Number: 903-575-2000

**Section 504 Referrals:**

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

**Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Contact Person: Tracie Johnson

Phone Number: 903-575-2040

**Additional Information:**

The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)

## **TEXTBOOKS**

State-approved textbooks are provided to students free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school loses the right to free textbooks until the book is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day.

## **CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

### **7<sup>th</sup> AND 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE REQUIREMENTS**

Two (2) year program for seventh and eighth grade.

Twelve (12) units will be required for students to be promoted to the ninth grade.

See requirement below for each grade level:

| <b>Seventh Grade</b>  |                | <b>Eighth Grade</b>   |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Courses               | Required Units | Courses               | Required Units |
| Reading/Language Arts | 1              | Reading/Language Arts | 1              |
| Science               | 1              | Science               | 1              |
| Mathematics           | 1              | Mathematics           | 1              |
| Texas History         | 1              | U.S. History          | 1              |
| Physical Education    | 1              |                       |                |

One year of Fine Art credit must be earned between 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> year.

Yearly Average: First semester mark plus second semester mark divided by two. A student will receive full credit if the yearly average is 69.5 or more. If the average is less than 69.5, the student will fail the subject. STUDENTS WHO FAIL ONE CORE CLASS WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ASSIGNED TO SUMMER SCHOOL. ADMINISTRATORS WILL REVIEW PROMOTION AFTER SUMMER SCHOOL.

## **SECTION III**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information regarding school operations and requirements. Included are provisions on student welfare; health and safety issues; fees; the school's expectations for student conduct (other than Student Code of Conduct requirements); use of facilities, such as the cafeteria, library, and transportation services; and emergency closings. For additional information or questions, you may have, please see the principal.

#### ***QUICK REFERENCE:***

##### **Where to look when you need information about...**

|                                                    |         |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------|
| • Attendance                                       | page 44 |
| • Makeup work                                      | page 45 |
| • Communicable diseases/conditions                 | page 46 |
| • Health-related matters                           | page 48 |
| • Freedom from discrimination                      | page 48 |
| • Conduct                                          | page 50 |
| • Disruptions                                      | page 50 |
| • Law enforcement agencies                         | page 52 |
| • Distribution of published materials or documents | page 53 |
| • Dress and grooming                               | page 54 |
| • In school suspension                             | page 56 |
| • Student fees                                     | page 56 |
| • Fund-raising                                     | page 57 |
| • Immunization                                     | page 57 |
| • Pledges of allegiance and a minute of silence    | page 58 |
| • Prayer                                           | page 58 |
| • Safety                                           | page 58 |
| • Emergency school-closings information            | page 59 |
| • School facilities                                | page 59 |
| • Searches                                         | page 61 |
| • Transportation                                   | page 62 |
| • Video cameras                                    | page 63 |
| • Visitors to the school                           | page 63 |

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is essential for the 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 student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws, one dealing with compulsory attendance, the other with attendance for course credit, are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed in the following sections:

### **Parent Notes for Student Absences**

A parent or guardian may submit written documentation to excuse a student's absence for personal illness or other non-school-related reasons. Mt. Pleasant ISD will accept up to **five (5) parent notes per semester**. Absences covered by these parent notes will be recorded as **excused absences**.

After a student has used five (5) parent notes during a semester, any additional absences supported only by a parent note will be recorded as **unexcused absences**, unless the absence qualifies for another excused category under state law or district policy and appropriate documentation is provided.

Parents are encouraged to provide medical documentation when a student is absent due to illness requiring medical attention.

Students and parents should be aware that Texas law requires regular school attendance. Under Texas Education Code §25.085, students who are required to attend school must attend school each day that instruction is provided.

Additionally, Texas Education Code §25.092 requires students to attend at least **90 percent of the days a class is offered** in order to receive credit or a final grade for the class.

Excessive unexcused absences may result in truancy prevention measures and other interventions as required by law. Students who accumulate unexcused absences may be referred for truancy proceedings in accordance with Texas Education Code §§25.0915 and 25.0951.

### **Compulsory Attendance**

State law requires that a student between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction programs, extended year programs, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise legally exempt or excused. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her eighteenth birthday is required to attend each school day. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, however, the district may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespass.



If kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program under state law, compulsory attendance applies to attendance in the reading program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of the reading diagnosis test.

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) assigned by the grade placement committee and basic skills for ninth graders; 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 parts of days within a four-week period.

### **Attendance for Credit**

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit.

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for religious holy days and health-care appointments will be considered days of attendance for this purpose. [See policy FEB.]
- A transfer or migrant student begins to accumulate absences only after he or she has enrolled in the district. For a student transferring into the district after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.

- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the board of trustees by filing a written request with the superintendent in accordance with policy FNG.

The actual number of days a student must be in attendance in order to receive credit will depend on whether the class is for a full semester or for a full year.

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence. A note signed by the student, even with the parent's permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

## **MAKEUP WORK**

### **Routine and In-depth Makeup Work Assignments**

For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner. [For further information, see policy EIAB.]

A student will be permitted to make up tests and to turn in projects due in any class missed because of absence.

### **DAEP or In-school Suspension Makeup Work**

A student removed to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete, before the beginning of the next school year, coursework needed to fulfill the student's high school graduation requirements.

The district may provide the opportunity to complete the coursework through an alternative method, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The district will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the district. [See policy FOCA.]

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The district may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. [See policy FEA.]

Students and their parents are encouraged to discuss options with the teacher or counselor to ensure the student completes all work required for the course or grade level.

## **COMMUNICABLE 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 communicable or contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

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

### **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, 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 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-RELATED MATTERS***

### **School Health Advisory Council**

Information regarding the District's School Health Advisory Council, including the number of meetings scheduled or held during the year, and information regarding vending machines in District facilities and student access to the machines is available from the principal. [See also policies BDF and EHAA.]

### **Illness**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know they will not be attending that day. State rules require schools to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for certain periods of time. For example, a child with a fever over 100 degrees must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications. Students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without use of diarrhea-suppressing medications for 24 hours.

A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and the school nurse determines that the child should go home, the nurse will contact the parent.

### **Vending Machines**

The district has adopted policies and implemented procedures to comply with agency and food service guidelines for restricting student access to vending machines. For more information regarding these policies and guidelines see the principal. [See policies CO and FFA]

## **Other Health-Related Matters**

### **Tobacco Prohibited**

The district and its staff strictly enforce prohibitions against the use of tobacco products by students and others on school property and at school-sponsored and school-related activities. [See the Student Code of Conduct and policy GKA.]

### **Asbestos Management Plan**

The district's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the superintendent's office. If you have any questions, please contact the Mr. Russell Luck the district's Asbestos designated person at 903-434-8666.

### **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 the districts IPM Coordinator at 903-434-8666.

## ***FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION***

The district believes that all students learn best in an environment free from harassment and that their welfare is best served when they can work free from discrimination. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any 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, sex, age, or disability. [See policy FFH] Prohibited 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; 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 on the district's Web site].

Examples of prohibited discrimination may include, but are not limited to, derogatory language directed at a person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; bullying, threatening, or intimidating conduct; name-calling or slurs, taunting, teasing (even when presented as "jokes"), or rumors; aggression or assault; graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property. 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.

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. However, all romantic and inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and district employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

## **Reporting Procedures**

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, 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, or by another student, when the allegations, if proven, would constitute "sexual harassment" or "other prohibited harassment" as defined by board policy.

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.

Retaliation against a person who makes a good faith report of prohibited harassment 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.

A student or parent who is dissatisfied with an outcome of the investigation may appeal in accordance with policy FNG.

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, the district makes the following statements:

Mount Pleasant Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, 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 requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: Mr. Judd Marshall at 903 575 2000.
- Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Mrs. Tracie Johnson at 903 575 2000.
- All other concerns: See the Superintendent Mr. Judd Marshall at 903 575 2000.

### **Services for the Homeless and for Title I Participants**

Other designated staff you may need to contact include:

- Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, who coordinates services for homeless students: 903 575 2000
- Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs: 903 575 2000

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, see **Student Fees** on page 54 and contact Mr. Justin Chambers at 903 575 2079.

## ***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—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of the standards. Students need to be familiar with the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct, as well as campus and classroom rules.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the Student Code of Conduct and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the district is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities. The district has disciplinary authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Corporal Punishment**

**Corporal punishment—spanking or paddling the student—may be used as a discipline management technique in accordance with the**

## **Student Code of Conduct and policy FO(LOCAL) in the district's policy manual. Disruptions**

As identified by law, disruptions 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 profane language or any misconduct.
- Interference with the transportation of students in district vehicles.
- Any object that is not approved by school administration or Individual Educational Plan that is considered a distraction will be taken to the front office and given back after school. Multiple infractions of this policy may require parent pick up.

## **iPods, Speakers, Cell Phones, and Other Electronic Devices and Games**

Students are not permitted to use such items **in class** as cellphones, radios, speakers, fidget spinners or other devices, tape recorders, camcorders, DVD players, cameras, electronic devices or games,

**No electronic devices or headphones are permitted to be visible during the instructional period of the day from 8:01 – 4:57 on campus.**

Repeated offenses of inappropriate use may result in confiscation of a device.

Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

[See policy FNCE.]

### **Social Events**

School rules apply to all school social events. Guests are not allowed to attend school sponsored social events.

A student attending a social event who leaves before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

## **Important general rules**

What to do in case....



1. You are hurt or ill—Go to the Nurse’s Office and he/she will call your parents if necessary.
2. You have been absent—Drop your note in the brown box outside the main office.
3. You need to leave school—Go to the front office to check out.
4. You have lost a book—Pay for it in the Assistant Principal’s Office and get a new one.
5. You want advice about schedules, personal problems, etc. —Go to the student office during the passing period and sign up for an appointment. The counselor will call you when an appointment comes open. Do NOT wait around; the Counselor will send for you.
6. You want a copy of your grades—Go to the Registrar’s Office.
7. You change address, telephone number, marital status, or guardianship—Go to the front office and have the change made.
8. You want to withdraw from school—Bring your parent or legal guardian to school. Go to the Registrar’s Office to get your withdrawal form.

## ***LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES***

### **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.

### **Students Taken Into Custody**

State law requires the district to permit a student to be taken into legal custody:

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation

officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.

Before a student is released to a law enforcement officer or other legally authorized person, the principal will verify the officer's identity and, to the best of his or her ability, will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student.

The principal will immediately notify the superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a student's release to a law enforcement officer, any notification will most likely be after the fact.

### **Notification of Law Violations**

The district is required by state law to notify:

- All instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising a student who has been arrested or referred to the juvenile court for any felony offense or for certain misdemeanors.
- All instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with a student who has been convicted, received deferred prosecution, received deferred adjudication, or was adjudicated of delinquent conduct for any felony offense or certain misdemeanors.

[For further information, see policy GRA.]

## ***DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS***

### **School Materials**

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, murals, etc.

The school newspaper, The Roaring Times, and the yearbook, are available to students.

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

[See **Directory Information for School-Sponsored Purposes** on page 27]

### **Non-school Materials...from students**

Students must obtain prior approval from the principal before posting, circulating, or distributing written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials that were not developed under the oversight of the school. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring person or organization. The decision regarding approval will be made in two school days.

The principal has designated the bulletin boards in each hallway as the location for approved non-school materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. See policy FNAA.

The student may appeal the principal's decision in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL). Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Materials displayed without this approval will be removed.

### **Non-school Materials...from 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 GKDA. To be considered, 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 principal for prior review. The principal 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 policy 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 noncurriculum-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. Students and parents may determine a student's personal dress and grooming standards, provided that they comply with the following:

Students shall be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean and neat and that will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. The District prohibits any clothing or grooming that in the principal's judgment may reasonably be expected to cause disruption or interference with normal school or classroom operations.

Students' pants will fit at the waist (belts may be used to keep pants at the waist). Students may not wear "cut-offs" or other un-hemmed garments. When wearing jeans, skin should not be visible above the knee. Leggings, tights, or any garment such as these are allowed at M.P.J.H. ONLY if it is worn together with a big mid-thigh length shirt.

Students are not permitted to wear very tight, very loose, very short, revealing clothing or pants with excessively large holes. Examples: biker shorts, mini-skirts, TANK or CROP tops, and sagging clothing. Shirts must be long enough that no skin is revealed below the hem of the shirt when arms are raised above the head, or when the student is seated.

Boys and Girls clothing must have sleeve to the top of the shoulder. No backless clothing is permitted if skin is revealed. Shirts that hang off the shoulder are not permitted.

Shorts and skirts must be no more than three inches above the knee. Low cut revealing necklines are prohibited. No house shoes/slippers are allowed except on designated days. No pajama pants or shirts are allowed except on designated days. No cutout or lace-up clothing is allowed.

Clothing advertising or picturing drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, as well as clothing with vulgar or suggestive language with double meaning is not allowed. Clothing deemed distasteful, disruptive, or gang related will not be allowed.

A student's hair must be neat, clean, and moderate in style.

- Extreme hairstyles are not acceptable.

- Hair pick's will not be allowed.

- Facial hair must be neat and closely trimmed.

- Noisy or distracting jewelry or accessories may not be worn.

- Earrings should be limited to the ears and not be distracting like nose rings, tongue rings, eyebrow rings and lip rings. Students may however have one small stud to be a place holder in the nose.

Hats, caps, hoods, blankets and headbands (boys and girls) are not to be brought on campus except when medically required. **Bandanas** are not allowed on campus. Sunglasses may be worn inside only when prescribed by a physician or eye doctor.

### **Violations of dress code**

If the principal or principal's designee determines that a student's grooming violates the dress code, the student shall be given an opportunity to contact a parent. If the parent is unavailable clothing will be issued if it is available. Students who choose to violate the dress code also choose to take the responsibility for these actions. The student will be placed in ISS until the violation is resolved. Decisions for appropriate dress are to be made by the student prior to arrival at school. Therefore, in order to make our students accountable for their decisions they will NOT be eligible to secure clothing from a source

other than parent or an administrator. Principal's discretion will be the ultimate determination.

### ***IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)***

ISS is a program with structured assignments relative to the offense that resulted in placement. Academic assignments will be completed prior to return to the classroom.

#### **ISS Rules**

1. Students assigned to ISS are NOT allowed to associate with other students while on campus.
2. When arriving before school, students should go directly to the rotunda and wait for the ISS supervisor.
3. While in ISS, there should be NO talking. Students should sit at their desks and work on assigned tasks. If they need help, they should raise their hands and ask the supervisor for assistance.
4. Cell phones may be turned in to the teacher on duty and will be returned at the end of the school day. If a student violates the cell phone policy, the cell phone will be taken to the office and only release to the parent.
5. Misbehavior while in ISS will be referred to an Administrator.

### ***STUDENT FEES***

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. **A student, however, is expected to provide his or her own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks and may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including:**

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.
- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the district.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.

- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Outdoor Adventure \$40.00 fee
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that require use of facilities not available on district premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school. [See **Buses and Other School Vehicles** on page 61.]
- A fee not to exceed \$50 for costs of providing an educational program outside of regular school hours for a student who has lost credit because of absences and whose parent chooses the program in order for the student to meet the 90 percent attendance requirement. The fee will be charged only if the parent or guardian signs a district-provided request form.

Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the principal. [For further information, see policy FP.]

## ***FUND-RAISING***

Student clubs or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the principal at least 10 days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

## ***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 Department of State Health Services, Immunization Division, can be honored by the district. The immunizations required are: diphtheria, rubeola (measles), rubella, mumps, tetanus, Hemophilus influenzae type B, poliomyelitis, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella (chicken pox). 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 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 any 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 and the Department of State Health Services Web site: [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/school\\_info.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/school_info.shtm)]

## ***PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE***

Each school day, students will 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.

A minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others. [See policy EC for more information.]

## ***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.

## ***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 students is essential to ensuring school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- 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.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- 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.

## ***Accident Insurance***

Soon after school opens, 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.

## **General Procedures:**

1. Remain calm at all times during an emergency.
2. Report any emergency situation as soon as possible to an administrator.
3. Take roll in any emergency situation. Know who you are responsible for. Make anyone who takes responsibility for a child, sign them out. Record the time the child left your care.
4. Anyone who is in the hall in an emergency must immediately report to a safe room.
5. Teachers in safe rooms must check the monitor before allowing anyone access to the room in an emergency situation.

## ***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 would need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

## **Food Allergies**

Parents should notify the district when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially an allergy that could result in dangerous or life-threatening reactions either by breathing, eating, or touching the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

The district has developed and annually reviews a food allergy management plan, based on the Texas Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) *Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies at Risk for Anaphylaxis* found on the DSHS Allergies and Anaphylaxis website (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/texas-school-health/resource-library/asthma-allergies-and-anaphylaxis>)

When the district receives information that a student has a food allergy that puts the student at risk for anaphylaxis, an individual care plan will be developed to assist the student in safely accessing the school environment.

## **Seizures**

To address the care of a student with a seizure disorder while at school or participating in a school activity, a parent may submit a seizure management and treatment plan to the



district before the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment of the student, or as soon as practicable following diagnosis of a seizure disorder. A parent who submits a plan must use the Seizure Management and Treatment Plan Form (<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/tea-seizure-management-form.pdf>) developed by the Texas Education Agency.

[See **A Student with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504** and contact the school nurse for more information.]

## **Emergency School-Closing Information**

Emergency school closing will be advertised on KLAKE 97.7 FM.

## ***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.

The following areas are open to students before school beginning at 7:15 a.m.

- Cafeteria
- Outside
- Library for academic purposes only

Unless the teacher or sponsor overseeing the activity gives permission, a student will not be permitted to go to another area of the building or campus.

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately. Parents must sign their child out in the Front Office if they are going to leave early.

### **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 play rehearsals, club meetings, athletic practices, and special study groups or tutorials. 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 stricter standards of behavior for extracurricular participants established by the sponsor.

### **Use of Hallways During Class Time**

Loitering or standing in the halls during class is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Students are

expected to move from class to class as quickly as possible and will be held accountable for arriving to class in a timely manner.

## **Cafeteria Services**

The district participates in the Free-pick three National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily.

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.]

All lunches will be eaten in the cafeteria, sack lunches included (unless students have been selected to participate in special programs where lunch is brought to them). Students should move through the serving lines as quickly and quietly as possible, and should not cut in line. Students should leave their tables clean and in order. Lunches should be paid for in advance or at the serving line.

Food and drinks must be consumed in the cafeteria and are not to be carried outside or into the halls at any time. Students found with food or drinks outside will be referred for disciplinary action. The cafeteria is considered to be a restaurant and manners appropriate to a restaurant are expected.

Due to Federal Laws. Parents may only bring food or drinks for their own student. Sharing with other students is not permitted. For parents who bring their child lunch it should be left in the front office prior to their designated lunch time. Student will only be allowed to eat outside lunches in designated office area.

## **Library**

The library is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library is open for student use during the following times with a teacher permit:

7:15 am – 3:50 pm Monday – Friday

The library has approximately 9,000 volumes. Books may be checked out for two weeks at a time unless special arrangements are made with the librarian.

Students are responsible for any change in condition of the book when it is returned. Book fines are \$0.05 a day, not counting the date due, but counting the day fines are paid. Holidays, Saturdays, and Sundays are not days counted on fines. If a book has been paid for and then found, a refund will be given less the amount of the fine charged not to exceed \$3.00.

Utilization of the library during the school day will be through scheduling of classes. Students who wish to use the library should do so before or after school. Passes to the library should be obtained from a teacher who has knowledge of the work students need to do.

## **Meetings of Noncurriculum-Related Groups**

Student-organized, student-led noncurriculum-related groups are permitted to meet during the hours designated by the principal before and after school. These groups must comply with the requirements of policy FNAB(LOCAL).

A list of these groups is available in the principal's office.

## **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. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, district officials may from time to time conduct searches. Such searches are conducted without a warrant and as permitted by law.

## **Students' Desks and Lockers**

Students' desks and lockers are school property and remain under the control and jurisdiction of the school even when assigned to an individual student.

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of their assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that their lockers are locked, and that the combinations are not available to others. Lockers are issued upon request.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by board policy, whether or not a student is present.

The parent will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

## **Vehicles on Campus**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the permission of the student. Students at Junior High are not allowed to drive vehicles to campus without proper licenses. [See also the Student Code of Conduct.]

## **Trained Dogs**

The district will use trained dogs to alert school officials to the presence of prohibited or illegal items, including drugs and alcohol. At any time, trained dogs may be used on lockers and vehicles parked on school property. Searches of classrooms, common areas, or student belongings may also be conducted by trained dogs when students are not

present. A locker, a vehicle, or an item in a classroom to which a trained dog alerts may be searched by school officials.

## ***TRANSPORTATION***

### **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use transportation provided by the school 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 or to another adult designated by the parent.

### **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. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. Further information may be obtained by calling 903 575 2090.

See the Student Code of Conduct for provisions regarding transportation to the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.

Students are expected to assist district staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in district 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.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- 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 or van.
- Be seated while the vehicle is moving.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

When students ride in a district van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times.

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

## ***VIDEO CAMERAS***

For safety purposes, video/audio equipment may be used to monitor student behavior on buses and in common areas on campus. Students will not be told when the equipment is being used.

The principal will review the tapes routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

## ***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 principal's office.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

## ***TELEPHONES***

Telephones in classrooms are not for students use during the day. Teachers have been instructed to send students to the student center to use the phone. Students who are caught using the phones without permission will be referred for disciplinary action. Students who have an emergency should report to the student center and sign up to use the phone.

## ***BUILDING AND HALLS***

The principal's office will be opened at 7:30 a.m. Students will not be permitted to roam the halls and rooms before classes in the morning time. Students should not be in the halls during classes without a pass. Students should stay away from areas where classes are in session during their lunchtime. Students may be in the hallway to attend tutorial sessions. A note is required to attend.

## ***ASSEMBLIES***

There will be several assemblies during the year. Most full school assemblies will be held in the gym. Students will be seated in the bleachers.

Students will be required to sit with their classes. Students will sit with their teachers in designated areas. Eighth grade students will sit in a section separated from the seventh grade. Teachers will provide students with seating information prior to each assembly. During the football season, time for regular pep rallies will be announced. True reflections of school loyalty and good training are measured by your behavior in

assembly. You must attend the pep rally or stay in an assigned area. Assembly etiquette to be observed by students:

1. Go immediately to gym when called.
2. Go promptly to assigned seat.
3. Listen carefully and respectfully to assembly programs.
4. Wait for the formal dismissal by the person in charge at the conclusion of every assembly.

## ***DRIVING A BICYCLE OR MOTOR VEHICLE***

1. Only bicycles and motorbikes may be ridden to Junior High School. Students must register their motorbikes in the office to be permitted to ride them to school. They must have in their possession a legal driver's license.
2. Students must lock the bicycle or motorbike when they get to school and leave it parked until school is out and they are allowed to leave.
3. Students must obey all traffic laws concerning driving safety and courtesies as they are applied on the streets and highways of the State of Texas.

When students break the above regulations, they are subject to having the privilege of riding their bikes to school taken away. The school will not be responsible for bicycles or motorbikes ridden to school.

Skates and skateboards are not allowed on campus. Skates and skateboards will be confiscated. The administrator will meet with parents to return these items.

## ***ELECTIONS***

### **General procedures**

1. The principal or designee and the Student Council Sponsor will be in charge of elections.
2. Voting will be completed through classes.
3. Ballot position will be according to alphabetical order.
4. Votes will be counted by members of the faculty and the Student Council. Results and ballots will be carried to the Principal's Office for verification and storage.
5. No student can receive more than one position, excluding Class Officer, Student Council Officer, and Cheerleader.

### **General requirements**

1. CLASS OFFICERS
  - a. Students will self-nominate.
  - b. Students must have a "B" average (80) the semester preceding.

## ***MARRIED STUDENTS***

Students married at the time of enrollment in a school unit of the Mt. Pleasant ISD, or who marry while enrolled in Mt. Pleasant Schools, have the same obligations and responsibilities and are subject to the same policies, rules, and regulations as unmarried students. Upon adherence to these policies, rules and regulations, married students may participate in any school extracurricular activity and hold any office, elected or appointed, while in the Mt. Pleasant Schools.

## ***FORMING A CLUB***

1. A group of at least 15 students must be organized to form a club.
2. An interested teacher must be found for the sponsor of the club.
3. A constitution must be written for the club.
4. A meeting place must be found and a time for meetings chosen.
5. A charter petition must be obtained from the student council, filled out and returned to the Student Council.
6. The club must be approved by the Administration.
7. When all necessary steps toward its existence have been finalized, the club is not chartered by the Student Council.
8. No one shall be excluded from membership due to race, creed, or color.

## ***GROUND AND BUILDING APPEARANCE***

The outward appearance of a school is an indication of what is happening inside the school. Since the goal for Mount Pleasant Junior High School is excellence, then our facility should reflect excellence. This requires the cooperation of all stakeholders and a proactive attitude toward our school. Together we can achieve our goal of excellence.

# **MPJH ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

## ***ATHLETIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

### **Major Goals**

- To teach the athlete values that will make them more productive in adult life.
- To help each athlete reach their full potential in their sport.

### **Other Specific Goals**

- To develop the athlete's quickness, strength, speed, agility and endurance.
- To learn teamwork.
- To learn sportsmanship in victory as well as defeat.
- To enjoy the camaraderie of team sports.
- To experience dedication, commitment and hard work.
- To obtain the ability to withstand pressure.
- To learn to be punctual and organized.
- To learn to be self-disciplined and be mentally tough.
- To develop a positive attitude.

## ***POLICIES***

### **Responsibilities**

The athletes represent Mt. Pleasant's finest and they should compete to the best of their ability in every event in which they participate. The athletes' competitiveness, attitude, conduct and appearance in the athletic competition will contribute greatly to a school pride. The athlete must be responsible in use of school facilities, equipment and uniforms. When we compete against other schools, we not only represent our school and ourselves, we represent the town of Mt. Pleasant.

### **Academics**

A good athlete becomes a good student by working as hard in the classroom as on the athletic field. The athletes should be positive leaders at school as well as in athletic competition. The athlete must pass all classes to meet the UIL academic guidelines to be eligible for competition. The coaches will counsel the athlete when needed. The athlete will be solely responsible for their grades.



## Attendance

The athlete should know when their practice and games are scheduled and make every effort to avoid conflicts. Coaches should be notified immediately when a conflict does arise. The athlete must be in attendance for at least half of the school day in which they participate in an athletic event. Missing a game or practice without a good reason is inexcusable. Be on time. If an athlete decides to quit, they should talk to the head coach of that sport, and turn in all athletic equipment.

## Uniform

The athlete is responsible for their equipment. Proper attire should be worn in workouts and games. Any unnecessary item that does not serve a purpose or draws attention may not be worn.

## General misconduct

Profanity, disrespect, and disruptive behavior are examples of conduct that is not acceptable. Good citizenship is expected. **Stealing from teammates will not be tolerated.**

## Discipline

The athlete will be disciplined when breaking rules or policies. The discipline will depend on the severity or the recurrence of the violation. Types of discipline will include:

- \*1. Conference with Coach
- \*2. Extra running
- \*3. Tiger Reminder – running and pushups
- \*4. Probation
- \*5. Suspension from games
- \*6. Suspension for the rest of the season
- \*7. Removal of athletic privileges
- \* 8. Corporal Punishment

## Transportation

The athlete must ride to and from out-of-town games on school transportation. If the parents wish to transport their child for a special reason, they should inform the coach in writing prior to leaving for the event.

## **Injury**

It is important that the athlete and parents know that it is very possible for an athlete to become injured while participating in athletics. Proper training will prevent some injuries, but of course some injuries are unavoidable. The catastrophic injury can happen in athletics. Paralysis and death have occurred as a result of participating in athletics but are rare occurrences. Most injuries that occur are minor. All injuries should be reported to the coach as soon as possible.

## **Insurance**

Supplementary insurance is provided by the school district for all athletes while participating in school athletic activities. It most often will not cover the total cost of a doctor's bill. Athletes are advised to have other insurance.

## **Requirements for participation**

1. Meet all eligibility requirements of the UIL.
2. Satisfy all rules and policies of the Mt. Pleasant I.S.D.
3. Have permission from the coach of that particular sport.
4. Have passed a current physical exam in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year.
5. Understand and abide by athletic policies.
6. Have read and signed the acknowledgment of receipt of Athletic Handbook form.

**Have an emergency card on file.**

## GLOSSARY

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level.

**ACT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the American College Test. The test may be a requirement for admission to certain colleges or universities.

**Alternative assessment instrument**, developed by the state, may be given to students in special education and students identified as limited English proficient.

**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.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Students in the DAEP will be separated from students not assigned to the program. The DAEP will focus instruction on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline, and provide for students' educational and behavior needs, as well as supervision and counseling.

**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 or a student 18 or older 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; modifications to state or districtwide tests, etc.

**ISS** refers to in-school suspension, a disciplinary technique for misconduct found in the Student Code of Conduct. Although different from out-of-school suspension and placement in a DAEP, ISS removes the student from the regular classroom.

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

**Personal Graduation Plan (PGP)** is required by state law for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated test or is identified by the district as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

**SAT** refers to one of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities.

**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 by an ARD committee to be eligible for special education services, appropriate regular educational services will be provided.

**State-mandated tests** are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance sometimes is a condition of promotion, and the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests if necessary for promotion or graduation.

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed with the advice of the district-level committee and adopted by the board and 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 disciplinary alternative education program. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion, 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 a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**STAAR** is short for the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness and Skills, the state's current standardized achievement test given to students in certain subjects in grades 3–11.

**UIL** refers to the University Interscholastic League, the statewide voluntary non-profit organization that oversees educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

## ***Appendix: Freedom from Bullying Policy***

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit

<https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=1133&code=FFI>. Below is the text of **MPISD**'s policy FFI(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

## **Student Welfare: Freedom from Bullying**

Policy FFI(LOCAL) adopted on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, as defined by state law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy and is prohibited. Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism. In accordance with law, the Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures to ensure that minimum standards for bullying prevention are implemented. The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation. Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances. A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct. To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying. Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee. A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form. The Superintendent shall periodically monitor the reported counts of bullying incidents, and that declines in the count may represent not only improvements in the campus culture because bullying declines but also declines in the campus culture because of a decline in openness to report incidents. When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify a parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify a parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct. The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action

calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate. Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The principal or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or designee. If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying. If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances. A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying. The principal or designee shall refer to FDB for transfer provisions. The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options. If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action. To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation. A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level. Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

## ***Appendix: Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy***

**Note:** School board policies may be revised at any time. For legal context and the most current copy of the local policy, visit

<https://pol.tasb.org/PolicyOnline/PolicyDetails?key=1133&code=FNG#legalTabContent>. Below is the text of **MPISD**'s policy FNG(LOCAL) as of the date this handbook was finalized for this school year.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities: Student and Parent Complaints/Grievances**

Policy FNG(LOCAL) adopted on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

In this policy, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning.

Student or parent complaints shall be filed in accordance with this policy, except as required by the policies listed below. Some of these policies require appeals to be submitted in accordance with FNG after the relevant complaint process:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, or disability shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
2. Complaints concerning dating violence shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
3. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be submitted in accordance with the FFH series.
4. Complaints concerning bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be submitted in accordance with FFI.
5. Complaints concerning failure to award credit or a final grade on the basis of attendance shall be submitted in accordance with FEC.
6. Complaints concerning expulsion shall be submitted in accordance with FOD and the Student Code of Conduct.
7. Complaints concerning any final decisions of the gifted and talented selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program shall be submitted in accordance with EHBB.

8. Complaints within the scope of Section 504, including complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational

placement of a student with a disability, shall be submitted in accordance with FB and the procedural safeguards handbook.

9. Complaints within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act, including complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a student

with a disability, shall be submitted in accordance with

EHBAE, FOF, and the procedural safeguards handbook provided to parents of all students referred to special education.

Complaints concerning instructional resources shall be submitted in accordance with the EF series.

11. Complaints concerning a commissioned peace officer who is

an employee of the District shall be submitted in accordance with the CKE series.

12. Complaints concerning intradistrict transfers or campus assignment shall be submitted in accordance with FDB.

13. Complaints concerning admission, placement, or services

provided for a homeless student shall be submitted in accordance with FDC.

14. Complaints concerning disputes regarding a student's eligibility for free or reduced-priced meal programs shall be submitted in accordance with COB.

Complaints regarding refusal of entry to or ejection from District

property based on Education Code 37.105 shall be filed in accordance with this policy. However, the timelines shall be adjusted as

necessary to permit the complainant to address the Board in person within 90 calendar days of filing the initial complaint, unless the

complaint is resolved before the Board considers it. [See GKA(LEGAL)]

The District shall inform students and parents of this policy through appropriate District publications.

The Board encourages students and parents to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher, principal, or other campus administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

Informal resolution shall be encouraged but shall not extend any



deadlines in this policy, except by mutual written consent.

A student or parent may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, students and

parents are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. A student or parent whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board

policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

Neither the Board nor any District employee shall unlawfully retaliate against any student or parent for bringing a concern or complaint.

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery,

by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S.

Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the

appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on

the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall

be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the

deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic

communication. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the

appropriate administrator or designated representative no more

than three days after the deadline.

The District shall make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If a student or parent fails to

appear at a scheduled conference, the District may hold the conference and issue a decision in the student’s or parent’s absence.

At Levels One and Two, “response” shall mean a written communication to the student or parent from the appropriate administrator.

Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the student’s or parent’s email address of record, or sent by

U.S. Mail to the student’s or parent’s mailing address of record.

Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S.

Mail on or before the deadline.

“Days” shall mean District business days, unless otherwise noted.

In calculating timelines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following business day is “day one.”

“Representative” shall mean any person who or organization that is designated by the student or parent to represent the student or parent in the complaint process. A student may be represented by an adult at any level of the complaint.

The student or parent may designate a representative through written notice to the District at any level of this process. If the student

or parent designates a representative with fewer than three days’ notice to the District before a scheduled conference or hearing, the District may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the District’s counsel. The District may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. A student or parent shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the student or parent,

at any point during the complaint process. The student or parent may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by the District.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the student or parent does not

have copies of these documents, copies may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the student or parent unless the student or parent did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be refiled with all the required information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing.

Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within 15 days of the date the student or parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the lowest level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, students and parents shall file Level One complaints with the campus principal.

If the only administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the complaint form at Level One.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator must note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the student or parent within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the administrator shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any

other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the Level One decision.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator shall prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Level One record shall include:

1. The original complaint form and any attachments.
2. All other documents submitted by the student or parent at Level One.
3. The written response issued at Level One and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the Level One administrator in reaching the Level One decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One.

At the conference, the student or parent may provide information concerning any documents or information relied upon by the administration for the Level One decision. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the student or parent a written response within ten days following the conference. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two conferences, if any,

shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

If the student or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the student or parent may appeal the decision to the Board.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the District, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two appeal. The student or parent may request a copy of the Level Two record.

The Level Two record shall include:

1. The Level One record.
2. The notice of appeal from Level One to Level Two.
3. The written response issued at Level Two and any attachments.
4. All other documents relied upon by the administration in reaching the Level Two decision.

The appeal shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level Two, except that if at the Level Three hearing the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the Level

Two record, the administration shall provide the student or parent notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the hearing.

The District shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas

Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. [See BE]

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, including an opportunity for the student or parent and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels.

In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the student or parent or the student's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. If the Board does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two

## Acknowledgment of Receipt of Student Handbook

My child and I have received a copy of the Mt. Pleasant Junior High Student Handbook for the 2026-27 school year. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I also understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. If I have any questions regarding this handbook or the Student Code of Conduct, I will direct those questions to the principal at (903) 434-8717 or e-mail at [jduke@mpisd.net](mailto:jduke@mpisd.net).

Student's name: *(print)*

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Student's signature:

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Parent's or guardian's name:  
*(print)*

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Parent's or guardian's signature:

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Date:

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