

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind



Student Handbook 2025-2026

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SBE Approved – July 18, 2024

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Mr. Matt Mayo

Crosby Parker, Junior Student Representative

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CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Wendy Clemons

Deleted: Donna Boone

MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND LEADERSHIP

LaMarlon Wilson, Superintendent

Dr. Adrienne Williams, Assistant

Superintendent

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Mrs. Lakesha Doyle, MSB
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Teacher

Mary Sneed, MSB Lead Teacher

Pam Jones, MSD Counselor

, MSB Counselor

Alison Bradford, Ex. Dir

Finance and
Operations

LaQuandra Jones, Psychometric Services Dr.

Antonio Magee, MIRC Director/MSDB Supports

Jarvis
Robinson
Associate
Administra-
tor of
Student

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Dr. Marla Davis¶

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Engagment

Shelly Jacobs, MSD Director of Residential Education
Candice Davis, MSB Director of Residential Education

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Mississippi Board of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi School of the Arts, the Mississippi School for the Blind, the Mississippi School for the Deaf, and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national, origin, sex, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs.

ACCREDITATION AND ACADEMICS

MSDB holds accreditation from Cognia (formerly known as AdvancED Regional), ensuring educational standards on par with any school district in Mississippi. Established by the Mississippi Legislature, these schools cater to the distinct learning requirements of students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, visually impaired, or blind, including those with additional disabilities. Highly skilled teachers at MSDB deliver curriculum objectives aligned with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards endorsed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. Each student benefits from specialized instruction and support provided by trained teachers and staff dedicated to serving this student population.

The fundamental principle underlying MSDB's approach to instruction is the belief that academic success for students is achievable through collaboration among all stakeholders, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community. By fostering a supportive environment, students can fully utilize the unique opportunities provided by this educational setting.

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MSDB MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is to serve a diverse educational community, to work collaboratively with families and partners, and to empower students through comprehensive support, self-advocacy, and personal excellence.

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MSD GOVERNANCE AND PURPOSE

The Mississippi School for the Deaf (MSD) is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. MSD is a special purpose school for students 3-21 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing and are referred by their local school district for evaluation/eligibility in consideration of a placement decision. MSD is a collaborative service provider that assists school districts in their provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for their students, through statewide field services.

Mission

The Mississippi School for the Deaf strives to be a diverse bilingual community. In partnership with families, MSD will provide exemplary education in a nurturing, engaging, and challenging environment to help ensure our students achieve personal excellence and become productive citizens.

Belief Statements

- All people have equal value.
- All students can learn and are lifelong learners.
- ASL English Bilingual Education (AEBE) is a basic right of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. ASL and English are two separate languages.
- Both Deaf and Hearing interactions are vital to students' bicultural development.
- Students benefit when parents and families are involved in the educational process, as all adults are vital educators.
- A safe, secure, inviting, and healthy school environment is essential for learning.
- All students need to be immersed in a creative, challenging environment that encourages risk-taking that enhances their social, emotional, and intellectual skills.
- Students have the right to have their individual needs met through learning opportunities that promote optimum success.
- Students should have cultural awareness, respect, and sensitivity when choosing a natural mode of communication with peers, staff, family, and the diverse multicultural society.

MSB GOVERNANCE AND PURPOSE

The Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. MSB is a special purpose school for students 3-21 years of age who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind and are referred by their local school district for evaluation/eligibility in consideration of a placement decision. MSB is a collaborative service provider that assists school districts in their provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for their students, statewide field services.

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Mission

The Mission of the Mississippi School for the Blind is to establish a strong foundation for learning and independence by providing individualized adaptive services and materials to enhance maximum potential for students with visual impairments or blindness.

Belief Statements

- Learning is the chief priority for students and the primary focus for decision-making.
- Students with visual impairments or blindness learn in different ways and will be provided with a variety of instructional strategies.
- Educators should be knowledgeable about the educational needs of individual students. Students with visual impairments or blindness learn best when they are actively involved throughout the learning process.
- Students with visual impairments or blindness should receive services from highly qualified professionals.
- Positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff should be present.
- A commitment to continuous improvement is imperative for preparing students to be lifelong learners.
- The expanded core curriculum should be a part of the course of study for all students with visual impairments or blindness.
- Students receiving instruction in Braille should receive services from a TVI certified teacher with expertise in delivering braille instruction.

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION AND NOTICES

Criteria For Admission & Continued Enrollment

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) has been designated by the State of Mississippi as a program that serves children whose primary disability is either a hearing loss or a vision loss. Program design and selection of staff is based on that premise. Not all children who apply are eligible to attend the MSDB. Below is a summary of MSDB's enrollment criteria.

A: All students must meet these requirements:

1. Live in the state of Mississippi.
2. Be between 3 and 21 years of age.
3. Can finger feed self, chew, and swallow most food, indicate awareness of being soiled or wet, assist with dressing, and cooperate in bathing.
4. Parent gives consent for emergency medical treatment or for a Health Care Plan, if needed.
5. Determined not to be a danger to self or others or disruptive to the educational process.
6. Does not show an uneven developmental profile and pattern of social, communication, and restricted or repetitive behaviors or interests.
7. Does not have a medical or mental health condition that prohibits the student from attending school daily.
8. Does not have a standard score of three (3) standard deviations below the mean on standardized intellectual and adaptive behavior assessments.
9. Does not have medically related health or safety needs beyond the scope of the Health Clinic or the educational program.

B. Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing must also meet the following requirements:

1. Have a permanent or fluctuating hearing threshold level as evidenced by:
 - a. Deaf (severe impairments in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification) - OR - Hearing impairment (permanent or fluctuating hearing impairment)
 - b. Adverse impact on educational performance.
2. The supporting evidence must contain an audiometric evaluation conducted by an audiologist (MDE license in audiology, MSDH license, ASHA- CCC, or AAA certification) or physician with expertise in audiological exams using appropriate audiological equipment explaining each of the following:
 - a. type of loss
 - b. age of onset (if known)
 - c. severity of loss
 - d. speech reception or speech awareness thresholds (if obtainable)
 - e. speech discrimination scores (if applicable)
 - f. recommendations regarding amplification, and
 - g. other recommended interventions, if any, including the need for assistive technology

- h. a description of a follow-up examination and results, including how the conditions noted during the examination might interfere with educational testing and performance and recommendations for accommodations, modifications, and educational programming.
 - i. acoustic immittance measures
 - j. an audiogram and/or measures of auditory evoked potential, such as Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR), Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR), and Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) that would define the hearing loss.
 - k. a description of how the hearing loss impacts educational performance.
 - l. communication abilities and needs including the need for assisted communication.
3. Have a hearing threshold that interferes with progress in developmental skills or academic performance, social-emotional development, or linguistic and communicative skills.
 4. Evidence of genetic deafness in the student's family and/or early identification of progressive hearing loss.

C. Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired must also meet the following requirements:

1. Have a documented eye condition that causes an impairment as manifested by:
 - a. Blind (little or no vision), - OR - Partially sighted (significant vision loss of 20/70 or worse in the better eye after correction) - OR - Legally blind (visual acuity of 20/200 or worse in the better eye after correction or contracted peripheral field of <20°) - OR - Other severe visual problems
 - b. Adverse impact on educational performance.
2. The supporting evidence must contain a statement from an ophthalmologist or optometrist supporting eligibility that includes descriptions of visual acuity, diagnosed visual problems, a statement of how the child's visual problems affect educational performance and recommendations for educational programming.
3. Have a functional vision loss which inhibits optimal processing of information through the visual channel and requires the use of specialized techniques, textbooks, materials, or equipment.
4. An ophthalmologist and/or optometrist statement of a visually impaired diagnosis.

D. Students who are Deaf-Blind must also meet the following requirements:

1. Evidence of Deaf/Hard of Hearing as described above.
2. Evidence of Blind/Visually Impaired as described above.

GENERAL INQUIRIES

1. Prior to requesting an IEP meeting to determine the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), local school districts must fax the following information to **Adrienne Williams** at (601) 984-8234:
 - a. In-state eligibility determination form
 - b. In-state Individual Education Program (IEPs) or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs-preschool) (past three school years)
 - c. Ophthalmologist or Optometrist reports for students who are Blind or have Visual Impairment
 - d. Audiologist reports for students who are Deaf or have Hearing Loss
 - e. Psychoeducational Report (an intelligence measure should be attempted)
 - f. Related Services Assessments, if applicable

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- g. Discipline Report (last two school years)
 - h. Attendance Report (last two school years)
 - i. Medical records (include medications)
 - j. Academic records
 - k. Other
2. The local school district should complete their evaluation procedures prior to seeking enrollment at MSDB. An MSDB representative will contact the local district to organize the scheduling of a change of placement meeting within three (3) business days of receiving the items listed above.
 3. Observation Period: The enrollee may attend MSDB for up to 60 school days from the student's initial day of school to determine if continued placement at MSDB is appropriate.
 4. Parents/guardians are welcome to inquire about our district. Entry is determined by the local school district when considering Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state board policy requirements for special education and MSDB's general admission criteria and continued enrollment. Please contact MSDB school counselors for information regarding academic learning and student life.
 5. The Mississippi Department of Education Office of Special Education offers a Parent Outreach and Support Center that is available to assist parents at 601-359-3498.

MSDB CONTACT INFORMATION

~~Adrienne Williams, Assistant Superintendent and Director of~~
~~Special Services adrienne.williams@msdbk12.org~~
~~601-984-8234~~

~~Failure to provide all information or falsification of information will prevent applications from being processed and/or result in disenrollment if the student is found ineligible based on incomplete or inaccurate information.~~

Registration

Parents should be prepared to provide all of the following:

1. Two proofs of residency within a MS school district
2. Provide an updated immunization form (Mississippi 121) if the immunization records are not up to date at the current placement.
3. Birth Certificate
4. Provide a copy of the child's social security card on or before registration.
5. Any relevant medical records or medical action plans (i.e., for seizures) at registration

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 Counselor pamela.jones@msdbk12.org
 601-984-8000

6. Official Withdrawal Papers from the previous school on the day of registration or as determined jointly in cases where more time is needed to prepare for a student.
7. Copy of the student's current report, when applicable.

Cost

Families pay no tuition, room, or boarding costs at Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind. Legislative appropriations support the costs for attendance at MSDB. Families are responsible for expenses such as prescription medications, personal hygiene items, laundry supplies, spending money, and individual expenses.

Withdrawal of Students

The student's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and placement decisions are determined by an IEP committee. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw the student from MSDB, an IEP meeting will be required to determine if a change in placement yields a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for the student. If the committee determines that a change in placement is most appropriate, the parent must visit MSD or MSB to sign withdrawal paperwork and adhere to other exit procedures. MSD or MSB will forward all academic records to the Local Educational Agency (LEA).

MSDB leadership team may offer re-admission to an LEA and parent--in lieu of the MSDB admission team's case review-- up to 60 calendar days after a previous change in placement reveals MSDB as the more appropriate placement. Otherwise, the LEA must submit documents within the admissions policy if reentry is considered.

The student's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and placement decisions are determined by an IEP committee. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw the student from MSDB, an IEP meeting will be recommended by MSDB to determine if a change in placement is the best option for the student. If a parental request is made for a student to withdraw without holding an IEP meeting prior to unenrolling, the district will follow the withdrawal procedures and then alert the forwarding local educational agency (LEA) of the parent's decision. After receiving withdrawal signatures, MSDB will forward all academic records to the LEA. If the parent wishes to re-enroll the student at MSDB, the LEA will need to adhere to the admissions policy before reenrollment is granted.

Expectations for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a compulsory school-age child are required to make every reasonable effort to ensure that their child attends school. Likewise, parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible financially for destructive acts their children commit against school property, school personnel, other students, and property.

Deleted: Withdrawing without an IEP meeting will result in a temporary hold being placed in the student's file until official procedures are met. The LEA will be notified, and an IEP meeting will be requested to best determine the LRE for the student services.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be requested to come to the school for a meeting with appropriate school officials to discuss the conduct and acts of their children to make every reasonable effort to ensure that their children have a successful and safe living and learning environment.

Appearance and Dress

The administration and faculty expect all students to dress in a manner which reflects favorably upon the efforts of the total educational community to provide the best learning experience possible for each student. The Student Dress Code is based on two precepts- good health and safety, and consistency with instructional processes. To prepare for increased restrictions and responsibilities within the adult workplace, students must learn to observe basic regulations. All students are expected to wear uniforms.

Students will be required to wear uniforms Monday - Friday each week. On Fridays, students may wear casual clothes **at the clearance of the principal.**

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The following provides additional information regarding attire on campus:

1. Hair and nails
 - a. Hair shall be groomed so as not to extend below the eyebrows or cover the eyes.
 - b. Hair and nails shall not be groomed in class.
 - c. Hair and body shall be free from obnoxious odors, clean, and neat in appearance.
 - d. Picks, combs, rollers, and other styling devices shall not be worn in the hair.
2. Accessories
 - a. Hats, caps, toboggans, head scarves, bandanas, wrist bands, sweat bands, hairnets, or shower caps, stocking caps, or do rags are not allowed to be worn during the academic day.
 - b. Hoods will not be worn inside the building.
 - c. Unless prescribed for medical reasons, sunglasses are not allowed in the building.
 - d. Wallet chains are not allowed.
 - e. Trench coats or duster style coats are not allowed.
 - f. Belts - If the pants/skirt have belt loops then a belt is to be worn.
 - g. Overall straps and suspenders shall be fastened and worn over the shoulders.
 - h. Blankets are not allowed in the classroom.
3. Tops
 - a. No tank tops, halters, tops with spaghetti straps or tops that expose the midriff, with hands raised above the head, shall be worn.
 - b. Appropriate underclothing shall be worn. No clothing considered and designed as underclothing, shall be worn as an outside garment.
4. Bottoms
 - a. Undergarments - Proper undergarments should be worn but not to be seen through the shirts, skirts, or pants.
 - b. Girls' skirts and dress length must meet the 4"-inch rule as stated above.
 - c. Students may wear shorts, provided the length is no shorter than 4" above the knee.
 - d. No pants with holes are permitted. No pajama pants are permitted.

Bottoms: Khaki, navy, black

Girls: pants, shorts, jumper, skirt (If your student wears a skirt, please provide a pair of shorts to wear underneath during P.E.)

Boys: pants, shorts

Feet: socks and shoes- see above (sport shoes will be used daily for P.E.)

Students not following dress code will be subject to consequences, which may include disciplinary action.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Campus Visitors

All visitors, including parents, friends, solicitors, or anyone else entering the campus or school buildings for any reason must first check in at the school office. Visitors must obtain authorization from the principal or office staff before visiting or making contact with students or teachers. Upon approval, visitors will receive a visitor's pass. Visits to classrooms or observations during instructional hours are prohibited unless prearranged.

Staff members are expected to regularly verify that visitors have proper authorization from the office. If a visitor does not have the necessary permission, the staff member should promptly guide them to the principal's office.

Publications

Publications of the school may include newspapers, newsletters, a yearbook, a literary magazine, or other media. The school administration and faculty will direct the nature and function of school-sponsored publications. The final product must reflect and fulfill the MSD and MSB philosophy and mission.

Free Speech, Assembly, and Publication

Students are entitled to freedom of expression and publication of their views and opinions if the expression does not disrupt and/or interfere with normal school operations and discipline. Profane, vulgar, racist, or harassing words by their nature disrupt the educational environment and may not be used. Students are responsible, when assembling, for exhibiting appropriate behavior and following the reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions of the school.

Student Organizations and Clubs

Students are allowed to establish and participate in lawful groups aligned with the principles and objectives of MSDB. These clubs will operate in conjunction with the educational mission of the schools. It is the students' responsibility, and they will be mandated, to ensure that the activities of these organizations align with the philosophy and mission of the school.

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Fund Raising

The faculty sponsor submits the request to the principal for approval. Requests should be submitted four (4) weeks in advance of the proposed activity. All funds raised must be deposited in the Business Office and funds should be turned in each day during the fundraiser.

Distribution of Non-MSDB Printed Material

Any information advocating non-MSDB causes must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval and dissemination.

Media Policies

MSDB has a positive working relationship with the news media to promote the school and its mission.

All news releases, newsletters, public service announcements, publicity, promotional brochures, advertising (except for advertising for purchasing), graphics, photography, etc. will be originated, produced, disseminated and/or approved by the Superintendent. All students, clubs, and organizations affiliated with MSDB must comply.

Field Trips/ Community-Based Lessons

Field trips/community-based lessons are an important extension of the curriculum. Students are afforded many opportunities during the school year to travel both in-state and out-of-state. With this privilege comes the responsibility to exhibit expected behaviors while representing MSDB. Trip administrators, teachers, or staff members in charge will communicate expectations. The policies of the student handbook are applicable during all travels. Violators will be referred to the principal. All students will travel in MSDB provided transportation. Students are encouraged to participate in all field trips/community-based lessons sponsored by the school or their teachers.

Progress Communication

To keep parents informed of their child's progress in school, MSDB will provide:

- progress reports at each midterm
- report cards every nine weeks
- teacher/parent conferences
- email and telephone contacts to parents when warranted
- online parental access

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Parental Access to Grades and Information

Online access to student's grades, discipline, and attendance is available through an online portal. Passwords can be obtained from the school principal, counselor, or designee. Information and school news are available through the MSDB website. Please access our school website regularly at <http://www.msdbk12.org> for up-to-date school information.

Parents must provide the school with all current contact information including emergency contacts to ensure student safety. MSDB is striving to "go green." Parents/guardians should provide the school with an email address to receive information via email if one is available.

Emergency Closing and Delays

MSDB rarely close during inclement weather; however, if closure is discussed, the decision will be made by the MSDB Superintendent. If buses from local school districts arrive early to pick up students, MSD and MSB will release them. MSDB will allow parents to bring their student(s) to school if conditions are safe. Students will receive excused absences for inclement weather when their daily buses do not transport, run on a 2-hour delay, or pick up students for early dismissal. Virtual options may be available and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Should there be a need to inform the public of information regarding MSDB and inclement weather, the schools will contact all parents through phone, email, the school's website, and social media.

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Virtual Option Due to Illness Exposure or Outbreaks

Though our goal is to remain on campus the entire year, there may be times when an individual student, small group, or class requires a quarantine. You will receive a notification from the school explaining that your child needs to be quarantined due exposure to an illness. There may also be times when our adult supervision coverage is inadequate to meet student needs. Our goal will always be to avoid temporary closure or quarantine at all costs.

If the virtual option is needed, students will receive mostly live, virtual instruction from a certified teacher, and a classroom assistant may help virtual students through tutoring sessions. There also may be some independent work required when the teacher is not live on the screen. All virtual instruction and learning must total at least 330 minutes through the Learning Management System (LMS) called Google Classroom, which is the equivalent of a full day of in-person learning.

Before a student is allowed to participate in virtual learning due to an exposure or outbreak, he or she must meet the following eligibility criteria, and the student/parent must agree to abide by the policies below:

- Parents and students must sign and return the agreement in Appendix A of this plan that acknowledges receipt and acceptance of, and commitment to, the district policy pertaining to virtual learning.

- Students **MUST** have reliable internet connectivity at home, or parents should request a hotspot. If the hotspot will not work, students will be required to complete learning packets, which include the same assignments that would be given in virtual instruction.
- Students must use their school-issued device for virtual learning.
- Students **MUST** have a designated space for virtual learning that is quiet, private, and free from distractions of other household members and household noises.
- The student **MUST** maintain good attendance and be logged in on time for each class for a total of 330 minutes each day.
- Virtual students will be held to the same code of student conduct requirements as in-person students.
- All students **MUST** attend school in-person on designated assessment days (interims, benchmarks, nine-weeks exams, end-of-course exams, and state assessments).
- All students have assurance of equal access/nondiscrimination while participating in virtual learning.
- All students have the assurance of the delivery of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities including:
 - a. process for conducting meetings pertaining to the evaluation and eligibility of students with disabilities;
 - b. process for monitoring and documenting student progress and services delivered to students with disabilities; and
 - c. process for ongoing communication with families, teachers, and related service providers.
- All students will have assurance of compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) while participating in virtual learning.

Internet hotspots will also be available to families who need them if the hotspot will work as an option for Internet access from home. Parents and students will be required to sign the MSDB Acceptable Use Policy before being issued any device. Students and parents will continue to receive training as needed on proper device usage and the online Learning Management System (LMS) called Google Classroom. Families who still have no Wi-Fi access after all attempts to remedy the issue will be provided learning packets, which include the same assignments that would be given in virtual instruction.

Virtual attendance will be documented as present or absent. If virtual, the student must sign in to Google Classroom and be present to be counted. If students use learning packets due to lack of wi-fi or have temporary wi-fi issues, each school will make one-on-one contact with a student for the day to authenticate their presence and provide daily evidence of engagement. Students must attend class for a minimum of 330 minutes of instruction per day. After five (5) unexcused absences, an attendance officer will be notified.

Homework

The purpose of assigning homework is to reinforce skills learned during class. In addition, parents and dorm parents are notified of weekly assignments. ~~MSDB~~ expects good communication between teachers and parents/dorm parents.

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Textbooks and Other Media - Electronic and Print

Textbooks and other media (e.g., music, CDs, tapes, prints, library books) are the property of **MSDB** and are provided without cost. Students must exercise care in using and maintaining school property. The student who is assigned the responsibility for textbooks or other media must pay for property lost or damaged. In the event **MSDB** property is lost or damaged, the replacement cost will be the responsibility of the student.

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Students are provided extra opportunities to receive needed academic support through participation in tutorial and content mastery sessions. Teachers are also available during their planning period when requested in advance.

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Student Vehicle Policy

The welfare of all students is of utmost concern to the **district**. Vehicle policies reflect our stance that bringing a vehicle to school should be taken seriously and is a privilege, not a right. MSDB considers the primary purpose for having a vehicle on campus to facilitate visits to and from home. The school also recognizes that there may be other occasions for a student's use of a personal vehicle. To accommodate these occasions, MSDB has developed the Vehicle Permission Form. This form must be completed for all students in possession of a Driver's License even if you do not expect to ever bring a car to campus. The Vehicle Permission Form provides parents with the forum to identify their student's limits. Parents may further restrict those limits or if needed, change the information on the form at any time during the school year by notifying the school office or residence hall office in writing. The school reserves final authority to restrict or deny use of the student's vehicle. Motorcycles are strictly prohibited.

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Students shall immediately and completely register any vehicle brought to campus. Complete registration is:

- filling out a registration card and
- providing proof of insurance (copy of card)

Failure to immediately and completely register any vehicle brought to campus or update any changes in the registration may result in **consequences up to** thirty (30) school days or the termination of vehicle privileges for the remainder of the school year if the vehicle is not registered. The student assumes responsibility for accurate, complete, and timely communication pertaining to the vehicle.

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Student cars are required to be in the designated MSDB parking area. Students are expected to comply with all rules, policies, and guidelines **and failure to abide by vehicle regulations may result in the loss of the right to bring a vehicle to school, or other disciplinary action**. Vehicle privileges may be withdrawn by **MSDB** administration if the school considers a student's operation of a vehicle to be a danger to self or others, if the vehicle is improperly registered or parked, or if its operation is a detriment to school order.

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An **Administrator** school official may search any vehicle owned or operated by a student if he or she has reasonable suspicion that there may be a violation of the school's printed regulations and/or Mississippi law. The parent or legal guardian of the **MSDB** student assumes full legal and financial responsibility in matters of their vehicle. The risks involved are those of the owner and operator, not **MSDB**.

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All students, whether drivers or passengers, need to keep in mind these vehicle policies:

- no student shall drive another student's vehicle,
- no student shall drive a vehicle without written (i.e., sign-out) permission from a director or **district** administrator (including moving a vehicle from one parking lot to another),
- no student shall ride in a personal vehicle with another student without written consent from both parents/guardians,
- vehicles should be considered off-limits in the absence of written or verbal permission from an MSD or MSB staff member,
- students may not "hang-out" at/in vehicles,
- students, or their guests, may not drive the vehicle of a student or guest,
- students may not drive a staff member's vehicle, and
- students shall demonstrate courtesy and consideration of others including, but not limited to, vehicle stereo volume.

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Vehicle use will be granted based on the information given in the Student Handbook. During the school week (Sunday 7:30 p.m. through Friday 2:00 p.m.) student vehicle use is restricted, and students should not expect to be granted vehicle use.

INSTRUCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS, POLICIES, AND INFORMATION

Academic Expectations and Honesty

MSDB promotes academic integrity by encouraging all students to demonstrate and exhibit high standards of honesty and respect in their academic work. Violations of this honor code disrupt the community of trust necessary to support high standards of academic achievement. All MSDB students will pledge and work consistently to uphold the standards and values relative to academic integrity.

Students must complete and accept credit only for their own work. Expectations for individual effort may differ among assignments depending on the nature of the work. Group work may or may not be acceptable.

Students are responsible for communicating their need for clarification or help to the teacher. MSDB expects academic honesty from all students. Decisions regarding academic honesty fall to the teacher. To ensure due process, teachers will report suspicion or other indications of dishonesty to the principal/supervisor and the student within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the assignment.

Violations may fall into the following categories:

- cheating on assignments, tests, or other similar evaluations
- plagiarism, violation of copyrights
- other similar types of violations

Incidents of academic dishonesty may include using an open book during a test unless the student has been given permission by the teacher to do so, obtaining unauthorized materials, sharing pertinent information with other students about a test, changing materials on a graded test, sharing answers during a test without permission, presenting another's work as your own, and failure to properly acknowledge sources. Acts of dishonesty may result in disciplinary action.

Daily Schedule

Student school hours are from 8:00 to 3:30 Monday through Thursday and from 8:00 through 1:00 on Friday. This schedule allows residential students from throughout the state to arrive home at a reasonable hour. Commuter students who leave campus via bus or other transportation at the end of the school day will not be permitted to return to

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campus once they have exited school grounds unless they are attending a school event, or arrangements have been made for dormitory stay due to athletic practices and games. **Day students may not be dropped off on campus before 7:30 a.m. and should be picked up by 3:35 p.m.**

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| Monday - Thursday (47-minute periods; 96-minute blocks) | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| Time | Period | Block |
| 8:00-8:47 | 1 | A |
| 8:50-9:37 | 2 | |
| 9:37-9:47 | break | |
| 9:50-10:37 | 3 | B |
| 10:43-11:27 | 4 | |
| 11:30-12:00 | lunch | |
| 12:03-12:50 | 5 | C |
| 12:53-1:40 | 6 | |
| 1:40-1:50 | break | |
| 1:53-2:40 | 7 | D |
| 2:43-3:30 | 8 | |

| Friday (30-minute periods; 63-minute blocks) | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| Time | Period | Block |
| 8:00-8:30 | 1 | A |
| 8:34-9:04 | 2 | |
| 9:04-9:14 | break | |
| 9:18-9:48 | 3 | B |
| 9:52-10:22 | 4 | |
| 10:22-10:32 | lunch | |
| 10:36-11:06 | 5 | C |
| 11:10-11:40 | 6 | |
| 11:40-12:10 | break | |
| 12:14-12:34 | 7 | D |
| 12:38-1:08 | 8 | |

Expanded Core Curriculum (MSB only)

Students at MSB receive training on the skills listed in the Expanded Core Curriculum. Many of these core skills require direct, sequential instruction in areas that sighted students pick up casually and incidentally:

1. Compensatory academic skills - adaptations necessary for reading and writing or for other means of communication.
2. Orientation and mobility - including independent travel in residential and business areas and the use of public transportation.
3. Social interaction skills - socially appropriate behavior skills leading to successful lives.
4. Self-determination skills - skills and beliefs to pursue personal goals and self-manage one's life successfully, understanding one's strengths and limitations.
5. Independent living skills - personal hygiene, food preparation, money management, time monitoring, and organization of personal spaces.
6. Recreation and leisure skills - a repertoire of enjoyable individual and team activities that carry into adult lives.

7. Career education - knowledge of the world of work, exploration of individual strengths and interests, and the chance to learn marketable skills.
8. Assistive technology - insurance of equal access to print and internet information, feedback to teachers and others, and storage of personal data for easy retrieval.
9. Visual (and other sensory) efficiency skills - instruction in the use of functional vision using specialized techniques and low vision aids, as well as the use of residual hearing and other senses.

Elementary School: Grades PK-5

Students in Pre-K through the fifth grade have an opportunity to access the MS College and Career Readiness Standards in all content areas. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is provided for every child. Support services including speech therapy, audiological services, psychometric services, counseling, occupational/physical therapy, Braille instruction, assistive technology, orientation and mobility, are available based on assessment and the IEP. Appropriate accommodations and modifications are provided to support the student's access to and success with the curriculum.

At MSD, exposure to communication is important at all ages but is critical during the elementary years. It is our goal that communication includes American Sign Language (ASL), both written and spoken English, as well as the newest means of communication through technology. Staff members, deaf and hearing, work together to provide both ASL and English role models as we strive to have our students become bilingual. The students will acquire competency in both languages.

Secondary Program: Grade 6-12

Students in middle (grades 6-8) are provided opportunities to obtain an appropriate education based on the individual student's abilities and interests. Students receive instruction on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness State Standards in all content areas. This ensures that each student is presented with experiences to develop skills and attitudes needed in preparation for transition into success in post-secondary education and adult life.

Mississippi High School Diploma

Students and parents should refer to high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements. Pursuit of classes to enhance a college or university major is suggested. MSD students must

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MSD and MSB preschool programs follow early childhood education requirements set forth by the State of Mississippi. MSD incorporates American Sign Language/English strategies and ideals. The program provides an intensive language-rich and listening environment where children learn through active hands-on experiences.

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select, and successfully complete courses required by the Mississippi Board of Education and pass applicable state assessments.

Mississippi Diploma Options

Information about Mississippi Graduation Requirements can be found here:

<https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/diploma>

Mississippi students now can make their high school diploma more valuable. Starting in 2018-19, all 9th graders will choose whether they want to work toward a Traditional Diploma, or take additional classes to earn an academic, distinguished academic or career and technical education endorsement.

Each diploma option will prepare students to be successful after graduation, whether that be in the workforce, a career and technical training program, or college. Also, beginning with incoming 9th graders in 2018-19, students who earn an academic or distinguished academic diploma endorsement from a public high school will be accepted into any of the state's public universities.

Students are encouraged to talk with their school counselor to learn more about Mississippi's Traditional high school diploma and opportunities to earn endorsements.

Traditional Diploma

- Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology or Computer Science, College and Career Readiness, Health, Art, Physical Education, and electives.
- Local school districts may add graduation requirements to the state requirements.

Traditional Diploma + Career and Technical Education (CTE) Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Earn four credits from the same CTE program
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average
- Score at silver level on ACT WorkKeys
- Successfully complete a dual credit course, a work-based learning experience or earn a national credential

Traditional Diploma + Academic Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Score at least 17 on ACT English section
- Score at least 19 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average
- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a C in the advanced course

Traditional Diploma + Distinguished Academic Endorsement

- Earn 28 credits
- Score at least 18 on ACT English section
- Score at least 22 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 3.0 grade point average
- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a B in the advanced course

Alternate Diploma

Mississippi public schools offer an alternate course of study for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. This course of study leads to the Alternate Diploma, which recognizes that a student has completed high school. The alternate Diploma is not equivalent to a Traditional Diploma and is not recognized by postsecondary entities that require a standard high school diploma.

The Life Skills Program is intended for students who have visual impairments combined with other disabilities, such as significant developmental and communication delays or dual sensory impairments. It is designed for students who learn best within a structured routine. With input from parents, the educational team and the local school district, developmental skills and functional activities are identified as areas of need. These are then taught in an integrated manner within the context of the daily routines. Transition planning with representatives from the student's community and local agencies prepare them for integration into their home school vocational/transition program or into future settings in which they may live and work.

Statewide Assessments

Third Grade Summative Assessment

The Literacy Based Promotion Act, Miss. Code Ann. Sections 37-177-1, et. seq, calls for students scoring at the lowest two achievement levels in reading on the established state assessment for third grade to not be promoted to fourth grade. The third-grade state reading assessment is the required End of Year statewide assessment, MAAP. Results from the April assessment will be used to address specific reading deficiencies of students who do not achieve a passing score. Two retest opportunities in mid-May and late July will be provided to students to support students in earning promotion to fourth grade.

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)

(Questar Grades 3-8, Algebra I, English II) – Customized criterion-referenced language arts and mathematics tests that are fully aligned with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards; Performance Based Assessment (PBA) format that includes multiple-choice, both short and extended responses and an essay-writing component. Algebra I and English II assessments are required for students earning a high school diploma. Administered during an online window in mid-April to mid-May. MAAP-SCI (Grades 5 & 8) - Customized criterion-referenced science assessments that are fully aligned with the 2018 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Science Administered during an

online window in mid-April to mid-May. MAAP-EOC (Grades 8-11) – Customized criterion-referenced assessments in Biology I and U.S. History that are fully aligned with Mississippi science (2018) and history (2011) Frameworks. MSDB students are required to participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) with appropriate accommodations and modifications outlined in their IEP.

MAAP-SCI (Grades 5 & 8)

Customized criterion-referenced science assessments that are fully aligned with the 2018 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Science. Results are used for school and district accountability purposes as well as to determine individual student progress. Administered during an online window in mid-April to mid-May.

MAAP-End of Course (EOC) (Grades 8-11)

Customized criterion-referenced assessments in Biology I that are fully aligned with Mississippi science (2018) Frameworks. Results are utilized for school and district accountability purposes as well as a graduation requirement for students earning a high school diploma. Primary administration is typically scheduled online for mid-April to mid-May with retests occurring in December and April/May.

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Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A)

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A) is a computer-based assessment for a student with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate. These alternate assessments, just like the general assessments, must be aligned to academic content standards that apply in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school and in science in at least one grade in each 3-5, 6-8 and high school grade ranges.

Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (Grades Pre-K & K) & MKAS2 (Grades K-3)

Baseline assessment to inform parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with a common understanding of what children know and can do upon entering school. Results will be used to deploy resources and instructional support for students from birth to third grade. Administered during a pre-test window in August/September and a post-test window of April/May.

ACT & ACT WorkKeys

The ACT assessment is a curriculum- and standards-based educational planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college. The ACT is administered to all students classified as eleventh grade students during the academic year. Ungraded students whose birthdays link them to the cohort of students identified as eleventh grade students will also be included.

In lieu of the performance requirements established in Sections 25.3, and 25.4, a student may obtain a Silver level or higher National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys assessment and successfully complete an industry certification or career pathway recognized by the

Mississippi Department of Education. A student who achieves a Gold or Platinum level National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys does not have to meet the additional requirement of successful completion of an industry certification or career pathway.

LAS Links (Grades K-12)

English language proficiency assessment administered to students who have been officially identified as English learners (ELs). This assessment is administered annually to monitor English learners' progress in acquiring academic English. Academic language is defined as the language required to succeed in school that includes deep understanding of content and communication of that language in the classroom environment. These understandings revolve around specific criteria related to dialogue, sentence, and word/phrase levels of language. Results are utilized for school and district accountability purposes as well as to determine individual student progress. Administered during the month of March.

Grading Policy

MSDB will adhere to the following policy for determining and reporting grades or progress for students with disabilities:

- The grading system utilized is a 10-point grading scale.

| | | |
|---|----------|-----|
| A | 90-100 | 4.0 |
| B | 80-89 | 3.0 |
| C | 70-79 | 2.0 |
| D | 60-69 | 1.0 |
| F | 59-below | 0 |
- Grades given will be based on the mastery of Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards and objectives/benchmarks outlined on the IEP using the 10-point grading system. The student's progress report and report card will reflect these grades. At the end of each nine (9) weeks (or more often as outlined on the IEP), the Report of Progress for each instructional goal and short-term instructional objective/benchmark outlined in the IEP will also be completed and forwarded to the parent(s).
- Any student enrolled in a traditional diploma course of study who does not meet course requirements, even though accommodations and modifications have been implemented in accordance with the student's IEP, may receive a failing grade. If it is obvious, however, that the student with a disability cannot function appropriately in the outlined course of study, the student's IEP should be revised.
- Alternate Curriculum - Grades will be based on mastery of the Mississippi Extended Curriculum outlined in the Individualized Education Program. The student may be assigned to a higher grade based on age appropriateness without completing all objectives as outlined on the IEP. MSD and MSB students in the alternate curriculum starting at the ninth grade will be earning credits toward an alternate diploma (not equivalent to a traditional diploma) as opposed to a traditional diploma if the student meets the objectives as outlined on the student's IEP and attendance requirements

according to MSDB student handbook. Carnegie units will be earned as outlined in the Mississippi Diploma Options-Alternate Diploma requirements for Mississippi Extended Curriculum.

- Written reports of student progress will be sent home to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of each nine-week period grading and each semester grading period. The parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for checking the report card carefully and contacting the school with questions. If a student has a failing grade, a parent/student/teacher conference will be scheduled.
- The lowest passing grade is a 60. The grading policies for each class are determined by the teacher and are communicated to the student through syllabi or through instructor policy and are distributed at the beginning of each semester or year. Progress reports, phone calls, and other methods of communicating with parents will provide any additional reports that evaluate each student on related issues such as attitude, completion of projects, and homework.

Incomplete Grades

Students with excused absences that have an incomplete at the end of any grading period will have one week to complete the work. If the work is not completed, the teacher will assign the student an "F" for the assignment. Under special circumstances, a student may petition the teacher and the principal for more time; granting extensions will be left to the discretion of the guidance counselor and approved by the principal.

Grade Challenges

The faculty maintains all grades for students. If a student disagrees with an assigned final grade, the student must request a meeting with the teacher. If a student believes that the grade is in error or demonstrably inconsistent with the teacher's grading policy, then the student may file a letter explaining the challenge of the grade to the principal indicating the steps the student has taken up to this point.

After review, the principal will meet, either jointly or separately, with the teacher and the student, to make a final determination.

Academic Honors

At the end of each nine-week grading period, the following awards will be given:

- Superintendent's List: Students receiving all As on the report card (4.0)
- Principal's List: Students receiving all As and Bs on the report card (3.5-3.99)
- Honor Roll: Students receiving A's and Bs on the report card (3.0-3.49)
- Improvement: Students improving at least one letter grade in a subject without dropping a letter in any other subjects
- Perfect Attendance: Students who have not missed a day during the nine-week period

The following awards will be given at the end of the school year:

- Valedictorian: Student who ranks highest in the graduating class Salutatorian: Student who ranks second highest in the graduating class High Honors: Graduating seniors with a GPA of 3.75 - 4.0
- Honors: Graduating seniors with a GPA of 3.50 - 3.74

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- Perfect Attendance: Students who have not missed a day during the year
- Highest Average Subject Awards: Students having the highest average in a course (minimum score is 90)

Promotion and Retention

The policy allows students to progress through grades based on their mastery of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness standards, applicable to those pursuing a Traditional Diploma. Promotion or retention will be based on the following criteria:

- Students must demonstrate mastery of the required course content, defined as achieving at least sixty percent (60%) proficiency in subjects as per the MSDB grading policy.
- The required content for each grade incorporates the objectives from the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards and offered specialized curricula designed for the school's unique student population.
- Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities must meet the standards of a modified curriculum, individually developed by an IEP (Individualized Education Program) committee, according to their transition plan.
- Students in grade 3 earn a "met LBPA requirement" level 3 or above on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program 3rd grade assessment, Good Cause Exemption with two years of documented intensive interventions, or a state-approved alternate assessment.

Promotion is strictly based on academic achievement or demonstrated mastery of the course content, aligned with the applicable standards.

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ATHLETICS

The district promotes equality in all aspects of its athletic programs, including equal access to athletics, and fair and just treatment within both the curricular and extracurricular program. Roster sizes for sports may need to be limited as a matter of practicality. This is to ensure team members receive adequate attention for training, supervision, and preparation for competitions and that adequate resources including transportation are in place to ensure a quality experience. Effort will be made to fairly evaluate all candidates for teams.

The district ensures that students, parents, and alumni, and others understand the expectations of sportsmanship, civility, and self-control at athletic practices and contests, much as those same characteristics are required within the more traditional academic environment. The MSDB Athletic Handbook must be reviewed and signed by students and parents each school year.

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The ~~district~~ is committed to the safety, physical and emotional health of participants in the athletic program. The ~~district~~ demonstrates this commitment by ensuring that appropriate safety precautions are in place for all ~~athletics~~ activities. Furthermore, the ~~district~~ has appropriate response safeguards in place if a student is injured. MSDB continually ensures that coaches have appropriate training.

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The ~~district~~ stands firmly in opposition to performance-enhancing drugs. The ~~district~~ and its athletic program do not tolerate any form of hazing, bullying or other inappropriate behaviors.

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Eligibility

To be eligible to participate students must:

- maintain a current physical (less than one (1) year old throughout all seasons they participate in) on file in the office prior to participation.
- ~~remain~~ in good academic standing per the Parent/Student Handbook. Therefore, students must maintain an overall "C" average.
- abide by individual eligibility requirements as outlined by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

Deleted: <#> demonstrate satisfactory progress towards mastering MS College and Career Readiness Standards and/or IEP competencies or objectives.

MSB also competes as a member of the South-Central Association of Schools for the Blind (SCASB) and students must meet eligibility requirements to compete in athletic and extracurricular activities sponsored by this organization.

Grades for Athletic Eligibility

A student that fails to maintain a "C" average at the end of any nine-week term will be declared ineligible. The student will remain ineligible through the next progress report period. At that time, should the student re-establish a "C" average then athletic eligibility will be granted. If the student does not meet the "C" average required for athletic eligibility he/she will remain ineligible until the end of the quarter or until a "C" average is obtained at the next grading interval. The students and parents will be informed of their ineligibility.

Activity Participation after Absence

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities, practices, employment, or after-school functions unless the student attends the last four periods of that school day. Students absent all day due to illness may not attend any extracurricular activity that day. If extenuating school or family circumstances result in a student's failure to be present the required periods, an exception can be made by the MSDB administration.

*See Appendix for Athletic Handbook.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES

Attendance

The State of Mississippi, as expressed by the Compulsory School Attendance Statute, has established responsible attendance habits as a priority for all Mississippi students. A compulsory-school-age child is defined by Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(2)(f). Parents should support the school by having their student arrive to school on time.

When a compulsory age student has accumulated five unexcused absences, the school shall report the absences to the appropriate school attendance officer in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(6).

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(4), a compulsory-school-age child has an absence that is more than thirty-seven percent (37%) of the instructional day must be considered absent the entire school day.

Parents are expected to notify the front office of their child's absence the day of the absence. If a child does not attend school due to an illness, surgery, or mental or physical incapacity, the school will require an excuse signed by a doctor.

Tardies

A student is tardy if they arrive at any time after the instructional day begins. Any student who is tardy must report to the office before going to class. Tardiness due to personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family or other similar emergencies will be excused if a written note or telephone call from the student's parent/guardian is presented at the time of arrival. All notes must contain the date, reason, time, and phone number where parent/guardian can be reached during regular school hours.

Oversleeping, clock failure, missed rides and failure of a vehicle will not be reasons for excused tardiness. Any student with a medical reason, which due to its nature may cause a student to be tardy from time to time, shall be excused if a doctor has notified the school in advance. The notice will be in writing. Any student who is tardy must report to the office before going to class. **When a student is tardy, the parent or guardian must come inside the school office to sign the student in. A student is considered absent if he/she checks in after 11:20am.**

To Class (Middle School and High School)

Students are tardy when they enter the classroom at any time after the tardy bell rings. Students are allowed time to pass from one class to the next and should not be tardy except in cases of emergency. If an emergency should arise, the student should get admittance from the teacher who knows about the emergency. In the event a student needs more than the regular time, they should report to their class first and obtain permission from the teacher. If a student finds it necessary to be late for class, the student must check with their teacher or the school office first. If the student is sick, they will report to an administrator in the school office. Any student missing ten (10) minutes of class after the tardy bell rings will be considered truant or skipping on campus.

Deleted: The student's teacher will excuse or un-excuse tardiness to class except for the first block.

Consequences of Tardiness to Class and School

- 1st Unexcused Tardy: A warning issued by the teacher.
- 2nd Unexcused Tardy: A warning issued by the administration.
- 3rd Unexcused Tardy: Parent contact and one (1) day In School ~~Detention (ISD)~~.
- 4th Unexcused Tardy: Two (2) days In School ~~Detention (ISD)~~.
- 5th Unexcused Tardy: Parent conference required and One (1) day Out of School Suspension (OSS). Students may be suspended from athletic practices, events, extracurricular activities or games.
- Any tardiness beyond 5 will be considered a Level 2 ~~offense~~ and will warrant disciplinary action under Level 2 by administration

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All tardies will reset at the beginning of each nine (9) weeks.

Excessive Absences

Frequent and prolonged absences are in violation of the Compulsory School Attendance Statute. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a change of placement, unearned credit, or retention as determined by the IEP Committee. The local education agency will be notified of excessive absences.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is an absence from school for all day(s) or for any number of periods of the day under circumstances granted by law or recognized by the school. These include:

- death in the immediate family
- religious observances
- college visitation
- serving as a legislative page or assignment at an election poll
- participation in official organized events sponsored by the 4-H or Future Farmers of America
- transportation canceled due to weather
- weather emergency observances
- verified court appearances
- authorized school activity with prior approval of the Superintendent or designee
- illness or injury that prevents the student from being physically able to attend school

A complete list of all excused absences may be found at Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13- 91(4).

~~The parent/guardian should inform the school in writing at least two days prior to the absence. No excused pre-arranged absences will be granted during state assessments.~~

Deleted: The principal or superintendent must approve pre-arranged absences.

MSDB encourages good medical and dental care for students. If appointments must occur during the school day, it is recommended that the appointment times be rotated to avoid missing the same class repeatedly.

Students may have up to two (2) excused parental absences per nine weeks grading period. Parents must notify the office in writing no later than the day the student returns for the absence to be considered a parental excuse. All other absences require medical or legal documentation to be submitted to the office on the day the student returns to school for the absence to be considered excused.

Make-Up Work for Absences

Students ~~who are absent~~ may make up tests, class work, exams, lab work, or assignments without penalty. Students must ~~have the opportunity to make-up work upon return to class following the absence.~~

~~Failure to complete and turn in assignments within the stipulated time shall result in a grade of zero for the assignment.~~

In the event of an extended illness or absence, teachers will be cooperative in providing make-up opportunities. The ultimate responsibility for obtaining and returning completed make-up work rests with the student.

Activity Participation after Absence

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities, practices, employment, or after-school functions unless the student attends the last four periods of that school day. Students absent all day due to illness may not attend any extracurricular activity that day. If extenuating school or family circumstances result in a student's failure to be present the required periods, an exception can be made by the MSDB administration.

Check-outs

While checking out of school is sometimes necessary, the school discourages check-out as much as possible. Please make an attempt to schedule doctor's appointments after the school day has ended. If check-outs are necessary, they should be done at the end of a block. Calling students to come to the office is disruptive to the instructional environment. No student will be allowed to check out after 2:30 p.m. on Monday-Thursday and 12:30 on Friday unless the principal or his/her designee determines there is an emergency. No student shall leave school without permission from a principal or his designee. Students shall be allowed to check out of school for personal illness or a bona-fide emergency. Students will only be released to the parent or other guardian on file in the office.

Parents or those checking out a student must come to the office, show ID, and sign the student out. No student will be released without a signature and ID.

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Deleted: The amount of time provided for make-up work to be completed and turned in for credit will be for each day of an absence, the student has one (1) day in which to complete the make-up work. For example: A student has three days to complete make-up work for a three-day absence.

Deleted: Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the principal, and/or guidance counselor to give students extended time if needed.

Deleted: Should the student need to be released to someone other than those on file, the principal will make that determination.

DISCIPLINE

The Student Code of Conduct outlines expectations for student behavior, providing a framework for interactions and decision-making in both academic and residential settings. This code defines what is considered appropriate conduct and serves to inform students, parents, faculty, and staff. It aims to foster an environment conducive to honesty, integrity, service, and lifelong learning.

MSDB expects students to uphold these standards at all times, whether in class, during field trips, at extracurricular activities, or any other time they represent the school or are under its supervision.

Classroom misbehavior, which includes disrespect, disruptions, failing or refusing to follow directions, or falling asleep in class, is not tolerated. Teachers hold the primary authority in managing the classroom and addressing behavioral issues. Should a situation arise that exceeds what a teacher can manage, it will be escalated to the principal.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind is governed by the State Board of Education and recognizes the teacher as the authority in classroom. Such recognition shall include the right of the teacher to remove from the classroom any student who, in the professional judgment of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment, to the office of the principal or designee.

The principal or designee shall determine the proper placement for the student, who may not be returned to the classroom until a conference of some kind has been held with the parent, guardian, or custodian during which the disrupting behavior is discussed, and agreements are reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. If the principal does not approve of the determination of the teacher to remove the student from the classroom, the student may not be removed from the classroom, and the principal can provide justification for their disapproval to the teacher.

Deleted: When a student is checked out, a note must be submitted when the student returns to school. In order for the check-out to be excused, it must meet the guidelines for excused absences. Early check-outs are strongly discouraged. School based incentives will be given to students who do not have unexcused tardies or check-outs during the nine weeks.

Students are permitted to leave campus only with their parent/guardian or individuals specified by the parent/guardian during registration. MSDB acknowledges that circumstances may arise where a student wishes to leave with another student.

For dormitory students, written notice must be provided to the office on Monday. For day students, the office must receive the note on the preceding day. In the case of day students, parents must pick up both students as they will not be allowed to use district-sponsored transportation.

The written notice can be in the form of an email or handwritten note and must include the names of both the departing and receiving students. Additionally, it should include a valid phone number for verification and authentication purposes.

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A student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities may be subject to discipline actions.

School officials, the reporting teacher, and the student's parent will develop a behavior modification plan for a student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities for a second time during the school year.

The superintendent, principal, or any district administrator may discipline a student for misconduct. Each administrator has the authority to determine the appropriate disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, out of school suspension, conferencing with students, and in some cases, expulsion.

Students are subject to discipline during any time that they are either under or subject to the jurisdiction of MSDB, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, at any place where an athletic contest or event is taking place, during the course of any field trip, during the course of any trip or activity sponsored or supervised by MSDB, while under the supervision or direction of any teacher, principal, or other authority of MSDB, or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or poses a threat to the safety of the student or others. School administrators may remove students from participation in school related activities for disciplinary reasons. Parents will be notified of disciplinary actions regarding their student.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind do not allow corporal punishment of any student.

Respect for Persons, Property, and Privacy

Students are expected to be fully and always respectful of other people, including faculty, staff, other students, and guests on campus. Examples of inappropriate behavior that might violate this expectation include:

1. Use of language not deemed respectful or in good taste.
2. Engaging in inappropriate physical contact or improper demonstrations of affection or attraction.
3. Any form of harassment, hazing, or bullying, whether verbal or nonverbal.
4. Taking any property without the owner's express consent is considered theft. This policy includes the access to contents of backpacks or bags without specific permission to do so. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
5. Any form of vandalism or abuse of the school's or another's personal property is unacceptable. Trespassing on property not owned by the school is also a violation of this standard. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
6. Violating any federal, state, or local laws.
7. Engaging in behavior which jeopardizes the welfare or good nature of the school or any members of the school community.
8. Students should be aware that certain activities outside of school hours or off school property may result in loss of school privileges or other disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Examples of such outside conduct are violations of laws; underage purchase of alcohol; drug use, sale or possession; or use or misuse of digital content which does or could compromise the welfare of any member of the school community or the reputation or function for the school.

9. Students are expected to always remain on campus except when leaving campus is scheduled, accompanied by staff, or approved by the school.
10. All students must respect the absolute privacy of each other's residential rooms and all areas of campus.

Items Prohibited on School Property

Possession of the following items on school property, a school bus, or at a school-related activity is prohibited:

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Alcoholic beverages | Bandanas, sweat bands | Toy weapons |
| Ammunition | Cigarette lighters | Knives |
| Stolen property | Firearms | Fireworks |
| Gambling paraphernalia | Gang paraphernalia | Cap Guns |
| Gun jewelry | Illegal drugs | Matches |
| Noise making devices | Drug paraphernalia | Laser lights |
| Mace | Incendiary materials | Tobacco |
| Paint guns | Personal defense spray | Water pistols |
| Pornographic materials | Silly bands | Slingshots |
| Stink bombs | e-cigarettes | |

Contraband property confiscated by school officials will be returned only to the parent or legal guardian. School personnel will not be held responsible for prohibited items which have been confiscated.

Note: Some of these items such as noise-making devices may be permitted for special events such as pep-rallies and carnivals. In such events, the principal and/or residential director have the authority to allow such items.

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Drugs and Alcohol

Students are absolutely prohibited from carrying, possessing in any manner, using or selling alcoholic beverages, morphine, marijuana, medical marijuana, cocaine, opium, heroin or their derivatives or compounds, drugs commonly called LSD, "pep" pills, tranquilizers, or any other narcotic drug, barbiturate, substance ingredient or compound which, when taken orally, intravenously, inhaled or in any other manner, may cause the person to be under the influence thereof or any other controlled substance regulated by law.

The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is under the supervision and direction of such physician. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all students during all of the period of time that they are under and subject to the jurisdiction of this school district, while participating in or going to or from any

school-related activity, while under the supervision and direction of any teacher, principal or other

authority of this school district or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or pose a threat to the safety of the student or others.

Any student violating any of the provisions of this policy shall be automatically suspended and recommended for expulsion by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. The suspension shall be effective immediately subject to the procedures of due process.

This policy is for the discipline and protection of the students of this school district and their general welfare. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to avoid any prosecution under any pertinent criminal statute of the State of Mississippi.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE Sections 37-11-18; 41-29-101 et seq.; 97-32-27 thru 97- 32-29

Illegal Purchase, Use, or Possession of Tobacco and/or Tobacco Products

The campus of MSDB is a tobacco-free environment. Cigarettes and other tobacco products are not allowed. Smoking, possession, or use of tobacco products are prohibited by students and adults (including visitors) on campus and at school related activities. While under the patronage of MSD and MSB, the same drug-free policies exist for all MSDB administration, faculty, staff, and students. Possession constitutes a violation and will be referred to administration as a Level Three violation.

In addition to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, MSDB prohibits the following items from campus: vapor cigarettes, electronic cigarettes/cigars/pipes, and accessories (e.g., pipes, holders, rolling papers, lighters, matches are not allowed). Any natural herbs, seeds, or plants that are used for altering the state of mind in students are strictly prohibited. Items that are used outside of their intended purpose to alter the state of mind in students are considered prohibited items. Students will be subject to disciplinary action accordingly.

Notification of Law Enforcement Officials

Commission of any of the following misconduct shall result in notification of law enforcement officials by the principal or his/her designee:

- aggravated assault resulting in serious physical injury
- sexual assault/battery
- sexual offense
- rape
- indecent liberties with a minor
- assault involving use of a weapon
- possession of a firearm in violation of the law
- possession or use of a weapon in violation of the law
- possession, sale, or use of any controlled substance in violation of the law
- simple assault upon any school employee
- murder
- other violent acts (action resulting in death or physical harm or attempt to cause death or physical harm to another) or threats of violent acts

The principal making the report or participating in any judicial proceeding resulting thereof, shall be presumed to be acting in good faith and, as such, shall be immune from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Zero Tolerance Policy

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18, MSDB has a zero-tolerance policy for the possession and/or use of firearms on any school property or at any school function or school-related activity. Any student found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to expulsion.

Any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm, or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17, shall be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled; provided, however, that the superintendent of the school shall be authorized to modify the period for such expulsion on a case-by-case basis. Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the local school board.

If a student has committed an infraction where Zero Tolerance applies, only the IEP Committee may determine the placement of a special education student in the alternative setting. Should the parents disagree with the placement decision, due process procedures afforded under IDEA will be followed. The IEP Committee will also determine if the student has met the goals outlined on the IEP, which would allow the student to return to an appropriate placement other than the alternative setting.

Bullying or Harassing Behavior Prohibited in Schools Prohibition

No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students. MSDB prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students and school employees. MSDB will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic* or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that, takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that: places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property; or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. For the purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Conduct described in subsection (1) is considered bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

*Bullying or harassing behavior includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying or harassing behavior that occurs electronically.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.

No person shall engage in any act of retaliation or reprisal against a victim, witness, or any person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying.

Procedures for Reporting, Investigating, and Addressing Bullying or Harassing Behavior

A student who feels he or she has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or a student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to a school employee, who shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal. ~~Students should report bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee promptly.~~

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Deleted: but no later than five (5) working days after the alleged incident(s) occurred.

Reports should include: the name of the reporting person*, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name(s) of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the name(s) of any witness(es), the name(s) of the alleged bully, and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the report. *If a student chooses to anonymously report bullying or harassing behavior, the school's ability to act based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal and/or Superintendent. Reports against the Principal shall immediately be made in writing to the Superintendent, and reports against the Superintendent shall immediately be made in writing to the Chief Academic Officer at the Mississippi Department of Education. The school administration will investigate reported incidents of bullying within five (5) working days of receiving the report.

The school administration will speak with the alleged victim and alleged bully separately. Students may submit evidence for the school administration to review and a list of witnesses for the school administration to speak with. Students should preserve evidence of bullying/cyberbullying and/or harassing behavior.

All teachers, employees, volunteers, and students shall fully cooperate with the investigating and answer truthfully all inquiries relative thereto.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration will immediately notify the alleged victim and alleged bully regarding the outcome of the investigation.

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Deleted: and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted. The school administration will provide notice of an incident of bullying and the outcome of the investigation and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted, within a reasonable amount of time to a parent or guardian of the victim and a parent or guardian of the bully not to exceed five (5) working days after the completion of the investigation....

MSDB recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassment. "Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee and student's use of

reasonable self-defense. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the basis that that student's use of reasonable self-defense was in response to the bullying.

Discipline for bullying of a student with disabilities shall comply with the applicable requirements under federal law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.).

Available counseling options for a student who is a victim of bullying or a witness to bullying or a student who engages in bullying include:

- School/District Counseling
- Conflict Resolution Training
- Anger Management Training
- Problem Solving Skills Training (proactive, constructive, relationship building)
- Social Skills Training.

Support and intervention in response to bullying may be provided by MSD~~B~~ through the assistance of the any of the following agencies:

- Mississippi Department of Education
- Mississippi Department of Health
- Mississippi Department of Human Services - Juvenile Services Department
- Community/Family Public or private community-based mental health services
- Faith-based services
- Law enforcement agencies

The procedure for reporting bullying will also be posted on the school's website. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited and may warrant disciplinary action. Any perceived criminal conduct will be immediately reported to law enforcement. Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-11-67 and 37-11-69 (Amended 7/2017)

Disciplinary Procedures

MSDB is committed to providing an environment where students may live and learn safely. Success is dependent upon the full cooperation of every member of the school's community. This includes school staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s) who understand their responsibilities to others and are mindful of laws, rules, and policies that govern student behavior.

Disciplinary measures employed by ~~MSDB~~ are intended to assist students to develop skills necessary for effective problem solving, develop positive self-images, learn how to have positive

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relationships with others, respect personal and property rights of others, understand and appreciate other cultures, ideas, and opinions, and develop a sense of responsibility for one's actions and an awareness of their possible consequences. MSD~~B~~ will follow relevant Federal and State statutes and regulations to convene IEP Committees.

~~MSDB~~ admits students with various backgrounds, experiences, and educational expectations. In a community of diverse learners, standards of behavior ensure that all students live in a safe environment conducive to learning and free from disruptions that impede the freedom to develop and grow as productive individuals in society. All students shall conduct themselves in a positive manner, attend classes, complete assignments on time, abide by the Student Code of Conduct, and respect the rights and freedoms of others.

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MSD and MSB students shall demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respect in all school related and sponsored activities, whether on or off the campus.

Students must conduct themselves appropriately in the ~~cafeteria~~. Shirts and shoes are required, and hats must be removed. Listening to radios, etc., and playing musical instruments is not permitted. Throwing food, leaving one's tray, or in any way making a mess for others to clean up will result in disciplinary action.

Deleted: dining room

Staff ~~will follow the policy~~ in relation to assign one or more consequences regarding an incident. When an incident occurs involving multiple violations on the same level, staff may count each violation separately or consider the incident as one violation for determining the consequence(s). However, when an incident involves multiple violations on different levels, the most severe consequence of the higher level, or consequences based on the frequency of the offense on the lower level, will apply. At the discretion of the administration, a senior who commits a serious violation (Level II or III) during the weeks prior to the end of the school year may be dismissed or may not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

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Level 1 Violations

Level 1 violations are handled by the teacher in the classroom with individual classroom management plans. If any teacher or other school employee observes a student committing a Level 1 Violation outside the classroom or in the cafeteria or gym, then the staff member should approach the student and ask the student to correct the misbehavior.

Level 1 violations include the following:

1. Consuming of food or drink in the classroom (except for special circumstances). Food and drink should only be carried into the building in a legitimate book bag or lunchbox.
2. Intentional littering
3. Inappropriate displays of affection
4. Making excessive noise
 - a. Talking in class
5. Sleeping in class
6. Failure to follow classroom rules
7. Refusal to do work

Deleted: If the student refuses, then the student should be referred to the office with an Office Discipline Referral Form....

8. Disruption of learning
9. Violation of the grooming rules
10. Tardies
 - a. First tardy
 - b. Second tardy
11. Violation of dress code rules

Level 1 Consequences

1st offense: Verbal warning

2nd offense: Notify parent of misbehavior

Level 2 Violations

The following misbehaviors warrant completion of an Office Discipline Referral Form for action as soon as possible.

Level 2 violations include the following:

1. Inappropriate or disrespectful written or verbal comments to students, teachers or staff
2. Skipping class or leaving class without permission
3. Being in an unassigned area; out of area
 - a. Includes tardies (3rd tardy, 4th tardy)
4. Refusal to stop disruption of learning after the teacher has warned the student or has applied disciplinary intervention
5. Continued refusal to complete class assignments
6. Cell phone violation
7. Continued dress code violations
 - a. Third offense and beyond
8. Cheating/plagiarism
 - a. Conveying false information through electronic, written, or verbal means
9. Inconsiderate of others
 - a. Disturbing others, excessive noise, horseplay, running, etc.
 - b. Disruption in school assemblies
10. Disrespect/disregard for authority
 - a. Non-compliance
 - b. Dishonesty
 - c. Refusal to follow directions of school personnel
11. Failure to follow written protocol
 - a. Accidental failure to sign in or out for field trips, community service, etc.
12. Property/equipment misuse
 - a. Misuse and/or unauthorized use of school furniture.
13. Abusive language (slip or unintentional)
 - a. Use of profanity, verbal or written
14. Improper cafeteria conduct

- a. Failure to follow cafeteria or school protocol including failure to clean up after oneself in an appropriate manner; taking utensils, food, drinks, and flatware from the cafeteria; food fights, etc.
- 15. Technology/electronic violation
 - a. Use of electrical appliances other than those designated appropriate for school use
 - b. Refusal to give cell phone, tablet, laptop or other electronic device to a teacher, administrator or staff
 - c. Inappropriate posting, texting, videoing, recording or use of social media during school hours
- 16. Improper physical contact
 - a. Inappropriate public display of affection
- 17. Any Level 1 misbehavior that has been upgraded to Level 2 according to procedure

Level 2 Consequences

1st offense: Conference with student, notification to parents, other possible sanctions

2nd offense: Parent conference, review of student record, referred to administration for intervention plan

3rd offense: Parents notified; sanctions created deemed necessary which may include ISS, possible referral to Level 3 violation

4th offense: Referred to principal/supervisor or designee as a possible Level 3 violation, parent conference required

Level 3 Violations

The following misbehaviors are considered major violations. An administrator or designee should be called for students guilty of such violations for disciplinary actions.

Level 3 violations include the following:

- 1. Leaving assigned areas without permission
 - a. Failure to attend required assemblies and meetings
 - b. Failure to receive staff approval before leaving campus
- 2. Failing to follow safety and security procedures
 - a. Failure to follow evacuation and emergency procedures
 - b. Possession and/or use of burning substances (e.g., candles, incense)
 - c. Compromising hall security (e.g., propping open exit doors, exiting an alarmed door)
 - d. Unauthorized use of keys
 - e. Facilitating the presence of unauthorized persons in the school
- 3. Attendance violation (curfew, tardy, skipping, etc.)
 - a. Unauthorized entry or exit from a room or building
 - b. Deliberate failure to sign in or out
- 4. Inconsiderate of others
 - a. Behavior impeding the day-to-day operation of the school
- 5. Physical aggression
 - a. Fighting
- 6. Defiance/disrespect for authority
 - a. Direct disobedience or insubordination

- b. Lying to judicial court or administration
 - c. Extreme or excessive written, verbal or electronic disrespect or using extreme or excessive profanity or provocative language to teachers or staff members
 - d. Forgery, fraud, submission of false information
- 7. Failure to follow written protocol
 - a. Documenting false information (e.g., signing out under false name, signing out for one destination, and going to another destination)
- 8. Deliberate property/equipment damage
 - a. Acts of minor vandalism
 - b. Actions resulting in defacement of school property (student responsible for restitution)
- 9. Deliberate abusive language
 - a. Lewd gestures, etc.
 - b. Verbal provocation
- 10. Inappropriate display/physical contact
 - a. Physical harassment of a sexual nature, which includes but is not limited to unwelcome touching, pinching, patting or brushing against another person.
- 11. Technology electronic violation
- 12. Gambling or gaming
- 13. Possession of pornographic, lewd, or obscene materials
- 14. Materials encouraging the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- 15. Multiple level 2 violations

Level 3 Consequences

Under routine circumstances, an administrator managing a Level 3 Violation will apply the sequence of disciplinary actions listed below and may have a student arrested. However, depending upon the frequency and seriousness of the student's misconduct, the administrator may advance immediately to any disciplinary step in the procedure.

The normal sequence, depending upon circumstances, is as follows:

- Two (2) days Out of School Suspension (OSS) with parent conference.
- Three (3) days Out of School Suspension with Parent conference.
- Referrals beyond 3rd Office visit will be automatically moved to Level 4 Violations.

Level 4 Violations

The following misbehaviors are not only violations of school policy but also violations of state laws. Any teacher who observes any unlawful activity shall notify an administrator immediately. The administrator shall notify the parents or guardians of the student committing the act and shall suspend the student for three (3) days and in most unlawful activities shall have a student arrested. Furthermore, administrators shall notify the Superintendent of Education or his designee, and then the proper authorities will be notified.

Level 4 violations include the following:

1. Fighting and/or initiating a fight (arrest dependent upon severity). Any fight that involves a group/gang may be recommended for expulsion

- a. Watching and/or boosting a fight may result in the same punishment as those fighting
2. Theft or damage of school/private property
 - a. Vandalism, destruction, or misuse of school property
3. Aggravated or simple assault upon anyone
 - a. Commits a violent act on school property. MS Code §37-11-1.
4. Sexual misconduct
 - a. Indecent exposure, and/or other offenses of an overt sexual nature; sex between or among students, or other prohibited sexual conduct
 - b. Indecent behavior or exposure
 - c. Pornography/using cell phone or other electronic device to produce/post pornography
5. Any action that constitutes a threat to self or others, including assault/battery, molestation, extortion
 - a. Threatening with a play/water gun
 - b. Verbally or maliciously threatening another person
6. Habitually disruptive
7. Bullying, cyberbullying or harassing behavior
 - a. Threats, hate crimes
8. Possession of any instrument defined as a weapon. MS Code §37-11-18
 - a. Statement by student that they are in possession of a weapon (i.e. knife, gun, etc.)
9. Stealing or vandalism
10. Drugs, smoking, and/or alcohol policy violations
 - a. Possession or under the influence of drugs. MS Code §37-11-18
 - b. Unauthorized purchase/possession, irresponsible use of and/or distribution of prescription or over the counter medications and/or inhalants
 - c. Purchase, possession of, distribution of, consumption of, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
11. Computer violations invasive to system or network offenses
12. Violation of municipal, state, or federal laws
 - a. Possession, creation, distribution, or use of fake I.D.
 - b. Compromising campus security and safety, tampering with safety, emergency alarm
 - c. Possession of weapons, including martial arts weapons, breaking, and entering, theft, shoplifting, receiving stolen property
13. Involvement in any gang-related activities. MS Code §37-11-37
14. Possession of explosive devices. MS Code §37-11-18

Level 4 Consequences

All Level 4 violations are immediately **reported** directly to the Superintendent and may include suspension. There is also the possibility of law enforcement involvement.

Deleted: referred

Public Display of Affection

Public displays of affection (PDA), beyond a friendly hug or holding hands, are considered a breach of MSDB expectations and are subject to disciplinary procedures. Listing every behavior that constitutes

PDA is **not possible**. Students must use caution and common sense in relation to appropriate behavior. Being in a "dating" relationship or being of the same gender does not alter the PDA restrictions. The Disciplinary Procedure for failing to follow the MSDB expectation for appropriate behavior will correspond to the gravity of the PDA situation and current disciplinary record.

Deleted: impossible

Gang Activity and Secret Societies

It is unlawful in the State of Mississippi to organize fraternities, sororities, or secret societies in the public high schools. It is also unlawful for a public school to be a member of, belong to, or participate in such organizations, and to solicit student membership in such organizations. Students in violation of this policy are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Schools governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education are committed to maintaining a safe school environment for their students and staff. Students are expected to adhere to the school standards of conduct that promote well-being and support the learning process.

Deleted: Gang activity will not be tolerated in any form.

Gang-related activities in the school, on school property or vehicles, or at school related activities are prohibited. Where gang activity is suspected or confirmed a complaint will be filed in accordance with the "Mississippi Street Gang Act" pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 97-44-1 et seq.

Gang activity, which initiates, promotes, or advocates activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds, or which disrupts the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger and is to be discouraged by school officials. Students displaying interest, involvement, or affiliation with a gang shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be encouraged to seek involvement in authorized school organizations to enhance self-esteem and promote activity that can have a positive impact on the student.

Probation

Probation is a period set by an administrator during which a student is given an opportunity to improve behavior exhibited in prior violations of school policy. The administrator will notify students, parents, and teachers in writing of students placed on probation. This notification could include a contract including future plans and expectations of the student and the way the student must meet the prescribed requirements. The parents, student, faculty, principal or supervisor, Director of Residence Education, and the counselor will receive copies of the signed contract.

Students who fail to **to improve attendance, or to correct behavioral problems during the probationary** term will be evaluated for appropriate actions.

Deleted: make required minimum academic progress,

General Suspension for Ten (10) Days or Less

Suspension is the administrative removal of a student from class attendance at MSD or MSB for a specified period due to violations of school policy. If the student receives an out-of-school suspension, the student may not come to campus **for any reason** for the number of days assigned.

The Principal may suspend a student from MSD or MSB for a period of ten (10) school days or less when it is determined that a student's behavior is detrimental to the good order of the school, and that suspension is an appropriate disciplinary action for a violation of school rules (or frequent violations of school rules).

Deleted: Superintendent or

The procedure for suspending a student is as follows:

MSDB officials will provide the student with a notice of the charge of violation of school discipline and the evidence against them. The notice of the charge may be given orally. The opportunity will be given for the student to hear the charge and evidence and to offer the student an opportunity to respond. This will be the only hearing conducted. If the facts indicate the student's guilt, the Superintendent or Principal will determine the appropriate term of suspension.

Upon notification of the suspension, the student is placed on restriction (in a room specified by the principal/supervisor during the school day) until the actual departure from school to begin the suspension. The suspension may begin immediately. MSDB will inform the parent/guardian(s) of the suspension prior to the student leaving campus.

Within five school days of the informal hearing with the student, MSD or MSB officials will send written notification to the student and parent/guardian(s) specifying the reasons for the suspension.

Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension. Such exclusions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc. A student suspended from school may make up work. To take advantage of this opportunity, the student must comply with the timelines specified in MSDB policies for making up work. Failure to contact teachers and make specific arrangements will waive the right to make up the work.

Upon completion of suspension, a student returning to school must make an appointment with the school official who handled the suspension to discuss returning to school and any additional restrictions that may apply. Parent/Guardian(s) will be requested to consult with the MSDB official.

Emergency Suspension

Emergency Suspension: occurs when the Principal summarily suspends a student for not more than three (3) days prior to completing an investigation for serious student misconduct under circumstances where immediate removal of the student is necessary to restore order, protect persons on the school grounds, protect the student, or protect school property. The school official will meet with the student to briefly explain the purpose of the suspension and allow the student to respond. Parents will be immediately notified of the suspension. The student may be placed under the supervision of security and may not attend any classes. The student must leave school as soon as possible.

Deleted: Superintendent or a designee

During the student's absence, a school official will complete the investigation by the end of the school day following the emergency suspension. The administration will communicate findings to the student by phone and allow the student to respond.

Further disciplinary action will be recommended or taken as needed. If additional suspension is necessary, the Superintendent or a designee may extend the suspension for a period not to exceed a maximum of ten days. A written notification of the reasons for the suspension will be sent to the student and parents within three (3) school days.

Disciplinary Hearing

A disciplinary hearing is the appropriate course of action when a student is alleged to have violated the code of conduct. The purpose of the hearing is to review the incident, examine evidence, and determine appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with school policy. The process ensures due process rights are upheld and that all decisions are made fairly and consistently.

Deleted: Change in Student Placement

Authority of School Personnel

The MSDB school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates the code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than ten (10) school days to the extent such alternatives are applied to children without disabilities and additional removals for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct if those removals do not constitute a change in placement.

Deleted: A change in placement only occurs when there is a serious violation to the code of conduct and (a) the removal is more than 10 consecutive school days; or (b) the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than ten (10) school days in a school year; and considering other factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

Deleted: MSD and MSB

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, in cases where a child:

- carries or possess a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substances, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

An IEP Team must determine an interim alternative education setting. Any interim alternative educational setting in which the student is placed by the school personnel or hearing officer must be selected so as to enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive services and modifications, including those described in the student's current IEP, that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in that IEP and includes services and modifications to address the behavior that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Manifestation Determination Review

A manifestation determination review is an evaluation of the relationship between a student's disability and the act of misconduct that must be conducted when the MSDB proposes to take specified serious disciplinary actions. The IEP Team, as determined by the parent and MSD or MSB, has up to ten (10) school days from any decision to change a child's educational placement for disciplinary reasons to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent to determine the relationship, if any, between the student's disability and the misconduct in question.

The behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability if:

- the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability
- the conduct in question was the direct result of the MSDB's failure to implement the student's IEP

The conduct will be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the MSDB, the parent, and relevant members of the student's IEP Team determine that either condition is met.

No manifestation review is required when a child is removed from his current placement for not more than ten (10) school days to an interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or because of a suspension.

Determination That Behavior WAS a Manifestation of Disability

The IEP Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment (and implement a behavioral intervention plan) in circumstances where the manifestation determination review concludes that the student's behavior was related to his disability provided the MSD has not already conducted such assessment before the occurrence of the behavior that resulted in the change in the student's placement. If a Behavioral Intervention Plan has already been developed and implemented, the IEP Team will review the plan and make modifications, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Determination That Behavior WAS NOT a Manifestation of Disability

If a student is removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) days for conduct determined not to be a manifestation of his disability or removed to an interim alternative educational setting for drugs, weapons, or infliction of serious bodily injury (regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the disability), the student will receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications that are designed to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Change in Placement Due to Behavior-Manifestation Determination

Students with disabilities have special protections under the IDEA when they exhibit behaviors that violate the code of conduct or exhibit behaviors that require an extended removal from the current educational setting.

In these cases, the IEP Committee must determine if the behavior(s) are a manifestation of the student's disability or if the proposed disciplinary action constitutes a change in their educational placement.

Decisions that impact placement must be made by the IEP Committee prior to any change in educational placement.

In making decisions concerning discipline procedures for a child with a disability, the public agency must consider the following factors:

- The proposed length of the removal from the current placement;
- If the behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability;
- Whether the behavior is due to the failure of the public agency to implement the child's IEP, including program modifications such as a BIP.
- Did the child, at school, on school premises, or at a school function carry or possess a weapon; Possess, sell, or use illegal drugs; and/or inflict a serious bodily injury on another person?

Discipline of a student who violates the student code of conduct permits the removal of the student from the general school setting for up to ten (10) school days over the course of a school year. The student with a disability may not be removed from the general school setting for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative school days without providing services following the tenth day of removal. For each incident after the tenth day or removal, it is the responsibility of the IEP Committee to determine if there is a relationship between the child's disability and the behavior precipitating a disciplinary action. To consider the behavior in question a manifestation of the child's disability, the relationship must be direct and substantial to the child's disability.

The removal to this setting must not exceed more than forty-five (45) school days without a review of the IEP and placement determination by the IEP team.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

A functional behavioral assessment is a procedure to assess problem behavior prior to recommending strategies for dealing with the student's problem behavior.

The general purpose of a functional assessment of behavior is to provide the IEP Team with additional information, analysis, and strategies for dealing with undesirable behavior, especially when it is interfering with the student's education. The process involves identifying the undesirable behavior; observing the student and collecting data on the problem behavior and consequences; developing an intervention(s); and collecting data on the effectiveness of the intervention(s) in changing the behavior. A functional behavioral assessment is only performed when the IEP Committee determines it is needed.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

The IEP Team will consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, to address behavior in the case of a student with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of other students.

Expedited Due Process

When a parent or the Superintendent or designee for MSDB requests an appeal to review a manifestation determination, the Mississippi Department of Education will arrange for an expedited, impartial due process hearing, which shall occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the hearing is requested. The hearing officer will decide within ten (10) school days after the hearing. The student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of a change in placement resulting from the behavior, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the MSDB agree otherwise. This applies to removals of up to forty-five (45) school days for special circumstances, such as drugs, weapons, and infliction of serious bodily injury.

A parent's right to an expedited, impartial due process hearing is limited to disciplinary situations involving a change of placement, which would occur if a child were removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) school days at a time or if there were a series of removals from the student's current educational placement in school year. The MSDB has the right to request an expedited hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving notice of the due process complaint unless the parent and MSDB agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or agree to use mediation. The due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the due process complaint.

The decisions rendered in expedited due process hearings are appealable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States.

Restraint and/or Seclusion

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-9-69 and 37-11-57, it is recognized that staff may intercede in situations wherein students are displaying physically violent behavior or are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. The use of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment regarding student management is prohibited. Restraint and/or seclusion shall not be utilized as a punitive measure.

Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students after the use of restraint or seclusion. This policy in no way shall inhibit the right of staff to reasonable self-defense in accordance with the provisions of the 5th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, or the Constitution of Mississippi, nor negate the obligation of the district to provide a safe work environment. In any situation in which a student is a danger to himself/herself or others, and it becomes necessary to contact law enforcement or emergency medical personnel, nothing in this policy guidance shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.

Restraint

Physical restraint is an emergency response after all other verbal and non-verbal de-escalation measures have failed in effectiveness. When using physical restraint for students who are a danger to themselves or others, staff should take precautions necessary to ensure the safety of the student and the staff members engaged in restraining the student.

1. Physical restraints that restrict the flow of air are prohibited in all situations;
2. The use of mechanical restraints is prohibited, except by law enforcement; and
3. The use of chemical restraints is prohibited.

Seclusion

The use of seclusion occurs in a specially designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The room or space used for seclusion may not be locked and staff shall be present to monitor the student. Seclusion shall cease once the student regains control of their behavior.

Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students after the use of restraint or seclusion.

Parental Notification

All parents shall receive, at least annually, written information about the policies and procedures for restraint and seclusion issued by MSDB.

TECHNOLOGY

MSDB Student Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

MSDB is pleased to offer to its students, faculty, and staff access to the Internet in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. All users of the Internet at the MSDB must comply with the MSDB's Acceptable Use Policy. It is important that all users understand the terms, conditions and responsibilities associated with the use of the Internet at MSDB. All users and parents of all users under the age of eighteen (18) are required to sign the attached contract stating they have carefully read and understand the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy and will comply with the policy while using the MSDB's computer network resources. The attached contract is a legally binding document and must be signed prior to the user accessing the Internet at the MSDB

Electronic Devices

Students may bring a cell phone or other personal communication devices (PCDs) for use while they are on campus at MSDB. However, these devices may NOT be used during instruction unless approved by the principal. These devices may be used in the dorm before and after study hours.

Dormitory students may bring electronic devices for video and audio enjoyment such as iPods, iPads and other tablets and laptop PCs. They must use headphones or earbuds.

These devices are to be transported home on homegoing days. These items will be collected by the dormitory parent and will be kept in the front office until departure time. When headphones or earbuds are used, these items may also be carried on out-of-town school trips, only if approved by the trip sponsor(s).

MSDB does not accept responsibility for lost or misplaced electronic devices. MSDB will not be held responsible for any fees associated with the use of personal devices.

Possession of cell phones and other electronic equipment is strictly prohibited in any room during testing. Violation of this policy during state mandated testing shall invalidate the student's test.

If an electronic device is confiscated for unauthorized use, it will be returned only to the parent or legal guardian.

Network and Computer Usage

MSDB's Internet policy is designed to provide an environment that is consistent with the MSDB mission and vision, Mississippi Department of Education requirements, and Federal/State laws. MSDB Internet refers to devices attached to the entire computer network system at MSDB. MSDB Internet includes but is not limited to the Local Area Network (LAN on campus), all MSDB file servers, and access to the Internet. Access to the Internet is provided through ATM lines that are a part of the larger statewide network. The Mississippi Department of Education-wide area network provides filtering services for MSDB Internet.

MSDB Internet facilities and network connections are for providing educational computing support to students, faculty, and staff. Under Federal statutes and the sections of the Mississippi Code, which govern the use of these resources, all users must use the MSDB Internet resources properly and for the purpose designated by the Legislature. All existing Federal and State laws as well as MSDB regulations and policies apply, including not only those that are specific to computers, networks, and websites, but also those that may apply generally to personal conduct. Technology changes rapidly, as do the ways in which users can use and perhaps abuse the school computer system. MSDB must ensure that its computer resources are used properly and within established guidelines. In pursuit of that goal, the school reserves the right to monitor the system for signs of illegal or unauthorized activity. Even though the MSDB Appropriate Use Policy may not expressly prohibit an activity such behavior is not permissible. For questions related to appropriate use contact the Technology Director.

Student Responsibilities

As MSDB technology users, students should:

- be owners of their data and be responsible for ensuring that their data is adequately protected against unauthorized access;
- keep their account passwords confidential (Instructors will have access to student account passwords for assisting students with access);
- remember passwords and refrain from writing them down;
- change their passwords frequently or contact the technology coordinator for assistance with password changes. Passwords will be reset if needed to allow instructors to assist students;
- avoid using their own names or those of parents or friends as passwords;
- deny access to their accounts by others for any reason (exceptions are granted to instructional staff at MSDB) log out of their accounts and shut down their computers when leaving the computer labs or the computers provided to them in the dorms and student center;
- perform maintenance on their accounts periodically by deleting old files. This applies to any files only on MSDB computers. Those on the students' One drive will be determined by space available;
- refrain from using computers and networks to access, download, upload, create, reproduce, and/or distribute files containing vulgar language and/or obscene materials and assure the legal and ethical use of the school computers and user accounts; and
- refrain from using the school's computer systems for personal financial gain and report violations of these guidelines to the technology coordinator.

Unauthorized Access to Files and Directories

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- engage in any activity that is intended to circumvent computer security controls or attempt to crack passwords;
- discover unprotected files; or
- decode encrypted files or create, modify, or execute programs designed to surreptitiously penetrate or hack computer systems or access the accounts of others with the intent to read, browse, modify, copy, or delete files and directories.

Unauthorized Use of Software

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- violate copyright laws, or
- download, possess, or use software (executable) designed to destroy data; provide unauthorized access to computer systems, or disrupt computing processes: in any way use viruses, worms, Trojan horses, or any other invasive software. Such activity is expressly forbidden.

Electronic Mail (Email)

If an MSDB student uses the school's network and has a Google email account, the student must:

- be aware that MSDB administration has authorization to read and approve both incoming and outgoing email before distribution;
- understand that use of the MSDB Internet does not guarantee privacy;
- use the MSDB provided Google student email account to communicate with faculty, staff, and administration (for educational purposes only);
- recognize that MSDB Internet is provided for educational purposes and to widen the communication channels between students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration;
- refrain from transmitting or forwarding fraudulent, harassing, or obscene messages and files;
- refrain from transmitting or forwarding jokes, chain letters, advertisements, mass mail, or SPAM to school mail systems or accounts of individual users; and
- abstain from harassment via MSDB computer systems including the use of insulting, sexist, racist, obscene, or suggestive e-mail.

Network, Website, and Communication Systems

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- attempt to gain unauthorized access to either MSDB computers or to remote computers, as such attempts are illegal under criminal law and subject to prosecution;
- house personal websites on the MSDB computer system without specific permission from the technology coordinator;
- attempt to degrade the performance of the MSDB computer system or subvert it in any way;
- crash the system deliberately; or
- play computer games or engage in recreational computing on any computer owned by MSDB, except for educational purposes and only with instructor supervision.

Waste and Abuse of MSDB Internet Resources

As MSDB technology users, students must:

- avoid activities around workstations that may result in damage to the computer, printer, software, or information;
- not eat and/or drink at computer workstations;
- conserve and protect the resources of MSDB computer systems by refraining from using or wasting valuable, limited resources; and
- be considerate of fellow users, avoid monopolizing computer systems, connect time, and another computer resource.

MSDB Internet Hardware

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- relocate computer hardware, peripherals, or cables from their current locations without specific authorization from the technology coordinator; or
- attempt to service any hardware without written authorization from the technology coordinator.

MSDB Internet Policy Enforcement

To protect the MSDB Internet resources and monitor proper usage of computer resources for educational purposes, the Technology Coordinator shall:

- investigate alleged abuses of computer resources to access the electronic files of its users;
- as part of that investigation, if there are indications that computer privileges have been violated, limit the access of users found to be using computer systems improperly;
- recommend administering disciplinary actions to the school administrators for violations of MSDB policies that may include the loss of some or all computer privileges and/or other disciplinary actions;
- act as a technical advisor to school administrators when they hear all cases involving student misuse of MSDB Internet privileges;
- deny student access temporarily pending review when there is reasonable suspicion that student use may harm or do damage in the interim; and

Internet Terms and Conditions of Use Personal Safety

User will not disclose, use, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors, or any others including personal identification such as, but not limited to, name, social security numbers, telephone numbers, home address, email address, or credit card information. User will immediately report to MSDB authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.

MSDB faculty and staff are prohibited from disclosing personal information about students on its website - such as a student's full name, home or email address, telephone number, social security number, and personal pictures.

Illegal Activity

User agrees not to access, transmit, or retransmit any material(s) in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of local, state, or Federal laws or regulations.

User shall not access, transmit, or re-transmit threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is inappropriate to minors.

User shall not plagiarize copyrighted materials.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.

User shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access, including hacking.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, or abusive.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.

MSDB assumes no responsibility for any charges made by students using an MSDB computer or violation of copyright laws.

Inappropriate content

Includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate internet searches, pictures of guns, alcohol, tobacco products, vulgar language, and inappropriate conversations in messages and/ or emails. Consequences for inappropriate content are as follows:

- 1st offense: 1-day ISS and one week of computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.
- 2nd offense: One day suspension and two-week computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.
- 3rd offense: Multiple day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

*Inappropriate content beyond the 3rd offense may result in additional suspensions and computer probation up to the end of the school year, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

Explicit content

includes, but is not limited to, nude photos and/or pornography. Consequences for explicit content are as follows:

- 1st offense: 2-day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home computer privileges.
- 2nd offense: 4-day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home computer privileges.

*Explicit content beyond the 2nd offense may result in additional suspensions and computer probation up to the end of the school year, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

Prohibition of Obscene Material

All digital or online resources or any database provided in this district by a vendor or other entity shall contain technology protection measures that:

1. Prohibit and prevent a person from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are inappropriate or obscene; and
2. Block, or otherwise prohibit and prevent, access to obscene and inappropriate materials as defined under MS Code 37-11-81.

Consequence of inappropriate photographs or content AND distribution to others:

- Multiple day suspension and/or expulsion and loss of computer privileges (reviewed on a case-by-case basis)

System Resource Limits

User shall only use the MSDB system for educational and career development activities and limited, high quality self-discovery activities as approved by MSDB faculty for a limited amount of time per week.

User agrees not to download large files unless it is necessary. If it is necessary to download large files, User agrees to download the file at the time when the system is not being heavily used.

User agrees not to download or install unauthorized software on school computers. This includes students, teachers, staff, and administrators.

User shall not damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks (hardware or software).

User agrees not to post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (sending an annoying or unnecessary message to large number of people).

Students will not be allowed to engage in any on-line chatting, including Internet messaging, unless it is a part of the curriculum and specifically designated as such by a teacher. Then the session will be monitored by the teacher and limited to the time frames that must also be specified in the curriculum. Teachers must know with whom the student is communicating always.

User agrees to immediately notify their teacher or other school administrator should User accidentally access inappropriate information so MSDB can take steps to prevent future access.

User will not make any attempt to defeat computer or network security on the MSDB network or any other server or network on the Internet.

User shall not engage in any Internet activity harmful to or reflecting negatively on the MSDB.

User Rights and Expectations

User shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school administration.

There is absolutely no expectation of privacy on the MSDB network. Activities at any workstation or transmission and receipt of data can be monitored anytime either electronically or by staff observation.

This includes transmission and receipt of email, email attachments, Web browsing, and any other use of the network. User consents to the monitoring of User's activities and files.

Users should log off at the end of each workday or the conclusion of the class session. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of the minor User's files.

Under no circumstances should a User provide his/her password to another person or use another person's password.

MSDB will fully cooperate with local, state, and federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the User's Internet account.

Consequences for Failing to Comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Use of the Internet at the MSDB is a privilege, not a right. There will be consequences for any User who fails to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy for the MSDB. For student Users, the consequences may include, but are not limited to, paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion, or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy. Any disciplinary action that is a result of an alleged violation of this policy can be appealed through the student grievance procedure provided in the MSDB Student/Parent Manual. Additionally, faculty and staff Users who fail to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy will be subject to discipline, including termination from employment with the type of discipline imposed being based on the severity of the specific offense(s).

For all Users, the MSDB will fully cooperate with local, state, and federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the User's Internet Policy.

CIPA

In December 2000, Congress enacted the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements. The CIPA requires that schools restrict employee and student access to the Internet through monitoring, policies, and filtering.

Under the CIPA, covered schools must have an Internet safety program which filters both adult and student access to visual depictions that are obscene or constitute child pornography. The program must also prevent students from accessing materials that are harmful to minors. The MSDB receives these discounts for Internet Access through the E-Rate program and is therefore in compliance with the CIPA.

COPPA

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), effective April 21, 2000, applies to online collection of personal information from children under the age of 13, such as full name, home address, email address, telephone number or any other information that would allow someone to identify or contact the child.

The Final Rule issued by the Federal Trade Commission spells out what a Web site operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent, and what responsibilities an operator must abide by to protect children's privacy and safety online.

Terms

All student users of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) are provided laptops, tablets, or other personal computing devices that comply with MSDB policies. Any failure to comply may result in termination of student user rights of possession effective immediately, and MSDB may repossess the device.

Legal Title

MSDB and the State of Mississippi retain legal title to the property. The student user's right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement, MSDB Technology policies, and all MSDB Acceptable Use policies and procedures as found in the MSDB Student Handbook.

Rules for Electronic Devices

1. Electronic devices loaned to students shall be used only for educational purposes that directly relate to a school project or assignment, unless otherwise explicitly authorized by building administration.
2. Student users are responsible for the proper care of electronic devices at all times, whether on or off school property.
 - a. Student users shall not leave the device unattended in an unlocked classroom or during an extracurricular activity.
 - b. Student users shall not lend the device to a classmate, friend, or family member. If any person damages the device, it will be the student user's or their parent/guardian's responsibility and the damage cost policy will be in effect.
 - c. Student users shall transport the device in its protective case and sleeve.
 - d. Student users shall not leave the device in a vehicle for extended periods of time or overnight.
 - e. Student users shall not leave the device in visible sight when left in a vehicle.
 - f. Student users shall report a lost or damaged device to the school authorities immediately. If a device is stolen, a report shall be made immediately to local law enforcement.
 - g. If a device is damaged, lost, or stolen because of irresponsible behavior, including intentional or negligent damage or loss, the student user or the parent/guardian may be responsible for the full replacement cost. The student user or the parent/guardian will be responsible for full replacement cost of the device if not reported to MSDB personnel within three (3) calendar days of missing or damaged device.

3. Violation of policies or rules governing the use of electronic devices, or any careless use of the device may result in a student's device being confiscated and/or a student only being allowed to use the device under the direct supervision of school staff. The student shall also be subject to disciplinary action for any violations of Board policies/procedures or school rules.
4. The student user is responsible for recharging the device's battery, so it is fully charged by the start of the next school day. Devices with no battery life shall be charged in the classroom. The student may be required to forfeit use of the device for the entire time it takes to charge it. All class work missed because of uncharged batteries shall be made up on a student's own time.
5. The device configuration shall not be altered in any way by student users. No software applications shall be installed, removed, or altered on the device unless permission is explicitly given, in writing, by the teacher or building administrator. Any attempt to "jailbreak" and/or remove MSDB protection software may result in disciplinary action.
6. The device shall only be used by the student to whom it is issued. The person to whom the device is issued will be responsible for any activity or action performed on the device.
7. The device shall be returned in acceptable working order by the last day of each school year, or upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, and whenever requested by school staff.
8. Failure to return the device by the last day of each school year, or upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, or whenever requested by school staff shall result in a full cost of replacement charge to the student user or parent/legal guardian responsible for this agreement.

Use of Personal Laptops and Tablets

Students may **not** use their personal laptops or tablets in place of a school device. However, while on the MSDB campus, students shall connect to the school's provided wireless network and not to a personal hotspot not provided by the school. Students bringing a personal device to campus, or using the device for remote learning, will be responsible for support and maintenance of the device.

Repossession

If the student user fails to fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and MSDB Technology policies, including the timely return of the property, MSDB shall be entitled to declare the student user in default and take appropriate legal action to secure the safe return of the device or incur full replacement.

Terms of Agreement

The student user's right to use and possession of the property terminates no later than the last day of enrollment, unless earlier terminated by MSDB or upon withdrawal from MSDB.

Support

Students shall contact their teachers as a first level of support for class-related work. If a student needs assistance regarding device software and hardware, they will need to send a repair request to support@msdbk12.org. Student users shall not take devices belonging to MSDB to any other businesses for technical support or repair.

Fees

Each student will pay an annual \$25 device usage fee due by September 5th of each year.

Any damage to electronic devices must be reported to school authorities immediately. Whenever a device is submitted for repair, students must pay the following deductibles:

- First repair - \$20
- Second repair- \$40
- Third repair - \$60 and possible loss of take-home privilege
- Fourth repair - fair market value to repair or replace the device and possible loss of computer use

Student User Data

All student users are responsible for keeping backups of important data. If a device must be repaired, there may be a need to reset it to the original settings. The technology department will not be responsible for any student user data that might be lost as a part of this process.

Unlawful Appropriations

Failure to timely return the property and use of any school device for non-school purposes, without MSDB consent, may be considered unlawful appropriation of MSDB property.

STUDENT LIFE

Safety and Security

Safety and security are universal responsibilities. MSD will provide information and guidance to students related to their safety and well-being on campus and in the community. MSD's students and staff must show respect and always cooperate with officials.

The following are general safety precautions:

- observe Student Code of Conduct,
- adhere to all MSD policies and procedures, and
- to help ensure student safety and to protect personal property in the Residence Halls students should:
 - o refrain from leaving large sums of money in their rooms,
 - o identify personal belongings, including clothing,

- o protect luggage and locker keys and do not lend them to anyone.
- o lock valuable items in wardrobes or luggage.
- o unplug and store electrical appliances properly after use (e.g., hair dryers, curling irons, irons), and
- o memorize emergency evacuation routes and participate in practice drills.

On Campus

To ensure safety while on campus, students should:

- report to school staff any threats to students and/or staff that could jeopardize the well-being or safety of anyone,
- restrict themselves to common areas of the campus identified during orientation,
- refrain from loitering around buildings closed during non-operational hours,
- seek guidance from MSD staff regarding access to appropriate areas,
- keep purses, backpacks, or other personal items in their possession, do not leave them unattended,
- exhibit good sportsmanship when participating in extracurricular activities,
- walk with another MSD student at night,
- walk on sidewalks and stay in well-lit areas,
- be aware of surrounding activities when you are outdoors, and
- report suspicious persons on campus to the staff or campus police.

Off Campus

To ensure safety while off campus, students should:

- report to school staff any threats to students and/or staff that could jeopardize the well-being or safety of anyone,
- be aware of all surroundings when using ATMs,
- stay in designated walkways and established routes,
- walk in groups of two or more,
- restrict destinations and activities to those stated when signing out of the dorm,
- refrain from getting in any vehicle other than an MSD vehicle, and
- remember that they represent MSD within the community.

Scent Detection Canine Searches

The use of law enforcement scent canines is a tactic designed to dramatically illustrate that neither school authorities nor law enforcement agencies will tolerate illicit drugs or other scent-detectable contraband on campus. Scent detection canine searches may include the common areas of the dormitories, academic building(s), and the parking lot including the external surfaces of automobiles. Alert by a scent detection canine will be considered reasonable suspicion.

The appropriate law enforcement agency will authorize further search and seizure in relation to that property or individual in accordance with their policies and procedures. Local law enforcement officers, with the assistance of MSDB personnel, will conduct all scent detection canine searches.

MSD Safety/Crisis Management Plan and MSD Safety Manual

The School Safety and Crisis Management Response Team is responsible for creating and updating the MSD/MSB Safety/Crisis Management Plan and MSD/MSB Safety Manual, which are distributed to all administration, faculty, and staff. The purpose of these manuals is to assure that adequate programs are provided for the protection of health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community and for compliance with appropriate codes and regulations. Procedures for emergency/safety plans will be printed, distributed, and posted so all MSDB students, faculty, staff, and administration will be knowledgeable of safety procedures.

The manuals identify health and safety problems, establish standards, evaluate, and report on the status of compliance with health and safety standards, codes, and regulations, provide technical services, recommend, and implement accident experiences, and develop and manage training resources.

In emergency situations and when required to do so by codes, regulations, or licensure agreement, any trained employees are authorized to take preventative, investigative, and remedial actions.

Student Transportation to and From School

Parents or other individuals(s) authorized by the parent must transport ~~non-residential~~ students to and from campus. On weekends and holidays students should decide to leave campus in advance of the day of departure. Specific times will be set for students to depart from campus. All students must go home during the weekends and holidays designated in the MSDB calendar.

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Commuters

Students who live within ~~35~~ miles of campus are considered commuters and are not permitted to live in the dormitories. If there are extreme, extenuating circumstances and a request is made for temporary housing, the superintendent must approve the request.

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Upon arrival, commuters are to report to the cafeteria and must arrive on campus no later than ~~7:45~~ a.m. and no earlier than 7:30 a.m. Parents are to pick up students at the time of dismissal. A commuter may stay on campus for an extra-curricular event with a residential supervisor, teacher/coach, and parent permission for required practices, rehearsals, class assignments, or other educational purposes. Commuters must leave campus by 9:00 p.m. or at the conclusion of the designated activity unless properly authorized as an overnight visitor. The commuter must follow all rules and regulations of the residence facility including the use of transportation and check-in/check-out policies and procedures.

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Student Conduct on Buses

Recognizing that student misconduct can jeopardize the safety of others, the following procedures have been adopted for student discipline related to school bus transportation:

- all bus drivers shall report student misconduct promptly to the appropriate Principal or Director of Residence Education, and

- a prompt due process investigation will ensue and based upon information; disciplinary actions deemed appropriate will be administered. Parents will be notified.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from the school, if the student constitutes a threat to the safety of the other students on the bus, causes damage or destruction of property, distracts the bus driver, or in other ways interferes with the normal or safe operation of the bus.

Transportation Safety Procedures

To ensure safety during transportation, students shall:

- report to the assigned bus pick-up on time,
- use extreme caution when loading and unloading from the bus,
- wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and the bus driver indicates it is safe to board or depart from the bus,
- keep head, arms, legs, body, and personal possessions out of the aisle of the bus and inside the windows,
- be always courteous and respectful, and
- follow the instructions of the driver.

Residential Education Services

Residential Education Philosophy: Residing on campus enriches the educational journey for MSDB students. The Residential Education program aligns with MSDB's objectives, fostering individuality while emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, accountability, and sound decision-making. Cultivating strong character traits is pivotal for nurturing a supportive residential community. The guidelines governing residential life emphasize that campus residency is a privilege, requiring students to uphold a standard of personal responsibility.

Residential Education

Living in a residence hall is an exciting opportunity that requires self-discipline, independence, a high degree of responsibility, and compatibility with students from diverse backgrounds. Students who demonstrate these characteristics should adapt successfully to living in a residence hall with minimal adjustments. While students are making transitions from living at home to those of residence life, the Residence Education Parents (REPs) are constantly available for assistance and support. They help students adjust to the residential setting and provide guidance and assistance as needed. Such a support system enhances the likelihood that all students will have successful and meaningful educational experiences. An important part of this adjustment is student understanding of the dorm rules and standards of conduct. An orderly, clean, comfortable living area supports and enhances the learning atmosphere and, therefore, benefits the entire school community.

Since learning and study styles differ among students, mutual respect must be the cornerstone of a harmonious community. Students must channel their behaviors to create an orderly, responsible atmosphere. Student self-monitoring builds and sustains positive relationships with peers and with residential staff members.

Students who do not comply with the residential education rules and regulations will become ineligible to remain a dormitory student.

[*See Residential Handbook](#)

SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered System of Support

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports is in place to ensure the behavioral and academic needs of every student are met through an instructional model that is designed to address student learning with quality classroom instruction and opportunities for intervention (Mississippi Department of Education, 2016). Mississippi School for the Deaf will follow a three-tier instructional model. The tiers consist of:

- Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards
- Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction
- Tier 3: Intensive interventions designed to meet the needs of individual students

If strategies at Tier 1 and Tier 2 are unsuccessful, collaboration will take place with the students' teachers to develop intervention for Tier 3. Interventions will be designed to address deficits, research based, implemented as designed, and supported by data.

Teachers use progress monitoring information to:

- determine if students are making progress
- identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind
- modify instruction early enough to ensure each student gains essential skills

Monitoring student progress will be ongoing and will be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments, and large-scale assessments. No more than two weeks after interventions begin, grade level meetings will occur to conduct a review of assessment data to determine if the interventions were successful. If the interventions were determined to be unsuccessful, grade level meetings will occur every two weeks to analyze assessment data and discuss student progress. The student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment if no progress is made after eight weeks.

Each student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention immediately following the identification of the deficiency. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade level.

Students will receive intensive interventions if any of the following apply:

- The student failed one grade in grades 1-3.
- The student failed two grades in grades 4-12.
- The student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than 20 days in the current school year.
- A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment.
- A student is promoted under the Good Cause exemption of the Literacy Based Promotion Act.

Food Services

MSDB provides meals at no cost to all students. To maximize available resources, MSDB participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Therefore, parents/guardians of all students are requested to complete Free/Reduced Meal Forms so that MSDB can receive reimbursement for meals served to students who qualify for free or reduced meals. Not only does this information enable MSDB to receive Federal school lunch funds and donated commodities, but the data will also provide demographics for use in grant applications.

U.S. Postal Services

Regular postal services are available by mail being placed in a designated area in the Academic Complex and in the Administrative Complex.

Mail on the MSDB campus is provided for students through the Residence Education staff. Packages received may be picked up in the Residence Life office. Outgoing mail should be deposited in the designated location in the Academic Complex. Mail should be addressed as follows:

(Name of Student)
Mississippi School for the Deaf
1253 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

Religious Services

MSDB recognizes that students may wish to attend religious services. A student may attend the church of his/her choice. Written permission from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be received and verified before he/she will be given a pass to leave campus. Students are allowed, with parental permission, to attend religious activities throughout the week so long as it does not interfere with required MSDB activities.

Financial Services

Students are encouraged to not carry large sums of cash. A student account can be arranged through staff assigned in residence halls. MSDB does not assume responsibility for monitoring student financial practices. Students must handle personal finances in accordance with parental wishes and use good judgment.

Campus/Community Service

A school is a community of people sharing common ideas and goals. Students contributing to the betterment of the school enhance community spirit. When a student contributes to the school community everyone benefits. Community service will occur during non-academic hours. This service is important to the overall reputation of the school. The quality of the work done by the students exemplifies pride in MSDB.

HEALTH SERVICES

The MSDB Health Clinic has formulated policies designed to enhance the health and well-being of all students. Included in these policies are room inspections, nutritious meals, lights-out regulations, activity programs, physical fitness programs, and required medical information from each student.

The Health Clinic is in Dorm 3 and provides services Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. In the case of a non-homegoing weekend, the clinic remains operational throughout the weekend. A registered nurse will examine students and coordinate appointments with a local doctor. While the nurse can administer allergy shots, provide basic first aid services, and perform health care counseling, the nurse is not a personal physician. When the Health Clinic is closed the nurse will be on call and can be reached by the Superintendent or Director of Residence Education, if deemed necessary. Students should alert their teachers in the event they become ill during the school day. If a student becomes ill during the evenings or on the weekend the Residence Education Parent should be informed.

In emergency situations an ambulance service may be called and the service of the emergency room of a local hospital utilized. Parents/guardians MUST sign an MSDB Health Information/Medical Treatment Form allowing a student to receive hospital care in the case of an emergency. MSDB will notify parents/guardians immediately in the event of an emergency.

A physician may direct the school nurse to restrict a student's activities if deemed necessary for a speedy and complete recovery or for the general welfare of the school community. Students are expected to comply with the directives. Students who do not obey such restrictions or confinements will result in unexcused absences for the days missed from class.

Parents are responsible for all medical costs including ambulance service, emergency & hospital visits and prescription medicines and will assume all financial obligations incurred by their child in health-related situations including cost for over-the-counter medications. Visits to the doctor's office will be billed to the parents.

Medication and Illness Policies and Procedures

All narcotic medication must be packaged in a blister pack. All prescriptions for narcotic medication must be filled by Marty's Pharmacy in Flowood, MS. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property.

A working phone number must be always on file in the MSDB Health Clinic. It is imperative that parents can be reached in the event of student illness.

Students in grades PK-5 should be escorted by an adult to the Health Clinic. Students in grades 6-12 may be allowed to come to the clinic independently unless the student has a disability or illness that would prevent them from safely arriving at the clinic and returning safely to class. If a student is admitted to the Health Clinic and Clinic staff determine that the student should be sent home, nurses will attempt to contact the student's parents.

If a parent cannot be contacted after eight (8) hours, the Superintendent will make the decision to call Child Protection Services (CPS) for assistance or send the student to a hospital emergency room. The parents will pay hospital expenses.

No medications sent from home to the school can be put in suitcases or backpacks. Medications must be registered with the chaperone on the bus and signed into the medication bag, which will be delivered directly to the clinic upon return to campus.

Parents are encouraged to schedule routine medical and dental visits when students are home for breaks or holidays.

Required Medical Information

School Asthma Plan (SAP) for students diagnosed with asthma: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11- 71 requires each student with asthma to have a current school asthma plan on file for use by the school nurse, teachers, and staff. The parents of the student are required to have the child's health care provider develop and sign the SAP annually. The SAP must include: (1) student's name, (2) date, (3) school, (4) age, (5) physician's signature, (6) instructions to the school if coughing or wheezing and indicate dosage and delivery method details, and (7) whether the student administers their own medication or school personnel may administer medication. The plan must also indicate whether premedication is required and shall indicate dosage and delivery method details.

All medical information is confidential. Parents must complete all medical forms required for admission to MSDB.

All students must have a physical and a completed Report of Medical Examination Form before checking into the residence hall. A copy of the immunization form must also be included with the cumulative school records or be delivered with all medical release forms.

The following medical information must be on file prior to admittance:

- Record of Immunization,
- MSDB Health Information/Medical Treatment Form,
- Report of Medical Examination Form,
- Administering Prescription Medication to Students Form, and
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Parents must notify the principal/supervisor, clinic staff, or Residence education staff immediately regarding changes in medications, guardianship, insurance, address, and employment. Photocopies of prescription cards should be attached to medical forms.

Self-Administration of Medication

All medications, both prescription and over the counter must be registered with the nurse except students who meet the requirements to possess and self-administer prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71. A student may self-administer prescription anaphylaxis medication if MSD is provided a written (1) parental authorization, (2) parental release of liability, and (3) the required doctor's statement pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71.

A student with asthma may self-administer prescription asthma medication if MSDB is provided a written (1) parental authorization, (2) parental release of liability, (3) school asthma plan completed by the prescribing physician authorizing self-administration and (4) the required doctor's statement pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71. Students will report to the nurse or designated representative at the predetermined time for administration of medications.

When a doctor prescribes medication for a student illness, the nurse must be notified immediately, and all forms completed and turned into MSD. The nurse will follow up or oversee the administration of the medication. Failure to comply with the doctor or nurse's directions will result in a discipline procedure at a Level III violation.

Excused Absence from Class for Health Reasons

A student who is ill must inform the nurse at the Health Clinic as soon as possible. Students who do not check in with the nurse will not receive an excuse for illness.

To be admitted to class, the student will receive a copy of the Health Clinic Form. The teacher will keep this form and record the absence as excused. The nurse will retain a copy of the form in the Health Clinic.

Going to the Health Clinic does not automatically excuse a student from class. The nurse and/or doctor must substantiate the seriousness of the illness. A minor illness (e.g., cramps, headache, minor cold) does not justify an excused absence. At any time during the school day an excused absence will be granted providing the student has gone to Health Clinic and has a substantiated illness.

Students excused from two or more classes because of illness shall not attend school functions that day and are expected to remain in the residence hall room except for meals unless written permission from a physician or the school nurse is provided. Students excused from class attendance must receive health clearance from the nurse to leave the residence hall. Students cannot attend any school functions when convinced to "bed rest" unless approval is obtained from principal and/or residence education director after a health clearance is obtained from the clinic staff or a physician.

When a student is not returning to school from a holiday and/or weekend at home because of illness, the parents must contact the school immediately. The absence will be recorded as excused upon return of the student to MSDB with a doctor's excuse or appropriate written statement from a parent.

Violation of the above may result in an unexcused absence and disciplinary action.

MSDB will comply with all Federal and State laws pertaining to the management of communicable diseases. The school will also follow the directives of an attending physician to determine risk factors on a case-by-case basis.

Every reasonable precaution will be taken to minimize risks to other students and school personnel. Faculty and staff will not discriminate against students with health conditions and will promote sensitivity, confidentiality, and reasonable accommodations.

If current medical knowledge indicates a student's health condition does not pose a risk to others the student will continue at MSDB as normally as possible. If the student is having academic problems because of the health condition the Principal/Supervisor will be notified immediately. Modifications, if any, may be provided in the work and academic environment. Each situation will be considered individually. If a communicable disease or medical condition is deemed detrimental to the immediate health or welfare of the student or general school population, the student will be sent home immediately upon diagnosis from a physician. Such illnesses include, but are not limited to measles, chicken pox, mumps, and influenza. All temporary leaves from school for illness are for the improved health of the student.

Before returning to MSDB, students who have recovered from a communicable disease must acquire a medical release form from the attending physician in the student's hometown. The form must be presented to the nurse immediately when the student returns to the campus. MSDB policy mandates confidentiality of student health history in compliance with medical, legal, and ethical standards of the school and State.

Transition Services

For all students, transition occurs from preschool to elementary school, elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to adulthood. For students with disabilities, each stage in transition requires thoughtful planning to ensure that the students with disabilities can transition from one level to next in a similar manner as typical peers of the same age. The goal for these students is to exit high school to their desired post-secondary outcome.

Transition and Career Development

Career development is an essential component of transition. Donald Zunker (1994) refers to career development as "a lifelong process of developing beliefs and values, skills and aptitudes, interests, personality characteristics, and knowledge of the world of work. Specifically, the terms reflect individually developed needs and goals associated with stages of life and with tasks that affect career choices and subsequent fulfillment of purpose." (Zunker, 1994, p. 3).

Career Awareness

Career awareness includes an understanding of the world of work and the knowledge and skills needed for traditional and nontraditional jobs and careers. Students are aware of opportunities, options, and roles that interest them in the world of work. They gain an awareness of the importance of personal responsibility, good work habits, and how people work. Activities for the students include, but is not limited to:

- Understanding the importance of working
- Acquainting students with local places of employment
- Understanding the need for cooperation and teamwork

Career Exploration

Career exploration includes investigation of the workplace and an understanding of the relationships among personal abilities, education, and knowledge and skills needed to pursue occupations and careers. Students learn about the variety of careers available and the types of jobs that would best fit their preferences, needs, and interests and explore the requirements related to those jobs. Activities for the students include, but is not limited to:

- Becoming aware of personal characteristics, interests, aptitudes, and skills,
- Development of an awareness of and respect for the diversity of the world of work,
- Understanding the relationship between school performance and future employment options, and
- Development of a positive attitude towards work.

Career Preparation

Career preparation includes the purposeful planning of activities that help students transition from school to the world of work and higher education. It includes learning about different careers and exploring skills needed to be successful in those careers, implementing skills that have been fostered and developed while in school and the successful transition from the secondary to post-secondary environment.

Activities for the students includes, but is not limited to:

- Volunteering
- Service-Learning Activities
- Apprenticeships/Internships
- Job Shadowing
- Part-time/Full-time Supported Employment and/or Integrated Employment

Transition Planning

Transition planning is the process that aids students, parents, and school personnel as they discuss and plan transition from school to adult life. This planning includes assessing interest and strengths; setting transition goals; and selecting the course of study and exit option; and services and agency linkages needed to meet the transitional goals for students with disabilities.

When the student is in middle school, school personnel will begin using career assessments to identify the career interests, abilities and needs of the student. The assessment data will be utilized to develop appropriate programming including the courses of study that focus on preparing the student to meet their post-secondary goals. The transition planning process is an ongoing process that can change over time, depending on the student's preferences, strengths, and interests.

Source: Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education. Secondary Transition Services: <https://mdek12.org/OSE/STS>

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support)

MSDB is committed to proactively teaching students appropriate behaviors as part of a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports mode. Positive behavior interventions and support is an application of a behaviorally based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to

design effective environments that improve the fit or link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching, and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (tier 1: school-wide), Secondary (tier 2: small group), and tertiary (tier 3: individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. Providing different types of support matched to each student's needs is referred to as a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). General descriptions for each tier as described in the Implementation Blueprint Part 1 are provided below:

| Tier | Prevent Description |
|---|---|
| I. Primary (Tier 1, Universal) | Preventing the development of new incidents/ occurrences of problem behavior by implementing high quality learning environments for all students and staff and across all settings (i.e., school-wide, classroom, and non-classroom). |
| II. Secondary (Tier 2, Targeted) | Reducing the frequency and intensity of incidents of problem behaviors for students who are not responsive to primary intervention practices by providing more focused, intensive, and frequent small group-oriented responses in situations where problem behavior is likely. |
| III. Tertiary (Tier 3, Intensive) | Reducing the intensity, frequency, and/or complexity of existing problem behaviors that are resistant to and/or unlikely to be addressed by primary and secondary prevention efforts by providing most individualized responses to situations where problem behavior is likely. |

SPECIAL SERVICES

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities are given to parents during the intake process, when notice of the IEP meeting is sent, during IEP development/review, when notice of staffing meeting is sent, and during a staffing meeting. Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities Notice is additionally given to parents as an attachment to the Student Handbook. The procedural safeguards will also be provided as required in 34 C.F.R. § 300.504 and Miss. Admin. Code 7-3:74.19, State Board Policy Chapter 74, Rule 74.19, § 300.504.

Free Appropriate Public Education

MSDB provides a free, appropriate public education to all children who have been determined to be eligible for special education and whose parents reside in the State of Mississippi, including children who are between the ages of three (3) and twenty (20) years:

- Including children from the date of their third birthday; and
- Including youth who are twenty (20) years of age on or before September 1st, even if they will turn twenty-one (21) years of age during the school year

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) means appropriate special education and related services provided at public expense, without cost to the parent, and under public supervision and direction. It is binding for all public agencies who receive payments under Part B of IDEA. A FAPE includes an appropriate preschool, elementary or secondary public education in the child's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and is provided in conformity with the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Non-Discriminatory Evaluation Policy

Evaluation materials and placement procedures utilized by MSDB will be, to the maximum extent possible, selected and administered to be racially or culturally non-discriminatory.

Least Restrictive Environment

MSDB will, to the maximum extent appropriate, educate disabled students with non-disabled students in their age groups. A continuum of alternative placements based on the individual student's IEP will be provided. Placement of students will be determined at least annually or as required by law.

In selecting the least restrictive environment for each student, consideration will be given to any potentially harmful effects on the student or on the quality of services needed. If an enrolled student can function socially, emotionally, and mentally on a par with non-disabled students of a similar chronological age, they will be given that opportunity in accordance with their IEP.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

Students may attend MSDB for many reasons, all related to the need for more intensive services than those currently available in their local district. This is especially true in the areas of language development and other communication needs, adaptive technology, daily living skills, vocational and transition skills, social skills, and the use of cochlear implants and/or hearing aids.

Students at MSDB should have an IEP to address their individualized education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Board of Education (SBE) Policy 74.19 have established the IEP as the structure for planning and implementing individualized services and supports for children with disabilities.

The IEP is collaboratively written by an IEP Committee, comprised of the parent(s)/guardian(s), the child with a disability (if appropriate), an MSDB administrator/agency representative, representatives from the child's home school district, the teacher(s), and other members as needed. The IEP is written to describe the unique needs of a child, and develops the specially designed instruction, related services, and accommodations and modifications needed to provide a child with a disability a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The IEP must be designed to:

- Indicate what the child is expected to be able to achieve within one (1) year;
- Provide high expectations and educational benefit for children with disabilities;
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum and standards in the general classroom, to the maximum extent possible.
- Provide effective transition services to promote successful postsecondary experiences including college and career to prepare children with disabilities to lead productive and independent adult lives.
- Project a date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services.

This program may be carried out either at MSDB or within the local school district or combination of such.

Extended School Year (Summer Program)

The Extended School Year (ESY) services are special education and related services provided to a child with a disability beyond the typical school year, at no cost to the parent.

The Extended School Year (ESY) services are not considered a summer school program, a childcare service, or an automatic program provision from year to year. The program is intended for those students who have been determined by a n Individualized Education Program (IEP) committee as needing the educational services provided during the school year to be extended into the summer to receive full benefit from their educational programs. Services may be required for some students with disabilities enrolled at MSD. Services and eligibility are not determined by the student's disability category but are determined on an individual case-by-case basis by the student's IEP committee according to the regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and policy and procedures set forth by the Mississippi Department of Education.

There are four (4) qualifying criteria used to determine a child's need for ESY services. They are:

1. Pattern of Regression-Recoupment: Refers to a child's loss of a skill on IEP objective(s) after at least two (2) breaks in instruction without regaining the documented level of skill(s) prior to the break within the specified period.
2. Critical Point of Instruction 1: Refers to the need to maintain a child's critical skill to prevent a loss of general education class time or an increase in special education service time.
3. Critical Point of Instruction 2: Refers to a point in the acquisition or maintenance of a critical skill during which a length in instruction would lead to a significant loss of progress.
4. Extenuating Circumstances: Refers to special situations that jeopardize the child's receipt of a FAPE unless ESY services are provided.

The IEP Committee must consider all four qualifying criteria in determining the need for ESY services. The review of data should indicate that a break in instruction would be detrimental to the child's instructional progress.

Due Process

MSD will ensure that all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided due process with respect to the provision of a free, appropriate public education as outlined in PROCEDURES FOR STATE BOARD POLICY 74.19 VOLUME III: Procedural Safeguards Dispute Resolution Confidentiality <https://mdek12.org/OSE/PP>. Information regarding Procedural Safeguards is provided to each parent at least annually. In the event of disagreements between the family and the school, it is hoped that these can be worked out through the IEP process or through subsequent discussions with the Mississippi School for the Deaf administration.

If the IEP committee members are unable to resolve disagreements, a request may be made with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education Parent Hotline: 1-877-544-0408.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The school counselor assists in providing and facilitating the provision of a variety of services for the students. The counselor is available to students and parents by appointment or in the event of an emergency. Confidentiality shall be observed in all counselor-student relations.

Objectives of Counseling Program

The overall objectives are to assist students in (1) adjusting to the MSDB environment, and (2) making the most of the MSDB educational experience. Individual counseling sessions, small-group discussions, large-group programs, and computer software are utilized to provide services to students, parents, and faculty. Specific objectives include:

- encouraging and supporting students' efforts to develop themselves holistically, with an appropriate focus on their intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development
- assisting students to utilize their abilities effectively, both inside and outside the classroom
- assist students in developing their skills in time management, preparing for, and taking tests, reading effectively, and taking notes
- individual follow-up discussions are held focusing on specific concerns as indicated by student progress and input from teachers and parents
- discuss strategies for good communication, interpersonal skills, goal setting, decision-making, and planning with students
- assist students to develop and continuously evaluate appropriate educational
- plans address individual strengths and interests, and progressing toward long-range educational and career goals
- assisting students in developing a mature level of self-awareness and
- self-responsibility in dealing with personal, social, and academic concerns
- provide access to information needed to make appropriate decisions in the college selection process
- provide files of information on colleges as well as other resources including books and software
- assist students and their parents in completing the various components of the college selection process, including testing, applications, and financial aid information
- provide registration forms and information the ACT

- assist in improving test-taking skills
- assist in preparing for college applications
- support in student search for scholarships through the provision of information, resources, and applications
- maintain academic records
- ensure cumulative records contain all grades earned at MSDB and generate the official MSDB transcript

Schedule Changes

Each spring preceding the next school year, junior/senior high students select courses to fulfill their program of study. Students may not request schedule changes to choose a specific teacher. The counselor and the principal will make all schedule changes based on the availability of classes and the academic needs of the students.

Schedule change requests must be made within the first week of the semester in which the course begins.

Deleted: . MSDB develops a master schedule based on the students' choices

Deleted: Special circumstances may warrant a change in schedule and must be approved by the IEP Committee.

College Testing Programs

All juniors are required to take the ACT in the spring. The first examination of all juniors is paid for by the state. Students are encouraged to take the ACT as often as possible to attain the highest score possible. Registration packets and dates for testing are available in the counselor's office. The counselor can assist with registration if requested by the student and/or parent. Students are responsible for payment of their own registration fees beyond the single examination provided by the state. The counselor will assist and work with the principal to provide reasonable and allowable accommodations as identified by the student's IEP.

In lieu of the performance requirements established in Sections 25.3, and 25.4, a student may obtain a Silver level or higher National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys assessment and successfully complete an industry certification or career pathway recognized by the Mississippi Department of Education. A student who achieves a Gold or Platinum level National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys does not have to meet the additional requirement of successful completion of an industry certification or career pathway.

Deleted: Exam Schedules

The guidance counselor will establish a schedule for the administration of semester exams so that no student has more than three tests scheduled on any school day. Teachers must administer all tests according to the schedule or must have prior approval from the principal to deviate from the approved schedule.

Dual Enrollment

Upon approval by the State Board of Education, students attending MSD may participate in a dual enrollment program with local colleges and universities, providing prerequisites are met. Dual enrollment

provides opportunities for high school students to earn college credit while in high school. Only students with a 3.1 grade point overall average (on a 4.0 scale) are eligible for dual enrollment. Participation in dual enrollment courses does not obligate students to enroll at participating colleges or universities after high school graduation. Credits earned by students enrolled in the dual enrollment program are held until regular admission status is obtained at a college or university. The same college regulations apply to dual enrollment program students as regular students.

To be admitted to the Dual Enrollment Program, students must have the following:

- fourteen (14) completed Carnegie Units
- meet prerequisites for specific classes at the participating college or university
- ACT composite score of sixteen (16)
- letter of recommendation from the school counselor

Students who have not completed the minimum of fourteen (14) core high school units may be considered for the Dual Enrollment Program if they have a composite ACT score of thirty (30), the required grade point average, and recommendations prescribed above.

MISSISSIPPI ASSISTANCE CENTER SERVICES

The Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) provides appropriate assessments for MSDB students as well as local school districts and families of children with a hearing loss or a suspected hearing loss. Appropriate assessments will drive the establishment of appropriate educational services. These assessments include audiological, Cognition, Academic, and Social Emotional. These assessments are provided in the Mississippi Assistance Center located on the campus of the Mississippi School for the Deaf. The MAC can be contacted by phone at 601-984-8000 or toll free at 1-844-332- 3464.

Each MSDB student receives one low vision evaluation per year through the Mississippi Assistance Center's Low Vision Clinic. The Low Vision Clinic schedules appointments based on various needs, which include, but are not limited to educational re-evaluations, parent request, high school graduation needs and other educational or vision needs.

In addition to full low vision evaluations, MSDB students are a priority for work-ins with the low vision specialist in the case of suspected eye pathologies, school athletics and other vision issues. MSB students with potentially degenerative conditions will be monitored as needed by the low vision specialist per his professional judgment.

Parents of MSDB students are welcome to call to request updated prescriptions, follow-up eye examinations, etc. Parents may request copies of annual eye reports.

Older students are encouraged to practice their self-advocacy skills and schedule their additional eye care appointments or request eye reports.

If a parent does not wish for their student to receive an examination through the Low Vision Clinic or wishes to be notified prior to their student's scheduled evaluation, a written notification must be received by the Low Vision Clinic during registration or as soon as possible.

Early Intervention Services Ski*Hi

Ages Birth-3 years of age

The Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) provides Early Intervention Services for babies and toddlers (Birth-3) who have been identified as having hearing loss and/or vision loss. Early intervention services are provided statewide to families of deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind children age birth to 3 years. Services are provided in the natural environment by parent advisors who have received specialized training as Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

For Deaf and Hard of Hearing children:

The SKI*HI Early Intervention resource manual contains information and activities for families on these topics:

- Early communication and interaction
- Audition
- Hearing Aids/Cochlear Implants
- Aural-Oral Language
- Sign Language
- Psycho-emotional support
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Mentors

For blind or visually impaired children:

Customized developmental and learning activities are designed and taught during each visit. These activities and topics for families include:

- Early Communication and interaction
- Pre-braille/Braille Skills
- Daily Living Skills
- Orientation and Mobility Skills
- Functional Academic Skills
- Psycho-emotional Support
- Fine/Gross Motor Skills
- Social Development

Other information is provided to parents on the use and care of hearing aids/cochlear implants; development of auditory skills; establishment of meaningful, two-way communication; and the development of language skills.

Early Intervention Specialists will provide services to children ages 3-5 until transition into an appropriate program can be established.

English Learners (ELs)

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind are committed to providing a quality education for all students, including those whose first language is not English. The instructional goal of the English as a

Second Language (ESL) program would be to provide services to English learners (ELs) to improve or increase their English language proficiency; thus, enabling them to function independently and to participate effectively in the regular academic program. All identified ELs' primary core curricular instruction will be provided through the regular academic program. The academic needs of ELL students will be met through a variety of educational strategies with emphasis placed on the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

As a supplement to regular classroom instruction, EL students receive regularly scheduled instruction in English as a Second Language, with emphasis on English language acquisition skills. As students test into the ESL program, they are scheduled in ESL classes and language acquisition sessions, through pull-out, and/or push-in/inclusion. Students may be served by certified teachers, ESL tutors, and content area/mainstream teachers as identified by each student's IEP committee and language service plan.

Initially, emphasis of the K-5 ESL program is on teaching "survival" language, following directions and basic conversational English. Support and assistance are provided for EL students in core curricular content for the regular program; but the ESL program does not take the place of regular classroom instruction. At the elementary and middle school levels, students are grouped according to their English language proficiency levels to individualize language acquisition instruction as much as possible. The level of English language proficiency and the individual needs of students determine the frequency and duration of ESL instruction. At the high school level, students are scheduled into an ESL class, which also counts as a language credit toward graduation.

*The acronyms LEP, ESL, EL and ELL are sometimes used interchangeably.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Grading Guidelines

Procedures for grading ELL students must facilitate students' success in school and the school district must ensure that EL students are not being discriminated against in the assignment of grades due to a language barrier. EL students should be expected to meet the same educational requirements as other students; however, they may need more time to do so. Federal requirements mandate that districts take affirmative steps to open their educational programs to national origin minority group students. This means that while EL students must meet the same educational requirements as other students, these requirements must be presented in a manner appropriate to EL students' cultural and linguistic needs and in a time frame that facilitates their learning.

Teachers must consider alternative assessment measures such as portfolios, special projects, and journals. Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind will adhere to the regular, district-wide grading guidelines with the following cautions when grading ELL students. Grading English learners in the content areas must be based on improvement.

Fluent English Proficient (FEP) English Learners must be graded on improvement as well as knowledge of content. No failing grades may be given during the English Learners' progression from Level 1-Beginning through Level 3- Intermediate (LAS Links English Language Proficiency Levels: 1-Beginning, 2-Early Intermediate, 3-Intermediate, 4-Proficient, 5-Above Proficient).

At level 1

Beginning, ELs are just beginning to develop productive and receptive uses of English in social, school, and academic contexts. Comprehension may only be demonstrated through nonverbal gestures or through the ELs native language rather than in English.

At level 2

Early Intermediate, ELs are at the developmental stage of communication in English (social, school, and academic contexts). Language deficits delay basic communication and comprehension. At this stage, productive and receptive control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse tactics for communicating in English is emerging.

At level 3

Intermediate, ELs communicate in English somewhat within grade-level appropriate language demands in social settings and classroom/academic contexts. But deficits interfere with communication and comprehension. More time, repetition and clarification are required. English Learners have a limited grasp of productive and receptive control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse tactics when addressing new or familiar topics. At level three, English Learners' language lacks adequate connections for elaboration or details.

English Learners at English Language Proficiency Levels 4 and 5 on the LAS Links Assessment may be graded according to common criteria for assigning grades, with necessary accommodations and modifications.

Teachers must fully document regular contact with EL teachers regarding specific modifications for ELL students, the performance of EL students and the progress of ELL students. Failures for EL students must not be due to English language deficiency. English language deficiency includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension. If an EL student receives a failing grade, documented evidence of modifications and accommodations, including conferences with the EL

teacher, SET meetings with teachers, school administrators, support specialist/s, parents or parent representatives must be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

MDE 2018 EL Guidelines

POLICIES, PLANS, AND STATUTES

Title IX Grievance Policy

1. RIGHT TO EXPRESS CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

It is the policy of the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education to maintain a safe and supportive learning and educational environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination.

The Mississippi Department of Education is a conduit for federal money to the local school districts and ensures the local school districts' compliance with federal financial grants. As such, MDE requires each local school district and each state school to have a grievance policy in place to address any complaints alleging discrimination under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the American Disability Act, Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Complaints alleging discrimination by the local school district, its staff, or students should be first directed to the local school level and handled pursuant to local policy.

As specifically related to Title IX, this policy sets out the minimum steps that each state school (i.e., special school and/or district under the purview of the State Board of Education) shall take in response to a notice of alleged discrimination based on sex, including discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, which encompasses sexual violence, such as dating violence, domestic violence, and cyberstalking. The State Board of Education forbids unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment and/or discrimination against any student under its purview.

2. DEFINITIONS

A. Sex Discrimination

The practice of treating a person differently, or less favorably, than other people or groups based on sex.

B. Allegation

An assertion that someone has engaged in discrimination based on sex.

C. Sexual Harassment

Unwanted conduct based on sex. Examples of such behavior include:

- Direct or indirect threats or bribes for unwanted sexual activity
- Sexual innuendos and comments
- Asking or commenting about a person's sexual activities
- Humor or jokes about sex or females/males in general
- Making sexually suggestive remarks, gestures, or jokes, or remarks of a sexual nature about a person's appearance

- Repeated unsuccessful attempts at gaining dates or sexual behavior
- Sexual touching, pinching, brushing, or patting
- Displaying offensive sexual illustrations in the school/workplace
- Insulting and belittling a person-sexual ridicule
- Letters, notes, telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature
- Stalking a person either inside or outside the institution
- Attempt or actual sexual assault

D. Complainant

The person who has experienced the alleged discrimination based on sex. This person is considered a complainant regardless of whether they choose to file a formal complaint under Title IX.

E. Respondent

The person accused of the alleged discrimination. This person may be a student or a school employee. If the person is an employee, the school shall adhere to the process found in Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-59.

F. Title IX Coordinator

The individual responsible for overseeing the school's efforts to comply with its obligations under Title IX and Title IX regulations, including, but not limited to, coordinating any investigations of complaints of sex discrimination, implementation of supportive measures, and remedies where appropriate.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

Each state school shall have a grievance policy adopted by the governing board and accessible in both the student handbook and employee handbook. The grievance policy shall include the following:

A. Receiving and Responding to Reports

Employees who believe or have been made aware that a student has been subject to Title IX Discrimination, shall report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Failure to make such a report may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The school shall respond whenever any school employee has been put on actual notice of improper behavior as defined in the school's policy. Such notice may be from an oral report of sexual harassment by a complainant or anyone else, a written report, through personal observation, through an anonymous report, or through various other means. When a complaint or report is made under the policy, the Title IX Coordinator shall: (1) confidentially contact the complainant to offer supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, and inform them of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint; (2) explain the process for how to file a formal complaint; (3) inform the complainant that any report made in good faith will not result in discipline; and (4) respect the complainant's wishes with respect to whether to investigate unless the designated staff member determines it is necessary to pursue the complaint in light of a health or safety concern for the

community.

B. Confidentiality

The school must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of any form of prohibited sex discrimination, including any reporter, complainant, respondent, or witness, except:

1. As may be permitted by FERPA;
2. Or as required by law; or
3. To carry out the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

The confidentiality of the reporting party will be observed providing it does not interfere with the school's ability to investigate or take corrective action. If the complainant reports rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, or other behaviors which constitute criminal activity, school officials shall contact appropriate law enforcement agencies and the superintendent/executive director.

C. Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are short-term measures that are designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity. Supportive measures are available regardless of whether the complainant chooses to pursue any action under the school's policy, including before and after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. They are meant to restore access to education, protect student and employee safety, and/or deter future acts.

Supportive measures are available to the complainant, respondent, and as appropriate, witnesses or other impacted individuals, and these measures should be provided based on an individualized assessment of the needs of the individual. These supports are non-disciplinary and non-punitive individualized services designed to offer support without being unreasonable burdensome.

Examples of supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures.

D. Formal Complaint

A "Formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging discrimination or sexual harassment against a respondent and request that the school investigate the allegation(s). A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information provided by the school district. The complaint document, whether physical or electronic, shall contain the complainant's physical or digital signature. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not "the complainant" or otherwise considered a party but shall comply with applicable procedures.

E. Investigations

Once a formal complaint is filed, an investigator will be assigned and the parties will be treated equitably, including in the provision of supportive measures and remedies. Each party will

receive notice of the specifics of the allegations as known, and as any arise during the investigation. The investigator will attempt to collect all relevant information and evidence. While the investigator will have the burden of gathering evidence, it is crucial that the parties present evidence and identify witnesses to the investigator so that they may be considered during the investigation.

The principal of the school, so long as the principal is neither the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or any other individual who may have a conflict of interest, shall serve as the decision-maker, and will facilitate a written question and answer period between the parties. Each party may submit written questions for the other party and witnesses to the decision-maker for review. The questions must be relevant to the case, and the decision-maker will determine if the questions submitted are relevant and will then forward the relevant questions to the other party or witnesses for a response. The decision-maker can then review all the responses, determine what is relevant or not relevant, and issue a decision as to whether the respondent is responsible for the alleged act.

F. Presumptions about Complainants, Respondents, and Witnesses

The school presumes that reports of prohibited conduct are made in good faith. A finding that the alleged behavior does not constitute a violation of this school's policy or that there is insufficient evidence to establish that the alleged conduct occurred as reported does not mean that the report was made in bad faith.

The respondent is presumed to be not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made by the decision-maker.

G. Determination Regarding Responsibility

The decision-maker shall review the evidence provided by all parties and will make a final determination of responsibility after the investigation based on a preponderance of the evidence. "Preponderance of the evidence" means evidence that is of greater weight or more convincing than as asserted fact or facts occurred than evidence in opposition to such facts. It is evidence which shows that an assertion to be proven is more likely than not.

The decision-maker shall provide a final determination to the parties at the same time, with appeal rights provided. It will explain if any policies were violated, the steps and methods taken to investigate, the findings of the investigation, conclusions about the findings, the ultimate determination and the reasons for it, any disciplinary sanctions that will be imposed on the respondent, and any remedies available to the complainant to restore or preserve equal access.

H. Sanctions and Remedies

The school will take reasonable steps to address any violations of the policy and to restore or preserve equal access to the school's education programs or activities. Sanctions for finding of responsibility depend upon the nature and gravity of the misconduct, any record of prior discipline for similar violations, or both.

When a respondent is found responsible for the prohibited behavior as alleged, remedies shall be provided to the complainant. Remedies are designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures or remedies that are punitive or would pose a

burden to the respondent.

Whatever the outcome of the investigation or appeal, the complainant and respondent may request ongoing or additional supportive measures. Ongoing supportive measures that do not unreasonably burden a party may be considered and provided even if the respondent is found not responsible.

I. Informal Resolution

Informal resolution is available only after a formal complaint has been filed involving parties of the same status (e.g., student-student or employee-employee), prior to a determination of responsibility, and if the complainant and respondent voluntarily consent to the process in writing. Informal resolution is not available in cases which an employee is alleged to have sexually harassed a student.

J. Parent and Guardian Rights

Consistent with the applicable laws of the State of Mississippi and absent a court order or other legal requirement to the contrary, a student's parent or guardian shall be permitted to exercise the rights granted to their child under the school's policy, whether such rights involve requesting supportive measures, filing a formal complaint, or participating in a grievance process. A student's parent or guardian shall also be permitted to accompany the student to meetings, interviews, and hearings, if applicable, during a grievance process to exercise rights on behalf of the student. The student may have an advisor of choice who is a different person from the parent or guardian.

4. APPEALS

Appeals are available after a complaint dismissal or after a final determination is made. Appeals may be made due to procedural irregularities in the investigation affecting the outcome, new evidence becoming available, or due to bias or a conflict of interest by the personnel that may have affected the outcome. The school should set a reasonable time frame to submit an appeal, but not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days. Or, if there is no administrative response to the student/parent/guardian grievance by the school, the grievance should be made to the superintendent of the school or the superintendent's designee.

Parties shall be given an opportunity to submit a written statement in support of or in opposition to the final determination. A new decision-maker shall issue a final decision at the same time to each party.

The following procedures shall be followed when submitted student/parent/guardian grievances regarding administrative decisions:

Level 1: An aggrieved party should express his or her concern to the school level administration for resolution or file a formal grievance with the school superintendent/executive director. The superintendent/executive director shall investigate allegations as soon as circumstances allow, but not later than five (5) business days from submission of the original written grievance. The administrator shall provide a written response to the aggrieved party no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the original written grievance. If there is no administrative response to the aggrieved party within the ten (10) business days, or if the response is unsatisfactory, the aggrieved party may elevate to Level 2.

Level 2: If any party deems the resolution unsatisfactory, the party may appeal the decision by submitting a copy of the grievance and decision to the Mississippi Department of Education's Associate Superintendent responsible for oversight of the state school, along with a written statement detailing the reasons for the dissatisfaction. The Associate Superintendent shall investigate and review the matter. After review, the Associate Superintendent shall provide a written response to the parties postmarked no later than ten (10) business days following receipt of the appeal.

If there is no response by the Associate Superintendent to the appealing party within the ten (10) business days, or if the response is unsatisfactory to either party, the aggrieved party may advance the grievance to Level 3.

Level 3: The aggrieved party, after review of the written response from the Associate Superintendent, may appeal that response to the State Superintendent or the State's Superintendent's designee no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the written communication at Level 2. The State Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the grievance and shall provide the parties a written response postmarked within ten (10) business days following the receipt of the appeal.

Level 4: The aggrieved party may appeal the response from the State Superintendent to the State Board of Education by submitting a written request for appeal to the State Board of Education along with all documentation from Levels 1-3 no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the State Superintendent's written response at Level 3. The State Board of Education shall review the grievance and shall provide the parties an opportunity to appear at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting to present his or her grievance and response in accordance with the Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. 1232g, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et. seq.* implementing regulations, and other federal and state laws that govern the protection of student information. If the party or parties elect not to appear personally, the parties may request the Board's review of the written documentation only. The decision of the State Board of Education shall be final.

Source: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. § 106; Miss. Code Ann. § 37 1-3 (Revised 3/2022)

MDE State Board Policy 99.1

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The schools governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education will protect the confidentiality of all previous or currently enrolled students about information contained in its records as prescribed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

FERPA affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Mississippi School for the Deaf receives a request for access.
 - Parents or eligible students should submit to the Superintendent (or their designee) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect.

- The Superintendent (or school official) will plan for access and notify the parent or the eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the Superintendent/Executive Director (or their designee), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent of the eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. If, because of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth his or her views.

The right to provide written consent before the school disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school and/or the Mississippi Department of Education as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Mississippi Board of Education. A school official may also include a volunteer or a person, company, consultant or other party or contractor with whom the school and/or Mississippi Department of Education has outsourced to perform an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student volunteering to serve on a n official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill their professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records with appropriate notification to parents and eligible students to officials of another school district or college in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment of transfer.

An educational agency or institution may disclose directory information if it has given public notice to parents of students in attendance and eligible students in attendance at the agency or institution of:

1. The types of personally identifiable information that the agency or institution has designated as directory information;
2. A parent's or eligible student's right to refuse to let the agency or institution designate any or all those types of information about the student as directory information; and
3. The period within which a parent or eligible student must notify the agency or institution in
4. writing that he or she does not want any or all types of information about the student designated as directory information.

Any disciplinary actions affecting attendance are included in the student's permanent record and

cumulative folder. The school will forward education records, including disciplinary records, to other schools or colleges in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

The school may disclose directory information about students without consent. Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height or members of athletic teams, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The school may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student under certain conditions set forth in the FERPA regulations. Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to, the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

The school is required to provide military recruiters names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students, unless the parent has opted-out of the disclosure.

The parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the school designate any or all types of information about the student as directory information. The parent or eligible student must notify the Superintendent (or his/her designee) in writing within 14 days of receipt of this notice that he or she does not want any or all types of information about the student designated as directory information or disclosed to military recruiters.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Dropout Prevention Plan

While attrition will occur with each class that enrolls at state special schools governed by the State Board of Education, students come to the school anticipating success, having completed a significant admissions process. While a residential school is not for everyone, the programming, select faculty, and special residential experiences will support continued involvement and success for all enrolled students. The goal of the school is graduation and pursuit of further learning.

1. College and Career Planning
 - a. On-site print and electronic college and career information, catalogs, and application materials

- b. Campus visits by recruiters from in-state and out-of-state colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning
 - c. Transition to college, financial aid, and other workshops relevant to high school students
 - d. Guest speakers and artists who are professionals working in relevant fields of interest among the students
- 2. Intervention Programs
 - a. Attendance monitoring
 - b. Grade progress reviews throughout grading periods
 - c. Tutorial and/or study blocks supervised by a staff/faculty member
 - d. Ongoing communication between the faculty, administration, and residential life staff regarding individual needs
- 3. School, Family, and Community Partnerships
 - a. Student data sharing through school package for student records
 - b. Email links between parents, teachers, administration, and students
 - c. Real time access by parents to student attendance, grades, assignments via the Internet through the school package for student records
 - d. Additional support for individual students from community and parent groups
- 4. Support for transition back to Home Schools
 - a. Communication with parents and students
 - b. Emotional support throughout the decision-making process
 - c. Prompt transfer of records and data upon request of the new school
 - d. Monitoring to ensure that students enroll in new school

To ensure a comprehensive Dropout Prevention Plan has been designed for the MSDB to address district and community concerns for students at-risk of dropping out of school. The plan is inclusive of goals, objectives, initiatives, and action plans to help all students meet or exceed the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. This plan is intended to serve as a resource guide to outline how the school is going to address at-risk factors that may cause students to drop out of school.

Suicide Prevention Policy

This policy is designed to provide intervention services for students needing preventative counseling and immediate protection.

The school establishes this policy to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

1. Prevention. To provide in-service training to all school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.
2. Intervention. To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.
3. Postvention. To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

Suicidal Attempt: The student will be taken to the health clinic if he or she is able; otherwise, the nurse will go to the student. The staff member who is calling should give specific information on the location of

the student. The nurse will measure and assess blood pressure, pulse, respiration, and begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation/first aid as indicated. A staff member should always remain with the student and other staff members and students should move out of the area.

Contact with the superintendent occurs at this time. The superintendent will assign a staff member to contact the parent/guardian.

The nurse will:

- determine if a life-threatening situation exists and delegate a staff member,
- to activate the medical response system (EMS-9-1-1) and meet the emergency vehicle. The nurse will continue to monitor vital signs every 5 minutes until the arrival of rescue personnel,
- will contact POISON CONTROL at MS Poison Control at the University Medical Center, 800-222-1222 for assistance with any drug overdose/chemical ingestion,
- will obtain name/description of medication/chemical, amount taken, and time taken (if possible, provide the health care provider the container),
- will save all vomitus and send to the health care provider,
- will give EMS personnel all health-related information and where to transport the student for medical care, and
- advise ER/mental health provider with the current observations and assessments.

A copy of the Permission to Treat and Health Care Provider Medical Record is to be sent with the student to the health care facility. The nurse will complete this if time permits, otherwise another staff member will be assigned this task.

Best practices for assisting a student who has made a suicide attempt are:

- detain student, getting assistance if student is acting out or presents risk to self/others,
- don't touch the student if touch increases agitation,
- don't allow the student to come between you and the door, and
- don't remain alone with a student who becomes aggressive.

If a mental health counselor is onsite, he/she will respond immediately for student support. The nurse will remain with the student to monitor medical status if deemed necessary. Counselors may assume responsibility for remaining mental health intervention.

Keep students under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or EMS response personnel.

Imminent Suicide Plan:

- specificity-consider high risk if there is a detailed plan
- lethality-consider high risk when a student perceives action to be lethal
- availability-consider high risk if implement is readily accessible
- proximity-consider as higher risk with increased distance from rescuers

EX: Student in a high place with a threat to jump.

Mental Health counselor should complete a mental health intervention. The superintendent will be notified when a threat is made, and policy will be set into motion.

Otherwise:

Staff members should encourage students to communicate feelings and concerns using a non-judgmental manner to maintain student dignity. The staff member should:

- actively listen to student and acknowledge student's feelings,
- speak in calm, steady voice as well as sign in a calming nature,

- try to maintain eye contact with the student,
- reflect student's feelings back to them,
- use touch, if appropriate and do so in a gradual way,
- ask directly about suicidal intent,
- DO NOT collude with the student; concerns need to be shared with pertinent persons in the student's life,
- provide as much privacy as possible and discourage onlookers,
- introduce concepts of hope,
- acknowledge student's feelings,
- remind student of the temporary nature of crisis,
- reinforce desire that student stay alive, and
- refer for immediate medical/mental health assessments.

MSD nursing staff will work with medical personnel on medical/physical concerns. The MSD counselor will follow up with mental health services and contact the parent of the responsible party of observations noted and recommendations for future interventions and assist, as needed in facilitating a mental health evaluation. If the Responsible Party is inaccessible, the counselor will work with designated school officials to reach an emergency contact.

Keep students with imminent suicidal plans under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or appropriate surrogate.

Non-Imminent Suicidal Ideation:

- refer to the MSD mental health counselor,
- encourage student to verbalize feelings and concerns using non-judgmental communication to allow student to maintain dignity,
- clarify/reflect/summarize feelings, but never say you understand feelings
- reassure those feelings are important,
- DO NOT collude with the student as to confidentiality - concerns need to be shared with pertinent persons in the student's life,
- introduce concepts of hope,
- acknowledge student's feelings
- remind student of the temporary nature of crisis
- reinforce desire that student stay alive
- refer for immediate medical/mental health assessment

Keep students with imminent suicidal plans under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or appropriate surrogate.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached by dialing 988 or by visiting

<https://988lifeline.org/>

Identifying At-Risk Students

The district uses the following key indicators to identify students who are at- risk of dropping out or at-risk in failing to achieve a successful level of academic achievement.

- Educationally at-risk
- Percentage of promotions in grades kindergarten through second
- Passage rate on subject area tests
- Passage rate on the third grade reading summative assessment

- Results of progress monitoring assessments
- Two or more grade levels behind
- Attendance rates, office referrals, suspensions
- Poor grade performance in core subjects

The Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System has been implemented to identify these students at an earlier age.

Goals and Objectives

MSB's dropout prevention plan is designed to meet the three overarching goals for the state's dropout prevention plan: increasing the state graduation rate to 85%, reducing the state dropout rate by 50%, and reducing the truancy rate by 50%. The school will focus on the following four goals:

1. Provide opportunities for all students to experience academic success at all grade levels,
2. Improve early identification of students at-risk of dropping out,
3. Reduce risk factors associated with dropping out of school, and
4. Strengthen the home-school-community partnership.

For information regarding the MSB Dropout Prevention Plan, please visit our website at msdbk12.org

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/SCHOOL AGE (JBA)

The term "minor" when used in any statute, shall include any person, male or female, under twenty-one years of age. MS Code ' 1-3-27

This school district shall comply with the requirements of the "Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law" (' 37-13-91). Appropriate reports as required by law shall be provided to the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement.

COMPULSORY- SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

"Compulsory-school-age child" means a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program. ' 37-13-91 (2) (f) (2013)

Compulsory-school-age children must be enrolled in school unless the child is:

1. Physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of attending school as determined by the appropriate school official based upon sufficient medical documentation;
2. Enrolled in and pursuing a course of special education, remedial education or education for handicapped or physically or mentally disadvantaged children; or
3. Being educated in a legitimate home instruction program. ' 37-13-91 (3)

REPORTS

If a compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a child has accumulated five (5) unlawful absences during the school year, the superintendent shall or his designee, within two (2) school days or within five (5) calendar days, whichever is less, report, on the form provided by the State Department of Education, the absences to the school attendance officer. The superintendent, or his designee, shall report any student suspensions or student expulsions to the school attendance officer when they occur. '37-13-91 (6) School districts shall maintain accurate records documenting enrollment and attendance in a manner that allows the State Department of Education to make an assessment of changes in enrollment and attendance, including dropout rates.

The State Department of Education shall compile annually a statewide report on school district effectiveness in reducing absentee problems, dropout rates, and other attendance related problems during the previous school year, incorporate the information into the annual Mississippi Report Card required by Section 37-3-53, Mississippi Code of 1972, on school district performance and offer technical assistance and coordination services to assist districts in improving performance.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCES / VALID EXCUSES

An "unlawful absence" is an absence during a school day by a compulsory-school-age child, whose absence is not due to a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance. Days missed from school due to disciplinary suspension shall not be considered an "excused" absence under this section. Each of the following shall constitute a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the superintendent or his designee:

1. Attendance at an authorized school activity with the prior approval of the superintendent of the school district or his designee.
2. Illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
3. When isolation is ordered by the county health officer, by the State Board of Health or appropriate school official.
4. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family, which includes children, spouse, grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters.
5. A medical or dental appointment with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee, except in the case of emergency.
6. Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
7. Observance of a religious event, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval should not be withheld unless, in the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee, the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
8. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel including vacations or other family travel, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval shall be based on the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee but shall not be withheld unless the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
9. Other conditions sufficient to warrant nonattendance, with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. However, no absences shall be excused when any student suspensions or expulsions circumvent the intent and spirit of the compulsory attendance law. ' 37-13-91 (4)

10. An absence is excused when it results from the attendance of a compulsory-school age child participating in official organized events sponsored by the 4-H or Future Farmers of America (FFA). The excuse for the 4-H or FFA event must be provided in writing to the appropriate school superintendent by the Extension Agent or High School Agricultural Instructor/FFA Advisor.

11. An absence is excused when it results from the compulsory-school-age child officially being employed to serve as a page at the State Capitol for the Mississippi House of Representatives or Senate.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The superintendent and principals shall cooperate with the school attendance officer employed by the State Department of Education, pursuant to ' 37-13-85.

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards for this policy are standards 10 and 11.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards Attorney General's Opinion. Carter, 1-9-98 (#183) (97-0817) Last Review Date: August 17, 2023

TRUANCY (JBAC)

"Compulsory-school-age child" means a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program. '37-13-91 (2) (f)

A "truant" is a student who is absent without a valid excuse as identified In Policy JBA, Compulsory School Attendance.

"Truancy" also includes absence without permission from any class, study hall or school related activity for which a student is scheduled during the school day.

Disciplinary action shall be taken against students who are truant. Continued truancy may lead to academic failure, placement in the alternative school program and/or suspension or expulsion from the regular and/or alternative school programs.

Reports of truancy shall be made in accordance with the Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law (MS CODE '37-13-91) and Policy JBA.

The school district shall follow the prescribed method for reporting unlawful absences to the Mississippi Department of Education.

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards for this policy are standards 10 and 11.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards Last Review Date: August 17, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (JQN)

Homeless students in the district will have access to the education and other services needed to ensure that an opportunity is available to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all students are held. A school counselor for students in homeless situations will be designated by the district to carry out duties as required by law.

The district will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student will be admitted based on the district and Local Education Agency (LEA). Transportation will be provided to and from the student's school of origin at the request of the parent, or in the case of an unaccompanied student, the district's school counselor for homeless students. Residential services may be on a case-by-case basis based upon availability.

The superintendent or designee will produce written guidelines for distribution to each school that explains the rights of homeless students and the responsibilities of the schools to meet their needs and eliminate barriers to school attendance. This information shall also be disseminated in writing and by other means designed to raise awareness of these rights and responsibilities to staff, homeless families and students, the public, and homeless service providers.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, children are deemed to be homeless under the following conditions:

1. Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1));
2. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
3. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C));
4. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
5. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described in numbers 2-4 above.

An unaccompanied child or youth is a homeless child not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
42 U.S.C. § 11434a

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

1. It shall be the policy of this school district, to the extent practicable under requirements relating to education established by state law, that each eligible child of a homeless individual and each

eligible homeless youth will have access to a free appropriate education comparable to the education provided the children of district residents who are non-homeless, without isolation or stigma.

2. The placement of an eligible homeless child or youth will be made according to Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils and will take into consideration the best interests of the homeless child or youth and placement requests made by a parent.
3. The choice of placement in either the "school of origin" or the school serving the "place of abode" will take place regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parent(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s).
4. Provided the homeless child or youth meets eligibility criteria, he/she will be provided transportation services; compensatory education programs for the disadvantaged; educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.
5. Any and all records ordinarily kept by this school district, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, evaluations for special services and programs shall be kept on homeless children and youth and shall be forwarded in a timely fashion should a child or youth enter a new school or school district; and in a manner consistent with Section 1232(g) of Title 20.
6. Should this school district receive assistance under Section 11432, it shall coordinate with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or youth and their families.
7. Should this school district receive assistance under Section 11432, it shall designate a homelessness school counselor to insure that homeless children and youth enroll in and succeed in the schools of their district; and, homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
8. The homelessness school counselor shall inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the school counselor.
9. This school district has and will continue to review and revise, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth in schools selected in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above.
10. In reviewing and revising such policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, requirements of immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation and guardianship.

11. Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth will be promptly resolved according to the provisions of Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils. Other issues or disputes will be directed to the attention of the school official responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. If this dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make written request for a review of the matter to: Coordinator of the Homeless Program Mississippi Department of Education P. O. Box 771 Jackson, MS 39205

LEGAL REF.: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001 Adopted Date: 7/27/2023

SECTION 504 – AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT – NON-DISCRIMINATION (IDDH)

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) will not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities to the extent provided by law. The following person has been designated as the Section 504 /Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator and will handle inquiries regarding the MSDB's nondiscrimination policies, the filing of grievances, and requests for copies of grievance procedures covering discrimination on the basis of disability.

Human Resources, Section 504/ADA

School District Name: The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

School District Address: 1403 Eastover Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211

Telephone: (601) 984-8203 Fax: (601) 984-8020

LEGAL REF.: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Last Review Date: August 17, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Self-Administration of Medication of Asthma/Anaphylaxis Medications (JGCDA)

Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.

The school board of this public school district permits the self-administration of asthma and anaphylaxis medication pursuant to the requirements of this policy. A student with asthma and/or anaphylaxis is entitled to possess and self-administer prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property, on school-provided transportation, or at a school-related event or activity if:

1. The prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication has been prescribed for that student as indicated by the prescription label on the medication;
2. The self-administration is done in compliance with the prescription or written instructions from the student's physician or other licensed health care provider; and
3. A parent of the student provides to the school:

a. Written authorization, signed by the parent, for the student to self-administer prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property or at a school-related event or activity;

b. A written statement, signed by the parent, in which the parent releases the school district and its employees and agents from liability for an injury arising from the student's self-administration of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property or at a school-related event or activity unless in cases of wanton or willful misconduct;

c. A written statement from the student's physician or other licensed health care provider, signed by the physician or provider, that states:

i. That the student has asthma and/or anaphylaxis and is capable of self-administering the prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication;

ii. The name and purpose of the medication;

iii. The prescribed dosage for the medication;

iv. The times at which or circumstances under which the medication may be administered;

v. The period for which the medication is prescribed; and

vi. The physician's statement must be kept on file in the office of the school nurse of the school the student attends or, if there is not a school nurse, in the office of the principal of the school the student attends.

4. If a student uses his/her medication in a manner other than prescribed, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action under the school codes. The disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the student's immediate access to the medication.

5. The school board authorizes the school nurse or trained school employee to administer auto injectable epinephrine to a student who the school nurse or trained school employee, in good faith, believes is having an anaphylactic reaction, whether or not the student has a prescription for epinephrine.

Definitions:

1. "Parent" means parent or legal guardian.

2. "Auto-injectable epinephrine" means a medical device for the immediate administration of epinephrine to a person at risk for anaphylaxis.

3. "Asthma and anaphylaxis medication" means inhaled bronchodilator and auto-injectable epinephrine.

4. "Self-administration of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication" means a student's discretionary use of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication.

OPTIONAL

Each public, private and parochial school may maintain a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine at the school in a locked, secure, and easily accessible location. A licensed physician, including, but not limited to, Mississippi State Department of Health District Health Officers, may prescribe epinephrine auto-injectors in the name of the school system or the individual school to be maintained for use when deemed necessary under the provisions of this section.

Each public, private and parochial school that maintains a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine at the school shall require at least one (1) employee at each school to receive training from a registered nurse or a licensed medical physician in the administration of auto-injectable epinephrine.

Last Review Date: September 28, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

Student Health Services Inoculations (JGCB)

This school board has the power, authority and duty to require those vaccinations specified by the state health officer as provided in Section 41-23-37. ' 37-7-301(i).

Whenever indicated, the state health officer shall specify such immunization practices as may be considered best for the control of vaccine preventable diseases. A listing shall be promulgated annually or more often, if necessary.

Except as provided hereinafter, it shall be unlawful for any child to attend any school, kindergarten or similar type facility intended for the instruction of children (hereinafter called "schools"), either public or private, with the exception of any legitimate home instruction program as defined in Section 37-13-9, for ten (10) or less children who are related within the third degree computed according to the civil law to the operator, unless they shall first have been vaccinated against those diseases specified by the state health officer.

A certificate of exemption from vaccination for medical reasons may be offered on behalf of a child by a duly licensed physician and may be accepted by the local health officer who, in his opinion, such exemption will not cause undue risk to the community.

Certificates of vaccination shall be issued by local health officers or physicians on forms specified by the Mississippi State Board of Health. These forms shall be the only acceptable means for showing compliance with these immunization requirements, and the responsible school officials shall file the form with the child's record.

If a child shall offer to enroll at a school without having completed the required vaccinations, the local health officer may grant a period of time up to ninety (90) days for such completion when, in the opinion of the health officer, such delay will not cause undue risk to the child, the school or the community. No child shall be enrolled without having had at least one (1) dose of each specified vaccine.

Within thirty (30) days after the opening of the fall term of school (on or before October 1 of each year) the person in charge of each school shall report to the county or local health officer, on forms provided by the Mississippi State Board of Health, the number of children enrolled by age or grade or both, the number fully vaccinated, the number in process of completing vaccination requirements, and the number exempt from vaccination by reason for such exemption.

Within one hundred twenty (120) days after the opening of the fall term (on or before December 31), the person in charge of each school shall certify to the local or county health officer that all children enrolled are in compliance with immunization requirements.

For the purpose of assisting in supervising the immunization status of the children the local health officer, or his designee, may inspect the children's records or furnish certificates of immunization compliance by the school.

It shall be the responsibility of the person in charge of each school to enforce the requirements for immunization. Any child not in compliance at the end of ninety (90) days from the opening of the fall term must be suspended until in compliance, unless the health officer shall attribute the delay to lack of supply of vaccine or some other such factor clearly making compliance impossible. 41- 23-37

Failure to enforce provisions of this Section shall constitute a misdemeanor and upon conviction be punishable by fine or imprisonment or both. ' 41-23-37 (1983) The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard for this policy is standard 6 and 28.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Last Review Date: September 28, 2023 Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

Concussion Management and Return to Play Policy (JGEB)

The Board of Trustees of this school district adopts this concussion management and return to play policy that includes the following guidelines:

- Parents or guardians shall receive and sign a copy of the concussion policy before the start of the regular school athletic event season.
- An athlete who reports or displays any symptoms or signs of a concussion in a practice or game setting shall be removed immediately from the practice or game. The athlete shall not be allowed to return to the practice or game for the remainder of the day regardless of whether the athlete appears or states that he or she is normal.
- The athlete shall be evaluated by a health care provider working within the provider's scope of practice.
- If an athlete has sustained a concussion, the athlete shall be referred to a licensed physician, preferably one with experience in managing sports concussion injuries.
- The athlete who has been diagnosed with a concussion shall be returned to play only after full recovery and clearance by a health care provider.
- Return to play after a concussion should be gradual and follow a progressive return to competition.
- An athlete shall not return to a competitive game before demonstrating that he or she has no symptoms in a full supervised practice.
- Athletes shall not continue to practice or return to play while still having symptoms of a concussion.

The superintendent/designee shall develop procedures to support this policy and the whole staff shall implement.

Concussion Policy Definitions

- "Health care provider" means a licensed physician or a licensed nurse practitioner, licensed physician assistant or licensed healthcare professional working within the person's scope of practice and under the direct supervision or written consultation of a physician. All health care providers referred to in this act also must be trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
- "School athletic event" means activities sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) or the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS), and school-sponsored activities in Grades 7 through 12 of schools that are not members of the MHSAA or the MAIS which activities are organized and conducted in a manner substantially similar to activities that are sanctioned by the MHSAA or the MAIS.

Last Review Date: September 28, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

District Assurance for Children with Disabilities (IDDFAA)

The Mississippi Schools of the Deaf and the Blind School District is committed to serving students with disabilities and hereby sets a goal of expanding and providing full educational opportunities for all students with disabilities, ages birth through twenty-one (21). The opportunities will be provided in accordance with applicable state statutes, federal laws and the Mississippi Department of Education's policies.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The district will provide a free appropriate public education to children ages birth through twenty-one (21), with a disability who need special education and, as appropriate, related services as defined under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2007 (IDEA), Mississippi statutes, and the Mississippi Department of Education policies. A free appropriate public education will be provided to students with disabilities who are enrolled in the district. These services will be provided at no cost to the parent, will meet the standards of the Mississippi State Board of Education, and will stand in conformity with a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The provision of a free appropriate public education will continue for a student with a disability through the school year in which a student reaches age twenty-one (21) if the student was enrolled in the district and was twenty (20) at the beginning of the school year.

Preschool students who have been determined to have a disability under IDEA, Part B, shall be provided a free appropriate public education in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) no later than their third (3) birthday.

Children participating in early-intervention programs under Part C of IDEA, and who are eligible and will participate in preschool programs under Part B of IDEA, will experience a smooth and effective transition to the district's preschool program. Appropriate district personnel will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the Department of Health, the lead agency for Part C of IDEA.

In accordance with Part B of IDEA regulations, students with disabilities who have graduated from high school with a general education diploma are not entitled to a free appropriate public education by the district.

Procedures for the implementation of this policy by the district are those contained in the state regulations that are relevant to local school districts and issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

CHILD FIND

The district will continue its efforts to search for underserved children, ages birth through twenty-one, who are in need of special education and related services as defined under IDEA, Part B. Children with disabilities, including children who are homeless children or are wards of the State, regardless of the severity of their disability are identified, located and evaluated for services. In accordance with IDEA, Part B, the district will conduct Child Find activities for children who reside in the district's jurisdiction and who are enrolled in the district.

Similar Child Find activities undertaken for the public-school children enrolled in the district will be conducted with respect to the identification, location, and evaluation for those children with disabilities who are enrolled in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located within the boundaries of the district. The Child Find process will be completed in a time period comparable to that for other students enrolled and attending public schools within the district.

The district will adhere to the relevant policies and the procedures for implementation of the Child Find requirements for local school districts under IDEA, Part B, as issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

EVALUATION AND DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY – PROTECTION IN EVALUATION

All testing and evaluation materials and procedures used by district personnel for assessment and placement will be, to the maximum extent possible, selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory. Materials or procedures shall be provided and administered in the child's native language or mode of communication, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so, and no single procedure shall be the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

The district will conduct reevaluations in accordance with the policies and procedures of Mississippi Department of Education prior to the initial provision of special education and related services to a student with a disability.

All reevaluations will be conducted of each student with a disability in accordance with the regulations of the Mississippi Department of Education. All reevaluations conducted by the district will be provided at no cost to the parent. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

The district will protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data, information, and records collected and maintained relative to students with disabilities as required under IDEA, Part B, and the

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

In accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education, the district will ensure the development, implementation, review, maintenance, and revision of each student's IEP periodically, but not less than annually. Educational placement decisions will be determined by a student's IEP Committee, except when a school official has the authority under IDEA, Part B, to remove a student with a disability from the student's current placement due to a violation of school rules. The district will initiate and conduct IEP meetings to develop, review, and revise the IEP of a student residing within its jurisdiction who is provided special education and related services in accordance with the regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The district will ensure the provision of the rights and the procedures provided to parents and students with disabilities as required under IDEA, Part B, and the regulatory policies and procedures issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The district will ensure that students with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed due process with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parents of a child with a disability must be given to the parents only one (1) time a school year, except that a copy also must be given to the parents:

1. Upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation;
2. Upon a parent filing a request for due process complaint;
3. Upon a disciplinary action constituting a change in placement; and/or
4. Upon request by a parent. The notice will fully explain the safeguards in the parents' native language unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The district, to the maximum extent appropriate, educates students with disabilities in their age range. A continuum of alternative placements based on individual students' IEPs will be provided to students with disabilities in the district. LEA placement of the students will be determined at least on an annual basis and will be as close to the student's home as possible. In selecting the least restrictive environment for each student, consideration is given to any potentially harmful effect on the student, or the quality of services needed. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The IEP Committee, when determining placement of each student with a disability, will utilize this policy and the designated procedures.

LEGAL REF: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1401; 1412; 1414; 1417; 1435; 1437; 1438 Last Review Date: October 19, 2023 Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 10/19/2023

Student Attendance, Reporting of Student Attendance, Tardiness and Excuses (JBD)

The State Board of Education (SBE) believes that good attendance, with a minimum of tardiness and absenteeism, is essential if students are to gain maximum benefit from the school district's instructional program. The SBE thusly directs the superintendent to develop administrative regulations governing tardiness and absences (excused and non-excused).

The administrative regulations shall be based on all applicable state laws governing absenteeism and tardiness and shall include (but not be limited to) the counting and reporting of students to the Mississippi Department of Education for attendance purposes, expectations for good student attendance, parent responsibility, excused and unexcused absences, and tardiness. Initial administrative regulations and any future changes to such administrative regulations shall be approved by the SBE before implementation.

Make-up Assignments: The administrative regulations shall specify that no absence will be excused when it is due to suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary action. However, to avoid adopting a policy or administrative rule that would ensure a student's failure, the district shall adopt a provision that permits or requires suspended students who are not immediately placed in an alternative school program to make up work within specified deadlines.

Attendance Reporting: In order for a student to be considered as having attended school for a full day, the SBE specifies that each student must be present for 63% of his or her individual Instructional day as fixed by the SBE for each individual school. For purposes of reporting absenteeism, a student who has an absence that is more than thirty-seven percent (37%) of the student's instructional day, as fixed by the SBE for the school at which the student is enrolled, shall be considered absent the entire school day.

The superintendent shall develop and submit for board adoption a policy which includes:

1. a definition of the instructional day for each individual school so that the 63% of the instructional day can be computed for each student within the school district's individual schools, and
2. a process for computing 63% of the instructional day for each student within the school district's individual schools.

DEFINITIONS

Full Day Attendance: When a student is present for 63% of his or her individual instructional day as fixed by the SBE for each individual school.

Unlawful Absence: An absence for an entire school day or during part of a school day when such absence is not due to a valid excuse.

LEGAL REF.: Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law, MS CODE 37-13-91 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 10 and 11 Attorney General Opinion, Carter, 1-9-98) (#183) (97-0817)
Last Review Date: October 19, 2023, Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 10/19/2023

Disciplinary Management (JCD)

Zero Tolerance Policy

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18, MSDB has a zero-tolerance policy for the possession and/or use of firearms on any school property or at any school function or school-related activity. Any student found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to expulsion. Any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm, or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17, shall be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled; provided, however, that the superintendent of the school shall be authorized to modify the period for such expulsion on a case-by-case basis and/or will adhere to guidelines specified under IDEA. Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the school board.

If a student has committed an infraction where Zero Tolerance applies, only the IEP Committee may determine the placement of a special education student in the alternative setting. Should the parents disagree with the placement decision, due process procedures afforded under IDEA will be followed. The IEP Committee will also determine if the student has met the goals outlined on the IEP, which would allow the student to return to an appropriate placement other than the alternative setting.

Disciplinary Procedures

Probation: a period set by an administrator during which a student is given an opportunity to improve behavior exhibited in prior violations of school policy. The administrator will notify students, parents, and teachers in writing of students placed on probation. This notification could include a contract including future plans and expectations of the student and the way the student must meet the prescribed requirements. The parents, student, faculty, principal or supervisor, Director of Residence Education, and the counselor will receive copies of the signed contract.

Students who fail to make required minimum academic progress, to improve attendance, or to correct residential life behavioral problems during the probationary term will be evaluated for appropriate actions.

General Suspension for Ten (10) Days or Less

Suspension: the administrative removal of a student from class attendance at MSDB for a specified period due to violations of school policy. If the student receives an out-of-school suspension, the student may not come to campus for any reason for the number of days assigned. Under the procedural safeguards, special circumstances that warrants a suspension will be considered.

The Superintendent may suspend a student from MSDB for a period of ten (10) school days or less when it is determined that a student's behavior is detrimental to the good order of the school, and that suspension is an appropriate disciplinary action for a serious violation of school rules (or frequent violations of school rules).

The procedure for suspending a student is as follows: MSDB officials will provide the student with a notice of the charge of violation of school discipline and the evidence against them. The notice of the charge may be given orally. The opportunity will be given for the student to hear the charge and evidence and to offer the student an opportunity to respond. This will be the only hearing conducted. If the facts indicate the student's guilt, the Superintendent will determine the appropriate term of suspension.

Upon notification of the suspension, the student is placed on restriction (in dormitory room, if during extended day or in a room specified by the principal/supervisor during the school day) until the actual departure from school to begin the suspension. The suspension may begin immediately. MSDB will inform the parent/guardian(s) of the suspension prior to the student leaving campus.

Within five school days of the informal hearing with the student, MSDB officials will send written notification to the student and parent/guardian(s) specifying the reasons for the suspension. Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension. Such exclusions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc. A student suspended from school may make up work. To take advantage of this opportunity, the student must comply with the timelines specified in MSDB policies for making up work. Failure to contact teachers and make specific arrangements will waive the right to make up the work.

Upon completion of suspension, a student returning to school must make an appointment with the school official who handled the suspension to discuss returning to school and any additional restrictions that may apply. Parent/Guardian(s) will be requested to consult with the MSDB official.

Emergency Suspension

Emergency Suspension: occurs when the Superintendent or a designee summarily suspends a student for not more than three (3) days prior to completing a n investigation for serious student misconduct under circumstances where immediate removal of the student is necessary to restore order, protect persons on the school grounds, protect the student, or protect school property. The school official will meet with the student to briefly explain the purpose of the suspension and allow the student to respond. Parents will be immediately notified of the suspension. The student may be placed under the supervision of security that is provided by MSDB and may not attend any classes. The student must leave school as soon as possible.

During the student's absence, a school official will complete the investigation by the end of the school day following the emergency suspension. The administration will communicate findings to the student by phone and allow the student to respond.

Further disciplinary action will be recommended or taken as needed. If additional suspension is necessary, the Superintendent or a designee may extend the suspension for a period not to exceed a maximum of ten days. A written notification of the reasons for the suspension will be sent to the student and parents within three (3) school days.

Change in Student Placement

A change in placement only occurs when there is a serious violation to the code of conduct and (a) the removal is more than 10 consecutive school days; or (b) the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than ten (10) school days in a school year; and

considering other factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

Authority of School Personnel

The MSDB school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates the code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than ten (10) school days to the extent such alternatives are applied to children without disabilities and additional removals for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct if those removals do not constitute a change in placement.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, in cases where a child:

- carries or possess a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substances, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

An IEP Team must determine an interim alternative education setting. Any interim alternative educational setting in which the student is placed by the school personnel or hearing officer must be selected so as to enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive services and modifications, including those described in the student's current IEP, that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in that IEP and includes services and modifications to address the behavior that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Manifestation Determination Review

A manifestation determination review is an evaluation of the relationship between a student's disability and the act of misconduct that must be conducted when the MSDB proposes to take specified serious disciplinary actions. The IEP Team, as determined by the parent and MSDB, has up to ten (10) school days from any decision to change a child's educational placement for disciplinary reasons to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent to determine the relationship, if any, between the student's disability and the misconduct in question.

The behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability if:

- the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability
- the conduct in question was the direct result of the MSDB's failure to implement the student's IEP

The conduct will be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the MSDB, the parent, and relevant members of the student's IEP Team determine that either condition is met.

No manifestation review is required when a child is removed from his current placement for not more than ten (10) school days to an interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or because of a suspension.

Determination That Behavior WAS a Manifestation of Disability

The IEP Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment (and implement a behavioral intervention plan) in circumstances where the manifestation determination review concludes that the student's behavior was related to his disability provided the MSDB has not already conducted such assessment before the occurrence of the behavior that resulted in the change in the student's placement. If a Behavioral Intervention Plan has already been developed and implemented, the IEP Team will review the plan and make modifications, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Determination That Behavior WAS NOT a Manifestation of Disability

If a student is removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) days for conduct determined not to be a manifestation of his disability or removed to an interim alternative educational setting for drugs, weapons, or infliction of serious bodily injury (regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the disability), the student will receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications that are designed to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

A functional behavioral assessment is a procedure to assess problem behavior prior to recommending strategies for dealing with the student's problem behavior.

The general purpose of a functional assessment of behavior is to provide the IEP Team with additional information, analysis, and strategies for dealing with undesirable behavior, especially when it is interfering with the student's education. The process involves identifying the undesirable behavior; observing the student and collecting data on the problem behavior and consequences; developing an intervention(s); and collecting data on the effectiveness of the intervention(s) in changing the behavior. A functional behavioral assessment is only performed when the IEP Committee determines it is needed.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

The IEP Team will consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, to address behavior in the case of a student with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of other students.

Expedited Due Process

When a parent or the Superintendent or designee for MSDB requests an appeal to review a manifestation determination, the Mississippi Department of Education will arrange for an expedited, impartial due process hearing, which shall occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the hearing is requested. The hearing officer will decide within ten (10) school days after the hearing. The student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of a change in placement resulting from the behavior, whichever occurs first, unless the parent

and the MSDB agree otherwise. This applies to removals of up to forty-five (45) school days for special circumstances, such as drugs, weapons, and infliction of serious bodily injury.

A parent's right to an expedited, impartial due process hearing is limited to disciplinary situations involving a change of placement, which would occur if a child were removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) school days at a time or if there were a series of removals from the student's current educational placement in school year. The MSDB has the right to request an expedited hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving notice of the due process complaint unless the parent and MSDB agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or agree to use mediation. The due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the due process complaint.

The decisions rendered in expedited due process hearings are appealable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States.

Drugs And Alcohol (JCDAC)

Students are absolutely prohibited from carrying, possessing in any manner, using or selling alcoholic beverages, morphine, marijuana, cocaine, opium, heroin or their derivatives or compounds, drugs commonly called LSD, "pep" pills, tranquilizers, or any other narcotic drug, barbiturate, substance ingredient or compound which, when taken orally, intravenously, inhaled or in any other manner, may cause the person to be under the influence thereof or any other controlled substance regulated by law.

The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is under the supervision and direction of such physician. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property. With regard to prescription medications, Policy Self-Administration of Medication of Asthma/Anaphylaxis Medications applies.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all students during all of the period of time that they are under and subject to the jurisdiction of this school district, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, while under the supervision and direction of any teacher, principal or other authority of this school district or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or pose a threat to the safety of the student or others.

Any student violating any of the provisions of this policy shall be subject to Manifestation Determination Review (MDR). In the event of violation of this policy, all reporting requirements of Policy JGCDA-P, Management of Narcan and Other Opioid Antagonists, shall be applicable.

This policy is for the discipline and protection of the students of this school district and their general welfare. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to avoid any prosecution under any pertinent criminal statute of the State of Mississippi.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE Sections 37-11-18; 41-29-101 et seq.; 97-32-27 thru 97-32-29

CROSS REF.: Policies JCAA – Due Process
JCBE – Unlawful or Violent Acts
JGCD – Student Health Services – Medicines
Last Review Date: January 18, 2024
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Management Of Narcan and Other Opioid Antagonists (JGCDA-P)

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) School District to seek to provide assistance to any person who may be suffering from an opioid overdose on school property.

Opioid Antagonist – Any drug that binds to opioid receptors and block or inhibits the effects of opioids acting on those receptors and that is approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid-related overdose. This includes, but is not limited to, Narcan.

An education employee may store or distribute an opioid antagonist. An education employee may administer an opioid antagonist to another person if the education employee:

1. In good faith, believes the other person is experiencing a drug overdose; and
2. Acts with reasonable care in administering the opioid antagonist to the other person.

Narcan, or other opioid antagonists, will be available at all schools in the MSDB School District. School nurses and school resource officers will be trained on the administration of Narcan, or other available opioid antagonists. Unless otherwise proscribed by state law, school nurses may serve as trainers.

All opioid antagonists shall be stored safely in compliance with the drug manufacturer's instructions. Narcan, and other opioid antagonists, shall be readily accessible to administer in the event of suspected drug overdose. All staff shall be made aware of the Narcan and other opioid antagonist storage locations.

Parents/guardians and Emergency Medical Services (911) must be called upon whenever an opioid antagonist is administered and in all suspected overdose situations.

Any person acting in good faith and with reasonable care to another person whom he/she believes to be experiencing an opioid-related overdose may administer an opioid antagonist and shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability or professional licensing sanctions.

Nothing in this policy is intended to regulate, restrict or otherwise deter a law enforcement officer, emergency medical technician, firefighter, licensed medical professional or other authorized individual from administering his/her own supply of Narcan or other opioid antagonist when responding in good faith to a suspected drug overdose occurring on school property.

LEGAL REF: MS Code 41-29-319 & 41-29-321

Abstinence-Plus Sex Education (ICG)

The school board of every public school district shall adopt a policy to implement abstinence-only, abstinence-plus, or sexual risk avoidance education into its curriculum.

BELIEF

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind believes that every student has the right to accurate information concerning the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. The district is committed to fostering community partnerships that educate both students and parents about this important topic.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind School District seeks to affirm its commitment to creating healthy and responsible teens in the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind by fully complying with the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, Section 37-13-171, and by:

- Adopting educational programs designed to help students and parents take action to reduce rates of teen births and sexually transmitted infections and integrating such programs into already established classes, and
- Establishing principles, guidelines, and strategies for implementing effective sex education programs, referred to in state law as “Abstinence-Plus” education programs.

The district shall utilize an age-appropriate, evidenced based, medically accurate, Abstinence-Plus curriculum from the list of curricula approved and recommended by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), including as one choice the curricula of Abstinence-Plus developed by the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Department of Health, if such curricula are on the MDE’s approved curriculum list.

ABSTINENCE-PLUS SEX EDUCATION

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board adopts a Mississippi Department of Education approved “Abstinence-Plus Education Curriculum” and requires the implementation of such a program and curriculum in the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind effective at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

Furthermore, the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board:

1. Prohibits any teaching that abortion can be used to prevent the birth of a baby;
2. Requires boys and girls to be separated into different classes when sex-related education is discussed or taught;
3. Prohibits instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms; and
4. Requires the school nurse employed by the school district to carry out the functions of those strategies to promote consistency in the administration of the program if the district adopts the program developed by the Mississippi Department of Health.

DEFINITION

Abstinence-Plus education is a grade and age-appropriate school curriculum that includes every component of the following, plus any other programmatic or instructional components approved by the MDE:

- the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity, and the likely negative psychological and physical effects of not abstaining;
- the harmful consequences to the child, the child's parents and society that bearing children out of wedlock is likely to produce, including the health, educational, financial and other difficulties the child and his or her parents are likely to face, as well as the inappropriateness of the social and economic burden placed on others;
- that unwanted sexual advances are irresponsible and teaches how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances;
- that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and related health problems;
- the current state law related to sexual conduct, including forcible rape, statutory rape, paternity establishment, child support and homosexual activity; and
- that a mutually faithful, monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate setting for sexual intercourse.
- any other age and grade appropriate material such as contraceptives (excluding instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms), the nature, cause and effects of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, along with a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates.

PARENT'S RIGHTS

Each school providing instruction or any other presentation on human sexuality in the classroom, assembly or other official setting shall be required to provide no less than one (1) week's written notice thereof to the parents of children in such programs of instruction. The written notice must inform the parents of their right to request the inclusion of their child for such instruction or presentation. The notice must also inform the parents of the right, and the appropriate process, to review the curriculum and all materials to be used in the lesson or presentation. Upon the request of any parent, the school shall excuse the parent's child from such instruction or presentation, without detriment to the student.

PROCEDURES

The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall establish procedures to support this policy. The Superintendent will provide the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board with an annual report on the outcomes of the Abstinence-Plus education program. If funding is available, this report shall include quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of the program and shall include the perspective of students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis in accordance with the Board's policy review process. This policy shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, including but not limited to code sections 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175, as amended and with all other applicable federal and state laws.

LEGAL REF: MS Code 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175

Last Review Date: January 18, 2024

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Mississippi State Laws

The State Legislature has passed several laws to prevent school violence and motivate students to modify or extinguish delinquent behavior. A copy of the entire law may be found in the volumes of Mississippi Code Annotated of 1972, as amended. The following statutes are examples of some of the state laws that pertain to student conduct but are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all statutes applicable to student conduct on or off school property.

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-51

Notification of Department of Education of conviction of certificated person of certain felonies of sex offense

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-81

School Safety Center established by the Mississippi Department of Education

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-84

Confiscation of illegal firearms;

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-89

School discipline and classroom management courses; requirement;

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-93

School Crisis Manage Program; quick response teams; toll free telephone service for reporting school violence

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-323

Application and enforcement of general criminal laws of state.

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-14

General duties and powers of superintendent of school district

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-17

Employment recommendations; contracts; higher grade licenses; criminal record background checks

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-71

Suspension or expulsion of student

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-5

Fire drills instruction; emergency management; active shooter drills

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-18

Automatic expulsion for weapon or controlled substance possession

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-19

Suspension or expulsion of student damaging school property; liability of parent or custodian

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-20

Intimidation, threatening or coercion of students for purpose of interfering with attendance of classes

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-21

Abuse of superintendent, principal, teacher, or bus driver

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-29

Reporting of unlawful activity or violent act on educational property or during school related activity; authority of law enforcement officers; reporting of disposition of charges against student; liability of school personnel participating in reporting

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-35

Penalties for failure to file reports

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-37
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; definition
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-39
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; illegality
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-41
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; prohibitions
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-43
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; duties of boards of trustees
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-49
Wearing of approved eye protective devices required during participation in certain vocational, industrial arts, and chemical-physical laboratory courses of instruction
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-53
Distribution of school district's discipline plan; content of plan; appearance by parents, guardians, or custodians at discipline conferences; recovery from parents for damage or destruction of property
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-55
Code of Student Conduct
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-57
Immunity of school personnel from liability for carrying out action in enforcing rules regarding control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91
Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-3
Storage of cumulative folders; access to records; disposition of records upon transfer of student between schools; destruction of records
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-6
Central reporting system for expulsions
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-9
Requirements for enrollment of children in public school
Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-151
Requirement to Notify Youth Court of Expulsions
Miss. Code Ann. § 93-5-26
Rights of non-custodial parents
Miss. Code Ann. § 97-44-1 et seq.
Mississippi Street Gang Act
Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17
Weapons possession on educational property

Deleted: MSDB OUTREACH SERVICES
Antonio Magee, Ph.D.
MIRC Director/ MSDB Supports
antonio.magee@msdbk12.org 601-984-8226

Cindi Eskew Matthews
Early Intervention Specialist
cindi.matthews@msdbk12.org
769-572-1062

Gloria Rogers-McDuffy
Early Intervention Specialist
gloria.mcduffy@msdbk12.org
769-572-2352

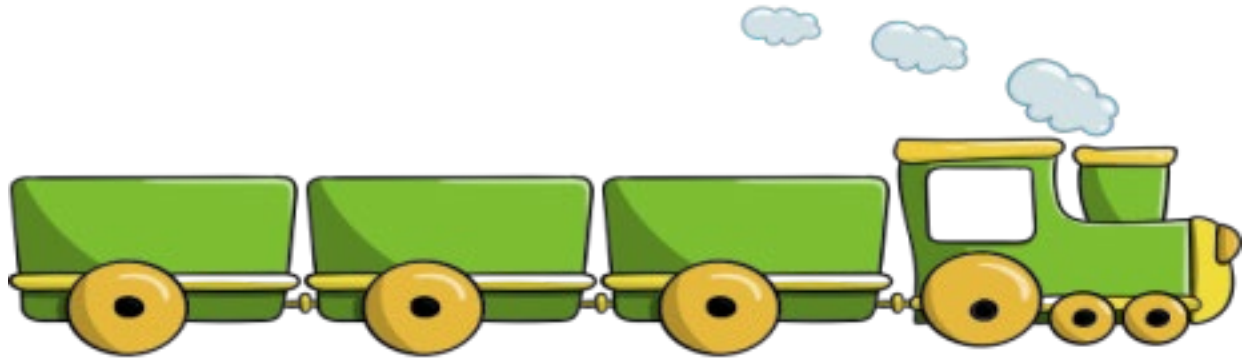
Dr. Glen Stribling
Optometrist
glen.stribling@msdbk12.org
601-984-8222

Dr. Ashley Sandifer
Pediatric Audiologist
ashley.sandifer@msdbk12.org
601.984.8133

Deleted: Kaye Carr
Early Intervention Coordinator kaye.carr@msdbk12.org
601-668-6401

Deleted: Mississippi Hearing & Vision (DEAF-BLIND)
Project Toni Hollingsworth, Project Director
thollingsworth@usm.edu

Deleted: 800-264-5135



Parent Handbook for the MSDB Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 Program

2025-2026

“Play is the work of a child,” Maria Montessori and Jean Piaget.

This Handbook and the Policies within:

This handbook is designed to provide detailed information about the school and its operational policies. MSDB reserves the right to make updates to the handbook as necessary and will inform families of any changes. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook, along with the Enrollment Agreement provided. In the Enrollment Agreement, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt of an agreement to the policies outlined here.

Mission and Values

The mission of MSDB's Pre-K Program is to provide a nurturing, accessible environment, where children grow, learn, and thrive together—regardless of socio-economic status or cultural background. The program supports each child's unique development through individualized instruction, specialized curriculum, low teacher-to-child ratios, and collaboration with therapy and support services.

MSDB's staff is deeply committed to:

- Character development
- Partnership with families and community
- Respect for each individual
- The celebration of our differences

The staff believe that early learning rooted in acceptance, access, and empathy builds a strong foundation for lifelong confidence and communication.

Philosophy

MSDB's Pre-K philosophy is grounded in the belief that all children, regardless of ability, thrive in an environment that honors individual differences and diverse learning styles. For children with sensory and developmental differences, this means providing rich, multisensory experiences that are tailored to each child's needs.

Pre-K staff promote early and consistent access to language and communication through American Sign Language (ASL), spoken and written English, Braille, tactile learning, and other accessible formats. Our classrooms are designed to support visual, auditory, and tactile engagement to ensure every child can explore, interact, and

express themselves meaningfully.

MSDB's Pre-K staff believe that early exposure to communication, social interaction, independence, and learning opportunities helps children develop:

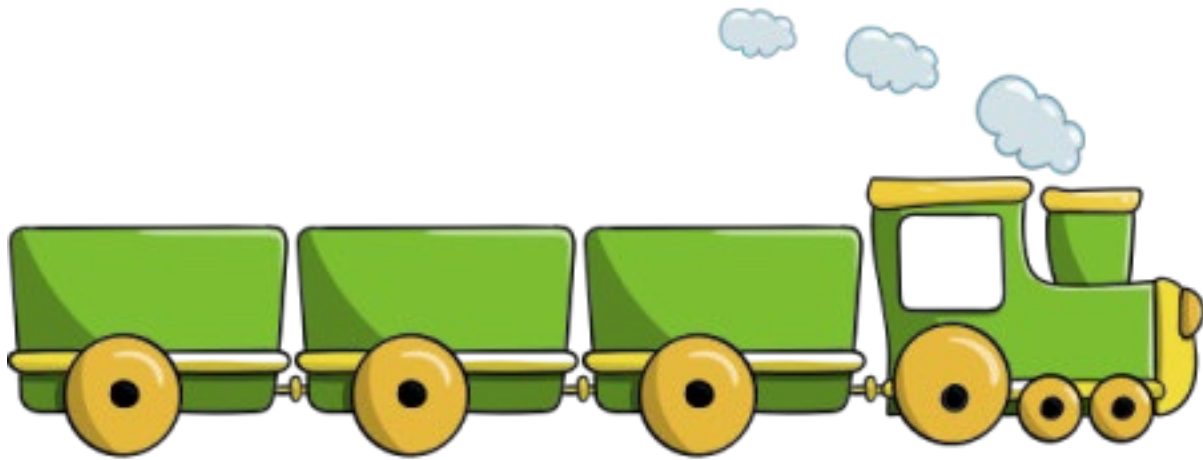
- Confidence and self-expression
- Empathy and understanding
- Self-help and problem-solving skills
- Respect for themselves and others
- The ability to communicate their needs in a way that works for them

Our approach is holistic and family centered. Our staff view families as essential partners in each child's journey and work together to build a bridge between home, school, and the wider world.

School Colors: Our school colors—green and gold—symbolize key aspects of our values:

- **Green** represents hope and growth, highlighting our dedication to nurturing your child's development socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
- **Gold** symbolizes success and excellence, reflecting our confidence that your child will thrive in MSDB's Pre-K Program and carry a strong foundation of achievement with them as they leave our program and continue their educational journey.

The Staff: The quality of this program is a direct result of the quality of the staff. It is essential to attract staff who are experienced and knowledgeable in early childhood education. Each classroom is staffed with a minimum of one full-time teacher and one full-time assistant. Additional staff may float between rooms to provide extra support as needed. All staff undergo criminal background checks, and reference checks. The staff are also specially trained to work with children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have low vision.



WELCOME ABOARD our new MSDB Pre-K Program train!

The Pre-K staff are excited to work with you and your child in fostering a nurturing and educational environment. To ensure a successful partnership between home and school, MSDB asks that parents adhere to the following policies and guidelines:

1. Campus Tour and Discovery Day

To ensure a smooth transition for your child into the Pre-K program, it is a requirement that all incoming children tour the campus with a parent before admission. This helps both the child and parent become familiar with the physical environment and provides an opportunity for the child to feel more comfortable.

Additionally, MSDB's Pre-K offers a **Discovery Day** where your child may visit the classroom for one hour prior to admission. During this time, your child can interact with peers, observe the classroom routine, and explore the social environment. It helps teachers and parents assess how the child fits into the group dynamics.

Discovery Day Details:

- **Duration:** 1 hour
- **Purpose:** To familiarize the child with the classroom environment and assess social fit.
- **When:** Discovery Days are scheduled on specific dates before admission. Parents will be contacted to confirm a suitable time.

Active participation in these experiences helps build a strong foundation for a positive school experience.

2. Application Process:

To complete your application, **you MUST provide all of the following documents:**

1. Completed Enrollment Application
2. Signed Enrollment Agreement
3. Your Child's Birth Certificate
4. Proof of Residence (Choose two of the following):
 - Utility Bill (e.g., Light, Water, Gas)
 - Phone Bill
 - Cable Bill
 - Lease Agreement
 - Mortgage Statement
5. Copy of IFSP/IEP
6. Doctor's documentation of the child's disability
7. Immunization record

3. Admissions Process

Children are eligible for admission at the age of three. Due to the limited number of spaces available and a commitment to maintaining a low teacher-to-student ratio, the admissions process is thorough and may take some time. The following steps must be completed before a child is officially admitted to the Pre-K program:

- **Tour of the Facility:** Parents and the child must schedule a campus tour to become familiar with the school environment, classrooms, and available resources.
- **Meeting with the Director/Principal or Specified Teacher:** During the tour, the parents and child will meet with the Director/Principal or a designated teacher to discuss the child's individual needs and how this school can best support their development.
- **Special Services Admissions:** Families must go through Special Services at the MSDB campus. The MSDB Admissions Committee will review the child's information, assessments, and supporting documents. Following this review, the committee will notify both the parents and the local school district of the preliminary decision.
- **Transition IEP Meeting:** If the Admissions Committee recommends the child for placement, a Change of Placement IEP meeting will be held by the local school district. MSDB staff will be invited to participate in the meeting to provide input. If the IEP Committee agrees with the recommendation and finalizes services and goals, the child may be formally enrolled.
- **Notification of Admission:** Once both the Admissions Committee and the IEP Committee have approved the placement, families and districts will receive official notification of admission. If space is not immediately available, the child may be placed on a waitlist and contacted when an opening arises.

4. Waiting List

Due to a commitment to a low teacher-to-student ratio, spaces may be limited. If the program reaches full capacity, families who wish to enroll will be placed on a **Waiting List**.

Waiting List Policy:

- **Placement:** Based on the order of applications received.
- **Notification:** Families will be notified when a spot becomes available.
- **Reapplication:** Families must reapply each year if they wish to be considered for future enrollment.

MSDB's Leadership encourages families to apply early to ensure the best chance of securing a spot.

5. Withdrawing

If you need to withdraw your child from MSDB's Pre-K Program, you must give notice in writing. The notice begins the day it is received in the school office. You must obtain all of your child's belongings the last day he/she is in school.

6. Tuition and Fees

MSDB's Pre-K Program, just like all of the other programs this district offers, is tuition-free and fee-free to all.

7. The School Day

Your Child's First Day

Preparing for the first day of school can be exciting, but it can also be overwhelming and an anxious time - our staff understand and will work with you to make your child's first day the best it can be. Don't hesitate to share any concerns you have before that first drop-off. Each child is unique in their patterns and ease of adjustment to new situations.

Be sure to talk with the staff daily during the transition phase. A consistent daily schedule (arrival and departure routines) also helps children adjust to a new routine and environment.

8. Parent Responsibilities

Parents are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- **On Time:** Drop off your child between 7:45-8:00 AM. The cut-off time for arrival is 9:00 AM. Pick up is from 2:45 PM - 3:00 PM (Mon-Thurs) and 11:45-12:00 PM (Fridays).
MSDB's Pre-K does not have extended day care.
- **Toiletry Items:** Provide necessary toiletry items (e.g., diapers, wipes, pull-ups) clearly labeled with your child's name. These items will stay at school and need to be replenished throughout the school year.
- **Extra Clothing:** Bring two changes of clothes, labeled with your child's name, in case of accidents or spills. Staff suggest a sweater or jacket for the school as well.
- **Napping Blanket:** Please provide a blanket for your child's naptime, labeled with your child's name. This should be taken home weekly for washing.
- **School Supplies:** Parents are expected to provide the list of school supplies on your child's School Supply List by the first day of class.

9. Parent Involvement

Active parental involvement is critical to your child's success. Parents are encouraged to participate in the following:

- **IEP Meetings:** Required to attend your child's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings held on Friday afternoons.
- **Annual Doctor Visits:** Required attendance for annual visits with Dr. Sandifer (Audiologist) or Dr. Stribling (Optometry) at the Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) Clinic on campus.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Attend at least one conference per semester.
- **Classroom Activities:** Participate in special events and classroom activities.
- **Special Events & Parties:** Volunteer for classroom parties and school celebrations.
- **Observation Times:** You may be asked from time-to-time, to observe your child in an Observation Room. If this is needed, the Principal will schedule these individually.
- **Reinforcement at Home:** Reinforce classroom learning, such as ASL for DHH children, navigation techniques for BLV children, potty training, and self-care skills like feeding.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Family participation is encouraged and welcomed. MSDB's Pre-K Program uses Parent-Teacher Conferences to offer family support and communication. Conferences are designed:

- To guide families and teachers with a way of sharing valuable information about their child.
- To individualize the planning process for each child in the context of their family, culture, and community.
- To explore ways to use a child's family's strengths to promote growth and development.
- To create an ongoing process for recording the growth and development of the child.

Teachers schedule two formal Parent-Teacher Conferences each school year, but encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher at any time if you have questions, concerns, or want an update on your child's progress. While conferences are not mandatory, they are encouraged, even for the youngest students, as they allow parents the opportunity to follow the progress that their child has made. During these conferences, you will be provided with a written report about your child's strengths and areas for growth.

Special Services and IEP Meetings

If your child requires any of the following Special Services: Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Auditory Training, Orientation and Mobility training, or other specific services, these sessions will be scheduled through an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

meeting. The following individuals may request an IEP meeting to discuss and determine the necessary services for your child: the Parent/Guardian, the child's teacher, or another designated representative from the school district.

Home Language

It is important to MSDB's Pre-K Program that all families are given the opportunity to fully understand, interpret, and become involved in their child's education. MSDB's Pre-K Program will work with the family to provide information in the language they are most comfortable with, for any family that makes a request. This includes, but is not limited to: ASL and Spanish.)

Observation Rooms

Each classroom within the MSDB Pre-K Program is equipped with an Observation Room featuring a one-way mirror, including the Napping Room. These rooms are available for parents to observe their child during specific situations, such as when receiving Special Services (Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, or Orientation and Mobility training), managing behavioral challenges, or learning new skills (so that you may practice these at home). Parents may schedule observation times directly with the teacher or Specialist, or the Principal may arrange a session with the parent when appropriate. Staff encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to observe your child's progress and development in these contexts.

Confidentiality

All information contained in your child's records, including your personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved in the care of your child or affiliated with MSDB, protective services, or other government agencies will not have access to your child's records without your written authorization or court order. All MSDB's Pre-K Program staff members and contracted therapists must sign a Statement of Assurance of Confidentiality upon employment and annually thereafter.

As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child's records; to do so, please email the Principal. If you withdraw your child from the program, MSDB's Pre-K will maintain your child's records for at least 5 years per regulation. Lastly, out of respect for other children and families, please do not post photos or videos that contain images of children other than your own on the internet.

10. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Times

- **Morning Drop-Off:** Between 7:45 AM and 8:00 AM.
- **Afternoon Pick-Up (Mon-Thurs):** 2:45 PM to 3:00 PM.
- **Friday Pick-Up:** 11:45 AM to 12:00 PM (half-day schedule).

To ensure each child's safety, it is of the utmost importance that everyone practices safety and courtesy while in the parking lot. Please watch out for others, drive slowly, and hold

children's hands.

If you are entering the building, please DO NOT hold the door open for others. The person behind you may not be a parent.

Mornings can be busy times, and they often set the tone for the day. Help your child have a successful start to their day by doing the following when you and your child arrive at school:

- Sign your child in.
- Parents must accompany their child to and from the classroom each day.
- You must connect with the teacher upon your child's arrival. This a wonderful opportunity to share any important information they should know about your child's morning or changes to their schedule.
- Help your child wash their hands before playing.

Please plan to bring your child to school by 8:00 AM. Our staff want each student to gain the most they can from their experiences at MSDB's Pre-K Program. When children are consistently arriving late, they miss out on educational opportunities and fun activities that the teachers have carefully planned.

Separation Anxiety

The first few weeks of school are always a time of adjustment, and many students (and parents) feel a sense of separation anxiety which is perfectly normal. Here are a few strategies to help with the process. Remember, separation anxiety is a phase, it is perfectly natural , and it will pass.

- Make the goodbye prompt and cheerful. Giving your child "one more minute" prolongs the inevitable. As a parent, the best thing you can do is hug your child, say "I love you," and reassure them that you will be back soon.
- Establish a goodbye routine. Children crave routine, and parents who establish a consistent goodbye routine have better luck with successful goodbyes. This could be a secret handshake or a special "I love you" ritual. This provides a special moment between them and the two of you that offers a sense of reassurance.
- Trust your child's teacher. This may be difficult to do when you do not yet know them, but keep in mind that the teachers have chosen this profession because they love children, and they have a wealth of ideas and strategies to help settle an upset little one.
- Acknowledge how your child is feeling. It is important to accept and respect your child's temporary unhappiness as it is genuine and normal. Say things like, "I know you feel sad when Mommy leaves, but you will have a good time, and I will be back soon."

Also, be prepared for regression. Sometimes a change in schedule like a long weekend or an illness that keeps your child home for a few days can have you feeling like you are right back to square one. As frustrating and upsetting as this can be, it is perfectly normal. Stick to the above strategies, and you should notice a significant change in a couple of days.

Departure

It is important to sign your child out each day. It is critical that you check in with your child's teachers before leaving. The school closes at 3:00 PM Monday-Thursday and at 12:00 PM on Fridays. **MSDB's Pre-K does not have late pick-up or extended day**, as there is not staff to cover that. Failure to pick up your child or contact MSDB's Preschool Program, and if you or another authorized emergency contact cannot be reached within 30 minutes after closing time, MSDB's Preschool Program Director or designated staff member will contact the local authorities.

11. Dress Code for Pre-K

A full day at school includes fun activities like singing, painting, playing indoors and out, dancing, and eating, so it is recommended easy-fitting, washable clothes. Being comfortable lets kids focus on learning and having fun!

Make sure your child is wearing shoes for easy movement. Flip-flops, clogs, cowboy boots, and slick-bottomed shoes often cause children to fall when running outside and limit their play. Please be sure that your child's shoes are rubber-soled and closed-toed with a closed heel or heel strap. **Shoes are required for all students.**

Please provide two complete sets of extra clothes, including socks, for your child. It's always a good idea to keep an extra pair of shoes and a sweater or sweatshirt at school too. Clothing should be labeled with your child's first and last name and checked periodically to make sure it still fits.

Children must follow a uniform dress code to ensure safety and create a focused learning environment:

- **Tops:** Solid color polo or t-shirt (Green, Yellow/Gold, White).
- **Pants/Shorts/Skirts/Jumpers/Skorts:** Solid color bottoms (Tan/Khaki, Black, Navy Blue).
- **Shoes:** Rubber-soled and closed-toed. Must be worn at all times.
- **Socks:** Must be worn at all times.
- **Girls with Uniform Dresses/Skirts:** Must wear bloomers, tights, leggings, or shorts underneath.
- **Hair:** Long hair should be secured away from the face.

Please ensure the uniform is comfortable, weather-appropriate, and labeled with your child's name.

Back up clothing should also be dress code appropriate.

Sometimes learning and fun can get messy! MSDB's Pre-K Program is not responsible for lost, stained, soiled, or torn clothing.

12. Bathroom Needs and Toilet Training

Every classroom at MSDB's Pre-K Program has a changing table that is disinfected regularly.

Parents of children in diapers/pull ups and children who are toilet training must provide an ongoing supply of diapers/pull ups, wipes, and additional necessary clothing. If your child is wearing pull-ups, it is helpful to send in the type with Velcro sides. This allows us to help your child change without having to take off their pants and shoes. Cubbies and coat hooks should be checked daily for items that need to be laundered. The school does not permit cloth diapers.

Every classroom at MSDB's Pre-K Program has a bathroom located inside the classroom that is cleaned and disinfected regularly. Toilets and sinks in the classroom bathrooms are at the proper height for younger children.

Potty Time Parent Meeting

Prior to a child beginning toilet training, the parent needs to meet with the teacher to discuss methods and the approach the parent will be utilizing at home. This way, staff can aid and support you as your child begins this new phase in their life.

13. General Guidelines and Expectations

- **Communication:** Open communication between parents and staff is essential for success. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.
- **Behavior Expectations:** Encourage your child to demonstrate respectful behaviors, such as sharing and following instructions.
- **Health & Safety:** Keep your child home if they are sick. Notify the school of any illnesses or medical conditions and ensure current emergency contact information is on file.

14. Volunteer and Support Opportunities

Parents are encouraged to volunteer for school events, classroom tasks, and fundraising initiatives. Your involvement helps create a positive and supportive school community.

15. Absences and Attendance

For children to learn from this program, they need to be here on a regular basis. As participants in MSDB's Preschool Program, teachers must record attendance.

- **Absences:** Notify the school in advance if your child will be absent. A parent must call the front office by 9:00 AM if their child is to be absent.
- **Late Arrivals & Early Pick-Ups:** Obtain permission from the Director if you need to drop off late or pick up early.
- **Extended Absences:** Inform the teacher and school of any extended absences. If your child has been absent two days in a row for unknown reasons, a staff member may contact you and touch base with you to check in and ensure the child is well and when to expect their return.
- **Designated Pick Up:** Staff will ONLY release your child to a person who is designed by you (the parent) to pick up your child.

The safety of every student is a top priority. Please notify your child's teacher if someone other than you will be picking up your child. MSDB's Pre-K Program will only release your child out to the parents and guardians or other adults you authorized on the student's Enrollment Application. If you need to authorize a new pickup person, please send the request via written consent with your signature and date, as well as in an email to the Director/Principal. For your child's safety, any time a person staff do not recognize comes to pick up your child, the staff will ask for a government-issued photo ID.

16. Curriculum

For a Pre-K serving Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing and blind/low vision children, the curriculum will be both academically rigorous and thoughtfully tailored to meet the unique needs of each population served. The academic program will be aligned with early childhood education standards to ensure that all children, regardless of sensory differences, have access to the same foundational skills their typically developing peers are expected to learn at ages 3 to 5. Our staff are committed to providing equal opportunities for learning in areas such as language and literacy, early math, science exploration, and social-emotional development.

17. Classroom Schedule

Each classroom follows a slightly different schedule that is customized for each for their students, especially if Special Services are required. Some children may have scheduled Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Auditory Training, or Orientation and Mobility services which will impact their daily schedule, however, a basic daily schedule is listed below:

Monday - Thursday

- **7:45 AM - 8:05 AM:** Arrival / Breakfast / Free Play / Socialization Time
- **8:05 AM - 8:35 AM:** Circle Time (Calendar/Weather/Music/Move to Learn)
- **8:35 AM - 9:00 AM:** Extension Class (Library, PE, Computers)
- **9:00 AM - 10:20 AM:** Whole Group/Story Time/Language and Communication Development (ASL and pre-Braille skills) and pre-Literacy skills
- **10:20 AM - 10:40 AM:** Lunch
- **10:40 AM - 11:00 AM:** Whole Group/Circle Time
- **11:00 AM - 12:00 PM:** Intervention/Small Groups/Centers
- **12:00 PM - 12:30 PM:** Physical Activity
- **12:30 PM - 1:15 PM:** Quiet Time/Nap Time
- **1:15 PM - 2:35 PM:** Mini Lesson/Afternoon Snack
- **2:35 PM - 2:45 PM:** Daily Review
- **2:45 PM - 3:00 PM:** Pick-up Time

Friday

- **7:45 AM - 8:05 AM:** Arrival / Breakfast / Free Play / Socialization Time
- **8:05 AM - 8:45 AM:** Circle Time (Calendar/Weather/Music/Move to Learn)
- **8:45 AM - 9:20 AM:** Whole Group/Story Time
- **9:20 AM - 9:40 AM:** Outdoor/Physical Activities.
- **9:40 AM - 10:30 PM:** Whole Group/Story Time/Language and Communication Development (ASL and pre-Braille skills) and pre-Literacy skills
- **10:30 AM - 10:50 AM:** Lunch Break
- **10:50 AM - 11:10 AM:** Weekly Review
- **11:10 AM - 11:30 AM:** Intervention/Small Groups/Centers
- **11:45 AM - 12:00 PM:** Pick-up Time

*On days when *The Friday Program* joins us, the schedule will be: 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM combined Snack Break and Structured Learning centers with visitors and 10:15 AM - 10:30 AM Outdoor/Physical Activities.

Mondays -Thursdays 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM is for teachers to have time to prepare their classroom for the next day and make sure lessons are in order.

Fridays from 12:00 PM - 3:30 PM is for Teachers to have teacher planning period, Teacher Assistants to

have a Break, holding IEP meetings, holding parent-teacher conferences, attending staff meetings, holding staffings on students (which may involve Special Services such as OT, PT, Speech, O&M professionals, and Counselors or Behavioral Specialists), and attending staff development classes that target their population.

18. The School Year

The School Calendar

You will be provided a calendar upon enrollment. Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind will be closed most federal holidays. Our school will follow MSDB's School Calendar for vacation, holidays, and staff development days.

Inclement Weather Days

In case of inclement weather, MSDB's Pre-K Program will close as determined by the District Superintendent.

Holiday Celebrations and Birthdays

Celebrations and birthdays are special days for children, and our staff want to share in the fun! If you'd like to provide a small treat for the celebration, the teacher will notify you of any allergic restrictions your child's class may have. Please do not send in any treats or candy, which may be a choking hazard to students. Healthy snack options such as whole-grain items, vegetables with dip, fresh fruit, fresh fruit popsicles, or yogurt are always a great choice. Please be sure to provide enough for everyone in your child's classroom and check in with your child's teacher before the special day so they can share any tips and plan accordingly.

19. Outside Play

Our students play outside every day that weather permits. When the weather keeps us inside, teachers find safe and fun ways to get active indoors. The playground equipment and materials are designed for active play and exploration, which keeps kids learning while getting exercise and fresh air. Teachers plan outdoor activities to address multiple areas of skill development, including: climbing, balance and coordination, throwing, kicking, running, jumping, and pedaling.

20. Assessment

High-quality early childhood programs prioritize comprehensive child assessment as a fundamental component of supporting young learners. Effective assessment practices provide essential insights into children's development, guiding educators in fostering growth and

individualized learning.

MSDB's Pre-K Program systematically measures child outcomes and growth while continuously monitoring progress on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals throughout the school year. All staff members receive training on the assessment process and the effective use of assessment tools to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The information gathered through assessments serves multiple purposes, including:

- Identifying each child's interests and developmental needs
- Implementing intentional, targeted instruction
- Developing and refining IEP goals to address individual student needs
- Informing instructional and environmental planning to support all learners effectively
- Sharing progress with families by providing a clear picture of where children are along their developmental and educational continuum

21. Meals and Snacks

Children will be provided with meals:

- **Healthy Breakfast:** A nutritious breakfast for your child each day.
- **Healthy Lunch:** A nutritious lunch for your child each day.
- **Snack:** A healthy snack to keep them energized.
- **Water:** water throughout the day

Healthy, balanced meals are just what a growing body needs. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are important for children daily.

The center provides all meals and snacks for children in the program. Oftentimes, when children are around others they will eat new foods they may not eat at home.

Staff ask that you not send candy or gum with your child as this can cause difficulties within the classroom.

Sippy Cups

Due to the potential risk, children will not be laid down to rest with a sippy cup, nor will the sippy cup be propped up. Children cannot walk around the classroom with a sippy cup. Our teachers will work with families to ensure students are offered fluids from an open cup as soon as their

families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup.

22. Rest Time/Quiet Time

All children will participate in rest time/quiet time. Children are not required to sleep; however, they will have a very busy and stimulating morning, so most preschoolers will nap when given a relaxing and quiet space to do so. If a child does not fall asleep after a short rest, they are given quiet activities within the nap room. The school provides cots for nap time that are disinfected regularly by staff. Parents are required to send a blanket for their child. These items are to be washed and disinfected by the parents each weekend.

There is always a staff member within the nap room, observing by sight and sound. MSDB's Pre-K staff do not use mirrors, video, or sound monitors in place of sight and sound supervision.

23. Emergency Contact Information

Ensure the school has current emergency contact details, including alternate pick-up people and any necessary medical information (e.g., allergies, medications).

Custodial and Foster Care Families

Some families have legal custodial orders that designate who is authorized to pick up or visit a child. If there are any custody or protection orders pertaining to your child, it is imperative that a current, court-issued copy be submitted to the school administration. This documentation enables us to comply with legal requirements and uphold the safety and well-being of your child.

24. Toys and Personal Items

To prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost, please label ALL items from home with your child's name. Within each classroom, each child has a hood and/or cubby assigned to them. This will provide storage space for your child's personal belongings. Please check your child's cubby daily for items that need to be taken home.

Children should **not bring toys or personal items** from home unless specifically requested for a special activity. This helps reduce distractions.

Toy weapons (guns, water pistols, swords, shields, or other items that may resemble weapons) are not permitted at MSDB's Preschool Program. All personal electronics (except Augmentative Communication Devices) brought to school must be stored in the "off" position in the Front Office. Use of personal electronics is not permitted in the classroom. MSDB's staff cannot

assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal items.

25. Communication and Updates

To keep parents informed:

- **Weekly Updates:** Sent via email and your child's Communication Folder.
- **Social Media:** Connect with us on Social Media!
- **Communication App:** Staff will utilize specific programs determined by the district (such as Parent Square) for quick communication schoolwide.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed.

26. Code of Conduct

MSDB's Leadership and staff expect all members of the school community to follow these guidelines:

- **Respectful Behavior:** Parents and children are expected to communicate respectfully at all times. Any use of foul language or inappropriate behavior by parents may result in the request for the child to be withdrawn from the program.
- **Classroom Behavior:** Children should participate in activities and treat peers kindly.
- **School Property:** Children should care for classroom materials.

27. Participation in Activities

Children are expected to actively participate in classroom activities, including socialization time, group lessons, and nap time. Active participation is essential for their social, emotional, and educational development.

28. Behavior Expectations and Physical Aggression

The foundational goal at MSDB's Pre-K Program is to help every students develop strong social and emotional skills. Instead of discipline, our staff uses guidance. Guidance is about building and encouraging setting for every person in the group. It means helping young children understand they can learn from their mistakes, and it starts with showing them how. Research indicates that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be happier, show

greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more early participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than students who exhibit social and emotional difficulties (Hyson 2004; Kostelnik et al 2015).

- **The environment:** Our staff provide children with exciting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive. Teachers develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity. Yet, the schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs.
- **Pre-K teachers:** Staff work to develop a strong rapport with each child speaking to them calmly, especially during redirections. Our staff help children put words to their emotions. Teachers use social stories to help teach all students healthy social skills. Pre-K staff strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.
- **Pre-K families:** MSDB's staff will communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school. Our staff partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help to give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

Guidance Procedures

When any student at MSDB's Pre-K Program presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall follow the standards of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Observe the children to identify events, activities, interactions, and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behaviors.
- Teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggressions, in a manner that provides for the child's safety and the safety of others in the classroom. Every response will be calm, respectful, and give the child information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not.
- Staff will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a log. Documentation may include incident reports, ABC charts, or Behavior Plans.
- Teacher-Parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private. They shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- If necessary, intervention shall ensure each child has access to professional services, such as referrals to community resources and/or agencies offering early intervention services.
- All discipline decisions will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's understanding levels.

MSDB'S Pre-K PROGRAM DOES NOT CONDONE OR TOLERATE THE USE OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF ANY KIND ON THE MSDB PROPERTY. THIS POLICY RESTRICTS PARENTS AND STAFF FROM USING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT ON THEIR CHILDREN WHILE ON MSDB PROPERTY. ALSO, MSDB WILL NOT TOLERATE PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE, COERCION, THREATS, DEROGATORY REMARKS, WITHHOLDING, OR THREATENING TO WITHHOLD FOOD AS A FORM OF DISCIPLINE.

Despite these efforts, some children may continue to exhibit significant, challenging behaviors. The following steps will be completed if a child must be removed for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others.

- Make a referral to an early childhood mental health specialist or behavioral counselor that specializes in working with young children.
- Maintain documentation on file of the incident's outcomes, subsequent parent conferences, and the plan development that includes appropriate intervention strategies.
- Special considerations are enacted due to the procedural safeguards and due process rights ensured under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Parts C and B. MSDB's Preschool Program will follow all state and special education rules and regulations governing suspension/expulsion.

Biting

Biting is a normal part of child development. Young children bite for various reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth. Biting can also be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they're feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions, and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. If they can't find the words they need quickly enough or can't articulate how they're feeling, they may resort to biting.

Biting tends to occur most often between 12-24 months of age. Biting past the age of two and a half to three is less common. For repeated biting instances with preschoolers, staff may request a parent/teacher conference. The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss what may be causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid and therefore lead to biting. Additionally, staff would develop a joint plan of action following behavior guidance procedures listed in this handbook. If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident/Accident Report that keeps the identity of both children confidential.

29. Health and Hygiene Guidelines

You should know that safety comes first! At MSDB's Pre-K Program, the first priority is to keep children safe, which starts with paying attention to every detail - big and small. Every day at this center, you can be confident that your child is in the very best hands.

- **Handwashing:** Encourage your child to wash hands frequently.
- **Health Screening:** Keep your child home if sick, and notify the school of any illnesses.

- **Immunizations:** Ensure your child is up-to-date on vaccinations.

Illness Policy

Our staff realize that it is difficult for working parents to keep their children at home, but exclusion from school will help prevent contagion and promote the health and safety of your child. Children should be kept home from school if they are feverish, have diarrhea and/or vomiting, have nasal mucous discharge that isn't clear, or if they show signs of becoming sick (listlessness or drowsiness, productive cough, sore throat, ear pain, eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge). If your child cannot comfortably participate in the day's activities or your child needs to stay indoors and/or have additional rest, these signs are generally indicative that they child should not be at school.

MSDB's Pre-K Program has established guidelines in accordance with state child care law and other best practices concerning sick children. In case of communicable disease or condition, and at the discretion of MSDB's Principal, other parents will be notified to watch for symptoms in their children.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, every effort will be made to make them comfortable, away from the other children, but with a family caregiver. A parent will immediately be called to come and pick them up. MSDB's Pre-K Program is not able to provide arrangements to care for sick children. Parents are required to respond as soon as possible concerning the sick child when contacted by the Director or designated staff member. If a staff member cannot reach the parent within thirty minutes, the staff will reach out to the family's emergency contacts as stated on the enrollment/admission form. If the illness warrants, the child's pediatrician will be contacted for consultation.

Children may attend with minor illnesses if it is not contagious, and it does not affect the child's ability to participate in the day's routine. Minor illnesses include:

- Mild respiratory infections
- Acute infections subsiding after treatment, such as pink eye, impetigo, or ear infections
- Cold symptoms without a fever

If the child's health deteriorates at some point in the day, the parent will be contacted to come to pick them up.

Doctor's notes are requested any time your child visits a doctor for an illness.

Illness Exclusion Criteria

| Disease/Condition | If your child has been diagnosed with this disease, our program will: | When to all your child to return to school: |
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| Chickenpox (or rash suggestive of chickenpox) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure and include a warning about aspirin use. • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Approximately 5-7 days after the rash begins or when ALL blisters have scabbed over |
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| Covid (or symptoms of Covid) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Guidance from the state is updated frequently. Nursing staff will refer to the Health Department/MSDB Guidelines. |
| Diarrheal illness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child that has two or more diarrhea episodes in one day • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication. |
| Fifth Disease | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Fever | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child from childcare if the child has a fever of 100.4 or greater • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication |

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| Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude a child that has an open, draining lesion on hand or has lesions in the mouth and is drooling Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When lesions heal and/or drooling ceases, and the child can participate in center activities (including meals) |
| Hepatitis A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take | At least one week after onset of illness or jaundice. Permission to return should be sought from the local health authorities first. |
| Impetigo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare Contact MSDB Nursing | After treatment has been started |

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| Impetigo (cont'd) | <p>staff for other preventative measures to take</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | |
| Influenza | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare Notify all parents regarding possible exposure Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Lice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare | 24 hours after treatment and no signs of nits or lice. Parents must present the empty box from the treatment. |
| Pink Eye | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | 24 hours after the first dose of medication and symptoms are mild |
| Pneumonia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |

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| Ringworm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | If unable to cover the lesion(s), after treatment begins and the lesion starts to shrink |
| RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and the energy to participate in center activities |
| Scabies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • All clothing and blankets will be sent home to be laundered in hot water and dried in a hot dryer | Until treatment is complete |

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| Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | 24 hours after antibiotics are started when the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Tuberculosis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Exclude until a healthcare professional provides a written statement the child is not infectious |
| Vomiting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is vomit-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication |

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| Whooping Cough/Pertussis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | <p>Exclude until five days after the treatment has started</p> <p>Exclude untreated cases for 21 days from the date coughing began</p> |
|--------------------------|--|--|

*This chart is not an exhaustive list of the communicable diseases and policies for exclusion from childcare. For more information, please contact the Supervising Nurse for MSDB or the District Website for the Student Handbook.

Chronic Health Conditions

For any child with health care needs such as allergies, asthma, or other chronic conditions (seizures, etc..) that require specialized health services, a medical action plan shall be completed. The medical action plan must be updated annually and when changes to the plan are made by the child's parent or health care professional. Blank medical action plans may be found in the Front Office. The medical action plan shall be signed by both the parent and the child's health care professional and must include the following information:

- A list of the child's diagnosis or diagnoses, including dietary, environmental, and applicable activity considerations
- Contact information for the child's health care professional(s)
- Medications to be administered on a scheduled basis
- Medications to be administered on an emergency basis with symptoms and instructions

Medications

Our staff do not administer medications at Pre-Kindergarten. Our staff recommend that you administer medications at home. To help with the medication scheduling, you may consider asking your health care provider for prescriptions with 12-hour dosages.

Emergency Medication

If your child requires the use of emergency medications (i.e., inhalers, Epi-pen, etc.), you will need to complete the corresponding medical action plan. Blank medical action plans may be found in the Front Office, and these plans MUST have a doctor or healthcare provider signature. Emergency medicines will be kept unlocked and easily accessible to adults but out of children's reach (at least 5 feet off the ground). This is to ensure easy access in the case of an emergency. All staff members have trained on emergency medication administration annually. Our teachers and staff work with a district nurse to ensure staff is appropriately trained for your

child 's specific medical needs.

Over the Counter Medication

MSDB's Pre-K Program staff will not administer over-the-counter medications to children, except when a health professional prescribes the over-the-counter medicines. This situation is most common for chronic health conditions (ex: Benadryl for students with allergy action plans or fever-reducing medication for students with febrile seizure action plans). MSDB's Pre-K Program will not administer over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, antibiotic cream, or medication for upset stomach in the case of acute illness or pain. Children that have these symptoms may need to remain at home until they are symptom-free.

Topical Creams and Sunscreen

Parents and guardians may give MSDB's Pre-K Program standing authorization for the school year to apply over-the-counter topical ointments, diapering cream, or sunscreen to their child when needed.

Medical Report and Immunization Record

A record of immunizations and a children's medical report must be completed and on file at school prior to the child beginning the program. Records should also include results of any screenings, prescribed medications, descriptions of any allergies, and current or chronic health conditions. If an immunization and medical report are not on file, the start date may be delayed.

As the child receives new immunizations, the date and type of shot or immunization should be reported to Administration to be added to the child's record. A schedule of immunizations can be acquired through the Center Front Office. See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/> for more information.

30. Safety

Supervision

MSDB's Preschool Program staff assume responsibility for enrolled children when they enter the classroom or are escorted by a staff member onto the MSDB property. Teaching staff always supervise children by sight and sound. This means, a staff member must be present at all times with a child.

All classrooms monitor attendance by updating their attendance records throughout the day and counting and matching the numbers of children present with the names on attendance records. "Name to face" headcounts occur through the day, particularly when moving about the center at every threshold.

Injuries/Accidents

Your child's safety is of the utmost concern, but also recognize that minor bumps and scrapes

are an everyday part of your child exploring and learning through experience. Known minor injuries sustained at school are reported to parents on an Incident Report Form, of which you will receive a copy. If your child is injured during school hours, the first step is to administer first aid. A first aid kit is available in the Front Office, and each class has a small first aid kit with them. The most common treatment is ice on bumps, soap and water cleansing, and a bandage on a minor wound. All staff members are trained in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR within the first 90 days of employment, and they must maintain their current certification every two years. If an accident is more than minor, a parent will be called to discuss the need for possible medical treatment. If the accident is more serious, a parent will be contacted and requested to come immediately. In the event of a life-threatening illness or injury, an ambulance will be called. To ensure your child's safety, your Enrollment Agreement provides a record of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people you have authorized to pick up your child. Pre-K Leadership asks you to keep this information current and supply names and phone numbers for your child's doctor and preferred hospital.

Mandated Reporting Requirements

It's the mission to ensure all children in this center are safe and well cared for, not only while they are in school, but at all times. Mississippi Law requires everyone who works directly with children to report suspicions or evidence of child neglect or abuse to local law enforcement. Those who fail to report can be held accountable under the law. The law prohibits interference with an individual's attempt to report child abuse or neglect. The school will offer full cooperation during the investigation of any reported incident.

- Should a staff member have reason to suspect abuse, they will contact the Director and follow up with an immediate phone call to the proper authorities.
- MSDB's Pre-K Program will not hire a person who has been convicted of abuse of any type, and all staff undergo a fingerprint and criminal background check before employment begins.
- All staff members are responsible for protecting all children from abuse from any child or staff member.
- All staff members are required to report any suspected cases of abuse, whether it is suspected at MSDB's Pre-K Program or away from the center.
- All MSDB's Pre-K Program staff members receive training in recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, including abuse and neglect.
- MSDB's Pre-K Program strictly prohibits the mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of any child in the program by any staff member. Any employee found in violation of the abuse and neglect policies shall be immediately terminated. If the charges are not upheld, MSDB's HR Director will determine eligibility for reinstatement.

31. Smoke-Free and Weapon-Free Environment

MSDB's Pre-K, playground, and district campus are smoke-free and tobacco-free environments. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, including

e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, shall not be permitted on the premises, including after hours. Additionally, firearms and ammunition are prohibited in all licensed childcare centers, including MSDB's Pre-K, unless carried by a law enforcement officer.

32. Transportation

MSDB's Pre-K Program does not provide transportation for children to and from school, nor for any off-campus activities. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their children. In the event of an emergency, if parents cannot be reached or are unable to come to campus, and students are required to leave the premises immediately as directed by officials, transportation may be provided. However, this will only occur after parents have been notified.

33. Safety Procedures and Protocols

MSDB's Pre-K is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children, staff, and visitors. Staff will adhere to and follow all safety procedures and protocols set forth by the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind school district. These guidelines are designed to ensure the well-being of everyone on the premises and include measures for emergency response, health and safety regulations, and risk management. MSDB staff continuously monitor and update practices to align with district standards and regulatory requirements, ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all children in daily care. These procedures and policies are available online for your reference, or a hard copy may be found in each classroom for easy access.

34. Grievance Procedures

Disagreements may occur, even with the best of intentions. Experience has taught us that open communication is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. The adults must demonstrate the cooperative, compassionate communication wanted for children to imitate. If you have a concern, please discuss it with your child's teacher or the staff involved. If the concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a meeting can be arranged between the persons involved and a member of the administration. At that time, a course of action can be determined.

35. Commitment to diversity

Tolerance and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to various ages, genders, family structures, races, cultures, religions, and physical abilities. Therefore, our staff emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

Acknowledgement of Policies

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Parent Policies for the Preschool Program for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Blind/Low Vision Children. I agree to abide by these policies and support my child's learning and development in the classroom.

Parent Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Final Note:

Thank you for partnering with us! By following these policies and maintaining open communication, staff and families working together can create a positive, supportive learning environment for your child and all students in the program.

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind



Student Handbook 2025-2026

MISSISSIPPI BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Mr. Jarvis Robinson, Associate Administrator of Student Engagement
Mrs. Shelly Jacobs, MSD Director of Residential Education
Ms. Candice Davis, MSB Director of Residential Education

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Mississippi Board of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi School of the Arts, the Mississippi School for the Blind, the Mississippi School for the Deaf, and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, national, origin, sex, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs.

ACCREDITATION AND ACADEMICS

MSDB holds accreditation from Cognia (formerly known as AdvancED Regional), ensuring educational standards on par with any school district in Mississippi. Established by the Mississippi Legislature, these schools cater to the distinct learning requirements of students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, visually impaired, or blind, including those with additional disabilities. Highly skilled teachers at MSDB deliver curriculum objectives aligned with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards endorsed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. Each student benefits from specialized instruction and support provided by trained teachers and staff dedicated to serving this student population.

The fundamental principle underlying MSDB's approach to instruction is the belief that academic success for students is achievable through collaboration among all stakeholders, including parents, students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community. By fostering a supportive environment, students can fully utilize the unique opportunities provided by this educational setting.

MSDB MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is to serve a diverse educational community, to work collaboratively with families and partners, and to empower students through comprehensive support, self-advocacy, and personal excellence.

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MSDB Preschool Handbook

MSD GOVERNANCE AND PURPOSE

The Mississippi School for the Deaf (MSD) is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. MSD is a special purpose school for students 3-21 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing and are referred by their local school district for evaluation/eligibility in consideration of a placement decision. MSD is a collaborative service provider that assists school districts in their provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for their students, through statewide field services.

Mission

The Mississippi School for the Deaf strives to be a diverse bilingual community. In partnership with families, MSD will provide exemplary education in a nurturing, engaging, and challenging environment to help ensure our students achieve personal excellence and become productive citizens.

Belief Statements

- All people have equal value.
- All students can learn and are lifelong learners.
- ASL English Bilingual Education (AEBE) is a basic right of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. ASL and English are two separate languages.
- Both Deaf and Hearing interactions are vital to students' bicultural development.
- Students benefit when parents and families are involved in the educational process, as all adults are vital educators.
- A safe, secure, inviting, and healthy school environment is essential for learning.
- All students need to be immersed in a creative, challenging environment that encourages risk-taking that enhances their social, emotional, and intellectual skills.
- Students have the right to have their individual needs met through learning opportunities that promote optimum success.
- Students should have cultural awareness, respect, and sensitivity when choosing a natural mode of communication with peers, staff, family, and the diverse multicultural society.

MSB GOVERNANCE AND PURPOSE

The Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education. MSB is a special purpose school for students 3-21 years of age who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind and are referred by their local school district for evaluation/eligibility in consideration of a placement decision. MSB is a collaborative service provider that assists school districts in their provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for their students, statewide field services.

Mission

The Mission of the Mississippi School for the Blind is to establish a strong foundation for learning and independence by providing individualized adaptive services and materials to enhance maximum potential for students with visual impairments or blindness.

Belief Statements

- Learning is the chief priority for students and the primary focus for decision-making.
- Students with visual impairments or blindness learn in different ways and will be provided with a variety of instructional strategies.
- Educators should be knowledgeable about the educational needs of individual students. Students with visual impairments or blindness learn best when they are actively involved throughout the learning process.
- Students with visual impairments or blindness should receive services from highly qualified professionals.
- Positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff should be present.
- A commitment to continuous improvement is imperative for preparing students to be lifelong learners.
- The expanded core curriculum should be a part of the course of study for all students with visual impairments or blindness.
- Students receiving instruction in Braille should receive services from a TVI certified teacher with expertise in delivering braille instruction.

STUDENT AND PARENT INFORMATION AND NOTICES

Criteria For Admission & Continued Enrollment

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) has been designated by the State of Mississippi as a program that serves children whose primary disability is either a hearing loss or a vision loss. Program design and selection of staff is based on that premise. Not all children who apply are eligible to attend the MSDB. Below is a summary of MSDB's enrollment criteria.

A: All students must meet these requirements:

1. Live in the state of Mississippi.
2. Be between 3 and 21 years of age.
3. Can finger feed self, chew, and swallow most food, indicate awareness of being soiled or wet, assist with dressing, and cooperate in bathing.
4. Parent gives consent for emergency medical treatment or for a Health Care Plan, if needed.
5. Determined not to be a danger to self or others or disruptive to the educational process.
6. Does not show an uneven developmental profile and pattern of social, communication, and restricted or repetitive behaviors or interests.
7. Does not have a medical or mental health condition that prohibits the student from attending school daily.
8. Does not have a standard score of three (3) standard deviations below the mean on standardized intellectual and adaptive behavior assessments.
9. Does not have medically related health or safety needs beyond the scope of the Health Clinic or the educational program.

B. Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing must also meet the following requirements:

1. Have a permanent or fluctuating hearing threshold level as evidenced by:
 - a. Deaf (severe impairments in processing linguistic information through hearing with or without amplification) - OR - Hearing impairment (permanent or fluctuating hearing impairment)
 - b. Adverse impact on educational performance.
2. The supporting evidence must contain an audiometric evaluation conducted by an audiologist (MDE license in audiology, MSDH license, ASHA- CCC, or AAA certification) or physician with expertise in audiological exams using appropriate audiological equipment explaining each of the following:
 - a. type of loss
 - b. age of onset (if known)
 - c. severity of loss
 - d. speech reception or speech awareness thresholds (if obtainable)
 - e. speech discrimination scores (if applicable)
 - f. recommendations regarding amplification, and
 - g. other recommended interventions, if any, including the need for assistive technology

- h. a description of a follow-up examination and results, including how the conditions noted during the examination might interfere with educational testing and performance and recommendations for accommodations, modifications, and educational programming.
 - i. acoustic immittance measures
 - j. an audiogram and/or measures of auditory evoked potential, such as Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR), Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR), and Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) that would define the hearing loss.
 - k. a description of how the hearing loss impacts educational performance.
 - l. communication abilities and needs including the need for assisted communication.
- 3. Have a hearing threshold that interferes with progress in developmental skills or academic performance, social-emotional development, or linguistic and communicative skills.
 - 4. Evidence of genetic deafness in the student's family and/or early identification of progressive hearing loss.

C. Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired must also meet the following requirements:

- 1. Have a documented eye condition that causes an impairment as manifested by:
 - a. Blind (little or no vision), - OR - Partially sighted (significant vision loss of 20/70 or worse in the better eye after correction) - OR - Legally blind (visual acuity of 20/200 or worse in the better eye after correction or contracted peripheral field of <20°) - OR - Other severe visual problems
 - b. Adverse impact on educational performance.
- 2. The supporting evidence must contain a statement from an ophthalmologist or optometrist supporting eligibility that includes descriptions of visual acuity, diagnosed visual problems, a statement of how the child's visual problems affect educational performance and recommendations for educational programming.
- 3. Have a functional vision loss which inhibits optimal processing of information through the visual channel and requires the use of specialized techniques, textbooks, materials, or equipment.
- 4. An ophthalmologist and/or optometrist statement of a visually impaired diagnosis.

D. Students who are Deaf-Blind must also meet the following requirements:

- 1. Evidence of Deaf/Hard of Hearing as described above.
- 2. Evidence of Blind/Visually Impaired as described above.

GENERAL INQUIRIES

- 1. Prior to requesting an IEP meeting to determine the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), local school districts must fax the following information to Adrienne Williams at (601) 984-8234:
 - a. In-state eligibility determination form
 - b. In-state Individual Education Program (IEPs) or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs-preschool) (past three school years)
 - c. Ophthalmologist or Optometrist reports for students who are Blind or have Visual Impairment
 - d. Audiologist reports for students who are Deaf or have Hearing Loss
 - e. Psychoeducational Report (an intelligence measure should be attempted)
 - f. Related Services Assessments, if applicable

- g. Discipline Report (last two school years)
 - h. Attendance Report (last two school years)
 - i. Medical records (include medications)
 - j. Academic records
 - k. Other
2. The local school district should complete their evaluation procedures prior to seeking enrollment at MSDB. An MSDB representative will contact the local district to organize the scheduling of a change of placement meeting within three (3) business days of receiving the items listed above.
 3. Observation Period: The enrollee may attend MSDB for up to 60 school days from the student's initial day of school to determine if continued placement at MSDB is appropriate.
 4. Parents/guardians are welcome to inquire about our district. Entry is determined by the local school district when considering Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state board policy requirements for special education and MSDB's general admission criteria and continued enrollment. Please contact MSDB school counselors for information regarding academic learning and student life.
 5. The Mississippi Department of Education Office of Special Education offers a Parent Outreach and Support Center that is available to assist parents at 601-359-3498.

MSDB CONTACT INFORMATION

Adrienne Williams, Assistant Superintendent and Director of
 Special Services adrienne.williams@msdbk12.org
 601-984-8234

Failure to provide all information or falsification of information will prevent applications from being processed and/or result in disenrollment if the student is found ineligible based on incomplete or inaccurate information.

Registration

Parents should be prepared to provide all of the following:

1. Two proofs of residency within a MS school district
2. Provide an updated immunization form (Mississippi 121) if the immunization records are not up to date at the current placement.
3. Birth Certificate
4. Provide a copy of the child's social security card on or before registration.
5. Any relevant medical records or medical action plans (i.e., for seizures) at registration

6. Official Withdrawal Papers from the previous school on the day of registration or as determined jointly in cases where more time is needed to prepare for a student.
7. Copy of the student's current report, when applicable.

Cost

Families pay no tuition, room, or boarding costs at Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind. Legislative appropriations support the costs for attendance at MSDB. Families are responsible for expenses such as prescription medications, personal hygiene items, laundry supplies, spending money, and individual expenses.

Withdrawal of Students

The student's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and placement decisions are determined by an IEP committee. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw the student from MSDB, an IEP meeting will be required to determine if a change in placement yields a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for the student. If the committee determines that a change in placement is most appropriate, the parent must visit MSD or MSB to sign withdrawal paperwork and adhere to other exit procedures. MSD or MSB will forward all academic records to the Local Educational Agency (LEA).

MSDB leadership team may offer re-admission to an LEA and parent--in lieu of the MSDB admission team's case review-- up to 60 calendar days after a previous change in placement reveals MSDB as the more appropriate placement. Otherwise, the LEA must submit documents within the admissions policy if reentry is considered.

The student's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and placement decisions are determined by an IEP committee. If the parent/guardian chooses to withdraw the student from MSDB, an IEP meeting will be recommended by MSDB to determine if a change in placement is the best option for the student. If a parental request is made for a student to withdraw without holding an IEP meeting prior to unenrolling, the district will follow the withdrawal procedures and then alert the forwarding local educational agency (LEA) of the parent's decision. After receiving withdrawal signatures, MSDB will forward all academic records to the LEA. If the parent wishes to re-enroll the student at MSDB, the LEA will need to adhere to the admissions policy before reenrollment is granted.

Expectations for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of a compulsory school-age child are required to make every reasonable effort to ensure that their child attends school. Likewise, parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible financially for destructive acts their children commit against school property, school personnel, other students, and property.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be requested to come to the school for a meeting with appropriate school officials to discuss the conduct and acts of their children to make every reasonable effort to ensure that their children have a successful and safe living and learning environment.

Appearance and Dress

The administration and faculty expect all students to dress in a manner which reflects favorably upon the efforts of the total educational community to provide the best learning experience possible for each student. The Student Dress Code is based on two precepts- good health and safety, and consistency with instructional processes. To prepare for increased restrictions and responsibilities within the adult workplace, students must learn to observe basic regulations. All students are expected to wear uniforms.

Students will be required to wear uniforms Monday - Friday each week. On Fridays, students may wear casual clothes at the clearance of the principal.

The following provides additional information regarding attire on campus:

1. Hair and nails
 - a. Hair shall be groomed so as not to extend below the eyebrows or cover the eyes.
 - b. Hair and nails shall not be groomed in class.
 - c. Hair and body shall be free from obnoxious odors, clean, and neat in appearance.
 - d. Picks, combs, rollers, and other styling devices shall not be worn in the hair.
2. Accessories
 - a. Hats, caps, toboggans, head scarves, bandanas, wrist bands, sweat bands, hairnets, or shower caps, stocking caps, or do rags are not allowed to be worn during the academic day.
 - b. Hoods will not be worn inside the building.
 - c. Unless prescribed for medical reasons, sunglasses are not allowed in the building.
 - d. Wallet chains are not allowed.
 - e. Trench coats or duster style coats are not allowed.
 - f. Belts - If the pants/skirt have belt loops then a belt is to be worn.
 - g. Overall straps and suspenders shall be fastened and worn over the shoulders.
 - h. Blankets are not allowed in the classroom.
3. Tops
 - a. No tank tops, halters, tops with spaghetti straps or tops that expose the midriff, with hands raised above the head, shall be worn.
 - b. Appropriate underclothing shall be worn. No clothing considered and designed as underclothing, shall be worn as an outside garment.
4. Bottoms
 - a. Undergarments - Proper undergarments should be worn but not to be seen through the shirts, skirts, or pants.
 - b. Girls' skirts and dress length must meet the 4"-inch rule as stated above.
 - c. Students may wear shorts, provided the length is no shorter than 4" above the knee.
 - d. No pants with holes are permitted. No pajama pants are permitted.

- ## 5. Shoes

Students in violation of the dress code will be required to return to the residential program to change into appropriate school wear. Parents of day students will be contacted to be informed of the inappropriateness of their child's appearance and may be asked to come and pick their child up from school.

Tops: solid color golf shirt (short or long sleeve) MSD: navy, white, purple, gold
MSB: navy, white, red

Long sleeve shirts may be worn under uniform shirts but must be the same approved color scheme.

Sweatshirts must be the same approved color-scheme unless they are MSD or MSB-approved sweatshirts. Any logo should be either an MSD or MSB logo OR no larger than 2 inches by 2 inches in size. They may be worn over other shirts or alone.

Bottoms: Khaki, navy, black

Girls: pants, shorts, jumper, skirt (If your student wears a skirt, please provide a pair of shorts to wear underneath during P.E.)

Boys: pants, shorts

Feet: socks and shoes- see above (sport shoes will be used daily for P.E.)

Students not following dress code will be subject to consequences, which may include disciplinary action.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Campus Visitors

All visitors, including parents, friends, solicitors, or anyone else entering the campus or school buildings for any reason must first check in at the school office. Visitors must obtain authorization from the principal or office staff before visiting or making contact with students or teachers. Upon approval, visitors will receive a visitor's pass. Visits to classrooms or observations during instructional hours are prohibited unless prearranged.

Staff members are expected to regularly verify that visitors have proper authorization from the office. If a visitor does not have the necessary permission, the staff member should promptly guide them to the principal's office.

Publications

Publications of the school may include newspapers, newsletters, a yearbook, a literary magazine, or other media. The school administration and faculty will direct the nature and function of school-sponsored publications. The final product must reflect and fulfill the MSD and MSB philosophy and mission.

Free Speech, Assembly, and Publication

Students are entitled to freedom of expression and publication of their views and opinions if the expression does not disrupt and/or interfere with normal school operations and discipline. Profane, vulgar, racist, or harassing words by their nature disrupt the educational environment and may not be used. Students are responsible, when assembling, for exhibiting appropriate behavior and following the reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions of the school.

Student Organizations and Clubs

Students are allowed to establish and participate in lawful groups aligned with the principles and objectives of MSDB. These clubs will operate in conjunction with the educational mission of the schools. It is the students' responsibility, and they will be mandated, to ensure that the activities of these organizations align with the philosophy and mission of the school.

Fund Raising

The faculty sponsor submits the request to the principal for approval. Requests should be submitted four (4) weeks in advance of the proposed activity. All funds raised must be deposited in the Business Office and funds should be turned in each day during the fundraiser.

Distribution of Non-MSDB Printed Material

Any information advocating non-MSDB causes must be submitted to the Superintendent for approval and dissemination.

Media Policies

MSDB has a positive working relationship with the news media to promote the school and its mission. All news releases, newsletters, public service announcements, publicity, promotional brochures, advertising (except for advertising for purchasing), graphics, photography, etc. will be originated, produced, disseminated and/or approved by the Superintendent. All students, clubs, and organizations affiliated with MSDB must comply.

Field Trips/ Community-Based Lessons

Field trips/community-based lessons are an important extension of the curriculum. Students are afforded many opportunities during the school year to travel both in-state and out-of-state. With this privilege comes the responsibility to exhibit expected behaviors while representing MSDB. Trip administrators, teachers, or staff members in charge will communicate expectations. The policies of the student handbook are applicable during all travels. Violators will be referred to the principal. All students will travel in MSDB provided transportation. Students are encouraged to participate in all field trips/community-based lessons sponsored by the school or their teachers.

Progress Communication

To keep parents informed of their child's progress in school, MSDB will provide:

- progress reports at each midterm
- report cards every nine weeks
- teacher/parent conferences
- email and telephone contacts to parents when warranted
- online parental access

Parental Access to Grades and Information

Online access to student's grades, discipline, and attendance is available through an online portal. Passwords can be obtained from the school principal, counselor, or designee. Information and school news are available through the MSDB website. Please access our school website regularly at <http://www.msdbk12.org> for up-to-date school information.

Parents must provide the school with all current contact information including emergency contacts to ensure student safety. MSDB is striving to "go green." Parents/guardians should provide the school with an email address to receive information via email if one is available.

Emergency Closing and Delays

MSDB rarely close during inclement weather; however, if closure is discussed, the decision will be made by the MSDB Superintendent. If buses from local school districts arrive early to pick up students, MSD and MSB will release them. MSDB will allow parents to bring their student(s) to school if conditions are safe. Students will receive excused absences for inclement weather when their daily buses do not transport, run on a 2-hour delay, or pick up students for early dismissal. Virtual options may be available and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Should there be a need to inform the public of information regarding MSDB and inclement weather, the schools will contact all parents through phone, email, the school's website, and social media.

Virtual Option Due to Illness Exposure or Outbreaks

Though our goal is to remain on campus the entire year, there may be times when an individual student, small group, or class requires a quarantine. You will receive a notification from the school explaining that your child needs to be quarantined due exposure to an illness. There may also be times when our adult supervision coverage is inadequate to meet student needs. Our goal will always be to avoid temporary closure or quarantine at all costs.

If the virtual option is needed, students will receive mostly live, virtual instruction from a certified teacher, and a classroom assistant may help virtual students through tutoring sessions. There also may be some independent work required when the teacher is not live on the screen. All virtual instruction and learning must total at least 330 minutes through the Learning Management System (LMS) called Google Classroom, which is the equivalent of a full day of in-person learning.

Before a student is allowed to participate in virtual learning due to an exposure or outbreak, he or she must meet the following eligibility criteria, and the student/parent must agree to abide by the policies below:

- Parents and students must sign and return the agreement in Appendix A of this plan that acknowledges receipt and acceptance of, and commitment to, the district policy pertaining to virtual learning.

- Students MUST have reliable internet connectivity at home, or parents should request a hotspot. If the hotspot will not work, students will be required to complete learning packets, which include the same assignments that would be given in virtual instruction.
- Students must use their school-issued device for virtual learning.
- Students MUST have a designated space for virtual learning that is quiet, private, and free from distractions of other household members and household noises.
- The student MUST maintain good attendance and be logged in on time for each class for a total of 330 minutes each day.
- Virtual students will be held to the same code of student conduct requirements as in-person students.
- All students MUST attend school in-person on designated assessment days (interims, benchmarks, nine-weeks exams, end-of-course exams, and state assessments).
- All students have assurance of equal access/nondiscrimination while participating in virtual learning.
- All students have the assurance of the delivery of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities including:
 - a. process for conducting meetings pertaining to the evaluation and eligibility of students with disabilities;
 - b. process for monitoring and documenting student progress and services delivered to students with disabilities; and
 - c. process for ongoing communication with families, teachers, and related service providers.
- All students will have assurance of compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) while participating in virtual learning.

Internet hotspots will also be available to families who need them if the hotspot will work as an option for Internet access from home. Parents and students will be required to sign the MSDB Acceptable Use Policy before being issued any device. Students and parents will continue to receive training as needed on proper device usage and the online Learning Management System (LMS) called Google Classroom. Families who still have no Wi-Fi access after all attempts to remedy the issue will be provided learning packets, which include the same assignments that would be given in virtual instruction.

Virtual attendance will be documented as present or absent. If virtual, the student must sign in to Google Classroom and be present to be counted. If students use learning packets due to lack of wi-fi or have temporary wi-fi issues, each school will make one-on-one contact with a student for the day to authenticate their presence and provide daily evidence of engagement. Students must attend class for a minimum of 330 minutes of instruction per day. After five (5) unexcused absences, an attendance officer will be notified.

Homework

The purpose of assigning homework is to reinforce skills learned during class. In addition, parents and dorm parents are notified of weekly assignments. MSDB expects good communication between teachers and parents/dorm parents.

Textbooks and Other Media - Electronic and Print

Textbooks and other media (e.g., music, CDs, tapes, prints, library books) are the property of MSDB and are provided without cost. Students must exercise care in using and maintaining school property. The student who is assigned the responsibility for textbooks or other media must pay for property lost or damaged. In the event MSDB property is lost or damaged, the replacement cost will be the responsibility of the student.

Student Vehicle Policy

The welfare of all students is of utmost concern to the district. Vehicle policies reflect our stance that bringing a vehicle to school should be taken seriously and is a privilege, not a right. MSDB considers the primary purpose for having a vehicle on campus to facilitate visits to and from home. The school also recognizes that there may be other occasions for a student's use of a personal vehicle. To accommodate these occasions, MSDB has developed the Vehicle Permission Form. This form must be completed for all students in possession of a Driver's License even if you do not expect to ever bring a car to campus. The Vehicle Permission Form provides parents with the forum to identify their student's limits. Parents may further restrict those limits or if needed, change the information on the form at any time during the school year by notifying the school office or residence hall office in writing. The school reserves final authority to restrict or deny use of the student's vehicle. Motorcycles are strictly prohibited.

Students shall immediately and completely register any vehicle brought to campus. Complete registration is:

- filling out a registration card and
- providing proof of insurance (copy of card)

Failure to immediately and completely register any vehicle brought to campus or update any changes in the registration may result in consequences up to thirty (30) school days or the termination of vehicle privileges for the remainder of the school year if the vehicle is not registered. The student assumes responsibility for accurate, complete, and timely communication pertaining to the vehicle.

Student cars are required to be in the designated MSDB parking area. Students are expected to comply with all rules, policies, and guidelines and failure to abide by vehicle regulations may result in the loss of the right to bring a vehicle to school, or other disciplinary action. Vehicle privileges may be withdrawn by MSDB administration if the school considers a student's operation of a vehicle to be a danger to self or others, if the vehicle is improperly registered or parked, or if its operation is a detriment to school order.

An Administrator school official may search any vehicle owned or operated by a student if he or she has reasonable suspicion that there may be a violation of the school's printed regulations and/or Mississippi law. The parent or legal guardian of the MSDB student assumes full legal and financial responsibility in matters of their vehicle. The risks involved are those of the owner and operator, not MSDB.

All students, whether drivers or passengers, need to keep in mind these vehicle policies:

- no student shall drive another student's vehicle,
- no student shall drive a vehicle without written (i.e., sign-out) permission from a director or district administrator (including moving a vehicle from one parking lot to another),
- no student shall ride in a personal vehicle with another student without written consent from both parents/guardians,
- vehicles should be considered off-limits in the absence of written or verbal permission from an MSD or MSB staff member,
- students may not "hang-out" at/in vehicles,
- students, or their guests, may not drive the vehicle of a student or guest,
- students may not drive a staff member's vehicle, and
- students shall demonstrate courtesy and consideration of others including, but not limited to, vehicle stereo volume.

Vehicle use will be granted based on the information given in the Student Handbook. During the school week (Sunday 7:30 p.m. through Friday 2:00 p.m.) student vehicle use is restricted, and students should not expect to be granted vehicle use.

INSTRUCTIONAL DEPARTMENTS, POLICIES, AND INFORMATION

Academic Expectations and Honesty

MSDB promotes academic integrity by encouraging all students to demonstrate and exhibit high standards of honesty and respect in their academic work. Violations of this honor code disrupt the community of trust necessary to support high standards of academic achievement. All MSDB students will pledge and work consistently to uphold the standards and values relative to academic integrity.

Students must complete and accept credit only for their own work. Expectations for individual effort may differ among assignments depending on the nature of the work. Group work may or may not be acceptable.

Students are responsible for communicating their need for clarification or help to the teacher. MSDB expects academic honesty from all students. Decisions regarding academic honesty fall to the teacher. To ensure due process, teachers will report suspicion or other indications of dishonesty to the principal/supervisor and the student within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the assignment.

Violations may fall into the following categories:

- cheating on assignments, tests, or other similar evaluations
- plagiarism, violation of copyrights
- other similar types of violations

Incidents of academic dishonesty may include using an open book during a test unless the student has been given permission by the teacher to do so, obtaining unauthorized materials, sharing pertinent information with other students about a test, changing materials on a graded test, sharing answers during a test without permission, presenting another's work as your own, and failure to properly acknowledge sources. Acts of dishonesty may result in disciplinary action.

Daily Schedule

Student school hours are from 8:00 to 3:30 Monday through Thursday and from 8:00 through 1:08 on Friday. This schedule allows residential students from throughout the state to arrive home at a reasonable hour. Commuter students who leave campus via bus or other transportation at the end of the school day will not be permitted to return to

campus once they have exited school grounds unless they are attending a school event, or arrangements have been made for dormitory stay due to athletic practices and games. **Day students may not be dropped off on campus before 7:30 a.m. and should be picked up by 3:35 p.m.**

| Monday - Thursday (47-minute periods; 96-minute blocks) | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| Time | Period | Block |
| 8:00-8:47 | 1 | A |
| 8:50-9:37 | 2 | |
| 9:37-9:47 | break | |
| 9:50-10:37 | 3 | B |
| 10:43-11:27 | 4 | |
| 11:30-12:00 | lunch | |
| 12:03-12:50 | 5 | C |
| 12:53-1:40 | 6 | |
| 1:40-1:50 | break | |
| 1:53-2:40 | 7 | D |
| 2:43-3:30 | 8 | |

| Friday (30-minute periods; 63-minute blocks) | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| Time | Period | Block |
| 8:00-8:30 | 1 | A |
| 8:34-9:04 | 2 | |
| 9:04-9:14 | break | |
| 9:18-9:48 | 3 | B |
| 9:52-10:22 | 4 | |
| 10:22-10:32 | lunch | |
| 10:36-11:06 | 5 | C |
| 11:10-11:40 | 6 | |
| 11:40-12:10 | break | |
| 12:14-12:34 | 7 | D |
| 12:38-1:08 | 8 | |

Expanded Core Curriculum (MSB only)

Students at MSB receive training on the skills listed in the Expanded Core Curriculum. Many of these core skills require direct, sequential instruction in areas that sighted students pick up casually and incidentally:

1. Compensatory academic skills - adaptations necessary for reading and writing or for other means of communication.
2. Orientation and mobility - including independent travel in residential and business areas and the use of public transportation.
3. Social interaction skills - socially appropriate behavior skills leading to successful lives.
4. Self-determination skills - skills and beliefs to pursue personal goals and self-manage one's life successfully, understanding one's strengths and limitations.
5. Independent living skills - personal hygiene, food preparation, money management, time monitoring, and organization of personal spaces.
6. Recreation and leisure skills - a repertoire of enjoyable individual and team activities that carry into adult lives.

7. Career education - knowledge of the world of work, exploration of individual strengths and interests, and the chance to learn marketable skills.
8. Assistive technology - insurance of equal access to print and internet information, feedback to teachers and others, and storage of personal data for easy retrieval.
9. Visual (and other sensory) efficiency skills - instruction in the use of functional vision using specialized techniques and low vision aids, as well as the use of residual hearing and other senses.

Elementary School: Grades PK-5

Students in Pre-K through the fifth grade have an opportunity to access the MS College and Career Readiness Standards in all content areas. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is provided for every child. Support services including speech therapy, audiological services, psychometric services, counseling, occupational/physical therapy, Braille instruction, assistive technology, orientation and mobility, are available based on assessment and the IEP. Appropriate accommodations and modifications are provided to support the student's access to and success with the curriculum.

At MSD, exposure to communication is important at all ages but is critical during the elementary years. It is our goal that communication includes American Sign Language (ASL), both written and spoken English, as well as the newest means of communication through technology. Staff members, deaf and hearing, work together to provide both ASL and English role models as we strive to have our students become bilingual. The students will acquire competency in both languages.

Secondary Program: Grade 6-12

Students in middle (grades 6-8) are provided opportunities to obtain an appropriate education based on the individual student's abilities and interests. Students receive instruction on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness State Standards in all content areas. This ensures that each student is presented with experiences to develop skills and attitudes needed in preparation for transition into success in post-secondary education and adult life.

Mississippi High School Diploma

Students and parents should refer to high school graduation requirements and college entrance requirements. Pursuit of classes to enhance a college or university major is suggested. MSD students must

select, and successfully complete courses required by the Mississippi Board of Education and pass applicable state assessments.

Mississippi Diploma Options

Information about Mississippi Graduation Requirements can be found here:

<https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/diploma>

Mississippi students now can make their high school diploma more valuable. Starting in 2018-19, all 9th graders will choose whether they want to work toward a Traditional Diploma, or take additional classes to earn an academic, distinguished academic or career and technical education endorsement.

Each diploma option will prepare students to be successful after graduation, whether that be in the workforce, a career and technical training program, or college. Also, beginning with incoming 9th graders in 2018-19, students who earn an academic or distinguished academic diploma endorsement from a public high school will be accepted into any of the state's public universities.

Students are encouraged to talk with their school counselor to learn more about Mississippi's Traditional high school diploma and opportunities to earn endorsements.

Traditional Diploma

- Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology or Computer Science, College and Career Readiness, Health, Art, Physical Education, and electives.
- Local school districts may add graduation requirements to the state requirements.

Traditional Diploma + Career and Technical Education (CTE) Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Earn four credits from the same CTE program
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average
- Score at silver level on ACT WorkKeys
- Successfully complete a dual credit course, a work-based learning experience or earn a national credential

Traditional Diploma + Academic Endorsement

- Earn 26 credits
- Score at least 17 on ACT English section
- Score at least 19 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 2.5 grade point average
- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a C in the advanced course

Traditional Diploma + Distinguished Academic Endorsement

- Earn 28 credits
- Score at least 18 on ACT English section
- Score at least 22 on ACT Math section
- Achieve at least a 3.0 grade point average
- Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course
- Earn at least a B in the advanced course

Alternate Diploma

Mississippi public schools offer an alternate course of study for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities. This course of study leads to the Alternate Diploma, which recognizes that a student has completed high school. The alternate Diploma is not equivalent to a Traditional Diploma and is not recognized by postsecondary entities that require a standard high school diploma.

The Life Skills Program is intended for students who have visual impairments combined with other disabilities, such as significant developmental and communication delays or dual sensory impairments. It is designed for students who learn best within a structured routine. With input from parents, the educational team and the local school district, developmental skills and functional activities are identified as areas of need. These are then taught in an integrated manner within the context of the daily routines. Transition planning with representatives from the student's community and local agencies prepare them for integration into their home school vocational/transition program or into future settings in which they may live and work.

Statewide Assessments

Third Grade Summative Assessment

The Literacy Based Promotion Act, Miss. Code Ann. Sections 37-177-1, et. seq, calls for students scoring at the lowest two achievement levels in reading on the established state assessment for third grade to not be promoted to fourth grade. The third-grade state reading assessment is the required End of Year statewide assessment, MAAP. Results from the April assessment will be used to address specific reading deficiencies of students who do not achieve a passing score. Two retest opportunities in mid-May and late July will be provided to students to support students in earning promotion to fourth grade.

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)

(Questar Grades 3-8, Algebra I, English II) – Customized criterion-referenced language arts and mathematics tests that are fully aligned with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards; Performance Based Assessment (PBA) format that includes multiple-choice, both short and extended responses and an essay-writing component. Algebra I and English II assessments are required for students earning a high school diploma. Administered during an online window in mid-April to mid-May. MAAP-SCI (Grades 5 & 8) - Customized criterion-referenced science assessments that are fully aligned with the 2018 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Science Administered during an

online window in mid-April to mid-May. MAAP-EOC (Grades 8-11) – Customized criterion-referenced assessments in Biology I and U.S. History that are fully aligned with Mississippi science (2018) and history (2011) Frameworks. MSDB students are required to participate in the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) with appropriate accommodations and modifications outlined in their IEP.

MAAP-SCI (Grades 5 & 8)

Customized criterion-referenced science assessments that are fully aligned with the 2018 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Science. Results are used for school and district accountability purposes as well as to determine individual student progress. Administered during an online window in mid-April to mid-May.

MAAP-End of Course (EOC) (Grades 8-11)

Customized criterion-referenced assessments in Biology I that are fully aligned with Mississippi science (2018) Frameworks. Results are utilized for school and district accountability purposes as well as a graduation requirement for students earning a high school diploma. Primary administration is typically scheduled online for mid-April to mid-May with retests occurring in December and April/May.

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A)

Mississippi Academic Assessment Program - Alternate (MAAP-A) is a computer-based assessment for a student with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate. These alternate assessments, just like the general assessments, must be aligned to academic content standards that apply in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school and in science in at least one grade in each 3-5, 6-8 and high school grade ranges.

Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (Grades Pre-K & K) & MKAS2 (Grades K-3)

Baseline assessment to inform parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with a common understanding of what children know and can do upon entering school. Results will be used to deploy resources and instructional support for students from birth to third grade. Administered during a pre-test window in August/September and a post-test window of April/May.

ACT & ACT WorkKeys

The ACT assessment is a curriculum- and standards-based educational planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college. The ACT is administered to all students classified as eleventh grade students during the academic year. Ungraded students whose birthdays link them to the cohort of students identified as eleventh grade students will also be included.

In lieu of the performance requirements established in Sections 25.3, and 25.4, a student may obtain a Silver level or higher National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys assessment and successfully complete an industry certification or career pathway recognized by the

Mississippi Department of Education. A student who achieves a Gold or Platinum level National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys does not have to meet the additional requirement of successful completion of an industry certification or career pathway.

LAS Links (Grades K-12)

English language proficiency assessment administered to students who have been officially identified as English learners (ELs). This assessment is administered annually to monitor English learners' progress in acquiring academic English. Academic language is defined as the language required to succeed in school that includes deep understanding of content and communication of that language in the classroom environment. These understandings revolve around specific criteria related to dialogue, sentence, and word/phrase levels of language. Results are utilized for school and district accountability purposes as well as to determine individual student progress. Administered during the month of March.

Grading Policy

MSDB will adhere to the following policy for determining and reporting grades or progress for students with disabilities:

- The grading system utilized is a 10-point grading scale.

| | | |
|---|----------|-----|
| A | 90-100 | 4.0 |
| B | 80-89 | 3.0 |
| C | 70-79 | 2.0 |
| D | 60-69 | 1.0 |
| F | 59-below | 0 |

- Grades given will be based on the mastery of Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards and objectives/benchmarks outlined on the IEP using the 10-point grading system. The student's progress report and report card will reflect these grades. At the end of each nine (9) weeks (or more often as outlined on the IEP), the Report of Progress for each instructional goal and short-term instructional objective/benchmark outlined in the IEP will also be completed and forwarded to the parent(s).
- Any student enrolled in a traditional diploma course of study who does not meet course requirements, even though accommodations and modifications have been implemented in accordance with the student's IEP, may receive a failing grade. If it is obvious, however, that the student with a disability cannot function appropriately in the outlined course of study, the student's IEP should be revised.
- Alternate Curriculum - Grades will be based on mastery of the Mississippi Extended Curriculum outlined in the Individualized Education Program. The student may be assigned to a higher grade based on age appropriateness without completing all objectives as outlined on the IEP. MSD and MSB students in the alternate curriculum starting at the ninth grade will be earning credits toward an alternate diploma (not equivalent to a traditional diploma) as opposed to a traditional diploma if the student meets the objectives as outlined on the student's IEP and attendance requirements

according to MSDB student handbook. Carnegie units will be earned as outlined in the Mississippi Diploma Options-Alternate Diploma requirements for Mississippi Extended Curriculum.

- Written reports of student progress will be sent home to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of each nine-week period grading and each semester grading period. The parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for checking the report card carefully and contacting the school with questions. If a student has a failing grade, a parent/student/teacher conference will be scheduled.
- The lowest passing grade is a 60. The grading policies for each class are determined by the teacher and are communicated to the student through syllabi or through instructor policy and are distributed at the beginning of each semester or year. Progress reports, phone calls, and other methods of communicating with parents will provide any additional reports that evaluate each student on related issues such as attitude, completion of projects, and homework.

Incomplete Grades

Students with excused absences that have an incomplete at the end of any grading period will have one week to complete the work. If the work is not completed, the teacher will assign the student an "F" for the assignment. Under special circumstances, a student may petition the teacher and the principal for more time; granting extensions will be left to the discretion of the guidance counselor and approved by the principal.

Grade Challenges

The faculty maintains all grades for students. If a student disagrees with an assigned final grade, the student must request a meeting with the teacher. If a student believes that the grade is in error or demonstrably inconsistent with the teacher's grading policy, then the student may file a letter explaining the challenge of the grade to the principal indicating the steps the student has taken up to this point. After review, the principal will meet, either jointly or separately, with the teacher and the student, to make a final determination.

Academic Honors

At the end of each nine-week grading period, the following awards will be given:

- Superintendent's List: Students receiving all As on the report card (4.0)
- Principal's List: Students receiving all As and Bs on the report card (3.5-3.99)
- Honor Roll: Students receiving A's and Bs on the report card (3.0-3.49)
- Improvement: Students improving at least one letter grade in a subject without dropping a letter in any other subjects
- Perfect Attendance: Students who have not missed a day during the nine-week period

The following awards will be given at the end of the school year:

- Valedictorian: Student who ranks highest in the graduating class Salutatorian: Student who ranks second highest in the graduating class High Honors: Graduating seniors with a GPA of 3.75 - 4.0
- Honors: Graduating seniors with a GPA of 3.50 - 3.74

- Perfect Attendance: Students who have not missed a day during the year
- Highest Average Subject Awards: Students having the highest average in a course (minimum score is 90)

Promotion and Retention

The policy allows students to progress through grades based on their mastery of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness standards, applicable to those pursuing a Traditional Diploma. Promotion or retention will be based on the following criteria:

- Students must demonstrate mastery of the required course content, defined as achieving at least sixty percent (60%) proficiency in subjects as per the MSDB grading policy.
- The required content for each grade incorporates the objectives from the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards and offered specialized curricula designed for the school's unique student population.
- Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities must meet the standards of a modified curriculum, individually developed by an IEP (Individualized Education Program) committee, according to their transition plan.
- Students in grade 3 earn a “met LBPA requirement” level 3 or above on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program 3rd grade assessment, Good Cause Exemption with two years of documented intensive interventions, or a state-approved alternate assessment.

Promotion is strictly based on academic achievement or demonstrated mastery of the course content, aligned with the applicable standards.

ATHLETICS

The district promotes equality in all aspects of its athletic programs, including equal access to athletics, and fair and just treatment within both the curricular and extracurricular program. Roster sizes for sports may need to be limited as a matter of practicality. This is to ensure team members receive adequate attention for training, supervision, and preparation for competitions and that adequate resources including transportation are in place to ensure a quality experience. Effort will be made to fairly evaluate all candidates for teams.

The district ensures that students, parents, and alumni, and others understand the expectations of sportsmanship, civility, and self-control at athletic practices and contests, much as those same characteristics are required within the more traditional academic environment. The MSDB Athletic Handbook must be reviewed and signed by students and parents each school year.

The district is committed to the safety, physical and emotional health of participants in the athletic program. The district demonstrates this commitment by ensuring that appropriate safety precautions are in place for all athletics activities. Furthermore, the district has appropriate response safeguards in place if a student is injured. MSDB continually ensures that coaches have appropriate training.

The district stands firmly in opposition to performance-enhancing drugs. The district and its athletic program do not tolerate any form of hazing, bullying or other inappropriate behaviors.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate students must:

- maintain a current physical (less than one (1) year old throughout all seasons they participate in) on file in the office prior to participation.
- remain in good academic standing per the Parent/Student Handbook. Therefore, students must maintain an overall "C" average.
- abide by individual eligibility requirements as outlined by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

MSB also competes as a member of the South-Central Association of Schools for the Blind (SCASB) and students must meet eligibility requirements to compete in athletic and extracurricular activities sponsored by this organization.

Grades for Athletic Eligibility

A student that fails to maintain a "C" average at the end of any nine-week term will be declared ineligible. The student will remain ineligible through the next progress report period. At that time, should the student re-establish a "C" average then athletic eligibility will be granted. If the student does not meet the "C" average required for athletic eligibility he/she will remain ineligible until the end of the quarter or until a "C" average is obtained at the next grading interval. The students and parents will be informed of their ineligibility.

Activity Participation after Absence

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities, practices, employment, or after-school functions unless the student attends the last four periods of that school day. Students absent all day due to illness may not attend any extracurricular activity that day. If extenuating school or family circumstances result in a student's failure to be present the required periods, an exception can be made by the MSDB administration.

*See Appendix for Athletic Handbook.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDIES

Attendance

The State of Mississippi, as expressed by the Compulsory School Attendance Statute, has established responsible attendance habits as a priority for all Mississippi students. A compulsory-school-age child is defined by Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(2)(f). Parents should support the school by having their student arrive to school on time.

When a compulsory age student has accumulated five unexcused absences, the school shall report the absences to the appropriate school attendance officer in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(6).

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91(4), a compulsory-school-age child has an absence that is more than thirty-seven percent (37%) of the instructional day must be considered absent the entire school day.

Parents are expected to notify the front office of their child's absence the day of the absence. If a child does not attend school due to an illness, surgery, or mental or physical incapacity, the school will require an excuse signed by a doctor.

Tardies

A student is tardy if they arrive at any time after the instructional day begins. Any student who is tardy must report to the office before going to class. Tardiness due to personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family or other similar emergencies will be excused if a written note or telephone call from the student's parent/guardian is presented at the time of arrival. All notes must contain the date, reason, time, and phone number where parent/guardian can be reached during regular school hours.

Oversleeping, clock failure, missed rides and failure of a vehicle will not be reasons for excused tardiness. Any student with a medical reason, which due to its nature may cause a student to be tardy from time to time, shall be excused if a doctor has notified the school in advance. The notice will be in writing. Any student who is tardy must report to the office before going to class. **When a student is tardy, the parent or guardian must come inside the school office to sign the student in. A student is considered absent if he/she checks in after 11:20am.**

To Class (Middle School and High School)

Students are tardy when they enter the classroom at any time after the tardy bell rings. Students are allowed time to pass from one class to the next and should not be tardy except in cases of emergency. If an emergency should arise, the student should get admittance from the teacher who knows about the emergency. In the event a student needs more than the regular time, they should report to their class first and obtain permission from the teacher. If a student finds it necessary to be late for class, the student must check with their teacher or the school office first. If the student is sick, they will report to an administrator in the school office. Any student missing ten (10) minutes of class after the tardy bell rings will be considered truant or skipping on campus.

Consequences of Tardiness to Class and School

- 1st Unexcused Tardy: A warning issued by the teacher.
- 2nd Unexcused Tardy: A warning issued by the administration.
- 3rd Unexcused Tardy: Parent contact and one (1) day In School Detention (ISD).
- 4th Unexcused Tardy: Two (2) days In School Detention (ISD).
- 5th Unexcused Tardy: Parent conference required and One (1) day Out of School Suspension (OSS). Students may be suspended from athletic practices, events, extracurricular activities or games.
- Any tardiness beyond 5 will be considered a Level 2 offense and will warrant disciplinary action under Level 2 by administration

All tardies will reset at the beginning of each nine (9) weeks.

Excessive Absences

Frequent and prolonged absences are in violation of the Compulsory School Attendance Statute. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a change of placement, unearned credit, or retention as determined by the IEP Committee. The local education agency will be notified of excessive absences.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is an absence from school for all day(s) or for any number of periods of the day under circumstances granted by law or recognized by the school. These include:

- death in the immediate family
- religious observances
- college visitation
- serving as a legislative page or assignment at an election poll
- participation in official organized events sponsored by the 4-H or Future Farmers of America
- transportation canceled due to weather
- weather emergency observances
- verified court appearances
- authorized school activity with prior approval of the Superintendent or designee
- illness or injury that prevents the student from being physically able to attend school

A complete list of all excused absences may be found at Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13- 91(4).

The parent/guardian should inform the school in writing at least two days prior to the absence. No excused pre-arranged absences will be granted during state assessments.

MSDB encourages good medical and dental care for students. If appointments must occur during the school day, it is recommended that the appointment times be rotated to avoid missing the same class repeatedly.

Students may have up to two (2) excused parental absences per nine weeks grading period. Parents must notify the office in writing no later than the day the student returns for the absence to be considered a parental excuse. All other absences require medical or legal documentation to be submitted to the office on the day the student returns to school for the absence to be considered excused.

Make-Up Work for Absences

Students who are absent may make up tests, class work, exams, lab work, or assignments without penalty. Students must have the opportunity to make-up work upon return to class following the absence.

Failure to complete and turn in assignments within the stipulated time shall result in a grade of zero for the assignment.

In the event of an extended illness or absence, teachers will be cooperative in providing make-up opportunities. The ultimate responsibility for obtaining and returning completed make-up work rests with the student.

Activity Participation after Absence

A student may not participate in extracurricular activities, practices, employment, or after-school functions unless the student attends the last four periods of that school day. Students absent all day due to illness may not attend any extracurricular activity that day. If extenuating school or family circumstances result in a student's failure to be present the required periods, an exception can be made by the MSDB administration.

Check-outs

While checking out of school is sometimes necessary, the school discourages check-out as much as possible. Please make an attempt to schedule doctor's appointments after the school day has ended. If check-outs are necessary, they should be done at the end of a block. Calling students to come to the office is disruptive to the instructional environment. No student will be allowed to check out after 2:30 p.m. on Monday-Thursday and 12:30 on Friday unless the principal or his/her designee determines there is an emergency. No student shall leave school without permission from a principal or his designee. Students shall be allowed to check out of school for personal illness or a bona-fide emergency. Students will only be released to the parent or other guardian on file in the office.

Parents or those checking out a student must come to the office, show ID, and sign the student out. No student will be released without a signature and ID.

DISCIPLINE

The Student Code of Conduct outlines expectations for student behavior, providing a framework for interactions and decision-making in both academic and residential settings. This code defines what is considered appropriate conduct and serves to inform students, parents, faculty, and staff. It aims to foster an environment conducive to honesty, integrity, service, and lifelong learning.

MSDB expects students to uphold these standards at all times, whether in class, during field trips, at extracurricular activities, or any other time they represent the school or are under its supervision.

Classroom misbehavior, which includes disrespect, disruptions, failing or refusing to follow directions, or falling asleep in class, is not tolerated. Teachers hold the primary authority in managing the classroom and addressing behavioral issues. Should a situation arise that exceeds what a teacher can manage, it will be escalated to the principal.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind is governed by the State Board of Education and recognizes the teacher as the authority in classroom. Such recognition shall include the right of the teacher to remove from the classroom any student who, in the professional judgment of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment, to the office of the principal or designee.

The principal or designee shall determine the proper placement for the student, who may not be returned to the classroom until a conference of some kind has been held with the parent, guardian, or custodian during which the disrupting behavior is discussed, and agreements are reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. If the principal does not approve of the determination of the teacher to remove the student from the classroom, the student may not be removed from the classroom, and the principal can provide justification for their disapproval to the teacher.

A student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities may be subject to discipline actions.

School officials, the reporting teacher, and the student's parent will develop a behavior modification plan for a student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities for a second time during the school year.

The superintendent, principal, or any district administrator may discipline a student for misconduct. Each administrator has the authority to determine the appropriate disciplinary action, including in-school suspension, out of school suspension, conferencing with students, and in some cases, expulsion.

Students are subject to discipline during any time that they are either under or subject to the jurisdiction of MSDB, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, at any place where an athletic contest or event is taking place, during the course of any field trip, during the course of any trip or activity sponsored or supervised by MSDB, while under the supervision or direction of any teacher, principal, or other authority of MSDB, or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or poses a threat to the safety of the student or others. School administrators may remove students from participation in school related activities for disciplinary reasons. Parents will be notified of disciplinary actions regarding their student.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind do not allow corporal punishment of any student.

Respect for Persons, Property, and Privacy

Students are expected to be fully and always respectful of other people, including faculty, staff, other students, and guests on campus. Examples of inappropriate behavior that might violate this expectation include:

1. Use of language not deemed respectful or in good taste.
2. Engaging in inappropriate physical contact or improper demonstrations of affection or attraction.
3. Any form of harassment, hazing, or bullying, whether verbal or nonverbal.
4. Taking any property without the owner's express consent is considered theft. This policy includes the access to contents of backpacks or bags without specific permission to do so. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
5. Any form of vandalism or abuse of the school's or another's personal property is unacceptable. Trespassing on property not owned by the school is also a violation of this standard. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
6. Violating any federal, state, or local laws.
7. Engaging in behavior which jeopardizes the welfare or good nature of the school or any members of the school community.
8. Students should be aware that certain activities outside of school hours or off school property may result in loss of school privileges or other disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Examples of such outside conduct are violations of laws; underage purchase of alcohol; drug use, sale or possession; or use or misuse of digital content which does or could compromise the welfare of any member of the school community or the reputation or function for the school.

9. Students are expected to always remain on campus except when leaving campus is scheduled, accompanied by staff, or approved by the school.
10. All students must respect the absolute privacy of each other's residential rooms and all areas of campus.

Items Prohibited on School Property

Possession of the following items on school property, a school bus, or at a school-related activity is prohibited:

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Alcoholic beverages | Bandanas, sweat bands | Toy weapons |
| Ammunition | Cigarette lighters | Knives |
| Stolen property | Firearms | Fireworks |
| Gambling paraphernalia | Gang paraphernalia | Cap Guns |
| Gun jewelry | Illegal drugs | Matches |
| Noise making devices | Drug paraphernalia | Laser lights |
| Mace | Incendiary materials | Tobacco |
| Paint guns | Personal defense spray | Water pistols |
| Pornographic materials | Silly bands | Slingshots |
| Stink bombs | e-cigarettes | |

Contraband property confiscated by school officials will be returned only to the parent or legal guardian. School personnel will not be held responsible for prohibited items which have been confiscated.

Note: Some of these items such as noise-making devices may be permitted for special events such as pep-rallies and carnivals. In such events, the principal and/or residential director have the authority to allow such items.

Drugs and Alcohol

Students are absolutely prohibited from carrying, possessing in any manner, using or selling alcoholic beverages, morphine, marijuana, medical marijuana, cocaine, opium, heroin or their derivatives or compounds, drugs commonly called LSD, "pep" pills, tranquilizers, or any other narcotic drug, barbiturate, substance ingredient or compound which, when taken orally, intravenously, inhaled or in any other manner, may cause the person to be under the influence thereof or any other controlled substance regulated by law.

The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is under the supervision and direction of such physician. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all students during all of the period of time that they are under and subject to the jurisdiction of this school district, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, while under the supervision and direction of any teacher, principal or other

authority of this school district or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or pose a threat to the safety of the student or others.

Any student violating any of the provisions of this policy shall be automatically suspended and recommended for expulsion by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. The suspension shall be effective immediately subject to the procedures of due process.

This policy is for the discipline and protection of the students of this school district and their general welfare. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to avoid any prosecution under any pertinent criminal statute of the State of Mississippi.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE Sections 37-11-18; 41-29-101 et seq.; 97-32-27 thru 97- 32-29

Illegal Purchase, Use, or Possession of Tobacco and/or Tobacco Products

The campus of MSDB is a tobacco-free environment. Cigarettes and other tobacco products are not allowed. Smoking, possession, or use of tobacco products are prohibited by students and adults (including visitors) on campus and at school related activities. While under the patronage of MSD and MSB, the same drug-free policies exist for all MSDB administration, faculty, staff, and students. Possession constitutes a violation and will be referred to administration as a Level Three violation.

In addition to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, MSDB prohibits the following items from campus: vapor cigarettes, electronic cigarettes/cigars/pipes, and accessories (e.g., pipes, holders, rolling papers, lighters, matches are not allowed). Any natural herbs, seeds, or plants that are used for altering the state of mind in students are strictly prohibited. Items that are used outside of their intended purpose to alter the state of mind in students are considered prohibited items. Students will be subject to disciplinary action accordingly.

Notification of Law Enforcement Officials

Commission of any of the following misconduct shall result in notification of law enforcement officials by the principal or his/her designee:

- aggravated assault resulting in serious physical injury
- sexual assault/battery
- sexual offense
- rape
- indecent liberties with a minor
- assault involving use of a weapon
- possession of a firearm in violation of the law
- possession or use of a weapon in violation of the law
- possession, sale, or use of any controlled substance in violation of the law
- simple assault upon any school employee
- murder
- other violent acts (action resulting in death or physical harm or attempt to cause death or physical harm to another) or threats of violent acts

The principal making the report or participating in any judicial proceeding resulting thereof, shall be presumed to be acting in good faith and, as such, shall be immune from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Zero Tolerance Policy

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18, MSDB has a zero-tolerance policy for the possession and/or use of firearms on any school property or at any school function or school-related activity. Any student found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to expulsion.

Any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm, or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17, shall be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled; provided, however, that the superintendent of the school shall be authorized to modify the period for such expulsion on a case-by-case basis. Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the local school board.

If a student has committed an infraction where Zero Tolerance applies, only the IEP Committee may determine the placement of a special education student in the alternative setting. Should the parents disagree with the placement decision, due process procedures afforded under IDEA will be followed. The IEP Committee will also determine if the student has met the goals outlined on the IEP, which would allow the student to return to an appropriate placement other than the alternative setting.

Bullying or Harassing Behavior Prohibited in Schools Prohibition

No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students. MSDB prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students and school employees. MSDB will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic* or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that, takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that: places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property; or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. For the purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Conduct described in subsection (1) is considered bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

*Bullying or harassing behavior includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying or harassing behavior that occurs electronically.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.

No person shall engage in any act of retaliation or reprisal against a victim, witness, or any person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying.

Procedures for Reporting, Investigating, and Addressing Bullying or Harassing Behavior

A student who feels he or she has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or a student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to a school employee, who shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal. Students should report bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee promptly.

Reports should include: the name of the reporting person*, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name(s) of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the name(s) of any witness(es), the name(s) of the alleged bully, and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the report. *If a student chooses to anonymously report bullying or harassing behavior, the school's ability to act based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal and/or Superintendent. Reports against the Principal shall immediately be made in writing to the Superintendent, and reports against the Superintendent shall immediately be made in writing to the Chief Academic Officer at the Mississippi Department of Education. The school administration will investigate reported incidents of bullying within five (5) working days of receiving the report.

The school administration will speak with the alleged victim and alleged bully separately. Students may submit evidence for the school administration to review and a list of witnesses for the school administration to speak with. Students should preserve evidence of bullying/cyberbullying and/or harassing behavior.

All teachers, employees, volunteers, and students shall fully cooperate with the investigating and answer truthfully all inquiries relative thereto.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration will immediately notify the alleged victim and alleged bully regarding the outcome of the investigation.

MSDB recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassment. "Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee and student's use of

reasonable self-defense. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the basis that that student's use of reasonable self-defense was in response to the bullying.

Discipline for bullying of a student with disabilities shall comply with the applicable requirements under federal law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.).

Available counseling options for a student who is a victim of bullying or a witness to bullying or a student who engages in bullying include:

- School/District Counseling
- Conflict Resolution Training
- Anger Management Training
- Problem Solving Skills Training (proactive, constructive, relationship building)
- Social Skills Training.

Support and intervention in response to bullying may be provided by MSDB through the assistance of the any of the following agencies:

- Mississippi Department of Education
- Mississippi Department of Health
- Mississippi Department of Human Services - Juvenile Services Department
- Community/Family Public or private community-based mental health services
- Faith-based services
- Law enforcement agencies

The procedure for reporting bullying will also be posted on the school's website. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited and may warrant disciplinary action. Any perceived criminal conduct will be immediately reported to law enforcement. Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-11-67 and 37-11-69 (Amended 7/2017)

Disciplinary Procedures

MSDB is committed to providing an environment where students may live and learn safely. Success is dependent upon the full cooperation of every member of the school's community. This includes school staff, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s) who understand their responsibilities to others and are mindful of laws, rules, and policies that govern student behavior.

Disciplinary measures employed by MSDB are intended to assist students to develop skills necessary for effective problem solving, develop positive self-images, learn how to have positive

relationships with others, respect personal and property rights of others, understand and appreciate other cultures, ideas, and opinions, and develop a sense of responsibility for one's actions and an awareness of their possible consequences. MSDB will follow relevant Federal and State statutes and regulations to convene IEP Committees.

MSDB admits students with various backgrounds, experiences, and educational expectations. In a community of diverse learners, standards of behavior ensure that all students live in a safe environment conducive to learning and free from disruptions that impede the freedom to develop and grow as productive individuals in society. All students shall conduct themselves in a positive manner, attend classes, complete assignments on time, abide by the Student Code of Conduct, and respect the rights and freedoms of others.

MSD and MSB students shall demonstrate honesty, integrity, and respect in all school related and sponsored activities, whether on or off the campus.

Students must conduct themselves appropriately in the cafeteria. Shirts and shoes are required, and hats must be removed. Listening to radios, etc., and playing musical instruments is not permitted. Throwing food, leaving one's tray, or in any way making a mess for others to clean up will result in disciplinary action.

Staff will follow the policy in relation to assign one or more consequences regarding an incident. When an incident occurs involving multiple violations on the same level, staff may count each violation separately or consider the incident as one violation for determining the consequence(s). However, when an incident involves multiple violations on different levels, the most severe consequence of the higher level, or consequences based on the frequency of the offense on the lower level, will apply. At the discretion of the administration, a senior who commits a serious violation (Level II or III) during the weeks prior to the end of the school year may be dismissed or may not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremonies.

Level 1 Violations

Level 1 violations are handled by the teacher in the classroom with individual classroom management plans. If any teacher or other school employee observes a student committing a Level 1 Violation outside the classroom or in the cafeteria or gym, then the staff member should approach the student and ask the student to correct the misbehavior.

Level 1 violations include the following:

1. Consuming of food or drink in the classroom (except for special circumstances). Food and drink should only be carried into the building in a legitimate book bag or lunchbox.
2. Intentional littering
3. Inappropriate displays of affection
4. Making excessive noise
 - a. Talking in class
5. Sleeping in class
6. Failure to follow classroom rules
7. Refusal to do work

8. Disruption of learning
9. Violation of the grooming rules
10. Tardies
 - a. First tardy
 - b. Second tardy
11. Violation of dress code rules

Level 1 Consequences

1st offense: Verbal warning

2nd offense: Notify parent of misbehavior

Level 2 Violations

The following misbehaviors warrant completion of an Office Discipline Referral Form for action as soon as possible.

Level 2 violations include the following:

1. Inappropriate or disrespectful written or verbal comments to students, teachers or staff
2. Skipping class or leaving class without permission
3. Being in an unassigned area; out of area
 - a. Includes tardies (3rd tardy, 4th tardy)
4. Refusal to stop disruption of learning after the teacher has warned the student or has applied disciplinary intervention
5. Continued refusal to complete class assignments
6. Cell phone violation
7. Continued dress code violations
 - a. Third offense and beyond
8. Cheating/plagiarism
 - a. Conveying false information through electronic, written, or verbal means
9. Inconsiderate of others
 - a. Disturbing others, excessive noise, horseplay, running, etc.
 - b. Disruption in school assemblies
10. Disrespect/disregard for authority
 - a. Non-compliance
 - b. Dishonesty
 - c. Refusal to follow directions of school personnel
11. Failure to follow written protocol
 - a. Accidental failure to sign in or out for field trips, community service, etc.
12. Property/equipment misuse
 - a. Misuse and/or unauthorized use of school furniture.
13. Abusive language (slip or unintentional)
 - a. Use of profanity, verbal or written
14. Improper cafeteria conduct

- a. Failure to follow cafeteria or school protocol including failure to clean up after oneself in an appropriate manner; taking utensils, food, drinks, and flatware from the cafeteria; food fights, etc.
- 15. Technology/electronic violation
 - a. Use of electrical appliances other than those designated appropriate for school use
 - b. Refusal to give cell phone, tablet, laptop or other electronic device to a teacher, administrator or staff
 - c. Inappropriate posting, texting, videoing, recording or use of social media during school hours
- 16. Improper physical contact
 - a. Inappropriate public display of affection
- 17. Any Level 1 misbehavior that has been upgraded to Level 2 according to procedure

Level 2 Consequences

1st offense: Conference with student, notification to parents, other possible sanctions

2nd offense: Parent conference, review of student record, referred to administration for intervention plan

3rd offense: Parents notified; sanctions created deemed necessary which may include ISS, possible referral to Level 3 violation

4th offense: Referred to principal/supervisor or designee as a possible Level 3 violation, parent conference required

Level 3 Violations

The following misbehaviors are considered major violations. An administrator or designee should be called for students guilty of such violations for disciplinary actions.

Level 3 violations include the following:

- 1. Leaving assigned areas without permission
 - a. Failure to attend required assemblies and meetings
 - b. Failure to receive staff approval before leaving campus
- 2. Failing to follow safety and security procedures
 - a. Failure to follow evacuation and emergency procedures
 - b. Possession and/or use of burning substances (e.g., candles, incense)
 - c. Compromising hall security (e.g., propping open exit doors, exiting an alarmed door)
 - d. Unauthorized use of keys
 - e. Facilitating the presence of unauthorized persons in the school
- 3. Attendance violation (curfew, tardy, skipping, etc.)
 - a. Unauthorized entry or exit from a room or building
 - b. Deliberate failure to sign in or out
- 4. Inconsiderate of others
 - a. Behavior impeding the day-to-day operation of the school
- 5. Physical aggression
 - a. Fighting
- 6. Defiance/disrespect for authority
 - a. Direct disobedience or insubordination

- b. Lying to judicial court or administration
 - c. Extreme or excessive written, verbal or electronic disrespect or using extreme or excessive profanity or provocative language to teachers or staff members
 - d. Forgery, fraud, submission of false information
- 7. Failure to follow written protocol
 - a. Documenting false information (e.g., signing out under false name, signing out for one destination, and going to another destination)
- 8. Deliberate property/equipment damage
 - a. Acts of minor vandalism
 - b. Actions resulting in defacement of school property (student responsible for restitution)
- 9. Deliberate abusive language
 - a. Lewd gestures, etc.
 - b. Verbal provocation
- 10. Inappropriate display/physical contact
 - a. Physical harassment of a sexual nature, which includes but is not limited to unwelcome touching, pinching, patting or brushing against another person.
- 11. Technology electronic violation
- 12. Gambling or gaming
- 13. Possession of pornographic, lewd, or obscene materials
- 14. Materials encouraging the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- 15. Multiple level 2 violations

Level 3 Consequences

Under routine circumstances, an administrator managing a Level 3 Violation will apply the sequence of disciplinary actions listed below and may have a student arrested. However, depending upon the frequency and seriousness of the student's misconduct, the administrator may advance immediately to any disciplinary step in the procedure.

The normal sequence, depending upon circumstances, is as follows:

- Two (2) days Out of School Suspension (OSS) with parent conference.
- Three (3) days Out of School Suspension with Parent conference.
- Referrals beyond 3rd Office visit will be automatically moved to Level 4 Violations.

Level 4 Violations

The following misbehaviors are not only violations of school policy but also violations of state laws. Any teacher who observes any unlawful activity shall notify an administrator immediately. The administrator shall notify the parents or guardians of the student committing the act and shall suspend the student for three (3) days and in most unlawful activities shall have a student arrested. Furthermore, administrators shall notify the Superintendent of Education or his designee, and then the proper authorities will be notified.

Level 4 violations include the following:

1. Fighting and/or initiating a fight (arrest dependent upon severity). Any fight that involves a group/gang may be recommended for expulsion

- a. Watching and/or boosting a fight may result in the same punishment as those fighting
- 2. Theft or damage of school/private property
 - a. Vandalism, destruction, or misuse of school property
- 3. Aggravated or simple assault upon anyone
 - a. Commits a violent act on school property. MS Code §37-11-1.
- 4. Sexual misconduct
 - a. Indecent exposure, and/or other offenses of an overt sexual nature; sex between or among students, or other prohibited sexual conduct
 - b. Indecent behavior or exposure
 - c. Pornography/using cell phone or other electronic device to produce/post pornography
- 5. Any action that constitutes a threat to self or others, including assault/battery, molestation, extortion
 - a. Threatening with a play/water gun
 - b. Verbally or maliciously threatening another person
- 6. Habitually disruptive
- 7. Bullying, cyberbullying or harassing behavior
 - a. Threats, hate crimes
- 8. Possession of any instrument defined as a weapon. MS Code §37-11-18
 - a. Statement by student that they are in possession of a weapon (i.e. knife, gun, etc.)
- 9. Stealing or vandalism
- 10. Drugs, smoking, and/or alcohol policy violations
 - a. Possession or under the influence of drugs. MS Code §37-11-18
 - b. Unauthorized purchase/possession, irresponsible use of and/or distribution of prescription or over the counter medications and/or inhalants
 - c. Purchase, possession of, distribution of, consumption of, or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
- 11. Computer violations invasive to system or network offenses
- 12. Violation of municipal, state, or federal laws
 - a. Possession, creation, distribution, or use of fake I.D.
 - b. Compromising campus security and safety, tampering with safety, emergency alarm
 - c. Possession of weapons, including martial arts weapons, breaking, and entering, theft, shoplifting, receiving stolen property
- 13. Involvement in any gang-related activities. MS Code §37-11-37
- 14. Possession of explosive devices. MS Code §37-11-18

Level 4 Consequences

All Level 4 violations are immediately reported directly to the Superintendent and may include suspension. There is also the possibility of law enforcement involvement.

Public Display of Affection

Public displays of affection (PDA), beyond a friendly hug or holding hands, are considered a breach of MSDB expectations and are subject to disciplinary procedures. Listing every behavior that constitutes

PDA is not possible. Students must use caution and common sense in relation to appropriate behavior. Being in a "dating" relationship or being of the same gender does not alter the PDA restrictions. The Disciplinary Procedure for failing to follow the MSDB expectation for appropriate behavior will correspond to the gravity of the PDA situation and current disciplinary record.

Gang Activity and Secret Societies

It is unlawful in the State of Mississippi to organize fraternities, sororities, or secret societies in the public high schools. It is also unlawful for a public school to be a member of, belong to, or participate in such organizations, and to solicit student membership in such organizations. Students in violation of this policy are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Schools governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education are committed to maintaining a safe school environment for their students and staff. Students are expected to adhere to the school standards of conduct that promote well-being and support the learning process.

Gang-related activities in the school, on school property or vehicles, or at school related activities are prohibited. Where gang activity is suspected or confirmed a complaint will be filed in accordance with the "Mississippi Street Gang Act" pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 97-44-1 et seq.

Gang activity, which initiates, promotes, or advocates activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or property on school grounds, or which disrupts the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger and is to be discouraged by school officials. Students displaying interest, involvement, or affiliation with a gang shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be encouraged to seek involvement in authorized school organizations to enhance self-esteem and promote activity that can have a positive impact on the student.

Probation

Probation is a period set by an administrator during which a student is given an opportunity to improve behavior exhibited in prior violations of school policy. The administrator will notify students, parents, and teachers in writing of students placed on probation. This notification could include a contract including future plans and expectations of the student and the way the student must meet the prescribed requirements. The parents, student, faculty, principal or supervisor, Director of Residence Education, and the counselor will receive copies of the signed contract.

Students who fail to improve attendance, or to correct behavioral problems during the probationary term will be evaluated for appropriate actions.

General Suspension for Ten (10) Days or Less

Suspension is the administrative removal of a student from class attendance at MSD or MSB for a specified period due to violations of school policy. If the student receives an out-of-school suspension, the student may not come to campus **for any reason** for the number of days assigned.

The Principal may suspend a student from MSD or MSB for a period of ten (10) school days or less when it is determined that a student's behavior is detrimental to the good order of the school, and that suspension is an appropriate disciplinary action for a violation of school rules (or frequent violations of school rules).

The procedure for suspending a student is as follows:

MSDB officials will provide the student with a notice of the charge of violation of school discipline and the evidence against them. The notice of the charge may be given orally. The opportunity will be given for the student to hear the charge and evidence and to offer the student an opportunity to respond. This will be the only hearing conducted. If the facts indicate the student's guilt, the Superintendent or Principal will determine the appropriate term of suspension.

Upon notification of the suspension, the student is placed on restriction (in a room specified by the principal/supervisor during the school day) until the actual departure from school to begin the suspension. The suspension may begin immediately. MSDB will inform the parent/guardian(s) of the suspension prior to the student leaving campus.

Within five school days of the informal hearing with the student, MSD or MSB officials will send written notification to the student and parent/guardian(s) specifying the reasons for the suspension.

Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension. Such exclusions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc. A student suspended from school may make up work. To take advantage of this opportunity, the student must comply with the timelines specified in MSDB policies for making up work. Failure to contact teachers and make specific arrangements will waive the right to make up the work.

Upon completion of suspension, a student returning to school must make an appointment with the school official who handled the suspension to discuss returning to school and any additional restrictions that may apply. Parent/Guardian(s) will be requested to consult with the MSDB official.

Emergency Suspension

Emergency Suspension: occurs when the Principal summarily suspends a student for not more than three (3) days prior to completing an investigation for serious student misconduct under circumstances where immediate removal of the student is necessary to restore order, protect persons on the school grounds, protect the student, or protect school property. The school official will meet with the student to briefly explain the purpose of the suspension and allow the student to respond. Parents will be immediately notified of the suspension. The student may be placed under the supervision of security and may not attend any classes. The student must leave school as soon as possible.

During the student's absence, a school official will complete the investigation by the end of the school day following the emergency suspension. The administration will communicate findings to the student by phone and allow the student to respond.

Further disciplinary action will be recommended or taken as needed. If additional suspension is necessary, the Superintendent or a designee may extend the suspension for a period not to exceed a maximum of ten days. A written notification of the reasons for the suspension will be sent to the student and parents within three (3) school days.

Disciplinary Hearing

A disciplinary hearing is the appropriate course of action when a student is alleged to have violated the code of conduct. The purpose of the hearing is to review the incident, examine evidence, and determine appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with school policy. The process ensures due process rights are upheld and that all decisions are made fairly and consistently.

Authority of School Personnel

The MSDB school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates the code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than ten (10) school days to the extent such alternatives are applied to children without disabilities and additional removals for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct if those removals do not constitute a change in placement.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, in cases where a child:

- carries or possess a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substances, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

An IEP Team must determine an interim alternative education setting. Any interim alternative educational setting in which the student is placed by the school personnel or hearing officer must be selected so as to enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive services and modifications, including those described in the student's current IEP, that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in that IEP and includes services and modifications to address the behavior that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Manifestation Determination Review

A manifestation determination review is an evaluation of the relationship between a student's disability and the act of misconduct that must be conducted when the MSDB proposes to take specified serious disciplinary actions. The IEP Team, as determined by the parent and MSD or MSB, has up to ten (10) school days from any decision to change a child's educational placement for disciplinary reasons to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent to determine the relationship, if any, between the student's disability and the misconduct in question.

The behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability if:

- the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability
- the conduct in question was the direct result of the MSDB's failure to implement the student's IEP

The conduct will be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the MSDB, the parent, and relevant members of the student's IEP Team determine that either condition is met.

No manifestation review is required when a child is removed from his current placement for not more than ten (10) school days to an interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or because of a suspension.

Determination That Behavior WAS a Manifestation of Disability

The IEP Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment (and implement a behavioral intervention plan) in circumstances where the manifestation determination review concludes that the student's behavior was related to his disability provided the MSD has not already conducted such assessment before the occurrence of the behavior that resulted in the change in the student's placement. If a Behavioral Intervention Plan has already been developed and implemented, the IEP Team will review the plan and make modifications, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Determination That Behavior WAS NOT a Manifestation of Disability

If a student is removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) days for conduct determined not to be a manifestation of his disability or removed to an interim alternative educational setting for drugs, weapons, or infliction of serious bodily injury (regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the disability), the student will receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications that are designed to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Change in Placement Due to Behavior-Manifestation Determination

Students with disabilities have special protections under the IDEA when they exhibit behaviors that violate the code of conduct or exhibit behaviors that require an extended removal from the current educational setting.

In these cases, the IEP Committee must determine if the behavior(s) are a manifestation of the student's disability or if the proposed disciplinary action constitutes a change in their educational placement.

Decisions that impact placement must be made by the IEP Committee prior to any change in educational placement.

In making decisions concerning discipline procedures for a child with a disability, the public agency must consider the following factors:

- The proposed length of the removal from the current placement;
- If the behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability;
- Whether the behavior is due to the failure of the public agency to Implement the child's IEP, including program modifications such as a BIP.
- Did the child, at school, on school premises, or at a school function carry or possess a weapon; Possess, sell, or use illegal drugs; and/or inflict a serious bodily injury on another person?

Discipline of a student who violates the student code of conduct permits the removal of the student from the general school setting for up to ten (10) school days over the course of a school year. The student with a disability may not be removed from the general school setting for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative school days without providing services following the tenth day of removal. For each incident after the tenth day or removal, it is the responsibility of the IEP Committee to determine if there is a relationship between the child's disability and the behavior precipitating a disciplinary action. To consider the behavior in question a manifestation of the child's disability, the relationship must be direct and substantial to the child's disability.

The removal to this setting must not exceed more than forty-five (45) school days without a review of the IEP and placement determination by the IEP team.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

A functional behavioral assessment is a procedure to assess problem behavior prior to recommending strategies for dealing with the student's problem behavior.

The general purpose of a functional assessment of behavior is to provide the IEP Team with additional information, analysis, and strategies for dealing with undesirable behavior, especially when it is interfering with the student's education. The process involves identifying the undesirable behavior; observing the student and collecting data on the problem behavior and consequences; developing an intervention(s); and collecting data on the effectiveness of the intervention(s) in changing the behavior. A functional behavioral assessment is only performed when the IEP Committee determines it is needed.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

The IEP Team will consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, to address behavior in the case of a student with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of other students.

Expedited Due Process

When a parent or the Superintendent or designee for MSDB requests an appeal to review a manifestation determination, the Mississippi Department of Education will arrange for an expedited, impartial due process hearing, which shall occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the hearing is requested. The hearing officer will decide within ten (10) school days after the hearing. The student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of a change in placement resulting from the behavior, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the MSDB agree otherwise. This applies to removals of up to forty-five (45) school days for special circumstances, such as drugs, weapons, and infliction of serious bodily injury.

A parent's right to an expedited, impartial due process hearing is limited to disciplinary situations involving a change of placement, which would occur if a child were removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) school days at a time or if there were a series of removals from the student's current educational placement in school year. The MSDB has the right to request an expedited hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving notice of the due process complaint unless the parent and MSDB agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or agree to use mediation. The due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the due process complaint.

The decisions rendered in expedited due process hearings are appealable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States.

Restraint and/or Seclusion

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-9-69 and 37-11-57, it is recognized that staff may intercede in situations wherein students are displaying physically violent behavior or are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others. The use of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment regarding student management is prohibited. Restraint and/or seclusion shall not be utilized as a punitive measure.

Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students after the use of restraint or seclusion. This policy in no way shall inhibit the right of staff to reasonable self-defense in accordance with the provisions of the 5th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, or the Constitution of Mississippi, nor negate the obligation of the district to provide a safe work environment. In any situation in which a student is a danger to himself/herself or others, and it becomes necessary to contact law enforcement or emergency medical personnel, nothing in this policy guidance shall be construed to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.

Restraint

Physical restraint is an emergency response after all other verbal and non-verbal de-escalation measures have failed in effectiveness. When using physical restraint for students who are a danger to themselves or others, staff should take precautions necessary to ensure the safety of the student and the staff members engaged in restraining the student.

1. Physical restraints that restrict the flow of air are prohibited in all situations;
2. The use of mechanical restraints is prohibited, except by law enforcement; and
3. The use of chemical restraints is prohibited.

Seclusion

The use of seclusion occurs in a specially designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The room or space used for seclusion may not be locked and staff shall be present to monitor the student. Seclusion shall cease once the student regains control of their behavior.

Only school personnel trained in the use of restraint and seclusion should be used to observe and monitor these students. Staff engaged in monitoring students shall have knowledge of effective restraint and seclusion procedures, emergency procedures, and knowledge of how to effectively debrief students after the use of restraint or seclusion.

Parental Notification

All parents shall receive, at least annually, written information about the policies and procedures for restraint and seclusion issued by MSDB.

TECHNOLOGY

MSDB Student Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

MSDB is pleased to offer to its students, faculty, and staff access to the Internet in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. All users of the Internet at the MSDB must comply with the MSDB's Acceptable Use Policy. It is important that all users understand the terms, conditions and responsibilities associated with the use of the Internet at MSDB. All users and parents of all users under the age of eighteen (18) are required to sign the attached contract stating they have carefully read and understand the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Policy and will comply with the policy while using the MSDB's computer network resources. The attached contract is a legally binding document and must be signed prior to the user accessing the Internet at the MSDB

Electronic Devices

Students may bring a cell phone or other personal communication devices (PCDs) for use while they are on campus at MSDB. However, these devices may NOT be used during instruction unless approved by the principal. These devices may be used in the dorm before and after study hours.

Dormitory students may bring electronic devices for video and audio enjoyment such as iPods, iPads and other tablets and laptop PCs. They must use headphones or earbuds.

These devices are to be transported home on homegoing days. These items will be collected by the dormitory parent and will be kept in the front office until departure time. When headphones or earbuds are used, these items may also be carried on out-of-town school trips, only if approved by the trip sponsor(s).

MSDB does not accept responsibility for lost or misplaced electronic devices. MSDB will not be held responsible for any fees associated with the use of personal devices.

Possession of cell phones and other electronic equipment is strictly prohibited in any room during testing. Violation of this policy during state mandated testing shall invalidate the student's test.

If an electronic device is confiscated for unauthorized use, it will be returned only to the parent or legal guardian.

Network and Computer Usage

MSDB's Internet policy is designed to provide an environment that is consistent with the MSDB mission and vision, Mississippi Department of Education requirements, and Federal/State laws. MSDB Internet refers to devices attached to the entire computer network system at MSDB. MSDB Internet includes but is not limited to the Local Area Network (LAN on campus), all MSDB file servers, and access to the Internet. Access to the Internet is provided through ATM lines that are a part of the larger statewide network. The Mississippi Department of Education-wide area network provides filtering services for MSDB Internet.

MSDB Internet facilities and network connections are for providing educational computing support to students, faculty, and staff. Under Federal statutes and the sections of the Mississippi Code, which govern the use of these resources, all users must use the MSDB Internet resources properly and for the purpose designated by the Legislature. All existing Federal and State laws as well as MSDB regulations and policies apply, including not only those that are specific to computers, networks, and websites, but also those that may apply generally to personal conduct. Technology changes rapidly, as do the ways in which users can use and perhaps abuse the school computer system. MSDB must ensure that its computer resources are used properly and within established guidelines. In pursuit of that goal, the school reserves the right to monitor the system for signs of illegal or unauthorized activity. Even though the MSDB Appropriate Use Policy may not expressly prohibit an activity such behavior is not permissible. For questions related to appropriate use contact the Technology Director.

Student Responsibilities

As MSDB technology users, students should:

- be owners of their data and be responsible for ensuring that their data is adequately protected against unauthorized access;
- keep their account passwords confidential (Instructors will have access to student account passwords for assisting students with access);
- remember passwords and refrain from writing them down;
- change their passwords frequently or contact the technology coordinator for assistance with password changes. Passwords will be reset if needed to allow instructors to assist students;
- avoid using their own names or those of parents or friends as passwords;
- deny access to their accounts by others for any reason (exceptions are granted to instructional staff at MSDB) log out of their accounts and shut down their computers when leaving the computer labs or the computers provided to them in the dorms and student center;
- perform maintenance on their accounts periodically by deleting old files. This applies to any files only on MSDB computers. Those on the students' One drive will be determined by space available;
- refrain from using computers and networks to access, download, upload, create, reproduce, and/or distribute files containing vulgar language and/or obscene materials and assure the legal and ethical use of the school computers and user accounts; and
- refrain from using the school's computer systems for personal financial gain and report violations of these guidelines to the technology coordinator.

Unauthorized Access to Files and Directories

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- engage in any activity that is intended to circumvent computer security controls or attempt to crack passwords;
- discover unprotected files; or
- decode encrypted files or create, modify, or execute programs designed to surreptitiously penetrate or hack computer systems or access the accounts of others with the intent to read, browse, modify, copy, or delete files and directories.

Unauthorized Use of Software

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- violate copyright laws, or
- download, possess, or use software (executable) designed to destroy data; provide unauthorized access to computer systems, or disrupt computing processes: in any way use viruses, worms, Trojan horses, or any other invasive software. Such activity is expressly forbidden.

Electronic Mail (Email)

If an MSDB student uses the school's network and has a Google email account, the student must:

- be aware that MSDB administration has authorization to read and approve both incoming and outgoing email before distribution;
- understand that use of the MSDB Internet does not guarantee privacy;
- use the MSDB provided Google student email account to communicate with faculty, staff, and administration (for educational purposes only);
- recognize that MSDB Internet is provided for educational purposes and to widen the communication channels between students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration;
- refrain from transmitting or forwarding fraudulent, harassing, or obscene messages and files;
- refrain from transmitting or forwarding jokes, chain letters, advertisements, mass mail, or SPAM to school mail systems or accounts of individual users; and
- abstain from harassment via MSDB computer systems including the use of insulting, sexist, racist, obscene, or suggestive e-mail.

Network, Website, and Communication Systems

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- attempt to gain unauthorized access to either MSDB computers or to remote computers, as such attempts are illegal under criminal law and subject to prosecution;
- house personal websites on the MSDB computer system without specific permission from the technology coordinator;
- attempt to degrade the performance of the MSDB computer system or subvert it in any way;
- crash the system deliberately; or
- play computer games or engage in recreational computing on any computer owned by MSDB, except for educational purposes and only with instructor supervision.

Waste and Abuse of MSDB Internet Resources

As MSDB technology users, students must:

- avoid activities around workstations that may result in damage to the computer, printer, software, or information;
- not eat and/or drink at computer workstations;
- conserve and protect the resources of MSDB computer systems by refraining from using or wasting valuable, limited resources; and
- be considerate of fellow users, avoid monopolizing computer systems, connect time, and another computer resource.

MSDB Internet Hardware

As MSDB technology users, students must not:

- relocate computer hardware, peripherals, or cables from their current locations without specific authorization from the technology coordinator; or
- attempt to service any hardware without written authorization from the technology coordinator.

MSDB Internet Policy Enforcement

To protect the MSDB Internet resources and monitor proper usage of computer resources for educational purposes, the Technology Coordinator shall:

- investigate alleged abuses of computer resources to access the electronic files of its users;
- as part of that investigation, if there are indications that computer privileges have been violated, limit the access of users found to be using computer systems improperly;
- recommend administering disciplinary actions to the school administrators for violations of MSDB policies that may include the loss of some or all computer privileges and/or other disciplinary actions;
- act as a technical advisor to school administrators when they hear all cases involving student misuse of MSDB Internet privileges;
- deny student access temporarily pending review when there is reasonable suspicion that student use may harm or do damage in the interim; and

Internet Terms and Conditions of Use Personal Safety

User will not disclose, use, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about himself/herself, minors, or any others including personal identification such as, but not limited to, name, social security numbers, telephone numbers, home address, email address, or credit card information.

User will immediately report to MSDB authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal contact.

MSDB faculty and staff are prohibited from disclosing personal information about students on its website - such as a student's full name, home or email address, telephone number, social security number, and personal pictures.

Illegal Activity

User agrees not to access, transmit, or retransmit any material(s) in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of local, state, or Federal laws or regulations.

User shall not access, transmit, or re-transmit threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is inappropriate to minors.

User shall not plagiarize copyrighted materials.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.

User shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access, including hacking.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, or abusive.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.

MSDB assumes no responsibility for any charges made by students using an MSDB computer or violation of copyright laws.

Inappropriate content

Includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate internet searches, pictures of guns, alcohol, tobacco products, vulgar language, and inappropriate conversations in messages and/ or emails. Consequences for inappropriate content are as follows:

- 1st offense: 1-day ISS and one week of computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.
- 2nd offense: One day suspension and two-week computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.
- 3rd offense: Multiple day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

*Inappropriate content beyond the 3rd offense may result in additional suspensions and computer probation up to the end of the school year, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

Explicit content

includes, but is not limited to, nude photos and/or pornography. Consequences for explicit content are as follows:

- 1st offense: 2-day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home computer privileges.
- 2nd offense: 4-day suspension and one-month computer probation, which includes the loss of home computer privileges.

*Explicit content beyond the 2nd offense may result in additional suspensions and computer probation up to the end of the school year, which includes the loss of home/dorm computer privileges.

Prohibition of Obscene Material

All digital or online resources or any database provided in this district by a vendor or other entity shall contain technology protection measures that:

1. Prohibit and prevent a person from sending, receiving, viewing, or downloading materials that are inappropriate or obscene; and
2. Block, or otherwise prohibit and prevent, access to obscene and inappropriate materials as defined under MS Code 37-11-81.

Consequence of inappropriate photographs or content AND distribution to others:

- Multiple day suspension and/or expulsion and loss of computer privileges (reviewed on a case-by-case basis)

System Resource Limits

User shall only use the MSDB system for educational and career development activities and limited, high quality self-discovery activities as approved by MSDB faculty for a limited amount of time per week.

User agrees not to download large files unless it is necessary. If it is necessary to download large files, User agrees to download the file at the time when the system is not being heavily used.

User agrees not to download or install unauthorized software on school computers. This includes students, teachers, staff, and administrators.

User shall not damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks (hardware or software).

User agrees not to post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (sending an annoying or unnecessary message to large number of people).

Students will not be allowed to engage in any on-line chatting, including Internet messaging, unless it is a part of the curriculum and specifically designated as such by a teacher. Then the session will be monitored by the teacher and limited to the time frames that must also be specified in the curriculum. Teachers must know with whom the student is communicating always.

User agrees to immediately notify their teacher or other school administrator should User accidentally access inappropriate information so MSDB can take steps to prevent future access.

User will not make any attempt to defeat computer or network security on the MSDB network or any other server or network on the Internet.

User shall not engage in any Internet activity harmful to or reflecting negatively on the MSDB.

User Rights and Expectations

User shall have the responsibility to use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. The only exception will be for academic research by a staff member with the approval of school administration.

There is absolutely no expectation of privacy on the MSDB network. Activities at any workstation or transmission and receipt of data can be monitored anytime either electronically or by staff observation.

This includes transmission and receipt of email, email attachments, Web browsing, and any other use of the network. User consents to the monitoring of User's activities and files.

Users should log off at the end of each workday or the conclusion of the class session. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of the minor User's files.

Under no circumstances should a User provide his/her password to another person or use another person's password.

MSDB will fully cooperate with local, state, and federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the User's Internet account.

Consequences for Failing to Comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Use of the Internet at the MSDB is a privilege, not a right. There will be consequences for any User who fails to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy for the MSDB. For student Users, the consequences may include, but are not limited to, paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, suspension, expulsion, or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy. Any disciplinary action that is a result of an alleged violation of this policy can be appealed through the student grievance procedure provided in the MSDB Student/Parent Manual. Additionally, faculty and staff Users who fail to comply with the Acceptable Use Policy will be subject to discipline, including termination from employment with the type of discipline imposed being based on the severity of the specific offense(s).

For all Users, the MSDB will fully cooperate with local, state, and federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the User's Internet Policy.

CIPA

In December 2000, Congress enacted the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements. The CIPA requires that schools restrict employee and student access to the Internet through monitoring, policies, and filtering.

Under the CIPA, covered schools must have an Internet safety program which filters both adult and student access to visual depictions that are obscene or constitute child pornography. The program must also prevent students from accessing materials that are harmful to minors. The MSDB receives these discounts for Internet Access through the E-Rate program and is therefore in compliance with the CIPA.

COPPA

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), effective April 21, 2000, applies to online collection of personal information from children under the age of 13, such as full name, home address, email address, telephone number or any other information that would allow someone to identify or contact the child.

The Final Rule issued by the Federal Trade Commission spells out what a Web site operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent, and what responsibilities an operator must abide by to protect children's privacy and safety online.

Terms

All student users of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) are provided laptops, tablets, or other personal computing devices that comply with MSDB policies. Any failure to comply may result in termination of student user rights of possession effective immediately, and MSDB may repossess the device.

Legal Title

MSDB and the State of Mississippi retain legal title to the property. The student user's right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement, MSDB Technology policies, and all MSDB Acceptable Use policies and procedures as found in the MSDB Student Handbook.

Rules for Electronic Devices

1. Electronic devices loaned to students shall be used only for educational purposes that directly relate to a school project or assignment, unless otherwise explicitly authorized by building administration.
2. Student users are responsible for the proper care of electronic devices at all times, whether on or off school property.
 - a. Student users shall not leave the device unattended in an unlocked classroom or during an extracurricular activity.
 - b. Student users shall not lend the device to a classmate, friend, or family member. If any person damages the device, it will be the student user's or their parent/guardian's responsibility and the damage cost policy will be in effect.
 - c. Student users shall transport the device in its protective case and sleeve.
 - d. Student users shall not leave the device in a vehicle for extended periods of time or overnight.
 - e. Student users shall not leave the device in visible sight when left in a vehicle.
 - f. Student users shall report a lost or damaged device to the school authorities immediately. If a device is stolen, a report shall be made immediately to local law enforcement.
 - g. If a device is damaged, lost, or stolen because of irresponsible behavior, including intentional or negligent damage or loss, the student user or the parent/guardian may be responsible for the full replacement cost. The student user or the parent/guardian will be responsible for full replacement cost of the device if not reported to MSDB personnel within three (3) calendar days of missing or damaged device.

3. Violation of policies or rules governing the use of electronic devices, or any careless use of the device may result in a student's device being confiscated and/or a student only being allowed to use the device under the direct supervision of school staff. The student shall also be subject to disciplinary action for any violations of Board policies/procedures or school rules.
4. The student user is responsible for recharging the device's battery, so it is fully charged by the start of the next school day. Devices with no battery life shall be charged in the classroom. The student may be required to forfeit use of the device for the entire time it takes to charge it. All class work missed because of uncharged batteries shall be made up on a student's own time.
5. The device configuration shall not be altered in any way by student users. No software applications shall be installed, removed, or altered on the device unless permission is explicitly given, in writing, by the teacher or building administrator. Any attempt to "jailbreak" and/or remove MSDB protection software may result in disciplinary action.
6. The device shall only be used by the student to whom it is issued. The person to whom the device is issued will be responsible for any activity or action performed on the device.
7. The device shall be returned in acceptable working order by the last day of each school year, or upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, and whenever requested by school staff.
8. Failure to return the device by the last day of each school year, or upon withdrawal or exit date from MSDB, or whenever requested by school staff shall result in a full cost of replacement charge to the student user or parent/legal guardian responsible for this agreement.

Use of Personal Laptops and Tablets

Students may **not** use their personal laptops or tablets in place of a school device. However, while on the MSDB campus, students shall connect to the school's provided wireless network and not to a personal hotspot not provided by the school. Students bringing a personal device to campus, or using the device for remote learning, will be responsible for support and maintenance of the device.

Repossession

If the student user fails to fully comply with all terms of this Agreement and MSDB Technology policies, including the timely return of the property, MSDB shall be entitled to declare the student user in default and take appropriate legal action to secure the safe return of the device or incur full replacement.

Terms of Agreement

The student user's right to use and possession of the property terminates no later than the last day of enrollment, unless earlier terminated by MSDB or upon withdrawal from MSDB.

Support

Students shall contact their teachers as a first level of support for class-related work. If a student needs assistance regarding device software and hardware, they will need to send a repair request to support@msdbk12.org. Student users shall not take devices belonging to MSDB to any other businesses for technical support or repair.

Fees

Each student will pay an annual \$25 device usage fee due by September 5th of each year.

Any damage to electronic devices must be reported to school authorities immediately. Whenever a device is submitted for repair, students must pay the following deductibles:

- First repair - \$20
- Second repair- \$40
- Third repair - \$60 and possible loss of take-home privilege
- Fourth repair - fair market value to repair or replace the device and possible loss of computer use

Student User Data

All student users are responsible for keeping backups of important data. If a device must be repaired, there may be a need to reset it to the original settings. The technology department will not be responsible for any student user data that might be lost as a part of this process.

Unlawful Appropriations

Failure to timely return the property and use of any school device for non-school purposes, without MSDB consent, may be considered unlawful appropriation of MSDB property.

STUDENT LIFE

Safety and Security

Safety and security are universal responsibilities. MSD will provide information and guidance to students related to their safety and well-being on campus and in the community. MSD's students and staff must show respect and always cooperate with officials.

The following are general safety precautions:

- observe Student Code of Conduct,
- adhere to all MSD policies and procedures, and
- to help ensure student safety and to protect personal property in the Residence Halls students should:
 - refrain from leaving large sums of money in their rooms,
 - identify personal belongings, including clothing,

- o protect luggage and locker keys and do not lend them to anyone.
- o lock valuable items in wardrobes or luggage.
- o unplug and store electrical appliances properly after use (e.g., hair dryers, curling irons, irons), and
- o memorize emergency evacuation routes and participate in practice drills.

On Campus

To ensure safety while on campus, students should:

- report to school staff any threats to students and/or staff that could jeopardize the well-being or safety of anyone,
- restrict themselves to common areas of the campus identified during orientation,
- refrain from loitering around buildings closed during non-operational hours,
- seek guidance from MSD staff regarding access to appropriate areas,
- keep purses, backpacks, or other personal items in their possession, do not leave them unattended,
- exhibit good sportsmanship when participating in extracurricular activities,
- walk with another MSD student at night,
- walk on sidewalks and stay in well-lit areas,
- be aware of surrounding activities when you are outdoors, and
- report suspicious persons on campus to the staff or campus police.

Off Campus

To ensure safety while off campus, students should:

- report to school staff any threats to students and/or staff that could jeopardize the well-being or safety of anyone,
- be aware of all surroundings when using ATMs,
- stay in designated walkways and established routes,
- walk in groups of two or more,
- restrict destinations and activities to those stated when signing out of the dorm,
- refrain from getting in any vehicle other than an MSD vehicle, and
- remember that they represent MSD within the community.

Scent Detection Canine Searches

The use of law enforcement scent canines is a tactic designed to dramatically illustrate that neither school authorities nor law enforcement agencies will tolerate illicit drugs or other scent-detectable contraband on campus. Scent detection canine searches may include the common areas of the dormitories, academic building(s), and the parking lot including the external surfaces of automobiles. Alert by a scent detection canine will be considered reasonable suspicion.

The appropriate law enforcement agency will authorize further search and seizure in relation to that property or individual in accordance with their policies and procedures. Local law enforcement officers, with the assistance of MSDB personnel, will conduct all scent detection canine searches.

MSD Safety/Crisis Management Plan and MSD Safety Manual

The School Safety and Crisis Management Response Team is responsible for creating and updating the MSD/MSB Safety/Crisis Management Plan and MSD/MSB Safety Manual, which are distributed to all administration, faculty, and staff. The purpose of these manuals is to assure that adequate programs are provided for the protection of health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community and for compliance with appropriate codes and regulations. Procedures for emergency/safety plans will be printed, distributed, and posted so all MSDB students, faculty, staff, and administration will be knowledgeable of safety procedures.

The manuals identify health and safety problems, establish standards, evaluate, and report on the status of compliance with health and safety standards, codes, and regulations, provide technical services, recommend, and implement accident experiences, and develop and manage training resources.

In emergency situations and when required to do so by codes, regulations, or licensure agreement, any trained employees are authorized to take preventative, investigative, and remedial actions.

Student Transportation to and From School

Parents or other individuals(s) authorized by the parent must transport non-residential students to and from campus. On weekends and holidays students should decide to leave campus in advance of the day of departure. Specific times will be set for students to depart from campus. All students must go home during the weekends and holidays designated in the MSDB calendar.

Commuters

Students who live within 35 miles of campus are considered commuters and are not permitted to live in the dormitories. If there are extreme, extenuating circumstances and a request is made for temporary housing, the superintendent must approve the request.

Upon arrival, commuters are to report to the cafeteria and must arrive on campus no later than 7:45 a.m. and no earlier than 7:30 a.m. Parents are to pick up students at the time of dismissal. A commuter may stay on campus for an extra-curricular event with a residential supervisor, teacher/coach, and parent permission for required practices, rehearsals, class assignments, or other educational purposes. Commuters must leave campus by 9:00 p.m. or at the conclusion of the designated activity unless properly authorized as an overnight visitor. The commuter must follow all rules and regulations of the residence facility including the use of transportation and check-in/check-out policies and procedures.

Student Conduct on Buses

Recognizing that student misconduct can jeopardize the safety of others, the following procedures have been adopted for student discipline related to school bus transportation:

- all bus drivers shall report student misconduct promptly to the appropriate Principal or Director of Residence Education, and

- a prompt due process investigation will ensue and based upon information; disciplinary actions deemed appropriate will be administered. Parents will be notified.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from the school, if the student constitutes a threat to the safety of the other students on the bus, causes damage or destruction of property, distracts the bus driver, or in other ways interferes with the normal or safe operation of the bus.

Transportation Safety Procedures

To ensure safety during transportation, students shall:

- report to the assigned bus pick-up on time,
- use extreme caution when loading and unloading from the bus,
- wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and the bus driver indicates it is safe to board or depart from the bus,
- keep head, arms, legs, body, and personal possessions out of the aisle of the bus and inside the windows,
- be always courteous and respectful, and
- follow the instructions of the driver.

Residential Education Services

Residential Education Philosophy: Residing on campus enriches the educational journey for MSDB students. The Residential Education program aligns with MSDB's objectives, fostering individuality while emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, accountability, and sound decision-making. Cultivating strong character traits is pivotal for nurturing a supportive residential community. The guidelines governing residential life emphasize that campus residency is a privilege, requiring students to uphold a standard of personal responsibility.

Residential Education

Living in a residence hall is an exciting opportunity that requires self-discipline, independence, a high degree of responsibility, and compatibility with students from diverse backgrounds. Students who demonstrate these characteristics should adapt successfully to living in a residence hall with minimal adjustments. While students are making transitions from living at home to those of residence life, the Residence Education Parents (REPs) are constantly available for assistance and support. They help students adjust to the residential setting and provide guidance and assistance as needed. Such a support system enhances the likelihood that all students will have successful and meaningful educational experiences. An important part of this adjustment is student understanding of the dorm rules and standards of conduct. An orderly, clean, comfortable living area supports and enhances the learning atmosphere and, therefore, benefits the entire school community.

Since learning and study styles differ among students, mutual respect must be the cornerstone of a harmonious community. Students must channel their behaviors to create an orderly, responsible atmosphere. Student self-monitoring builds and sustains positive relationships with peers and with residential staff members.

Students who do not comply with the residential education rules and regulations will become ineligible to remain a dormitory student.

*See Residential Handbook

SUPPORT SERVICES

Multi-Tiered System of Support

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports is in place to ensure the behavioral and academic needs of every student are met through an instructional model that is designed to address student learning with quality classroom instruction and opportunities for intervention (Mississippi Department of Education, 2016). Mississippi School for the Deaf will follow a three-tier instructional model. The tiers consist of:

- Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards
- Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction
- Tier 3: Intensive interventions designed to meet the needs of individual students

If strategies at Tier 1 and Tier 2 are unsuccessful, collaboration will take place with the students' teachers to develop intervention for Tier 3. Interventions will be designed to address deficits, research based, implemented as designed, and supported by data.

Teachers use progress monitoring information to:

- determine if students are making progress
- identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind
- modify instruction early enough to ensure each student gains essential skills

Monitoring student progress will be ongoing and will be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments, and large-scale assessments. No more than two weeks after interventions begin, grade level meetings will occur to conduct a review of assessment data to determine if the interventions were successful. If the interventions were determined to be unsuccessful, grade level meetings will occur every two weeks to analyze assessment data and discuss student progress. The student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment if no progress is made after eight weeks.

Each student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention immediately following the identification of the deficiency. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade level.

Students will receive intensive interventions if any of the following apply:

- The student failed one grade in grades 1-3.
- The student failed two grades in grades 4-12.
- The student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than 20 days in the current school year.
- A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment.
- A student is promoted under the Good Cause exemption of the Literacy Based Promotion Act.

Food Services

MSDB provides meals at no cost to all students. To maximize available resources, MSDB participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Therefore, parents/guardians of all students are requested to complete Free/Reduced Meal Forms so that MSDB can receive reimbursement for meals served to students who qualify for free or reduced meals. Not only does this information enable MSDB to receive Federal school lunch funds and donated commodities, but the data will also provide demographics for use in grant applications.

U.S. Postal Services

Regular postal services are available by mail being placed in a designated area in the Academic Complex and in the Administrative Complex.

Mail on the MSDB campus is provided for students through the Residence Education staff. Packages received may be picked up in the Residence Life office. Outgoing mail should be deposited in the designated location in the Academic Complex. Mail should be addressed as follows:

(Name of Student)
Mississippi School for the Deaf
1253 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

Religious Services

MSDB recognizes that students may wish to attend religious services. A student may attend the church of his/her choice. Written permission from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be received and verified before he/she will be given a pass to leave campus. Students are allowed, with parental permission, to attend religious activities throughout the week so long as it does not interfere with required MSDB activities.

Financial Services

Students are encouraged to not carry large sums of cash. A student account can be arranged through staff assigned in residence halls. MSDB does not assume responsibility for monitoring student financial practices. Students must handle personal finances in accordance with parental wishes and use good judgment.

Campus/Community Service

A school is a community of people sharing common ideas and goals. Students contributing to the betterment of the school enhance community spirit. When a student contributes to the school community everyone benefits. Community service will occur during non-academic hours. This service is important to the overall reputation of the school. The quality of the work done by the students exemplifies pride in MSDB.

HEALTH SERVICES

The MSDB Health Clinic has formulated policies designed to enhance the health and well-being of all students. Included in these policies are room inspections, nutritious meals, lights-out regulations, activity programs, physical fitness programs, and required medical information from each student.

The Health Clinic is in Dorm 3 and provides services Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. In the case of a non-homegoing weekend, the clinic remains operational throughout the weekend. A registered nurse will examine students and coordinate appointments with a local doctor. While the nurse can administer allergy shots, provide basic first aid services, and perform health care counseling, the nurse is not a personal physician. When the Health Clinic is closed the nurse will be on call and can be reached by the Superintendent or Director of Residence Education, if deemed necessary. Students should alert their teachers in the event they become ill during the school day. If a student becomes ill during the evenings or on the weekend the Residence Education Parent should be informed.

In emergency situations an ambulance service may be called and the service of the emergency room of a local hospital utilized. Parents/guardians **MUST** sign an MSDB Health Information/Medical Treatment Form allowing a student to receive hospital care in the case of an emergency. MSDB will notify parents/guardians immediately in the event of an emergency.

A physician may direct the school nurse to restrict a student's activities if deemed necessary for a speedy and complete recovery or for the general welfare of the school community. Students are expected to comply with the directives. Students who do not obey such restrictions or confinements will result in unexcused absences for the days missed from class.

Parents are responsible for all medical costs including ambulance service, emergency & hospital visits and prescription medicines and will assume all financial obligations incurred by their child in health-related situations including cost for over-the-counter medications. Visits to the doctor's office will be billed to the parents.

Medication and Illness Policies and Procedures

All narcotic medication must be packaged in a blister pack. All prescriptions for narcotic medication must be filled by Marty's Pharmacy in Flowood, MS. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property.

A working phone number must be always on file in the MSDB Health Clinic. It is imperative that parents can be reached in the event of student illness.

Students in grades PK-5 should be escorted by an adult to the Health Clinic. Students in grades 6-12 may be allowed to come to the clinic independently unless the student has a disability or illness that would prevent them from safely arriving at the clinic and returning safely to class. If a student is admitted to the Health Clinic and Clinic staff determine that the student should be sent home, nurses will attempt to contact the student's parents.

If a parent cannot be contacted after eight (8) hours, the Superintendent will make the decision to call Child Protection Services (CPS) for assistance or send the student to a hospital emergency room. The parents will pay hospital expenses.

No medications sent from home to the school can be put in suitcases or backpacks. Medications must be registered with the chaperone on the bus and signed into the medication bag, which will be delivered directly to the clinic upon return to campus.

Parents are encouraged to schedule routine medical and dental visits when students are home for breaks or holidays.

Required Medical Information

School Asthma Plan (SAP) for students diagnosed with asthma: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11- 71 requires each student with asthma to have a current school asthma plan on file for use by the school nurse, teachers, and staff. The parents of the student are required to have the child's health care provider develop and sign the SAP annually. The SAP must include: (1) student's name, (2) date, (3) school, (4) age, (5) physician's signature, (6) instructions to the school if coughing or wheezing and indicate dosage and delivery method details, and (7) whether the student administers their own medication or school personnel may administer medication. The plan must also indicate whether premedication is required and shall indicate dosage and delivery method details.

All medical information is confidential. Parents must complete all medical forms required for admission to MSDB.

All students must have a physical and a completed Report of Medical Examination Form before checking into the residence hall. A copy of the immunization form must also be included with the cumulative school records or be delivered with all medical release forms.

The following medical information must be on file prior to admittance:

- Record of Immunization,
- MSDB Health Information/Medical Treatment Form,
- Report of Medical Examination Form,
- Administering Prescription Medication to Students Form, and
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Parents must notify the principal/supervisor, clinic staff, or Residence education staff immediately regarding changes in medications, guardianship, insurance, address, and employment. Photocopies of prescription cards should be attached to medical forms.

Self-Administration of Medication

All medications, both prescription and over the counter must be registered with the nurse except students who meet the requirements to possess and self-administer prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71. A student may self-administer prescription anaphylaxis medication if MSD is provided a written (1) parental authorization, (2) parental release of liability, and (3) the required doctor's statement pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71.

A student with asthma may self-administer prescription asthma medication if MSDB is provided a written (1) parental authorization, (2) parental release of liability, (3) school asthma plan completed by the prescribing physician authorizing self-administration and (4) the required doctor's statement pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-71. Students will report to the nurse or designated representative at the predetermined time for administration of medications.

When a doctor prescribes medication for a student illness, the nurse must be notified immediately, and all forms completed and turned into MSD. The nurse will follow up or oversee the administration of the medication. Failure to comply with the doctor or nurse's directions will result in a discipline procedure at a Level III violation.

Excused Absence from Class for Health Reasons

A student who is ill must inform the nurse at the Health Clinic as soon as possible. Students who do not check in with the nurse will not receive an excuse for illness.

To be admitted to class, the student will receive a copy of the Health Clinic Form. The teacher will keep this form and record the absence as excused. The nurse will retain a copy of the form in the Health Clinic.

Going to the Health Clinic does not automatically excuse a student from class. The nurse and/or doctor must substantiate the seriousness of the illness. A minor illness (e.g., cramps, headache, minor cold) does not justify an excused absence. At any time during the school day an excused absence will be granted providing the student has gone to Health Clinic and has a substantiated illness.

Students excused from two or more classes because of illness shall not attend school functions that day and are expected to remain in the residence hall room except for meals unless written permission from a physician or the school nurse is provided. Students excused from class attendance must receive health clearance from the nurse to leave the residence hall. Students cannot attend any school functions when convinced to "bed rest" unless approval is obtained from principal and/or residence education director after a health clearance is obtained from the clinic staff or a physician.

When a student is not returning to school from a holiday and/or weekend at home because of illness, the parents must contact the school immediately. The absence will be recorded as excused upon return of the student to MSDB with a doctor's excuse or appropriate written statement from a parent.

Violation of the above may result in an unexcused absence and disciplinary action.

MSDB will comply with all Federal and State laws pertaining to the management of communicable diseases. The school will also follow the directives of an attending physician to determine risk factors on a case-by-case basis.

Every reasonable precaution will be taken to minimize risks to other students and school personnel. Faculty and staff will not discriminate against students with health conditions and will promote sensitivity, confidentiality, and reasonable accommodations.

If current medical knowledge indicates a student's health condition does not pose a risk to others the student will continue at MSDB as normally as possible. If the student is having academic problems because of the health condition the Principal/Supervisor will be notified immediately. Modifications, if any, may be provided in the work and academic environment. Each situation will be considered individually. If a communicable disease or medical condition is deemed detrimental to the immediate health or welfare of the student or general school population, the student will be sent home immediately upon diagnosis from a physician. Such illnesses include, but are not limited to measles, chicken pox, mumps, and influenza. All temporary leaves from school for illness are for the improved health of the student.

Before returning to MSDB, students who have recovered from a communicable disease must acquire a medical release form from the attending physician in the student's hometown. The form must be presented to the nurse immediately when the student returns to the campus. MSDB policy mandates confidentiality of student health history in compliance with medical, legal, and ethical standards of the school and State.

Transition Services

For all students, transition occurs from preschool to elementary school, elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to adulthood. For students with disabilities, each stage in transition requires thoughtful planning to ensure that the students with disabilities can transition from one level to next in a similar manner as typical peers of the same age. The goal for these students is to exit high school to their desired post-secondary outcome.

Transition and Career Development

Career development is an essential component of transition. Donald Zunker (1994) refers to career development as "a lifelong process of developing beliefs and values, skills and aptitudes, interests, personality characteristics, and knowledge of the world of work. Specifically, the terms reflect individually developed needs and goals associated with stages of life and with tasks that affect career choices and subsequent fulfillment of purpose." (Zunker, 1994, p. 3).

Career Awareness

Career awareness includes an understanding of the world of work and the knowledge and skills needed for traditional and nontraditional jobs and careers. Students are aware of opportunities, options, and roles that interest them in the world of work. They gain an awareness of the importance of personal responsibility, good work habits, and how people work. Activities for the students include, but is not limited to:

- Understanding the importance of working
- Acquainting students with local places of employment
- Understanding the need for cooperation and teamwork

Career Exploration

Career exploration includes investigation of the workplace and an understanding of the relationships among personal abilities, education, and knowledge and skills needed to pursue occupations and careers. Students learn about the variety of careers available and the types of jobs that would best fit their preferences, needs, and interests and explore the requirements related to those jobs. Activities for the students include, but is not limited to:

- Becoming aware of personal characteristics, interests, aptitudes, and skills,
- Development of an awareness of and respect for the diversity of the world of work,
- Understanding the relationship between school performance and future employment options, and
- Development of a positive attitude towards work.

Career Preparation

Career preparation includes the purposeful planning of activities that help students transition from school to the world of work and higher education. It includes learning about different careers and exploring skills needed to be successful in those careers, implementing skills that have been fostered and developed while in school and the successful transition from the secondary to post-secondary environment.

Activities for the students includes, but is not limited to:

- Volunteering
- Service-Learning Activities
- Apprenticeships/Internships
- Job Shadowing
- Part-time/Full-time Supported Employment and/or Integrated Employment

Transition Planning

Transition planning is the process that aids students, parents, and school personnel as they discuss and plan transition from school to adult life. This planning includes assessing interest and strengths; setting transition goals; and selecting the course of study and exit option; and services and agency linkages needed to meet the transitional goals for students with disabilities.

When the student is in middle school, school personnel will begin using career assessments to identify the career interests, abilities and needs of the student. The assessment data will be utilized to develop appropriate programming including the courses of study that focus on preparing the student to meet their post-secondary goals. The transition planning process is an ongoing process that can change over time, depending on the student's preferences, strengths, and interests.

Source: Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education. Secondary Transition Services: <https://mdek12.org/OSE/STS>

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support)

MSDB is committed to proactively teaching students appropriate behaviors as part of a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports mode. Positive behavior interventions and support is an application of a behaviorally based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to

design effective environments that improve the fit or link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching, and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (tier 1: school-wide), Secondary (tier 2: small group), and tertiary (tier 3: individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. Providing different types of support matched to each student's needs is referred to as a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). General descriptions for each tier as described in the Implementation Blueprint Part 1 are provided below:

| Tier | Prevent Description |
|---|---|
| I. Primary (Tier 1, Universal) | Preventing the development of new incidents/ occurrences of problem behavior by implementing high quality learning environments for all students and staff and across all settings (i.e., school-wide, classroom, and non-classroom). |
| II. Secondary (Tier 2, Targeted) | Reducing the frequency and intensity of incidents of problem behaviors for students who are not responsive to primary intervention practices by providing more focused, intensive, and frequent small group-oriented responses in situations where problem behavior is likely. |
| III. Tertiary (Tier 3, Intensive) | Reducing the intensity, frequency, and/or complexity of existing problem behaviors that are resistant to and/or unlikely to be addressed by primary and secondary prevention efforts by providing most individualized responses to situations where problem behavior is likely. |

SPECIAL SERVICES

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities are given to parents during the intake process, when notice of the IEP meeting is sent, during IEP development/review, when notice of staffing meeting is sent, and during a staffing meeting. Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities Notice is additionally given to parents as an attachment to the Student Handbook. The procedural safeguards will also be provided as required in 34 C.F.R. § 300.504 and Miss. Admin. Code 7-3:74.19, State Board Policy Chapter 74, Rule 74.19, § 300.504.

Free Appropriate Public Education

MSDB provides a free, appropriate public education to all children who have been determined to be eligible for special education and whose parents reside in the State of Mississippi, including children who are between the ages of three (3) and twenty (20) years:

- Including children from the date of their third birthday; and
- Including youth who are twenty (20) years of age on or before September 1st, even if they will turn twenty-one (21) years of age during the school year

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) means appropriate special education and related services provided at public expense, without cost to the parent, and under public supervision and direction. It is binding for all public agencies who receive payments under Part B of IDEA. A FAPE includes an appropriate preschool, elementary or secondary public education in the child's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and is provided in conformity with the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Non-Discriminatory Evaluation Policy

Evaluation materials and placement procedures utilized by MSDB will be, to the maximum extent possible, selected and administered to be racially or culturally non-discriminatory.

Least Restrictive Environment

MSDB will, to the maximum extent appropriate, educate disabled students with non-disabled students in their age groups. A continuum of alternative placements based on the individual student's IEP will be provided. Placement of students will be determined at least annually or as required by law.

In selecting the least restrictive environment for each student, consideration will be given to any potentially harmful effects on the student or on the quality of services needed. If an enrolled student can function socially, emotionally, and mentally on a par with non-disabled students of a similar chronological age, they will be given that opportunity in accordance with their IEP.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

Students may attend MSDB for many reasons, all related to the need for more intensive services than those currently available in their local district. This is especially true in the areas of language development and other communication needs, adaptive technology, daily living skills, vocational and transition skills, social skills, and the use of cochlear implants and/or hearing aids.

Students at MSDB should have an IEP to address their individualized education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Board of Education (SBE) Policy 74.19 have established the IEP as the structure for planning and implementing individualized services and supports for children with disabilities.

The IEP is collaboratively written by an IEP Committee, comprised of the parent(s)/guardian(s), the child with a disability (if appropriate), an MSDB administrator/agency representative, representatives from the child's home school district, the teacher(s), and other members as needed. The IEP is written to describe the unique needs of a child, and develops the specially designed instruction, related services, and accommodations and modifications needed to provide a child with a disability a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

The IEP must be designed to:

- Indicate what the child is expected to be able to achieve within one (1) year;
- Provide high expectations and educational benefit for children with disabilities;
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum and standards in the general classroom, to the maximum extent possible.
- Provide effective transition services to promote successful postsecondary experiences including college and career to prepare children with disabilities to lead productive and independent adult lives.
- Project a date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services.

This program may be carried out either at MSDB or within the local school district or combination of such.

Extended School Year (Summer Program)

The Extended School Year (ESY) services are special education and related services provided to a child with a disability beyond the typical school year, at no cost to the parent.

The Extended School Year (ESY) services are not considered a summer school program, a childcare service, or an automatic program provision from year to year. The program is intended for those students who have been determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) committee as needing the educational services provided during the school year to be extended into the summer to receive full benefit from their educational programs. Services may be required for some students with disabilities enrolled at MSD. Services and eligibility are not determined by the student's disability category but are determined on an individual case-by-case basis by the student's IEP committee according to the regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and policy and procedures set forth by the Mississippi Department of Education.

There are four (4) qualifying criteria used to determine a child's need for ESY services. They are:

1. Pattern of Regression-Recoupment: Refers to a child's loss of a skill on IEP objective(s) after at least two (2) breaks in instruction without regaining the documented level of skill(s) prior to the break within the specified period.
2. Critical Point of Instruction 1: Refers to the need to maintain a child's critical skill to prevent a loss of general education class time or an increase in special education service time.
3. Critical Point of Instruction 2: Refers to a point in the acquisition or maintenance of a critical skill during which a length in instruction would lead to a significant loss of progress.
4. Extenuating Circumstances: Refers to special situations that jeopardize the child's receipt of a FAPE unless ESY services are provided.

The IEP Committee must consider all four qualifying criteria in determining the need for ESY services. The review of data should indicate that a break in instruction would be detrimental to the child's instructional progress.

Due Process

MSD will ensure that all students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided due process with respect to the provision of a free, appropriate public education as outlined in PROCEDURES FOR STATE BOARD POLICY 74.19 VOLUME III: Procedural Safeguards Dispute Resolution Confidentiality

<https://mdek12.org/OSE/PP>, Information regarding Procedural Safeguards is provided to each parent at least annually. In the event of disagreements between the family and the school, it is hoped that these can be worked out through the IEP process or through subsequent discussions with the Mississippi School for the Deaf administration.

If the IEP committee members are unable to resolve disagreements, a request may be made with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education Parent Hotline: 1-877-544-0408.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The school counselor assists in providing and facilitating the provision of a variety of services for the students. The counselor is available to students and parents by appointment or in the event of an emergency. Confidentiality shall be observed in all counselor-student relations.

Objectives of Counseling Program

The overall objectives are to assist students in (1) adjusting to the MSDB environment, and (2) making the most of the MSDB educational experience. Individual counseling sessions, small-group discussions, large-group programs, and computer software are utilized to provide services to students, parents, and faculty. Specific objectives include:

- encouraging and supporting students' efforts to develop themselves holistically, with an appropriate focus on their intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development
- assisting students to utilize their abilities effectively, both inside and outside the classroom
- assist students in developing their skills in time management, preparing for, and taking tests, reading effectively, and taking notes
- individual follow-up discussions are held focusing on specific concerns as indicated by student progress and input from teachers and parents
- discuss strategies for good communication, interpersonal skills, goal setting, decision-making, and planning with students
- assist students to develop and continuously evaluate appropriate educational
- plans address individual strengths and interests, and progressing toward long-range educational and career goals
- assisting students in developing a mature level of self-awareness and
- self-responsibility in dealing with personal, social, and academic concerns
- provide access to information needed to make appropriate decisions in the college selection process
- provide files of information on colleges as well as other resources including books and software
- assist students and their parents in completing the various components of the college selection process, including testing, applications, and financial aid information
- provide registration forms and information the ACT

- assist in improving test-taking skills
- assist in preparing for college applications
- support in student search for scholarships through the provision of information, resources, and applications
- maintain academic records
- ensure cumulative records contain all grades earned at MSDB and generate the official MSDB transcript

Schedule Changes

Each spring preceding the next school year, junior/senior high students select courses to fulfill their program of study. Students may not request schedule changes to choose a specific teacher. The counselor and the principal will make all schedule changes based on the availability of classes and the academic needs of the students.

Schedule change requests must be made within the first week of the semester in which the course begins.

College Testing Programs

All juniors are required to take the ACT in the spring. The first examination of all juniors is paid for by the state. Students are encouraged to take the ACT as often as possible to attain the highest score possible. Registration packets and dates for testing are available in the counselor's office. The counselor can assist with registration if requested by the student and/or parent. Students are responsible for payment of their own registration fees beyond the single examination provided by the state. The counselor will assist and work with the principal to provide reasonable and allowable accommodations as identified by the student's IEP.

In lieu of the performance requirements established in Sections 25.3, and 25.4, a student may obtain a Silver level or higher National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys assessment and successfully complete an industry certification or career pathway recognized by the Mississippi Department of Education. A student who achieves a Gold or Platinum level National Career Readiness Certificate administered through the ACT WorkKeys does not have to meet the additional requirement of successful completion of an industry certification or career pathway.

Dual Enrollment

Upon approval by the State Board of Education, students attending MSD may participate in a dual enrollment program with local colleges and universities, providing prerequisites are met. Dual enrollment

provides opportunities for high school students to earn college credit while in high school. Only students with a 3.1 grade point overall average (on a 4.0 scale) are eligible for dual enrollment. Participation in dual enrollment courses does not obligate students to enroll at participating colleges or universities after high school graduation. Credits earned by students enrolled in the dual enrollment program are held until regular admission status is obtained at a college or university. The same college regulations apply to dual enrollment program students as regular students.

To be admitted to the Dual Enrollment Program, students must have the following:

- fourteen (14) completed Carnegie Units
- meet prerequisites for specific classes at the participating college or university
- ACT composite score of sixteen (16)
- letter of recommendation from the school counselor

Students who have not completed the minimum of fourteen (14) core high school units may be considered for the Dual Enrollment Program if they have a composite ACT score of thirty (30), the required grade point average, and recommendations prescribed above.

MISSISSIPPI ASSISTANCE CENTER SERVICES

The Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) provides appropriate assessments for MSDB students as well as local school districts and families of children with a hearing loss or a suspected hearing loss.

Appropriate assessments will drive the establishment of appropriate educational services. These assessments include audiological, Cognition, Academic, and Social Emotional. These assessments are provided in the Mississippi Assistance Center located on the campus of the Mississippi School for the Deaf. The MAC can be contacted by phone at 601-984-8000 or toll free at 1-844-332- 3464.

Each MSDB student receives one low vision evaluation per year through the Mississippi Assistance Center's Low Vision Clinic. The Low Vision Clinic schedules appointments based on various needs, which include, but are not limited to educational re-evaluations, parent request, high school graduation needs and other educational or vision needs.

In addition to full low vision evaluations, MSDB students are a priority for work-ins with the low vision specialist in the case of suspected eye pathologies, school athletics and other vision issues. MSB students with potentially degenerative conditions will be monitored as needed by the low vision specialist per his professional judgment.

Parents of MSDB students are welcome to call to request updated prescriptions, follow-up eye examinations, etc. Parents may request copies of annual eye reports.

Older students are encouraged to practice their self-advocacy skills and schedule their additional eye care appointments or request eye reports.

If a parent does not wish for their student to receive an examination through the Low Vision Clinic or wishes to be notified prior to their student's scheduled evaluation, a written notification must be received by the Low Vision Clinic during registration or as soon as possible.

Early Intervention Services Ski*Hi

Ages Birth-3 years of age

The Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) provides Early Intervention Services for babies and toddlers (Birth-3) who have been identified as having hearing loss and/or vision loss. Early intervention services are provided statewide to families of deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind children age birth to 3 years. Services are provided in the natural environment by parent advisors who have received specialized training as Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing or Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

For Deaf and Hard of Hearing children:

The SKI*HI Early Intervention resource manual contains information and activities for families on these topics:

- Early communication and interaction
- Audition
- Hearing Aids/Cochlear Implants
- Aural-Oral Language
- Sign Language
- Psycho-emotional support
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Mentors

For blind or visually impaired children:

Customized developmental and learning activities are designed and taught during each visit. These activities and topics for families include:

- Early Communication and interaction
- Pre-braille/Braille Skills
- Daily Living Skills
- Orientation and Mobility Skills
- Functional Academic Skills
- Psycho-emotional Support
- Fine/Gross Motor Skills
- Social Development

Other information is provided to parents on the use and care of hearing aids/cochlear implants; development of auditory skills; establishment of meaningful, two-way communication; and the development of language skills.

Early Intervention Specialists will provide services to children ages 3-5 until transition into an appropriate program can be established.

English Learners (ELs)

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind are committed to providing a quality education for all students, including those whose first language is not English. The instructional goal of the English as a

Second Language (ESL) program would be to provide services to English learners (ELs) to improve or increase their English language proficiency; thus, enabling them to function independently and to participate effectively in the regular academic program. All identified ELs' primary core curricular instruction will be provided through the regular academic program. The academic needs of ELL students will be met through a variety of educational strategies with emphasis placed on the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

As a supplement to regular classroom instruction, EL students receive regularly scheduled instruction in English as a Second Language, with emphasis on English language acquisition skills. As students test into the ESL program, they are scheduled in ESL classes and language acquisition sessions, through pull-out, and/or push-in/inclusion. Students may be served by certified teachers, ESL tutors, and content area/mainstream teachers as identified by each student's IEP committee and language service plan.

Initially, emphasis of the K-5 ESL program is on teaching "survival" language, following directions and basic conversational English. Support and assistance are provided for EL students in core curricular content for the regular program; but the ESL program does not take the place of regular classroom instruction. At the elementary and middle school levels, students are grouped according to their English language proficiency levels to individualize language acquisition instruction as much as possible. The level of English language proficiency and the individual needs of students determine the frequency and duration of ESL instruction. At the high school level, students are scheduled into an ESL class, which also counts as a language credit toward graduation.

*The acronyms LEP, ESL, EL and ELL are sometimes used interchangeably.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Grading Guidelines

Procedures for grading ELL students must facilitate students' success in school and the school district must ensure that EL students are not being discriminated against in the assignment of grades due to a language barrier. EL students should be expected to meet the same educational requirements as other students; however, they may need more time to do so. Federal requirements mandate that districts take affirmative steps to open their educational programs to national origin minority group students. This means that while EL students must meet the same educational requirements as other students, these requirements must be presented in a manner appropriate to EL students' cultural and linguistic needs and in a time frame that facilitates their learning.

Teachers must consider alternative assessment measures such as portfolios, special projects, and journals. Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind will adhere to the regular, district-wide grading guidelines with the following cautions when grading ELL students. Grading English learners in the content areas must be based on improvement.

Fluent English Proficient (FEP) English Learners must be graded on improvement as well as knowledge of content. No failing grades may be given during the English Learners' progression from Level 1-Beginning through Level 3- Intermediate (LAS Links English Language Proficiency Levels: 1-Beginning, 2-Early Intermediate, 3-Intermediate, 4-Proficient, 5-Above Proficient).

At level 1

Beginning, ELs are just beginning to develop productive and receptive uses of English in social, school, and academic contexts. Comprehension may only be demonstrated through nonverbal gestures or through the ELs native language rather than in English.

At level 2

Early Intermediate, ELs are at the developmental stage of communication in English (social, school, and academic contexts). Language deficits delay basic communication and comprehension. At this stage, productive and receptive control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse tactics for communicating in English is emerging.

At level 3

Intermediate, ELs communicate in English somewhat within grade-level appropriate language demands in social settings and classroom/academic contexts. But deficits interfere with communication and comprehension. More time, repetition and clarification are required. English Learners have a limited grasp of productive and receptive control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse tactics when addressing new or familiar topics. At level three, English Learners' language lacks adequate connections for elaboration or details.

English Learners at English Language Proficiency Levels 4 and 5 on the LAS Links Assessment may be graded according to common criteria for assigning grades, with necessary accommodations and modifications.

Teachers must fully document regular contact with EL teachers regarding specific modifications for ELL students, the performance of EL students and the progress of ELL students. Failures for EL students must not be due to English language deficiency. English language deficiency includes reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension. If an EL student receives a failing grade, documented evidence of modifications and accommodations, including conferences with the EL

teacher, SET meetings with teachers, school administrators, support specialist/s, parents or parent representatives must be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

MDE 2018 EL Guidelines

POLICIES, PLANS, AND STATUTES

Title IX Grievance Policy

1. RIGHT TO EXPRESS CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

It is the policy of the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education to maintain a safe and supportive learning and educational environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination.

The Mississippi Department of Education is a conduit for federal money to the local school districts and ensures the local school districts' compliance with federal financial grants. As such, MDE requires each local school district and each state school to have a grievance policy in place to address any complaints alleging discrimination under the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the American Disability Act, Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Complaints alleging discrimination by the local school district, its staff, or students should be first directed to the local school level and handled pursuant to local policy.

As specifically related to Title IX, this policy sets out the minimum steps that each state school (i.e., special school and/or district under the purview of the State Board of Education) shall take in response to a notice of alleged discrimination based on sex, including discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, which encompasses sexual violence, such as dating violence, domestic violence, and cyberstalking. The State Board of Education forbids unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment and/or discrimination against any student under its purview.

2. DEFINITIONS

A. Sex Discrimination

The practice of treating a person differently, or less favorably, than other people or groups based on sex.

B. Allegation

An assertion that someone has engaged in discrimination based on sex.

C. Sexual Harassment

Unwanted conduct based on sex. Examples of such behavior include:

- Direct or indirect threats or bribes for unwanted sexual activity
- Sexual innuendos and comments
- Asking or commenting about a person's sexual activities
- Humor or jokes about sex or females/males in general
- Making sexually suggestive remarks, gestures, or jokes, or remarks of a sexual nature about a person's appearance

- Repeated unsuccessful attempts at gaining dates or sexual behavior
- Sexual touching, pinching, brushing, or patting
- Displaying offensive sexual illustrations in the school/workplace
- Insulting and belittling a person-sexual ridicule
- Letters, notes, telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature
- Stalking a person either inside or outside the institution
- Attempt or actual sexual assault

D. Complainant

The person who has experienced the alleged discrimination based on sex. This person is considered a complainant regardless of whether they choose to file a formal complaint under Title IX.

E. Respondent

The person accused of the alleged discrimination. This person may be a student or a school employee. If the person is an employee, the school shall adhere to the process found in Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-59.

F. Title IX Coordinator

The individual responsible for overseeing the school's efforts to comply with its obligations under Title IX and Title IX regulations, including, but not limited to, coordinating any investigations of complaints of sex discrimination, implementation of supportive measures, and remedies where appropriate.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

Each state school shall have a grievance policy adopted by the governing board and accessible in both the student handbook and employee handbook. The grievance policy shall include the following:

A. Receiving and Responding to Reports

Employees who believe or have been made aware that a student has been subject to Title IX Discrimination, shall report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Failure to make such a report may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The school shall respond whenever any school employee has been put on actual notice of improper behavior as defined in the school's policy. Such notice may be from an oral report of sexual harassment by a complainant or anyone else, a written report, through personal observation, through an anonymous report, or through various other means. When a complaint or report is made under the policy, the Title IX Coordinator shall: (1) confidentially contact the complainant to offer supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, and inform them of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint; (2) explain the process for how to file a formal complaint; (3) inform the complainant that any report made in good faith will not result in discipline; and (4) respect the complainant's wishes with respect to whether to investigate unless the designated staff member determines it is necessary to pursue the complaint in light of a health or safety concern for the

community.

B. Confidentiality

The school must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of any form of prohibited sex discrimination, including any reporter, complainant, respondent, or witness, except:

1. As may be permitted by FERPA;
2. Or as required by law; or
3. To carry out the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

The confidentiality of the reporting party will be observed providing it does not interfere with the school's ability to investigate or take corrective action. If the complainant reports rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, or other behaviors which constitute criminal activity, school officials shall contact appropriate law enforcement agencies and the superintendent/executive director.

C. Supportive Measures

Supportive measures are short-term measures that are designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity. Supportive measures are available regardless of whether the complainant chooses to pursue any action under the school's policy, including before and after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. They are meant to restore access to education, protect student and employee safety, and/or deter future acts.

Supportive measures are available to the complainant, respondent, and as appropriate, witnesses or other impacted individuals, and these measures should be provided based on an individualized assessment of the needs of the individual. These supports are non-disciplinary and non-punitive individualized services designed to offer support without being unreasonable burdensome.

Examples of supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures.

D. Formal Complaint

A "Formal complaint" means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging discrimination or sexual harassment against a respondent and request that the school investigate the allegation(s). A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information provided by the school district. The complaint document, whether physical or electronic, shall contain the complainant's physical or digital signature. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not "the complainant" or otherwise considered a party but shall comply with applicable procedures.

E. Investigations

Once a formal complaint is filed, an investigator will be assigned and the parties will be treated equitably, including in the provision of supportive measures and remedies. Each party will

receive notice of the specifics of the allegations as known, and as any arise during the investigation. The investigator will attempt to collect all relevant information and evidence. While the investigator will have the burden of gathering evidence, it is crucial that the parties present evidence and identify witnesses to the investigator so that they may be considered during the investigation.

The principal of the school, so long as the principal is neither the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or any other individual who may have a conflict of interest, shall serve as the decision-maker, and will facilitate a written question and answer period between the parties. Each party may submit written questions for the other party and witnesses to the decision-maker for review. The questions must be relevant to the case, and the decision-maker will determine if the questions submitted are relevant and will then forward the relevant questions to the other party or witnesses for a response. The decision-maker can then review all the responses, determine what is relevant or not relevant, and issue a decision as to whether the respondent is responsible for the alleged act.

F. Presumptions about Complainants, Respondents, and Witnesses

The school presumes that reports of prohibited conduct are made in good faith. A finding that the alleged behavior does not constitute a violation of this school's policy or that there is insufficient evidence to establish that the alleged conduct occurred as reported does not mean that the report was made in bad faith.

The respondent is presumed to be not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made by the decision-maker.

G. Determination Regarding Responsibility

The decision-maker shall review the evidence provided by all parties and will make a final determination of responsibility after the investigation based on a preponderance of the evidence. "Preponderance of the evidence" means evidence that is of greater weight or more convincing than as asserted fact or facts occurred than evidence in opposition to such facts. It is evidence which shows that an assertion to be proven is more likely than not.

The decision-maker shall provide a final determination to the parties at the same time, with appeal rights provided. It will explain if any policies were violated, the steps and methods taken to investigate, the findings of the investigation, conclusions about the findings, the ultimate determination and the reasons for it, any disciplinary sanctions that will be imposed on the respondent, and any remedies available to the complainant to restore or preserve equal access.

H. Sanctions and Remedies

The school will take reasonable steps to address any violations of the policy and to restore or preserve equal access to the school's education programs or activities. Sanctions for finding of responsibility depend upon the nature and gravity of the misconduct, any record of prior discipline for similar violations, or both.

When a respondent is found responsible for the prohibited behavior as alleged, remedies shall be provided to the complainant. Remedies are designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures or remedies that are punitive or would pose a

burden to the respondent.

Whatever the outcome of the investigation or appeal, the complainant and respondent may request ongoing or additional supportive measures. Ongoing supportive measures that do not unreasonably burden a party may be considered and provided even if the respondent is found not responsible.

I. Informal Resolution

Informal resolution is available only after a formal complaint has been filed involving parties of the same status (e.g., student-student or employee-employee), prior to a determination of responsibility, and if the complainant and respondent voluntarily consent to the process in writing. Informal resolution is not available in cases which an employee is alleged to have sexually harassed a student.

J. Parent and Guardian Rights

Consistent with the applicable laws of the State of Mississippi and absent a court order or other legal requirement to the contrary, a student's parent or guardian shall be permitted to exercise the rights granted to their child under the school's policy, whether such rights involve requesting supportive measures, filing a formal complaint, or participating in a grievance process. A student's parent or guardian shall also be permitted to accompany the student to meetings, interviews, and hearings, if applicable, during a grievance process to exercise rights on behalf of the student. The student may have an advisor of choice who is a different person from the parent or guardian.

4. APPEALS

Appeals are available after a complaint dismissal or after a final determination is made. Appeals may be made due to procedural irregularities in the investigation affecting the outcome, new evidence becoming available, or due to bias or a conflict of interest by the personnel that may have affected the outcome. The school should set a reasonable time frame to submit an appeal, but not less than 10 days nor more than 30 days. Or, if there is no administrative response to the student/parent/guardian grievance by the school, the grievance should be made to the superintendent of the school or the superintendent's designee.

Parties shall be given an opportunity to submit a written statement in support of or in opposition to the final determination. A new decision-maker shall issue a final decision at the same time to each party.

The following procedures shall be followed when submitted student/parent/guardian grievances regarding administrative decisions:

Level 1: An aggrieved party should express his or her concern to the school level administration for resolution or file a formal grievance with the school superintendent/executive director. The superintendent/executive director shall investigate allegations as soon as circumstances allow, but not later than five (5) business days from submission of the original written grievance. The administrator shall provide a written response to the aggrieved party no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the original written grievance. If there is no administrative response to the aggrieved party within the ten (10) business days, or if the response is unsatisfactory, the aggrieved party may elevate to Level 2.

Level 2: If any party deems the resolution unsatisfactory, the party may appeal the decision by submitting a copy of the grievance and decision to the Mississippi Department of Education's Associate Superintendent responsible for oversight of the state school, along with a written statement detailing the reasons for the dissatisfaction. The Associate Superintendent shall investigate and review the matter. After review, the Associate Superintendent shall provide a written response to the parties postmarked no later than ten (10) business days following receipt of the appeal.

If there is no response by the Associate Superintendent to the appealing party within the ten (10) business days, or if the response is unsatisfactory to either party, the aggrieved party may advance the grievance to Level 3.

Level 3: The aggrieved party, after review of the written response from the Associate Superintendent, may appeal that response to the State Superintendent or the State's Superintendent's designee no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the written communication at Level 2. The State Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the grievance and shall provide the parties a written response postmarked within ten (10) business days following the receipt of the appeal.

Level 4: The aggrieved party may appeal the response from the State Superintendent to the State Board of Education by submitting a written request for appeal to the State Board of Education along with all documentation from Levels 1-3 no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the State Superintendent's written response at Level 3. The State Board of Education shall review the grievance and shall provide the parties an opportunity to appear at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting to present his or her grievance and response in accordance with the Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. 1232g, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et. seq.* implementing regulations, and other federal and state laws that govern the protection of student information. If the party or parties elect not to appear personally, the parties may request the Board's review of the written documentation only. The decision of the State Board of Education shall be final.

Source: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. § 106; Miss. Code Ann. § 37 1-3 (Revised 3/2022)

MDE State Board Policy 99.1

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The schools governed by the Mississippi State Board of Education will protect the confidentiality of all previous or currently enrolled students about information contained in its records as prescribed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

FERPA affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Mississippi School for the Deaf receives a request for access.
 - Parents or eligible students should submit to the Superintendent (or their designee) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect.

- The Superintendent (or school official) will plan for access and notify the parent or the eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the Superintendent/Executive Director (or their designee), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent of the eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing. If, because of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth his or her views.

The right to provide written consent before the school disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school and/or the Mississippi Department of Education as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Mississippi Board of Education. A school official may also include a volunteer or a person, company, consultant or other party or contractor with whom the school and/or Mississippi Department of Education has outsourced to perform an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student volunteering to serve on a n official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill their professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records with appropriate notification to parents and eligible students to officials of another school district or college in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment of transfer.

An educational agency or institution may disclose directory information if it has given public notice to parents of students in attendance and eligible students in attendance at the agency or institution of:

1. The types of personally identifiable information that the agency or institution has designated as directory information;
2. A parent's or eligible student's right to refuse to let the agency or institution designate any or all those types of information about the student as directory information; and
3. The period within which a parent or eligible student must notify the agency or institution in
4. writing that he or she does not want any or all types of information about the student designated as directory information.

Any disciplinary actions affecting attendance are included in the student's permanent record and

cumulative folder. The school will forward education records, including disciplinary records, to other schools or colleges in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

The school may disclose directory information about students without consent. Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height or members of athletic teams, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The school may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student under certain conditions set forth in the FERPA regulations. Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to, the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

The school is required to provide military recruiters names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students, unless the parent has opted-out of the disclosure.

The parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the school designate any or all types of information about the student as directory information. The parent or eligible student must notify the Superintendent (or his/her designee) in writing within 14 days of receipt of this notice that he or she does not want any or all types of information about the student designated as directory information or disclosed to military recruiters. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Dropout Prevention Plan

While attrition will occur with each class that enrolls at state special schools governed by the State Board of Education, students come to the school anticipating success, having completed a significant admissions process. While a residential school is not for everyone, the programming, select faculty, and special residential experiences will support continued involvement and success for all enrolled students. The goal of the school is graduation and pursuit of further learning.

1. College and Career Planning
 - a. On-site print and electronic college and career information, catalogs, and application materials

- b. Campus visits by recruiters from in-state and out-of-state colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning
 - c. Transition to college, financial aid, and other workshops relevant to high school students
 - d. Guest speakers and artists who are professionals working in relevant fields of interest among the students
- 2. Intervention Programs
 - a. Attendance monitoring
 - b. Grade progress reviews throughout grading periods
 - c. Tutorial and/or study blocks supervised by a staff/faculty member
 - d. Ongoing communication between the faculty, administration, and residential life staff regarding individual needs
- 3. School, Family, and Community Partnerships
 - a. Student data sharing through school package for student records
 - b. Email links between parents, teachers, administration, and students
 - c. Real time access by parents to student attendance, grades, assignments via the Internet through the school package for student records
 - d. Additional support for individual students from community and parent groups
- 4. Support for transition back to Home Schools
 - a. Communication with parents and students
 - b. Emotional support throughout the decision-making process
 - c. Prompt transfer of records and data upon request of the new school
 - d. Monitoring to ensure that students enroll in new school

To ensure a comprehensive Dropout Prevention Plan has been designed for the MSDB to address district and community concerns for students at-risk of dropping out of school. The plan is inclusive of goals, objectives, initiatives, and action plans to help all students meet or exceed the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. This plan is intended to serve as a resource guide to outline how the school is going to address at-risk factors that may cause students to drop out of school.

Suicide Prevention Policy

This policy is designed to provide intervention services for students needing preventative counseling and immediate protection.

The school establishes this policy to take positive steps toward reducing student suicide through:

- 1. Prevention. To provide in-service training to all school district employees with information about the recognition of the signs of suicidal behavior; including, but not limited to, early identification and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.
- 2. Intervention. To take affirmative action when an immediate referral is warranted and to understand the emergency procedures when a referral is made and to provide support for students.
- 3. Postvention. To respond to suicide or suicide attempt, utilizing the district's crisis response, documentation, and reporting procedures.

Suicidal Attempt: The student will be taken to the health clinic if he or she is able; otherwise, the nurse will go to the student. The staff member who is calling should give specific information on the location of

the student. The nurse will measure and assess blood pressure, pulse, respiration, and begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation/first aid as indicated. A staff member should always remain with the student and other staff members and students should move out of the area.

Contact with the superintendent occurs at this time. The superintendent will assign a staff member to contact the parent/guardian.

The nurse will:

- determine if a life-threatening situation exists and delegate a staff member,
- to activate the medical response system (EMS-9-1-1) and meet the emergency vehicle. The nurse will continue to monitor vital signs every 5 minutes until the arrival of rescue personnel,
- will contact POISON CONTROL at MS Poison Control at the University Medical Center, 800-222-1222 for assistance with any drug overdose/chemical ingestion,
- will obtain name/description of medication/chemical, amount taken, and time taken (if possible, provide the health care provider the container),
- will save all vomitus and send to the health care provider,
- will give EMS personnel all health-related information and where to transport the student for medical care, and
- advise ER/mental health provider with the current observations and assessments.

A copy of the Permission to Treat and Health Care Provider Medical Record is to be sent with the student to the health care facility. The nurse will complete this if time permits, otherwise another staff member will be assigned this task.

Best practices for assisting a student who has made a suicide attempt are:

- detain student, getting assistance if student is acting out or presents risk to self/others,
- don't touch the student if touch increases agitation,
- don't allow the student to come between you and the door, and
- don't remain alone with a student who becomes aggressive.

If a mental health counselor is onsite, he/she will respond immediately for student support. The nurse will remain with the student to monitor medical status if deemed necessary. Counselors may assume responsibility for remaining mental health intervention.

Keep students under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or EMS response personnel.

Imminent Suicide Plan:

- specificity-consider high risk if there is a detailed plan
- lethality-consider high risk when a student perceives action to be lethal
- availability-consider high risk if implement is readily accessible
- proximity-consider as higher risk with increased distance from rescuers

EX: Student in a high place with a threat to jump.

Mental Health counselor should complete a mental health intervention. The superintendent will be notified when a threat is made, and policy will be set into motion.

Otherwise:

Staff members should encourage students to communicate feelings and concerns using a non-judgmental manner to maintain student dignity. The staff member should:

- actively listen to student and acknowledge student's feelings,
- speak in calm, steady voice as well as sign in a calming nature,

- try to maintain eye contact with the student,
- reflect student's feelings back to them,
- use touch, if appropriate and do so in a gradual way,
- ask directly about suicidal intent,
- DO NOT collude with the student; concerns need to be shared with pertinent persons in the student's life,
- provide as much privacy as possible and discourage onlookers,
- introduce concepts of hope,
- acknowledge student's feelings,
- remind student of the temporary nature of crisis,
- reinforce desire that student stay alive, and
- refer for immediate medical/mental health assessments.

MSD nursing staff will work with medical personnel on medical/physical concerns. The MSD counselor will follow up with mental health services and contact the parent of the responsible party of observations noted and recommendations for future interventions and assist, as needed in facilitating a mental health evaluation. If the Responsible Party is inaccessible, the counselor will work with designated school officials to reach an emergency contact.

Keep students with imminent suicidal plans under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or appropriate surrogate.

Non-Imminent Suicidal Ideation:

- refer to the MSD mental health counselor,
- encourage student to verbalize feelings and concerns using non-judgmental communication to allow student to maintain dignity,
- clarify/reflect/summarize feelings, but never say you understand feelings
- reassure those feelings are important,
- DO NOT collude with the student as to confidentiality - concerns need to be shared with pertinent persons in the student's life,
- introduce concepts of hope,
- acknowledge student's feelings
- remind student of the temporary nature of crisis
- reinforce desire that student stay alive
- refer for immediate medical/mental health assessment

Keep students with imminent suicidal plans under direct surveillance until dismissed directly to the responsible party or appropriate surrogate.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached by dialing 988 or by visiting

<https://988lifeline.org/>

Identifying At-Risk Students

The district uses the following key indicators to identify students who are at- risk of dropping out or at-risk in failing to achieve a successful level of academic achievement.

- Educationally at-risk
- Percentage of promotions in grades kindergarten through second
- Passage rate on subject area tests
- Passage rate on the third grade reading summative assessment

- Results of progress monitoring assessments
- Two or more grade levels behind
- Attendance rates, office referrals, suspensions
- Poor grade performance in core subjects

The Mississippi Department of Education Early Warning System has been implemented to identify these students at an earlier age.

Goals and Objectives

MSB's dropout prevention plan is designed to meet the three overarching goals for the state's dropout prevention plan: increasing the state graduation rate to 85%, reducing the state dropout rate by 50%, and reducing the truancy rate by 50%. The school will focus on the following four goals:

1. Provide opportunities for all students to experience academic success at all grade levels,
2. Improve early identification of students at-risk of dropping out,
3. Reduce risk factors associated with dropping out of school,
- and 4. Strengthen the home-school-community partnership.

For information regarding the MSB Dropout Prevention Plan, please visit our website at msdbk12.org

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/SCHOOL AGE (JBA)

The term "minor" when used in any statute, shall include any person, male or female, under twenty-one years of age. MS Code ' 1-3-27

This school district shall comply with the requirements of the "Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law" (' 37-13-91). Appropriate reports as required by law shall be provided to the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement.

COMPULSORY- SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

"Compulsory-school-age child" means a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program. ' 37-13-91 (2) (f) (2013)

Compulsory-school-age children must be enrolled in school unless the child is:

1. Physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of attending school as determined by the appropriate school official based upon sufficient medical documentation;
2. Enrolled in and pursuing a course of special education, remedial education or education for handicapped or physically or mentally disadvantaged children; or
3. Being educated in a legitimate home instruction program. ' 37-13-91 (3)

REPORTS

If a compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within fifteen (15) calendar days after the first day of the school year or if a child has accumulated five (5) unlawful absences during the school year, the superintendent shall or his designee, within two (2) school days or within five (5) calendar days, whichever is less, report, on the form provided by the State Department of Education, the absences to the school attendance officer. The superintendent, or his designee, shall report any student suspensions or student expulsions to the school attendance officer when they occur. '37-13-91 (6) School districts shall maintain accurate records documenting enrollment and attendance in a manner that allows the State Department of Education to make an assessment of changes in enrollment and attendance, including dropout rates.

The State Department of Education shall compile annually a statewide report on school district effectiveness in reducing absentee problems, dropout rates, and other attendance related problems during the previous school year, incorporate the information into the annual Mississippi Report Card required by Section 37-3-53, Mississippi Code of 1972, on school district performance and offer technical assistance and coordination services to assist districts in improving performance.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCES / VALID EXCUSES

An "unlawful absence" is an absence during a school day by a compulsory-school-age child, whose absence is not due to a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance. Days missed from school due to disciplinary suspension shall not be considered an "excused" absence under this section. Each of the following shall constitute a valid excuse for temporary nonattendance, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the superintendent or his designee:

1. Attendance at an authorized school activity with the prior approval of the superintendent of the school district or his designee.
2. Illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
3. When isolation is ordered by the county health officer, by the State Board of Health or appropriate school official.
4. Death or serious illness of a member of the immediate family, which includes children, spouse, grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters.
5. A medical or dental appointment with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee, except in the case of emergency.
6. Attendance at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness.
7. Observance of a religious event, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval should not be withheld unless, in the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee, the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
8. Participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel including vacations or other family travel, with the prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. (Approval shall be based on the professional judgment of the superintendent or his designee but shall not be withheld unless the extent of the absence would adversely affect the student's education.)
9. Other conditions sufficient to warrant nonattendance, with prior approval of the superintendent or his designee. However, no absences shall be excused when any student suspensions or expulsions circumvent the intent and spirit of the compulsory attendance law. ' 37-13-91 (4)

10. An absence is excused when it results from the attendance of a compulsory-school age child participating in official organized events sponsored by the 4-H or Future Farmers of America (FFA). The excuse for the 4-H or FFA event must be provided in writing to the appropriate school superintendent by the Extension Agent or High School Agricultural Instructor/FFA Advisor.

11. An absence is excused when it results from the compulsory-school-age child officially being employed to serve as a page at the State Capitol for the Mississippi House of Representatives or Senate.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER

The superintendent and principals shall cooperate with the school attendance officer employed by the State Department of Education, pursuant to ' 37-13-85.

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards for this policy are standards 10 and 11.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards Attorney General's Opinion. Carter, 1-9-98 (#183) (97-0817) Last Review Date: August 17, 2023

TRUANCY (JBAC)

“Compulsory-school-age child” means a child who has attained or will attain the age of six (6) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year and who has not attained the age of seventeen (17) years on or before September 1 of the calendar year; and shall include any child who has attained or will attain the age of five (5) years on or before September 1 and has enrolled in a full-day public school kindergarten program. ‘37-13-91 (2) (f)

A "truant" is a student who is absent without a valid excuse as identified In Policy JBA, Compulsory School Attendance.

“Truancy” also includes absence without permission from any class, study hall or school related activity for which a student is scheduled during the school day.

Disciplinary action shall be taken against students who are truant. Continued truancy may lead to academic failure, placement in the alternative school program and/or suspension or expulsion from the regular and/or alternative school programs.

Reports of truancy shall be made in accordance with the Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law (MS CODE ‘37-13-91) and Policy JBA.

The school district shall follow the prescribed method for reporting unlawful absences to the Mississippi Department of Education.

The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards for this policy are standards 10 and 11.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards Last Review Date: August 17, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (JQN)

Homeless students in the district will have access to the education and other services needed to ensure that an opportunity is available to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all students are held. A school counselor for students in homeless situations will be designated by the district to carry out duties as required by law.

The district will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student will be admitted based on the district and Local Education Agency (LEA). Transportation will be provided to and from the student's school of origin at the request of the parent, or in the case of an unaccompanied student, the district's school counselor for homeless students. Residential services may be on a case-by-case basis based upon availability.

The superintendent or designee will produce written guidelines for distribution to each school that explains the rights of homeless students and the responsibilities of the schools to meet their needs and eliminate barriers to school attendance. This information shall also be disseminated in writing and by other means designed to raise awareness of these rights and responsibilities to staff, homeless families and students, the public, and homeless service providers.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, children are deemed to be homeless under the following conditions:

1. Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1));
2. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
3. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C));
4. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
5. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described in numbers 2-4 above.

An unaccompanied child or youth is a homeless child not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
42 U.S.C. § 11434a

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

1. It shall be the policy of this school district, to the extent practicable under requirements relating to education established by state law, that each eligible child of a homeless individual and each

eligible homeless youth will have access to a free appropriate education comparable to the education provided the children of district residents who are non-homeless, without isolation or stigma.

2. The placement of an eligible homeless child or youth will be made according to Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils and will take into consideration the best interests of the homeless child or youth and placement requests made by a parent.

3. The choice of placement in either the "school of origin" or the school serving the "place of abode" will take place regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parent(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s).

4. Provided the homeless child or youth meets eligibility criteria, he/she will be provided transportation services; compensatory education programs for the disadvantaged; educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.

5. Any and all records ordinarily kept by this school district, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, evaluations for special services and programs shall be kept on homeless children and youth and shall be forwarded in a timely fashion should a child or youth enter a new school or school district; and in a manner consistent with Section 1232(g) of Title 20.

6. Should this school district receive assistance under Section 11432, it shall coordinate with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or youth and their families.

7. Should this school district receive assistance under Section 11432, it shall designate a homelessness school counselor to insure that homeless children and youth enroll in and succeed in the schools of their district; and, homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.

8. The homelessness school counselor shall inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the school counselor.

9. This school district has and will continue to review and revise, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth in schools selected in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above.

10. In reviewing and revising such policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, requirements of immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation and guardianship.

11. Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth will be promptly resolved according to the provisions of Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils. Other issues or disputes will be directed to the attention of the school official responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. If this dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make written request for a review of the matter to: Coordinator of the Homeless Program Mississippi Department of Education P. O. Box 771 Jackson, MS 39205

LEGAL REF.: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001 Adopted Date: 7/27/2023

SECTION 504 – AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT – NON-DISCRIMINATION (IDDH)

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) will not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities to the extent provided by law. The following person has been designated as the Section 504 /Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator and will handle inquiries regarding the MSDB's nondiscrimination policies, the filing of grievances, and requests for copies of grievance procedures covering discrimination on the basis of disability.

Human Resources, Section 504/ADA

School District Name: The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

School District Address: 1403 Eastover Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211

Telephone: (601) 984-8203 Fax: (601) 984-8020

LEGAL REF.: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Last Review Date: August 17, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Self-Administration of Medication of Asthma/Anaphylaxis Medications (JGCDA)

Every child who has been diagnosed with asthma must have an asthma action plan on file in the school office.

The school board of this public school district permits the self-administration of asthma and anaphylaxis medication pursuant to the requirements of this policy. A student with asthma and/or anaphylaxis is entitled to possess and self-administer prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property, on school-provided transportation, or at a school-related event or activity if:

1. The prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication has been prescribed for that student as indicated by the prescription label on the medication;
2. The self-administration is done in compliance with the prescription or written instructions from the student's physician or other licensed health care provider; and
3. A parent of the student provides to the school:

- a. Written authorization, signed by the parent, for the student to self-administer prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property or at a school-related event or activity;
- b. A written statement, signed by the parent, in which the parent releases the school district and its employees and agents from liability for an injury arising from the student's self-administration of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication while on school property or at a school-related event or activity unless in cases of wanton or willful misconduct;
- c. A written statement from the student's physician or other licensed health care provider, signed by the physician or provider, that states:
 - i. That the student has asthma and/or anaphylaxis and is capable of self-administering the prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication;
 - ii. The name and purpose of the medication;
 - iii. The prescribed dosage for the medication;
 - iv. The times at which or circumstances under which the medication may be administered;
 - v. The period for which the medication is prescribed; and
 - vi. The physician's statement must be kept on file in the office of the school nurse of the school the student attends or, if there is not a school nurse, in the office of the principal of the school the student attends.

4. If a student uses his/her medication in a manner other than prescribed, he/she may be subject to disciplinary action under the school codes. The disciplinary action shall not limit or restrict the student's immediate access to the medication.

5. The school board authorizes the school nurse or trained school employee to administer auto injectable epinephrine to a student who the school nurse or trained school employee, in good faith, believes is having an anaphylactic reaction, whether or not the student has a prescription for epinephrine.

Definitions:

- 1. "Parent" means parent or legal guardian.
- 2. "Auto-injectable epinephrine" means a medical device for the immediate administration of epinephrine to a person at risk for anaphylaxis.
- 3. "Asthma and anaphylaxis medication" means inhaled bronchodilator and auto-injectable epinephrine.
- 4. "Self-administration of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication" means a student's discretionary use of prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication.

OPTIONAL

Each public, private and parochial school may maintain a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine at the school in a locked, secure, and easily accessible location. A licensed physician, including, but not limited to, Mississippi State Department of Health District Health Officers, may prescribe epinephrine auto-injectors in the name of the school system or the individual school to be maintained for use when deemed necessary under the provisions of this section.

Each public, private and parochial school that maintains a supply of auto-injectable epinephrine at the school shall require at least one (1) employee at each school to receive training from a registered nurse or a licensed medical physician in the administration of auto-injectable epinephrine.

Last Review Date: September 28, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

Student Health Services Inoculations (JGCB)

This school board has the power, authority and duty to require those vaccinations specified by the state health officer as provided in Section 41-23-37. ' 37-7-301(i).

Whenever indicated, the state health officer shall specify such immunization practices as may be considered best for the control of vaccine preventable diseases. A listing shall be promulgated annually or more often, if necessary.

Except as provided hereinafter, it shall be unlawful for any child to attend any school, kindergarten or similar type facility intended for the instruction of children (hereinafter called "schools"), either public or private, with the exception of any legitimate home instruction program as defined in Section 37-13-9, for ten (10) or less children who are related within the third degree computed according to the civil law to the operator, unless they shall first have been vaccinated against those diseases specified by the state health officer.

A certificate of exemption from vaccination for medical reasons may be offered on behalf of a child by a duly licensed physician and may be accepted by the local health officer who, in his opinion, such exemption will not cause undue risk to the community.

Certificates of vaccination shall be issued by local health officers or physicians on forms specified by the Mississippi State Board of Health. These forms shall be the only acceptable means for showing compliance with these immunization requirements, and the responsible school officials shall file the form with the child's record.

If a child shall offer to enroll at a school without having completed the required vaccinations, the local health officer may grant a period of time up to ninety (90) days for such completion when, in the opinion of the health officer, such delay will not cause undue risk to the child, the school or the community. No child shall be enrolled without having had at least one (1) dose of each specified vaccine.

Within thirty (30) days after the opening of the fall term of school (on or before October 1 of each year) the person in charge of each school shall report to the county or local health officer, on forms provided by the Mississippi State Board of Health, the number of children enrolled by age or grade or both, the number fully vaccinated, the number in process of completing vaccination requirements, and the number exempt from vaccination by reason for such exemption.

Within one hundred twenty (120) days after the opening of the fall term (on or before December 31), the person in charge of each school shall certify to the local or county health officer that all children enrolled are in compliance with immunization requirements.

For the purpose of assisting in supervising the immunization status of the children the local health officer, or his designee, may inspect the children's records or furnish certificates of immunization compliance by the school.

It shall be the responsibility of the person in charge of each school to enforce the requirements for immunization. Any child not in compliance at the end of ninety (90) days from the opening of the fall term must be suspended until in compliance, unless the health officer shall attribute the delay to lack of supply of vaccine or some other such factor clearly making compliance impossible. 41- 23-37

Failure to enforce provisions of this Section shall constitute a misdemeanor and upon conviction be punishable by fine or imprisonment or both. ' 41-23-37 (1983) The Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard for this policy is standard 6 and 28.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited Last Review Date: September 28, 2023 Review History:
[1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

Concussion Management and Return to Play Policy (JGEB)

The Board of Trustees of this school district adopts this concussion management and return to play policy that includes the following guidelines:

- Parents or guardians shall receive and sign a copy of the concussion policy before the start of the regular school athletic event season.
- An athlete who reports or displays any symptoms or signs of a concussion in a practice or game setting shall be removed immediately from the practice or game. The athlete shall not be allowed to return to the practice or game for the remainder of the day regardless of whether the athlete appears or states that he or she is normal.
- The athlete shall be evaluated by a health care provider working within the provider's scope of practice.
- If an athlete has sustained a concussion, the athlete shall be referred to a licensed physician, preferably one with experience in managing sports concussion injuries.
- The athlete who has been diagnosed with a concussion shall be returned to play only after full recovery and clearance by a health care provider.
- Return to play after a concussion should be gradual and follow a progressive return to competition.
- An athlete shall not return to a competitive game before demonstrating that he or she has no symptoms in a full supervised practice.
- Athletes shall not continue to practice or return to play while still having symptoms of a concussion.

The superintendent/designee shall develop procedures to support this policy and the whole staff shall implement.

Concussion Policy Definitions

- "Health care provider" means a licensed physician or a licensed nurse practitioner, licensed physician assistant or licensed healthcare professional working within the person's scope of practice and under the direct supervision or written consultation of a physician. All health care providers referred to in this act also must be trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
- "School athletic event" means activities sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) or the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS), and school-sponsored activities in Grades 7 through 12 of schools that are not members of the MHSAA or the MAIS which activities are organized and conducted in a manner substantially similar to activities that are sanctioned by the MHSAA or the MAIS.

Last Review Date: September 28, 2023, Review History: [1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 9/28/2023

District Assurance for Children with Disabilities (IDDFAA)

The Mississippi Schools of the Deaf and the Blind School District is committed to serving students with disabilities and hereby sets a goal of expanding and providing full educational opportunities for all students with disabilities, ages birth through twenty-one (21). The opportunities will be provided in accordance with applicable state statutes, federal laws and the Mississippi Department of Education's policies.

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The district will provide a free appropriate public education to children ages birth through twenty-one (21), with a disability who need special education and, as appropriate, related services as defined under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2007 (IDEA), Mississippi statutes, and the Mississippi Department of Education policies. A free appropriate public education will be provided to students with disabilities who are enrolled in the district. These services will be provided at no cost to the parent, will meet the standards of the Mississippi State Board of Education, and will stand in conformity with a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The provision of a free appropriate public education will continue for a student with a disability through the school year in which a student reaches age twenty-one (21) if the student was enrolled in the district and was twenty (20) at the beginning of the school year.

Preschool students who have been determined to have a disability under IDEA, Part B, shall be provided a free appropriate public education in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) no later than their third (3) birthday.

Children participating in early-intervention programs under Part C of IDEA, and who are eligible and will participate in preschool programs under Part B of IDEA, will experience a smooth and effective transition to the district's preschool program. Appropriate district personnel will participate in transition planning conferences arranged by the Department of Health, the lead agency for Part C of IDEA.

In accordance with Part B of IDEA regulations, students with disabilities who have graduated from high school with a general education diploma are not entitled to a free appropriate public education by the district.

Procedures for the implementation of this policy by the district are those contained in the state regulations that are relevant to local school districts and issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

CHILD FIND

The district will continue its efforts to search for underserved children, ages birth through twenty-one, who are in need of special education and related services as defined under IDEA, Part B. Children with disabilities, including children who are homeless children or are wards of the State, regardless of the severity of their disability are identified, located and evaluated for services. In accordance with IDEA, Part B, the district will conduct Child Find activities for children who reside in the district's jurisdiction and who are enrolled in the district.

Similar Child Find activities undertaken for the public-school children enrolled in the district will be conducted with respect to the identification, location, and evaluation for those children with disabilities who are enrolled in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools located within the boundaries of the district. The Child Find process will be completed in a time period comparable to that for other students enrolled and attending public schools within the district.

The district will adhere to the relevant policies and the procedures for implementation of the Child Find requirements for local school districts under IDEA, Part B, as issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

EVALUATION AND DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY – PROTECTION IN EVALUATION

All testing and evaluation materials and procedures used by district personnel for assessment and placement will be, to the maximum extent possible, selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory. Materials or procedures shall be provided and administered in the child's native language or mode of communication, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so, and no single procedure shall be the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

The district will conduct reevaluations in accordance with the policies and procedures of Mississippi Department of Education prior to the initial provision of special education and related services to a student with a disability.

All reevaluations will be conducted of each student with a disability in accordance with the regulations of the Mississippi Department of Education. All reevaluations conducted by the district will be provided at no cost to the parent. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

The district will protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable data, information, and records collected and maintained relative to students with disabilities as required under IDEA, Part B, and the

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

In accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education, the district will ensure the development, implementation, review, maintenance, and revision of each student's IEP periodically, but not less than annually. Educational placement decisions will be determined by a student's IEP Committee, except when a school official has the authority under IDEA, Part B, to remove a student with a disability from the student's current placement due to a violation of school rules. The district will initiate and conduct IEP meetings to develop, review, and revise the IEP of a student residing within its jurisdiction who is provided special education and related services in accordance with the regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The district will ensure the provision of the rights and the procedures provided to parents and students with disabilities as required under IDEA, Part B, and the regulatory policies and procedures issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The district will ensure that students with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed due process with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education.

A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parents of a child with a disability must be given to the parents only one (1) time a school year, except that a copy also must be given to the parents:

1. Upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation;
2. Upon a parent filing a request for due process complaint;
3. Upon a disciplinary action constituting a change in placement; and/or
4. Upon request by a parent. The notice will fully explain the safeguards in the parents' native language unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The district, to the maximum extent appropriate, educates students with disabilities in their age range. A continuum of alternative placements based on individual students' IEPs will be provided to students with disabilities in the district. LEA placement of the students will be determined at least on an annual basis and will be as close to the student's home as possible. In selecting the least restrictive environment for each student, consideration is given to any potentially harmful effect on the student, or the quality of services needed. The district's procedures for implementation of this policy are those contained in the state regulations issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The IEP Committee, when determining placement of each student with a disability, will utilize this policy and the designated procedures.

LEGAL REF: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1401; 1412; 1414; 1417; 1435; 1437; 1438 Last Review Date: October 19, 2023 Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 10/19/2023

Student Attendance, Reporting of Student Attendance, Tardiness and Excuses (JBD)

The State Board of Education (SBE) believes that good attendance, with a minimum of tardiness and absenteeism, is essential if students are to gain maximum benefit from the school district's instructional program. The SBE thusly directs the superintendent to develop administrative regulations governing tardiness and absences (excused and non-excused).

The administrative regulations shall be based on all applicable state laws governing absenteeism and tardiness and shall include (but not be limited to) the counting and reporting of students to the Mississippi Department of Education for attendance purposes, expectations for good student attendance, parent responsibility, excused and unexcused absences, and tardiness. Initial administrative regulations and any future changes to such administrative regulations shall be approved by the SBE before implementation.

Make-up Assignments: The administrative regulations shall specify that no absence will be excused when it is due to suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary action. However, to avoid adopting a policy or administrative rule that would ensure a student's failure, the district shall adopt a provision that permits or requires suspended students who are not immediately placed in an alternative school program to make up work within specified deadlines.

Attendance Reporting: In order for a student to be considered as having attended school for a full day, the SBE specifies that each student must be present for 63% of his or her individual Instructional day as fixed by the SBE for each individual school. For purposes of reporting absenteeism, a student who has an absence that is more than thirty-seven percent (37%) of the student's instructional day, as fixed by the SBE for the school at which the student is enrolled, shall be considered absent the entire school day.

The superintendent shall develop and submit for board adoption a policy which includes:

1. a definition of the instructional day for each individual school so that the 63% of the instructional day can be computed for each student within the school district's individual schools, and
2. a process for computing 63% of the instructional day for each student within the school district's individual schools.

DEFINITIONS

Full Day Attendance: When a student is present for 63% of his or her individual instructional day as fixed by the SBE for each individual school.

Unlawful Absence: An absence for an entire school day or during part of a school day when such absence is not due to a valid excuse.

LEGAL REF.: Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law, MS CODE 37-13-91 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 10 and 11 Attorney General Opinion, Carter, 1-9-98) (#183) (97-0817)
Last Review Date: October 19, 2023, Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901] Adopted Date: 10/19/2023

Disciplinary Management (JCD)

Zero Tolerance Policy

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. 37-11-18, MSDB has a zero-tolerance policy for the possession and/or use of firearms on any school property or at any school function or school-related activity. Any student found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to expulsion. Any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm, or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17, shall be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the superintendent or principal of the school in which the student is enrolled; provided, however, that the superintendent of the school shall be authorized to modify the period for such expulsion on a case-by-case basis and/or will adhere to guidelines specified under IDEA. Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the school board.

If a student has committed an infraction where Zero Tolerance applies, only the IEP Committee may determine the placement of a special education student in the alternative setting. Should the parents disagree with the placement decision, due process procedures afforded under IDEA will be followed. The IEP Committee will also determine if the student has met the goals outlined on the IEP, which would allow the student to return to an appropriate placement other than the alternative setting.

Disciplinary Procedures

Probation: a period set by an administrator during which a student is given an opportunity to improve behavior exhibited in prior violations of school policy. The administrator will notify students, parents, and teachers in writing of students placed on probation. This notification could include a contract including future plans and expectations of the student and the way the student must meet the prescribed requirements. The parents, student, faculty, principal or supervisor, Director of Residence Education, and the counselor will receive copies of the signed contract.

Students who fail to make required minimum academic progress, to improve attendance, or to correct residential life behavioral problems during the probationary term will be evaluated for appropriate actions.

General Suspension for Ten (10) Days or Less

Suspension: the administrative removal of a student from class attendance at MSDB for a specified period due to violations of school policy. If the student receives an out-of-school suspension, the student may not come to campus for any reason for the number of days assigned. Under the procedural safeguards, special circumstances that warrants a suspension will be considered.

The Superintendent may suspend a student from MSDB for a period of ten (10) school days or less when it is determined that a student's behavior is detrimental to the good order of the school, and that suspension is an appropriate disciplinary action for a serious violation of school rules (or frequent violations of school rules).

The procedure for suspending a student is as follows: MSDB officials will provide the student with a notice of the charge of violation of school discipline and the evidence against them. The notice of the charge may be given orally. The opportunity will be given for the student to hear the charge and evidence and to offer the student an opportunity to respond. This will be the only hearing conducted. If the facts indicate the student's guilt, the Superintendent will determine the appropriate term of suspension.

Upon notification of the suspension, the student is placed on restriction (in dormitory room, if during extended day or in a room specified by the principal/supervisor during the school day) until the actual departure from school to begin the suspension. The suspension may begin immediately. MSDB will inform the parent/guardian(s) of the suspension prior to the student leaving campus.

Within five school days of the informal hearing with the student, MSDB officials will send written notification to the student and parent/guardian(s) specifying the reasons for the suspension. Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension. Such exclusions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc. A student suspended from school may make up work. To take advantage of this opportunity, the student must comply with the timelines specified in MSDB policies for making up work. Failure to contact teachers and make specific arrangements will waive the right to make up the work.

Upon completion of suspension, a student returning to school must make an appointment with the school official who handled the suspension to discuss returning to school and any additional restrictions that may apply. Parent/Guardian(s) will be requested to consult with the MSDB official.

Emergency Suspension

Emergency Suspension: occurs when the Superintendent or a designee summarily suspends a student for not more than three (3) days prior to completing a n investigation for serious student misconduct under circumstances where immediate removal of the student is necessary to restore order, protect persons on the school grounds, protect the student, or protect school property. The school official will meet with the student to briefly explain the purpose of the suspension and allow the student to respond. Parents will be immediately notified of the suspension. The student may be placed under the supervision of security that is provided by MSDB and may not attend any classes. The student must leave school as soon as possible.

During the student's absence, a school official will complete the investigation by the end of the school day following the emergency suspension. The administration will communicate findings to the student by phone and allow the student to respond.

Further disciplinary action will be recommended or taken as needed. If additional suspension is necessary, the Superintendent or a designee may extend the suspension for a period not to exceed a maximum of ten days. A written notification of the reasons for the suspension will be sent to the student and parents within three (3) school days.

Change in Student Placement

A change in placement only occurs when there is a serious violation to the code of conduct and (a) the removal is more than 10 consecutive school days; or (b) the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than ten (10) school days in a school year; and

considering other factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

Authority of School Personnel

The MSDB school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates the code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than ten (10) school days to the extent such alternatives are applied to children without disabilities and additional removals for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct if those removals do not constitute a change in placement.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, in cases where a child:

- carries or possess a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substances, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting

An IEP Team must determine an interim alternative education setting. Any interim alternative educational setting in which the student is placed by the school personnel or hearing officer must be selected so as to enable the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to receive services and modifications, including those described in the student's current IEP, that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in that IEP and includes services and modifications to address the behavior that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Manifestation Determination Review

A manifestation determination review is an evaluation of the relationship between a student's disability and the act of misconduct that must be conducted when the MSDB proposes to take specified serious disciplinary actions. The IEP Team, as determined by the parent and MSDB, has up to ten (10) school days from any decision to change a child's educational placement for disciplinary reasons to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent to determine the relationship, if any, between the student's disability and the misconduct in question.

The behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability if:

- the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability
- the conduct in question was the direct result of the MSDB's failure to implement the student's IEP

The conduct will be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the MSDB, the parent, and relevant members of the student's IEP Team determine that either condition is met.

No manifestation review is required when a child is removed from his current placement for not more than ten (10) school days to an interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or because of a suspension.

Determination That Behavior WAS a Manifestation of Disability

The IEP Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment (and implement a behavioral intervention plan) in circumstances where the manifestation determination review concludes that the student's behavior was related to his disability provided the MSDS has not already conducted such assessment before the occurrence of the behavior that resulted in the change in the student's placement. If a Behavioral Intervention Plan has already been developed and implemented, the IEP Team will review the plan and make modifications, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Determination That Behavior WAS NOT a Manifestation of Disability

If a student is removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) days for conduct determined not to be a manifestation of his disability or removed to an interim alternative educational setting for drugs, weapons, or infliction of serious bodily injury (regardless of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the disability), the student will receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services, and modifications that are designed to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

A functional behavioral assessment is a procedure to assess problem behavior prior to recommending strategies for dealing with the student's problem behavior.

The general purpose of a functional assessment of behavior is to provide the IEP Team with additional information, analysis, and strategies for dealing with undesirable behavior, especially when it is interfering with the student's education. The process involves identifying the undesirable behavior; observing the student and collecting data on the problem behavior and consequences; developing an intervention(s); and collecting data on the effectiveness of the intervention(s) in changing the behavior. A functional behavioral assessment is only performed when the IEP Committee determines it is needed.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

The IEP Team will consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, to address behavior in the case of a student with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of other students.

Expedited Due Process

When a parent or the Superintendent or designee for MSDS requests an appeal to review a manifestation determination, the Mississippi Department of Education will arrange for an expedited, impartial due process hearing, which shall occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the hearing is requested. The hearing officer will decide within ten (10) school days after the hearing. The student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of a change in placement resulting from the behavior, whichever occurs first, unless the parent

and the MSDB agree otherwise. This applies to removals of up to forty-five (45) school days for special circumstances, such as drugs, weapons, and infliction of serious bodily injury.

A parent's right to an expedited, impartial due process hearing is limited to disciplinary situations involving a change of placement, which would occur if a child were removed from the current placement for more than ten (10) school days at a time or if there were a series of removals from the student's current educational placement in school year. The MSDB has the right to request an expedited hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

A resolution meeting must occur within seven days of receiving notice of the due process complaint unless the parent and MSDB agree in writing to waive the resolution meeting or agree to use mediation. The due process hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the due process complaint.

The decisions rendered in expedited due process hearings are appealable in any state court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States.

Drugs And Alcohol (JCDAC)

Students are absolutely prohibited from carrying, possessing in any manner, using or selling alcoholic beverages, morphine, marijuana, cocaine, opium, heroin or their derivatives or compounds, drugs commonly called LSD, "pep" pills, tranquilizers, or any other narcotic drug, barbiturate, substance ingredient or compound which, when taken orally, intravenously, inhaled or in any other manner, may cause the person to be under the influence thereof or any other controlled substance regulated by law.

The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is under the supervision and direction of such physician. The district does not allow the use of medical cannabis while on district property. With regard to prescription medications, Policy Self-Administration of Medication of Asthma/Anaphylaxis Medications applies.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all students during all of the period of time that they are under and subject to the jurisdiction of this school district, while participating in or going to or from any school-related activity, while under the supervision and direction of any teacher, principal or other authority of this school district or when such conduct does or may threaten to interfere with or disrupt the educational process or pose a threat to the safety of the student or others.

Any student violating any of the provisions of this policy shall be subject to Manifestation Determination Review (MDR). In the event of violation of this policy, all reporting requirements of Policy JGCDA-P, Management of Narcan and Other Opioid Antagonists, shall be applicable.

This policy is for the discipline and protection of the students of this school district and their general welfare. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to avoid any prosecution under any pertinent criminal statute of the State of Mississippi.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE Sections 37-11-18; 41-29-101 et seq.; 97-32-27 thru 97-32-29

CROSS REF.: Policies JCAA – Due Process
JCBE – Unlawful or Violent Acts
JGCD – Student Health Services – Medicines
Last Review Date: January 18, 2024
Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Management Of Narcan and Other Opioid Antagonists (JGCDA-P)

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) School District to seek to provide assistance to any person who may be suffering from an opioid overdose on school property.

Opioid Antagonist – Any drug that binds to opioid receptors and block or inhibits the effects of opioids acting on those receptors and that is approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid-related overdose. This includes, but is not limited to, Narcan.

An education employee may store or distribute an opioid antagonist. An education employee may administer an opioid antagonist to another person if the education employee:

1. In good faith, believes the other person is experiencing a drug overdose; and
2. Acts with reasonable care in administering the opioid antagonist to the other person.

Narcan, or other opioid antagonists, will be available at all schools in the MSDB School District. School nurses and school resource officers will be trained on the administration of Narcan, or other available opioid antagonists. Unless otherwise proscribed by state law, school nurses may serve as trainers.

All opioid antagonists shall be stored safely in compliance with the drug manufacturer's instructions. Narcan, and other opioid antagonists, shall be readily accessible to administer in the event of suspected drug overdose. All staff shall be made aware of the Narcan and other opioid antagonist storage locations.

Parents/guardians and Emergency Medical Services (911) must be called upon whenever an opioid antagonist is administered and in all suspected overdose situations.

Any person acting in good faith and with reasonable care to another person whom he/she believes to be experiencing an opioid-related overdose may administer an opioid antagonist and shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability or professional licensing sanctions.

Nothing in this policy is intended to regulate, restrict or otherwise deter a law enforcement officer, emergency medical technician, firefighter, licensed medical professional or other authorized individual from administering his/her own supply of Narcan or other opioid antagonist when responding in good faith to a suspected drug overdose occurring on school property.

LEGAL REF: MS Code 41-29-319 & 41-29-321

Abstinence-Plus Sex Education (ICG)

The school board of every public school district shall adopt a policy to implement abstinence-only, abstinence-plus, or sexual risk avoidance education into its curriculum.

BELIEF

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind believes that every student has the right to accurate information concerning the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. The district is committed to fostering community partnerships that educate both students and parents about this important topic.

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind School District seeks to affirm its commitment to creating healthy and responsible teens in the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind by fully complying with the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, Section 37-13-171, and by:

- Adopting educational programs designed to help students and parents take action to reduce rates of teen births and sexually transmitted infections and integrating such programs into already established classes, and
- Establishing principles, guidelines, and strategies for implementing effective sex education programs, referred to in state law as “Abstinence-Plus” education programs.

The district shall utilize an age-appropriate, evidenced based, medically accurate, Abstinence-Plus curriculum from the list of curricula approved and recommended by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), including as one choice the curricula of Abstinence-Plus developed by the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Department of Health, if such curricula are on the MDE’s approved curriculum list.

ABSTINENCE-PLUS SEX EDUCATION

The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board adopts a Mississippi Department of Education approved “Abstinence-Plus Education Curriculum” and requires the implementation of such a program and curriculum in the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind effective at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

Furthermore, the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board:

1. Prohibits any teaching that abortion can be used to prevent the birth of a baby;
2. Requires boys and girls to be separated into different classes when sex-related education is discussed or taught;
3. Prohibits instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms; and
4. Requires the school nurse employed by the school district to carry out the functions of those strategies to promote consistency in the administration of the program if the district adopts the program developed by the Mississippi Department of Health.

DEFINITION

Abstinence-Plus education is a grade and age-appropriate school curriculum that includes every component of the following, plus any other programmatic or instructional components approved by the MDE:

- the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity, and the likely negative psychological and physical effects of not abstaining;
- the harmful consequences to the child, the child's parents and society that bearing children out of wedlock is likely to produce, including the health, educational, financial and other difficulties the child and his or her parents are likely to face, as well as the inappropriateness of the social and economic burden placed on others;
- that unwanted sexual advances are irresponsible and teaches how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances;
- that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and related health problems;
- the current state law related to sexual conduct, including forcible rape, statutory rape, paternity establishment, child support and homosexual activity; and
- that a mutually faithful, monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate setting for sexual intercourse.
- any other age and grade appropriate material such as contraceptives (excluding instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms), the nature, cause and effects of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, along with a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates.

PARENT'S RIGHTS

Each school providing instruction or any other presentation on human sexuality in the classroom, assembly or other official setting shall be required to provide no less than one (1) week's written notice thereof to the parents of children in such programs of instruction. The written notice must inform the parents of their right to request the inclusion of their child for such instruction or presentation. The notice must also inform the parents of the right, and the appropriate process, to review the curriculum and all materials to be used in the lesson or presentation. Upon the request of any parent, the school shall excuse the parent's child from such instruction or presentation, without detriment to the student.

PROCEDURES

The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall establish procedures to support this policy. The Superintendent will provide the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind Board with an annual report on the outcomes of the Abstinence-Plus education program. If funding is available, this report shall include quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of the program and shall include the perspective of students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on an on-going basis in accordance with the Board's policy review process. This policy shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, including but not limited to code sections 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175, as amended and with all other applicable federal and state laws.

LEGAL REF: MS Code 37-13-171, 37-13-173, 37-13-175

Last Review Date: January 18, 2024

Review History:[1/1/1900][1/1/1901]

Mississippi State Laws

The State Legislature has passed several laws to prevent school violence and motivate students to modify or extinguish delinquent behavior. A copy of the entire law may be found in the volumes of Mississippi Code Annotated of 1972, as amended. The following statutes are examples of some of the state laws that pertain to student conduct but are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all statutes applicable to student conduct on or off school property.

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-51

Notification of Department of Education of conviction of certificated person of certain felonies of sex offense

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-81

School Safety Center established by the Mississippi Department of Education

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-84

Confiscation of illegal firearms;

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-89

School discipline and classroom management courses; requirement;

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-93

School Crisis Manage Program; quick response teams; toll free telephone service for reporting school violence

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-323

Application and enforcement of general criminal laws of state.

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-14

General duties and powers of superintendent of school district

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-17

Employment recommendations; contracts; higher grade licenses; criminal record background checks

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-71

Suspension or expulsion of student

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-5

Fire drills instruction; emergency management; active shooter drills

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-18

Automatic expulsion for weapon or controlled substance possession

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-19

Suspension or expulsion of student damaging school property; liability of parent or custodian

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-20

Intimidation, threatening or coercion of students for purpose of interfering with attendance of classes

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-21

Abuse of superintendent, principal, teacher, or bus driver

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-29

Reporting of unlawful activity or violent act on educational property or during school related activity; authority of law enforcement officers; reporting of disposition of charges against student; liability of school personnel participating in reporting

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-35

Penalties for failure to file reports

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-37
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; definition
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-39
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; illegality
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-41
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; prohibitions
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-43
Public high school fraternity, sorority, or secret society; duties of boards of trustees
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-49
Wearing of approved eye protective devices required during participation in certain vocational, industrial arts, and chemical-physical laboratory courses of instruction
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-53
Distribution of school district's discipline plan; content of plan; appearance by parents, guardians, or custodians at discipline conferences; recovery from parents for damage or destruction of property
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-55
Code of Student Conduct
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-11-57
Immunity of school personnel from liability for carrying out action in enforcing rules regarding control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-91
Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-3
Storage of cumulative folders; access to records; disposition of records upon transfer of student between schools; destruction of records
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-6
Central reporting system for expulsions
Miss. Code Ann. § 37-15-9
Requirements for enrollment of children in public school
Miss. Code Ann. § 43-21-151
Requirement to Notify Youth Court of Expulsions
Miss. Code Ann. § 93-5-26
Rights of non-custodial parents
Miss. Code Ann. § 97-44-1 et seq.
Mississippi Street Gang Act
Miss. Code Ann. § 97-37-17
Weapons possession on educational property

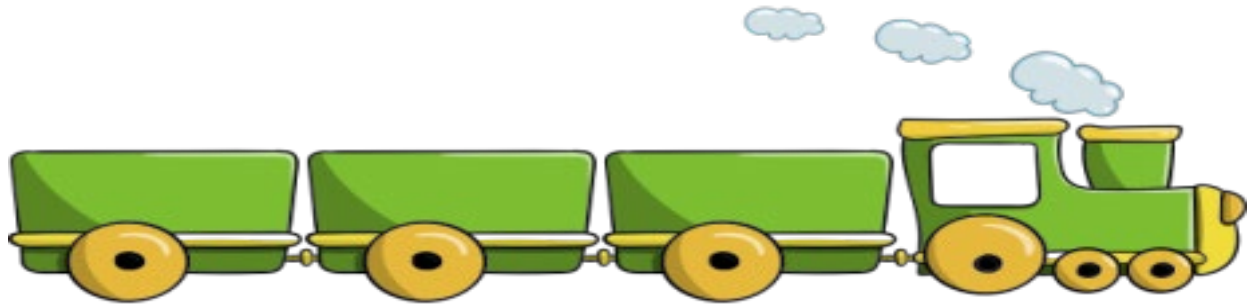
Cindi Eskew Matthews
Early Intervention Specialist
cindi.matthews@msdbk12.org
769-572-1062

Gloria Rogers-McDuffy
Early Intervention Specialist
gloria.mcduffy@msdbk12.org
769-572-2352

Dr. Glen Stribling
Optometrist
glen.stribling@msdbk12.org
601-984-8222

Dr. Ashley Sandifer
Pediatric Audiologist
ashley.sandifer@msdbk12.org
601.984.8133

APPENDIX A



Parent Handbook for the MSDB Pre-K3 & Pre-K4 Program

2025-2026

“Play is the work of a child,” Maria Montessori and Jean Piaget.

This Handbook and the Policies within:

This handbook is designed to provide detailed information about the school and its operational policies. MSDB reserves the right to make updates to the handbook as necessary and will inform families of any changes. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook, along with the Enrollment Agreement provided. In the Enrollment Agreement, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt of an agreement to the policies outlined here.

Mission and Values

The mission of MSDB's Pre-K Program is to provide a nurturing, accessible environment, where children grow, learn, and thrive together—regardless of socio-economic status or cultural background. The program supports each child's unique development through individualized instruction, specialized curriculum, low teacher-to-child ratios, and collaboration with therapy and support services.

MSDB's staff is deeply committed to:

- Character development
- Partnership with families and community
- Respect for each individual
- The celebration of our differences

The staff believe that early learning rooted in acceptance, access, and empathy builds a strong foundation for lifelong confidence and communication.

Philosophy

MSDB's Pre-K philosophy is grounded in the belief that all children, regardless of ability, thrive in an environment that honors individual differences and diverse learning styles. For children with sensory and developmental differences, this means providing rich, multisensory experiences that are tailored to each child's needs.

Pre-K staff promote early and consistent access to language and communication through American Sign Language (ASL), spoken and written English, Braille, tactile learning, and other accessible formats. Our classrooms are designed to support visual, auditory, and tactile engagement to ensure every child can explore, interact, and express themselves meaningfully.

MSDB's Pre-K staff believe that early exposure to communication, social interaction, independence, and learning opportunities helps children develop:

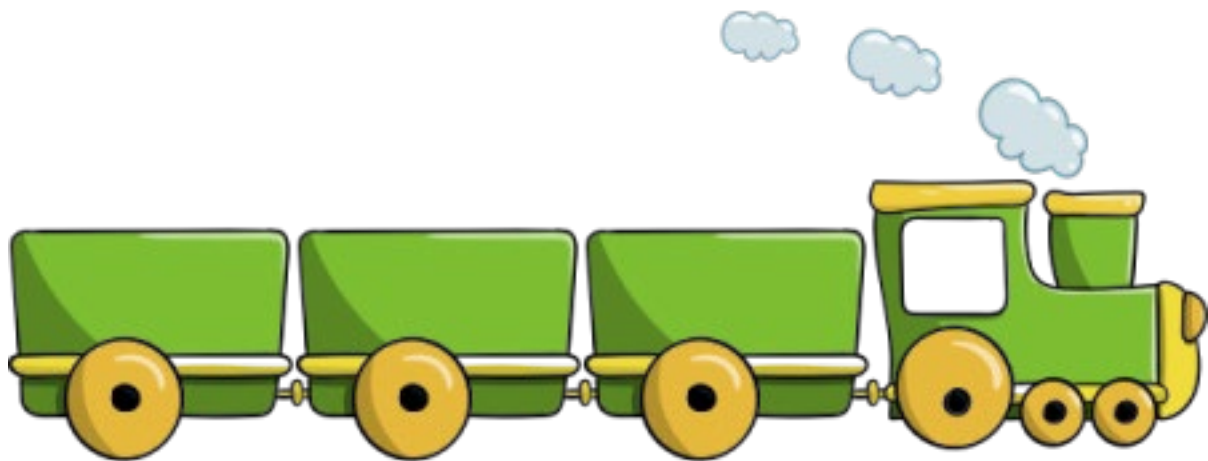
- Confidence and self-expression
- Empathy and understanding
- Self-help and problem-solving skills
- Respect for themselves and others
- The ability to communicate their needs in a way that works for them

Our approach is holistic and family centered. Our staff view families as essential partners in each child's journey and work together to build a bridge between home, school, and the wider world.

School Colors: Our school colors—green and gold—symbolize key aspects of our values:

- **Green** represents hope and growth, highlighting our dedication to nurturing your child's development socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.
- **Gold** symbolizes success and excellence, reflecting our confidence that your child will thrive in MSDB's Pre-K Program and carry a strong foundation of achievement with them as they leave our program and continue their educational journey.

The Staff: The quality of this program is a direct result of the quality of the staff. It is essential to attract staff who are experienced and knowledgeable in early childhood education. Each classroom is staffed with a minimum of one full-time teacher and one full-time assistant. Additional staff may float between rooms to provide extra support as needed. All staff undergo criminal background checks, and reference checks. The staff are also specially trained to work with children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or have low vision.



WELCOME ABOARD our new MSDB Pre-K Program train!

The Pre-K staff are excited to work with you and your child in fostering a nurturing and educational environment. To ensure a successful partnership between home and school, MSDB asks that parents adhere to the following policies and guidelines:

1. Campus Tour and Discovery Day

To ensure a smooth transition for your child into the Pre-K program, it is a requirement that all incoming children tour the campus with a parent before admission. This helps both the child and parent become familiar with the physical environment and provides an opportunity for the child to feel more comfortable.

Additionally, MSDB's Pre-K offers a **Discovery Day** where your child may visit the classroom for one hour prior to admission. During this time, your child can interact with peers, observe the classroom routine, and explore the social environment. It helps teachers and parents assess how the child fits into the group dynamics.

Discovery Day Details:

- **Duration:** 1 hour
- **Purpose:** To familiarize the child with the classroom environment and assess social fit.
- **When:** Discovery Days are scheduled on specific dates before admission. Parents will be contacted to confirm a suitable time.

Active participation in these experiences helps build a strong foundation for a positive school experience.

2. Application Process:

To complete your application, **you MUST provide all of the following documents:**

1. Completed Enrollment Application
2. Signed Enrollment Agreement
3. Your Child's Birth Certificate
4. Proof of Residence (Choose two of the following):
 - Utility Bill (e.g., Light, Water, Gas)
 - Phone Bill
 - Cable Bill
 - Lease Agreement
 - Mortgage Statement
5. Copy of IFSP/IEP
6. Doctor's documentation of the child's disability
7. Immunization record

3. Admissions Process

Children are eligible for admission at the age of three. Due to the limited number of spaces available and a commitment to maintaining a low teacher-to-student ratio, the admissions process is thorough and may take some time. The following steps must be completed before a child is officially admitted to the Pre-K program:

- **Tour of the Facility:** Parents and the child must schedule a campus tour to become familiar with the school environment, classrooms, and available resources.
- **Meeting with the Director/Principal or Specified Teacher:** During the tour, the parents and child will meet with the Director/Principal or a designated teacher to discuss the child's individual needs and how this school can best support their development.
- **Special Services Admissions:** Families must go through Special Services at the MSDB campus. The MSDB Admissions Committee will review the child's information, assessments, and supporting documents. Following this review, the committee will notify both the parents and the local school district of the preliminary decision.
- **Transition IEP Meeting:** If the Admissions Committee recommends the child for placement, a Change of Placement IEP meeting will be held by the local school district. MSDB staff will be invited to participate in the meeting to provide input. If the IEP Committee agrees with the recommendation and finalizes services and goals, the child may be formally enrolled.
- **Notification of Admission:** Once both the Admissions Committee and the IEP Committee have approved the placement, families and districts will receive official notification of admission. If space is not immediately available, the child may be placed on a waitlist and contacted when an opening arises.

4. Waiting List

Due to a commitment to a low teacher-to-student ratio, spaces may be limited. If the program reaches full capacity, families who wish to enroll will be placed on a **Waiting List**.

Waiting List Policy:

- **Placement:** Based on the order of applications received.
- **Notification:** Families will be notified when a spot becomes available.
- **Reapplication:** Families must reapply each year if they wish to be considered for future enrollment.

MSDB's Leadership encourages families to apply early to ensure the best chance of securing a spot.

5. Withdrawing

If you need to withdraw your child from MSDB's Pre-K Program, you must give notice in writing. The notice begins the day it is received in the school office. You must obtain all of your child's belongings the last day

he/she is in school.

6. Tuition and Fees

MSDB's Pre-K Program, just like all of the other programs this district offers, is tuition-free and fee-free to all.

7. The School Day

Your Child's First Day

Preparing for the first day of school can be exciting, but it can also be overwhelming and an anxious time - our staff understand and will work with you to make your child's first day the best it can be. Don't hesitate to share any concerns you have before that first drop-off. Each child is unique in their patterns and ease of adjustment to new situations.

Be sure to talk with the staff daily during the transition phase. A consistent daily schedule (arrival and departure routines) also helps children adjust to a new routine and environment.

8. Parent Responsibilities

Parents are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- **On Time:** Drop off your child between 7:45-8:00 AM. The cut-off time for arrival is 9:00 AM. Pick up is from 2:45 PM - 3:00 PM (Mon-Thurs) and 11:45-12:00 PM (Fridays). *MSDB's Pre-K does not have extended day care.*
- **Toiletry Items:** Provide necessary toiletry items (e.g., diapers, wipes, pull-ups) clearly labeled with your child's name. These items will stay at school and need to be replenished throughout the school year.
- **Extra Clothing:** Bring two changes of clothes, labeled with your child's name, in case of accidents or spills. Staff suggest a sweater or jacket for the school as well.
- **Napping Blanket:** Please provide a blanket for your child's naptime, labeled with your child's name. This should be taken home weekly for washing.
- **School Supplies:** Parents are expected to provide the list of school supplies on your child's School Supply List by the first day of class.

9. Parent Involvement

Active parental involvement is critical to your child's success. Parents are encouraged to participate in the following:

- **IEP Meetings:** Required to attend your child's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings held on Friday afternoons.
- **Annual Doctor Visits:** Required attendance for annual visits with Dr. Sandifer (Audiologist) or Dr. Stribling (Optometry) at the Mississippi Assistance Center (MAC) Clinic on campus.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Attend at least one conference per semester.
- **Classroom Activities:** Participate in special events and classroom activities.
- **Special Events & Parties:** Volunteer for classroom parties and school celebrations.
- **Observation Times:** You may be asked from time-to-time, to observe your child in an Observation Room. If this is needed, the Principal will schedule these individually.
 - **Reinforcement at Home:** Reinforce classroom learning, such as ASL for DHH children, navigation techniques for BLV children, potty training, and self-care skills like feeding.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Family participation is encouraged and welcomed. MSDB's Pre-K Program uses Parent-Teacher Conferences to offer family support and communication. Conferences are designed:

- To guide families and teachers with a way of sharing valuable information about their child.
- To individualize the planning process for each child in the context of their family, culture, and community.
- To explore ways to use a child's family's strengths to promote growth and development.
- To create an ongoing process for recording the growth and development of the child.

Teachers schedule two formal Parent-Teacher Conferences each school year, but encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher at any time if you have questions, concerns, or want an update on your child's progress. While conferences are not mandatory, they are encouraged, even for the youngest students, as they allow parents the opportunity to follow the progress that their child has made. During these conferences, you will be provided with a written report about your child's strengths and areas for growth.

Special Services and IEP Meetings

If your child requires any of the following Special Services: Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Auditory Training, Orientation and Mobility training, or other specific services, these sessions will be scheduled through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. The following individuals may request an IEP meeting to discuss and determine the necessary services for your child: the Parent/Guardian, the child's teacher, or another designated representative from the school district.

Home Language

It is important to MSDB's Pre-K Program that all families are given the opportunity to fully understand, interpret, and become involved in their child's education. MSDB's Pre-K Program will work with the family to provide information in the language they are most comfortable with, for any family that makes a request. This includes but is not limited to: ASL and Spanish.)

Observation Rooms

Each classroom within the MSDB Pre-K Program is equipped with an Observation Room featuring a one-way mirror, including the Napping Room. These rooms are available for parents to observe their child during specific situations, such as when receiving Special Services (Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy,

or Orientation and Mobility training), managing behavioral challenges, or learning new skills (so that you may practice these at home). Parents may schedule observation times directly with the teacher or Specialist, or the Principal may arrange a session with the parent when appropriate. Staff encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to observe your child's progress and development in these contexts.

Confidentiality

All information contained in your child's records, including your personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved in the care of your child or affiliated with MSDB, protective services, or other government agencies will not have access to your child's records without your written authorization or court order. All MSDB's Pre-K Program staff members and contracted therapists must sign a Statement of Assurance of Confidentiality upon employment and annually thereafter.

As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child's records; to do so, please email the Principal. If you withdraw your child from the program, MSDB's Pre-K will maintain your child's records for at least 5 years per regulation. Lastly, out of respect for other children and families, please do not post photos or videos that contain images of children other than your own on the internet.

10. Drop-Off and Pick-Up Times

- **Morning Drop-Off:** Between 7:45 AM and 8:00 AM.
- **Afternoon Pick-Up (Mon-Thurs):** 2:45 PM to 3:00 PM.
- **Friday Pick-Up:** 11:45 AM to 12:00 PM (half-day schedule).

To ensure each child's safety, it is of the utmost importance that everyone practices safety and courtesy while in the parking lot. Please watch out for others, drive slowly, and hold children's hands.

If you are entering the building, please DO NOT hold the door open for others. The person behind you may not be a parent.

Mornings can be busy times, and they often set the tone for the day. Help your child have a successful start to their day by doing the following when you and your child arrive at school:

- Sign your child in.
- Parents must accompany their child to and from the classroom each day.
- You must connect with the teacher upon your child's arrival. This a wonderful opportunity to share any important information they should know about your child's morning or changes to their schedule.
- Help your child wash their hands before playing.

Please plan to bring your child to school by 8:00 AM. Our staff want each student to gain the most they can from their experiences at MSDB's Pre-K Program. When children are consistently arriving late, they miss out on educational opportunities and fun activities that the teachers have carefully planned.

Separation Anxiety

The first few weeks of school are always a time of adjustment, and many students (and parents) feel a sense of separation anxiety which is perfectly normal. Here are a few strategies to help with the process. Remember, separation anxiety is a phase, it is perfectly natural , and it will pass.

- Make the goodbye prompt and cheerful. Giving your child “one more minute” prolongs the inevitable. As a parent, the best thing you can do is hug your child, say “I love you,” and reassure them that you will be back soon.
- Establish a goodbye routine. Children crave routine, and parents who establish a consistent goodbye routine have better luck with successful goodbyes. This could be a secret handshake or a special “I love you” ritual. This provides a special moment between them and the two of you that offers a sense of reassurance.
- Trust your child’s teacher. This may be difficult to do when you do not yet know them, but keep in mind that the teachers have chosen this profession because they love children, and they have a wealth of ideas and strategies to help settle an upset little one.
- Acknowledge how your child is feeling. It is important to accept and respect your child’s temporary unhappiness as it is genuine and normal. Say things like, “I know you feel sad when Mommy leaves, but you will have a good time, and I will be back soon.”

Also, be prepared for regression. Sometimes a change in schedule like a long weekend or an illness that keeps your child home for a few days can have you feeling like you are right back to square one. As frustrating and upsetting as this can be, it is perfectly normal. Stick to the above strategies, and you should notice a significant change in a couple of days.

Departure

It is important to sign your child out each day. It is critical that you check in with your child’s teachers before leaving. The school closes at 3:00 PM Monday-Thursday and at 12:00 PM on Fridays. **MSDB’s Pre-K does not have late pick-up or extended day**, as there is not staff to cover that. Failure to pick up your child or contact MSDB’s Preschool Program, and if you or another authorized emergency contact cannot be reached within 30 minutes after closing time, MSDB’s Preschool Program Director or designated staff member will contact the local authorities.

11. Dress Code for Pre-K

A full day at school includes fun activities like singing, painting, playing indoors and out, dancing, and eating, so it is recommended easy-fitting, washable clothes. Being comfortable lets kids focus on learning and having fun!

Make sure your child is wearing shoes for easy movement. Flip-flops, clogs, cowboy boots, and slick-bottomed shoes often cause children to fall when running outside and limit their play. Please be sure that your child's shoes are rubber-soled and closed-toed with a closed heel or heel strap. **Shoes are required for all students.**

Please provide two complete sets of extra clothes, including socks, for your child. It's always a good idea to keep an extra pair of shoes and a sweater or sweatshirt at school too. Clothing should be labeled with your child's first and last name and checked periodically to make sure it still fits.

Children must follow a uniform dress code to ensure safety and create a focused learning environment:

- **Tops:** Solid color polo or t-shirt (Green, Yellow/Gold, White).
- **Pants/Shorts/Skirts/Jumpers/Skorts:** Solid color bottoms (Tan/Khaki, Black, Navy Blue).
- **Shoes:** Rubber-soled and closed-toed. Must be worn at all times.
- **Socks:** Must be worn at all times.
- **Girls with Uniform Dresses/Skirts:** Must wear bloomers, tights, leggings, or shorts underneath.
- **Hair:** Long hair should be secured away from the face.

Please ensure the uniform is comfortable, weather-appropriate, and labeled with your child's name.

Back up clothing should also be dress code appropriate.

Sometimes learning and fun can get messy! MSDB's Pre-K Program is not responsible for lost, stained, soiled, or torn clothing.

12. Bathroom Needs and Toilet Training

Every classroom at MSDB's Pre-K Program has a changing table that is disinfected regularly.

Parents of children in diapers/pull ups and children who are toilet training must provide an ongoing supply of diapers/pull ups, wipes, and additional necessary clothing. If your child is wearing pull-ups, it is helpful to send in the type with Velcro sides. This allows us to help your child change without having to take off their pants and shoes. Cubbies and coat hooks should be checked daily for items that need to be laundered. The school does not permit cloth diapers.

Every classroom at MSDB's Pre-K Program has a bathroom located inside the classroom that is cleaned and disinfected regularly. Toilets and sinks in the classroom bathrooms are at the proper height for younger children.

Potty Time Parent Meeting

Prior to a child beginning toilet training, the parent needs to meet with the teacher to discuss methods and the approach the parent will be utilizing at home. This way, staff can aid and support you as your child begins this new phase in their life.

13. General Guidelines and Expectations

- **Communication:** Open communication between parents and staff is essential for success. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.
- **Behavior Expectations:** Encourage your child to demonstrate respectful behaviors, such as sharing and following instructions.
- **Health & Safety:** Keep your child home if they are sick. Notify the school of any illnesses or medical conditions and ensure current emergency contact information is on file.

14. Volunteer and Support Opportunities

Parents are encouraged to volunteer for school events, classroom tasks, and fundraising initiatives. Your involvement helps create a positive and supportive school community.

15. Absences and Attendance

For children to learn from this program, they need to be here on a regular basis. As participants in MSDB's Preschool Program, teachers must record attendance.

- **Absences:** Notify the school in advance if your child will be absent. A parent must call the front office by 9:00 AM if their child is to be absent.
- **Late Arrivals & Early Pick-Ups:** Obtain permission from the Director if you need to drop off late or pick up early.
- **Extended Absences:** Inform the teacher and school of any extended absences. If your child has been absent two days in a row for unknown reasons, a staff member may contact you and touch base with you to check in and ensure the child is well and when to expect their return.
- **Designated Pick Up:** Staff will ONLY release your child to a person who is designated by you (the parent) to pick up your child.

The safety of every student is a top priority. Please notify your child's teacher if someone other than you will be picking up your child. MSDB's Pre-K Program will only release your child out to the parents and guardians or other adults you authorized on the student's Enrollment Application. If you need to authorize a new pickup person, please send the request via written consent with your signature and date, as well as in an email to the Director/Principal. For your child's safety, any time a person staff do not recognize comes to pick up your child, the staff will ask for a government-issued photo ID.

16. Curriculum

For a Prer-K serving Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing and blind/low vision children, the curriculum will be both

academically rigorous and thoughtfully tailored to meet the unique needs of each population served. The academic program will be aligned with early childhood education standards to ensure that all children, regardless of sensory differences, have access to the same foundational skills their typically developing peers are expected to learn at ages 3 to 5. Our staff are committed to providing equal opportunities for learning in areas such as language and literacy, early math, science exploration, and social-emotional development.

17. Classroom Schedule

Each classroom follows a slightly different schedule that is customized for each for their students, especially if Special Services are required. Some children may have scheduled Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, Auditory Training, or Orientation and Mobility services which will impact their daily schedule; however, a basic daily schedule is listed below:

Monday - Thursday

- **7:45 AM - 8:05 AM:** Arrival / Breakfast / Free Play / Socialization Time
- **8:05 AM - 8:35 AM:** Circle Time (Calendar/Weather/Music/Move to Learn)
- **8:35 AM - 9:00 AM:** Extension Class (Library, PE, Computers)
- **9:00 AM - 10:20 AM:** Whole Group/Story Time/Language and Communication Development (ASL and pre-Braille skills) and pre-Literacy skills
- **10:20 AM - 10:40 AM:** Lunch
- **10:40 AM - 11:00 AM:** Whole Group/Circle Time
- **11:00 AM - 12:00 PM:** Intervention/Small Groups/Centers
- **12:00 PM - 12:30 PM:** Physical Activity
- **12:30 PM - 1:15 PM:** Quiet Time/Nap Time
- **1:15 PM - 2:35 PM:** Mini Lesson/Afternoon Snack
- **2:35 PM - 2:45 PM:** Daily Review
- **2:45 PM - 3:00 PM:** Pick-up Time

Friday

- **7:45 AM - 8:05 AM:** Arrival / Breakfast / Free Play / Socialization Time
- **8:05 AM - 8:45 AM:** Circle Time (Calendar/Weather/Music/Move to Learn)
- **8:45 AM - 9:20 AM:** Whole Group/Story Time
- **9:20 AM - 9:40 AM:** Outdoor/Physical Activities.
- **9:40 AM - 10:30 PM:** Whole Group/Story Time/Language and Communication Development (ASL and pre-Braille skills) and pre-Literacy skills

- **10:30 AM - 10:50 AM:** Lunch Break
- **10:50 AM - 11:10 AM:** Weekly Review
- **11:10 AM - 11:30 AM:** Intervention/Small Groups/Centers
- **11:45 AM - 12:00 PM:** Pick-up Time

*On days when *The Friday Program* joins us, the schedule will be: 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM combined Snack Break and Structured Learning centers with visitors and 10:15 AM - 10:30 AM Outdoor/Physical Activities.

Mondays -Thursdays 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM is for teachers to have time to prepare their classroom for the next day and make sure lessons are in order.

Fridays from 12:00 PM - 3:30 PM is for Teachers to have teacher planning period, Teacher Assistants to have a Break, holding IEP meetings, holding parent-teacher conferences, attending staff meetings, holding staffings on students (which may involve Special Services such as OT, PT, Speech, O&M professionals, and Counselors or Behavioral Specialists), and attending staff development classes that target their population.

18. The School Year

The School Calendar

You will be provided a calendar upon enrollment. Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind will be closed most federal holidays. Our school will follow MSDB's School Calendar for vacation, holidays, and staff development days.

Inclement Weather Days

In case of inclement weather, MSDB's Pre-K Program will close as determined by the District Superintendent.

Holiday Celebrations and Birthdays

Celebrations and birthdays are special days for children, and our staff want to share in the fun! If you'd like to provide a small treat for the celebration, the teacher will notify you of any allergic restrictions your child's class may have. Please do not send in any treats or candy, which may be a choking hazard to students. Healthy snack options such as whole-grain items, vegetables with dip, fresh fruit, fresh fruit popsicles, or yogurt are always a great choice. Please be sure to provide enough for everyone in your child's classroom and check in with your child's teacher before the special day so they can share any tips and plan accordingly.

19. Outside Play

Our students play outside every day that weather permits. When the weather keeps us inside, teachers find safe and fun ways to get active indoors. The playground equipment and materials are designed for active play and exploration, which keeps kids learning while getting exercise and fresh air. Teachers plan outdoor activities to address multiple areas of skill development, including climbing, balance and coordination, throwing, kicking,

running, jumping, and pedaling.

20. Assessment

High-quality early childhood programs prioritize comprehensive child assessment as a fundamental component of supporting young learners. Effective assessment practices provide essential insights into children's development, guiding educators in fostering growth and individualized learning.

MSDB's Pre-K Program systematically measures child outcomes and growth while continuously monitoring progress on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals throughout the school year. All staff members receive training on the assessment process and the effective use of assessment tools to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The information gathered through assessments serves multiple purposes, including:

- Identifying each child's interests and developmental needs
- Implementing intentional, targeted instruction
- Developing and refining IEP goals to address individual student needs
- Informing instructional and environmental planning to support all learners effectively
- Sharing progress with families by providing a clear picture of where children are along their developmental and educational continuum

21. Meals and Snacks

Children will be provided with meals:

- **Healthy Breakfast:** A nutritious breakfast for your child each day.
- **Healthy Lunch:** A nutritious lunch for your child each day.
- **Snack:** A healthy snack to keep them energized.
- **Water:** water throughout the day

Healthy, balanced meals are just what a growing body needs. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are important for children daily.

The center provides all meals and snacks for children in the program. Oftentimes, when children are around others, they will eat new foods they may not eat at home.

Staff ask that you not send candy or gum with your child as this can cause difficulties within the classroom.

Sippy Cups

Due to the potential risk, children will not be laid down to rest with a sippy cup, nor will the sippy cup be propped up. Children cannot walk around the classroom with a sippy cup. Our teachers will work with families to ensure students are offered fluids from an open cup as soon as their families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup.

22. Rest Time/Quiet Time

All children will participate in rest time/quiet time. Children are not required to sleep; however, they will have a very busy and stimulating morning, so most preschoolers will nap when given a relaxing and quiet space to do so. If a child does not fall asleep after a short rest, they are given quiet activities within the nap room. The school provides cots for nap time that are disinfected regularly by staff. Parents are required to send a blanket for their child. These items are to be washed and disinfected by the parents each weekend.

There is always a staff member within the nap room, observing by sight and sound. MSDB's Pre-K staff do not use mirrors, video, or sound monitors in place of sight and sound supervision.

23. Emergency Contact Information

Ensure the school has current emergency contact details, including alternate pick-up people and any necessary medical information (e.g., allergies, medications).

Custodial and Foster Care Families

Some families have legal custodial orders that designate who is authorized to pick up or visit a child. If there are any custody or protection orders pertaining to your child, it is imperative that a current, court-issued copy be submitted to the school administration. This documentation enables us to comply with legal requirements and uphold the safety and well-being of your child.

24. Toys and Personal Items

To prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost, please label ALL items from home with your child's name. Within each classroom, each child has a hood and/or cubby assigned to them. This will provide storage space for your child's personal belongings. Please check your child's cubby daily for items that need to be taken home.

Children should **not bring toys or personal items** from home unless specifically requested for a special activity. This helps reduce distractions.

Toy weapons (guns, water pistols, swords, shields, or other items that may resemble weapons) are not permitted at MSDB's Preschool Program. All personal electronics (except Augmentative Communication Devices)

brought to school must be stored in the “off” position in the Front Office. Use of personal electronics is not permitted in the classroom. MSDB’s staff cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal items.

25. Communication and Updates

To keep parents informed:

- **Weekly Updates:** Sent via email and your child’s Communication Folder.
- **Social Media:** Connect with us on Social Media!
- **Communication App:** Staff will utilize specific programs determined by the district (such as Parent Square) for quick communication schoolwide.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed.

26. Code of Conduct

MSDB’s Leadership and staff expect all members of the school community to follow these guidelines:

- **Respectful Behavior:** Parents and children are expected to communicate respectfully at all times. Any use of foul language or inappropriate behavior by parents may result in the request for the child to be withdrawn from the program.
- **Classroom Behavior:** Children should participate in activities and treat peers kindly.
- **School Property:** Children should care for classroom materials.

27. Participation in Activities

Children are expected to actively participate in classroom activities, including socialization time, group lessons, and nap time. Active participation is essential for their social, emotional, and educational development.

28. Behavior Expectations and Physical Aggression

The foundational goal at MSDB’s Pre-K Program is to help every students develop strong social and emotional skills. Instead of discipline, our staff uses guidance. Guidance is about building and encouraging setting for every person in the group. It means helping young children understand they can learn from their mistakes, and it starts with showing them how. Research indicates that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more early participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than students who exhibit social and emotional difficulties (Hyson 2004; Kostechnik et al 2015).

- **The environment:** Our staff provide children with exciting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive. Teachers develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity. Yet, the schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs.
- **Pre-K teachers:** Staff work to develop a strong rapport with each child speaking to them calmly, especially during redirections. Our staff help children put words to their emotions. Teachers use social stories to help teach all students healthy social skills. Pre-K staff strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.
- **Pre-K families:** MSDB's staff will communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school. Our staff partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help to give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

Guidance Procedures

When any student at MSDB's Pre-K Program presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall follow the standards of National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Observe the children to identify events, activities, interactions, and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behaviors.
- Teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggressions, in a manner that provides for the child's safety and the safety of others in the classroom. Every response will be calm, respectful, and give the child information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not.
- Staff will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a log. Documentation may include incident reports, ABC charts, or Behavior Plans.
- Teacher-Parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private. They shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- If necessary, intervention shall ensure each child has access to professional services, such as referrals to community resources and/or agencies offering early intervention services.
- All discipline decisions will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's understanding levels.

MSDB'S Pre-K PROGRAM DOES NOT CONDONE OR TOLERATE THE USE OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF ANY KIND ON THE MSDB PROPERTY. THIS POLICY RESTRICTS PARENTS AND STAFF FROM USING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT ON THEIR CHILDREN WHILE ON MSDB PROPERTY. ALSO, MSDB WILL NOT TOLERATE PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE, COERCION, THREATS, DEROGATORY REMARKS, WITHHOLDING, OR THREATENING TO WITHHOLD FOOD AS A FORM OF DISCIPLINE.

Despite these efforts, some children may continue to exhibit significant, challenging behaviors. The following steps will be completed if a child must be removed for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others.

- Make a referral to an early childhood mental health specialist or behavioral counselor that specializes in working with young children.
- Maintain documentation on file of the incident's outcomes, subsequent parent conferences, and the plan development that includes appropriate intervention strategies.
- Special considerations are enacted due to the procedural safeguards and due process rights ensured under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Parts C and B. MSDB's Preschool Program will follow all state and special education rules and regulations governing suspension/expulsion.

Biting

Biting is a normal part of child development. Young children bite for various reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth. Biting can also be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they're feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions, and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. If they can't find the words they need quickly enough or can't articulate how they're feeling, they may resort to biting.

Biting tends to occur most often between 12-24 months of age. Biting past the age of two and a half to three is less common. For repeated biting instances with preschoolers, staff may request a parent/teacher conference. The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss what may be causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid and therefore lead to biting. Additionally, staff would develop a joint plan of action following behavior guidance procedures listed in this handbook. If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident/Accident Report that keeps the identity of both children confidential.

29. Health and Hygiene Guidelines

You should know that safety comes first! At MSDB's Pre-K Program, the first priority is to keep children safe, which starts with paying attention to every detail - big and small. Every day at this center, you can be confident that your child is in the very best hands.

- **Handwashing:** Encourage your child to wash hands frequently.
- **Health Screening:** Keep your child home if sick, and notify the school of any illnesses.
- **Immunizations:** Ensure your child is up-to-date on vaccinations.

Illness Policy

Our staff realize that it is difficult for working parents to keep their children at home, but exclusion from school will help prevent contagion and promote the health and safety of your child. Children should be kept home from school if they are feverish, have diarrhea and/or vomiting, have nasal mucous discharge that isn't clear, or if they show signs of becoming sick (listlessness or drowsiness, productive cough, sore throat, ear pain, eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge). If your child cannot comfortably participate in the day's activities or your child needs to stay indoors and/or have additional rest, these signs are generally indicative that they child should not be at school.

MSDB's Pre-K Program has established guidelines in accordance with state child care law and other best practices concerning sick children. In case of communicable disease or condition, and at the discretion of MSDB's Principal, other parents will be notified to watch for symptoms in their children.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, every effort will be made to make them comfortable, away from the other children, but with a family caregiver. A parent will immediately be called to come and pick them up. MSDB's Pre-K Program is not able to provide arrangements to care for sick children. Parents are required to respond as soon as possible concerning the sick child when contacted by the Director or designated staff member. If a staff member cannot reach the parent within thirty minutes, the staff will reach out to the family's emergency contacts as stated on the enrollment/admission form. If the illness warrants, the child's pediatrician will be contacted for consultation.

Children may attend with minor illnesses if it is not contagious, and it does not affect the child's ability to participate in the day's routine. Minor illnesses include:

- Mild respiratory infections
- Acute infections subsiding after treatment, such as pink eye, impetigo, or ear infections
- Cold symptoms without a fever

If the child's health deteriorates at some point in the day, the parent will be contacted to come to pick them up.

Doctor's notes are requested any time your child visits a doctor for an illness. **Illness**

Exclusion Criteria

| Disease/Condition | If your child has been diagnosed with this disease, our program will: | When to tell your child to return to school: |
|---|---|---|
| Chickenpox (or rash suggestive of chickenpox) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare ● Notify all parents regarding possible exposure and include a warning about aspirin use. ● Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take ● Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider ● Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Approximately 5-7 days after the rash begins or when ALL blisters have scabbed over |
| Covid (or symptoms of Covid) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare ● Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take ● Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Guidance from the state is updated frequently. Nursing staff will refer to the Health Department/MSDB Guidelines. |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Diarrheal illness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child that has two or more diarrhea episodes in one day • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication. |
| Fifth Disease | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Fever | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child from childcare if the child has a fever of 100.4 or greater • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication |
| Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude a child that has an open, draining lesion on hand or has lesions in the mouth and is drooling • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When lesions heal and/or drooling ceases, and the child can participate in center activities (including meals) |
| Hepatitis A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take | At least one week after onset of illness or jaundice. Permission to return should be sought from the local health authorities first. |
| Impetigo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing | After treatment has been started |
| Impetigo (cont'd) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | |

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| Influenza | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Lice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare | 24 hours after treatment and no signs of nits or lice. Parents must present the empty box from the treatment. |
| Pink Eye | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | 24 hours after the first dose of medication and symptoms are mild |
| Pneumonia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Ringworm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | If unable to cover the lesion(s), after treatment begins and the lesion starts to shrink |
| RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare if they present with fever or difficulty breathing • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication and the energy to participate in center activities |

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| Scabies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • All clothing and blankets will be sent home to be laundered in hot water and dried in a hot dryer | Until treatment is complete |
| Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | 24 hours after antibiotics are started when the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and has the energy to participate in center activities |
| Tuberculosis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | Exclude until a healthcare professional provides a written statement the child is not infectious |
| Vomiting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | When the child is vomit-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication |
| Whooping Cough/Pertussis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily exclude the sick child from childcare • Notify all parents regarding possible exposure • Contact MSDB Nursing staff for other preventative measures to take • Unimmunized children must be excluded until they are permitted to return by their health care provider • Carefully follow hand washing and cleaning procedures | <p>Exclude until five days after the treatment has started</p> <p>Exclude untreated cases for 21 days from the date coughing began</p> |

*This chart is not an exhaustive list of the communicable diseases and policies for exclusion from childcare. For more information, please contact the Supervising Nurse for MSDB or the District Website for the Student Handbook.

Chronic Health Conditions

For any child with health care needs such as allergies, asthma, or other chronic conditions (seizures, etc..) that require specialized health services, a medical action plan shall be completed. The medical action plan must be updated annually and when changes to the plan are made by the child's parent or health care professional. Blank medical action plans may be found in the Front Office. The medical action plan shall be signed by both the parent and the child's health care professional and must include the following information:

- A list of the child's diagnosis or diagnoses, including dietary, environmental, and applicable activity considerations
- Contact information for the child's health care professional(s)
- Medications to be administered on a scheduled basis
- Medications to be administered on an emergency basis with symptoms and instructions **Medications**

Our staff do not administer medications at Pre-Kindergarten. Our staff recommend that you administer medications at home. To help with the medication scheduling, you may consider asking your health care provider for prescriptions with 12-hour dosages.

Emergency Medication

If your child requires the use of emergency medications (i.e., inhalers, Epi-pen, etc.), you will need to complete the corresponding medical action plan. Blank medical action plans may be found in the Front Office, and these plans **MUST** have a doctor or healthcare provider signature. Emergency medicines will be kept unlocked and easily accessible to adults but out of children's reach (at least 5 feet off the ground). This is to ensure easy access in the case of an emergency. All staff members have trained on emergency medication administration annually. Our teachers and staff work with a district nurse to ensure staff is appropriately trained for your child's specific medical needs.

Over the Counter Medication

MSDB's Pre-K Program staff will not administer over-the-counter medications to children, except when a health professional prescribes the over-the-counter medicines. This situation is most common for chronic health conditions (ex: Benadryl for students with allergy action plans or fever-reducing medication for students with febrile seizure action plans). MSDB's Pre-K

Program will not administer over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, antibiotic cream, or medication for upset stomach in the case of acute illness or pain. Children that have these symptoms may need to remain at home until they are symptom-free.

Topical Creams and Sunscreen

Parents and guardians may give MSDB's Pre-K Program standing authorization for the school year to apply over-the-counter topical ointments, diapering cream, or sunscreen to their child when needed.

Medical Report and Immunization Record

A record of immunizations and a children's medical report must be completed and on file at school prior to the child beginning the program. Records should also include results of any screenings, prescribed medications, descriptions of any allergies, and current or chronic health conditions. If an immunization and medical report are not on file, the start date may be delayed.

As the child receives new immunizations, the date and type of shot or immunization should be reported to Administration to be added to the child's record. A schedule of immunizations can be acquired through the Center Front Office. See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/> for more information.

30. Safety

Supervision

MSDB's Preschool Program staff assume responsibility for enrolled children when they enter the classroom or are escorted by a staff member onto the MSDB property. Teaching staff always supervise children by sight and sound. This means, a staff member must be present at all times with a child.

All classrooms monitor attendance by updating their attendance records throughout the day and counting and matching the numbers of children present with the names on attendance records. "Name to face" headcounts occur through the day, particularly when moving about the center at every threshold.

Injuries/Accidents

Your child's safety is of the utmost concern, but also recognize that minor bumps and scrapes are an everyday part of your child exploring and learning through experience. Known minor injuries sustained at school are reported to parents on an Incident Report Form, of which you will receive a copy. If your child is injured during school hours, the first step is to administer first aid. A first aid kit is available in the Front Office, and each class has a small first aid kit with them. The most common treatment is ice on bumps, soap and water cleansing, and a bandage on a minor wound. All staff members are trained in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR within the first 90 days of employment, and they must maintain their current certification every two years. If an accident is more than minor, a parent will be called to discuss the need for possible medical treatment. If the accident is more serious, a parent will be contacted and requested to come immediately. In the event of a life-threatening illness or injury, an ambulance will be called. To ensure your child's safety, your Enrollment Agreement provides a record of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people you have authorized to pick up your child. Pre-K Leadership asks you to keep this information current and supply names and phone numbers for your child's doctor and preferred hospital.

Mandated Reporting Requirements

It's the mission to ensure all children in this center are safe and well cared for, not only while they are in school, but at all times. Mississippi Law requires everyone who works directly with children to report suspicions or evidence of child neglect or abuse to local law enforcement. Those who fail to report can be held accountable under the law. The law prohibits interference with an individual's attempt to report child abuse or neglect. The school will offer full cooperation during the investigation of any reported incident.

- Should a staff member have reason to suspect abuse, they will contact the Director and follow up with an immediate phone call to the proper authorities.
- MSDB's Pre-K Program will not hire a person who has been convicted of abuse of any type, and all staff undergo a fingerprint and criminal background check before employment begins.
- All staff members are responsible for protecting all children from abuse from any child or staff member.
- All staff members are required to report any suspected cases of abuse, whether it is suspected at MSDB's Pre-K Program or away from the center.
- All MSDB's Pre-K Program staff members receive training in recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, including abuse and neglect.
- MSDB's Pre-K Program strictly prohibits the mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of any child in the program by any staff member. Any employee found in violation of the abuse and neglect policies shall be immediately terminated. If the charges are not upheld, MSDB's HR Director will determine eligibility for reinstatement.

31. Smoke-Free and Weapon-Free Environment

MSDB's Pre-K, playground, and district campus are smoke-free and tobacco-free environments. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, including e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, shall not be permitted on the premises, including after hours. Additionally, firearms and ammunition are prohibited in all licensed childcare centers, including MSDB's Pre-K, unless carried by a law enforcement officer.

32. Transportation

MSDB's Pre-K Program does not provide transportation for children to and from school, nor for any off-campus activities. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their children. In the event of an emergency, if parents cannot be reached or are unable to come to campus, and students are required to leave the premises immediately as directed by officials, transportation may be provided. However, this will only occur after parents have been notified.

33. Safety Procedures and Protocols

MSDB's Pre-K is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children, staff, and visitors. Staff will adhere to and follow all safety procedures and protocols set forth by the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind school district. These guidelines are designed to ensure the well-being of everyone on the premises and include measures for emergency response, health and safety regulations, and risk management. MSDB staff continuously monitor and update practices to align with district standards and regulatory requirements, ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all children in daily care. These procedures and policies are available online for your reference, or a hard copy may be found in each classroom for easy access.

34. Grievance Procedures

Disagreements may occur, even with the best of intentions. Experience has taught us that open communication is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. The adults must demonstrate the cooperative, compassionate communication wanted for children to imitate. If you have a concern, please discuss it with your child's teacher or the staff involved. If the concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a meeting can be arranged between the persons involved and a member of the administration. At that time, a course of action can be determined.

35. Commitment to diversity

Tolerance and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to various ages, genders, family structures, races, cultures, religions, and physical abilities. Therefore, our staff emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

Acknowledgement of Policies

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Parent Policies for the Preschool Program for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Blind/Low Vision Children. I agree to abide by these policies and support my child's learning and development in the classroom.

Parent Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Final Note:

Thank you for partnering with us! By following these policies and maintaining open communication, staff and families working together can create a positive, supportive learning environment for your child and all students in the program.