

Elementary Student Handbook

PreK – Grade 5

Midlothian I. S. D.

T. E. Baxter Elementary

J. R. Irvin Elementary

Longbranch Elementary

LaRue Miller Elementary

Mt. Peak Elementary

J. A. Vitovsky Elementary

2009 – 2010

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PREFACE

To Students and Parents:

Welcome to the Midlothian Elementary Schools! For this year to be successful for your child, we must all work together: students, parents, teachers, and other school staff members.

The Midlothian I. S. D. Elementary Student Handbook is designed to provide a resource for some of the basic information that you and your child will need during the school year. In an effort to make it easier to use, the handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I—REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS—with notices that the District must provide to all parents, as well as other information to assist you in responding to school-related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook; and

Section II—INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS – organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

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

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Midlothian I. S. D. ***Student Code of Conduct***, which is a document adopted by the Board and intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere for learning. That document may be found posted to the District website at www.midlothian-isd.net, or available in the principal’s office of each campus.

The Student Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy and the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters and other communications, including the District website at www.midlothian-isd.net.

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

We strongly recommend that parents review the entire handbook with their children and keep it as a reference during this school year. If you have questions about any of the material in this handbook, please contact a teacher, the counselor, or the principal. Please complete and return the required parental acknowledgment and consent forms (separate from this handbook) so that we have a record of your choices. [See **Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights** and **Directory Information** for more information.]

Please note that references to alphabetical policy codes are included so that parents can refer to current policy. A copy of the District’s policy manual is available for review at the school or online at www.midlothian-isd.net.

Homework Online: Parents may access “homework online” to check assignments for their child by logging onto www.midlothian-isd.net. Teachers will post homework weekly; however, parents are encouraged to check homework assignments daily in order to determine any assignment changes that have been made by the teacher.

Student grades online: Parents may access their student’s grades online by logging onto www.midlothian-isd.net and clicking on the Power School button. Grades will be posted on a

weekly basis. Should parents experience difficulty accessing grades, please contact the campus office.

We believe effective communication between school and home is extremely important to your child's success in school. Shared cooperation and expectations between home and school will ensure each student reaches maximum potential during the school year.

Nondiscrimination

In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, Midlothian I. S. D. does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

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

Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex: Jennifer McFalls, Assistant Athletic Director at 972-775-8296.

Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability: Lisa Knight, Director of Special & Federal Programs at 972-775-8296.

All other concerns **regarding discrimination**: Dr. J.D. Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools for MISD at 972-775-8296.

Services for the Homeless and for Title I Participants

Other designated staff you may need to contact include:

Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, who coordinates services for homeless students: Lisa Knight, Director of Special & Federal Programs at 972-775-8296.

Parent Involvement Coordinator, who works with parents of students participating in Title I programs: Lisa Knight, Director of Special & Federal Programs at 972-775-8296.

Students with Disabilities

Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. For more information, contact Melissa Wolfe, Executive Director of Specialized Learning – 972-775-8236 or 972-775-8296.

SECTION I

REQUIRED NOTICES AND INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

This section of the Midlothian I. S. D. Elementary Student Handbook includes several notices that the District is required to provide to you, as well as other information on topics of particular interest to you as a parent.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Working Together

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

- Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides. Ensure that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects. Be sure your child comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
- Becoming familiar with all of your child's school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child. If your child is entering ninth grade, review the requirements of the graduation programs with your child. Monitoring your child's academic progress and contacting teachers as needed.
- Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. A teacher will usually return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school.
- Becoming a school volunteer. For further information, see policy GKG and contact your child's campus. Your interest and involvement is always appreciated.
- Participating in campus parent organizations. Information about this program will be sent home soon.
- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the district-level or campus-level planning committees, assisting in the development of educational goals and plans to improve student achievement. For further information, see policies at BQA and BQB, and contact Robin Bullock, Deputy Superintendent 972-775-8296.
- Offering to serve as a parent representative on the School Health Advisory Council, assisting the District in ensuring local community values are reflected in health education instruction. [See policies BDF and EHAA and School Health Advisory Council.]

- Attending Board meetings to learn more about District operations. [See policies BE and BED for more information.]

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:

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

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

“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

As a parent, you have a right to receive notice and opt your child out of participating in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling that information.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law. See policies EF and FFAA.

As a parent, you also have a right:

- To provide consent before the District can display your child’s artwork, special projects, photographs taken by your child, and the like on the District’s website, in printed material, by video, or by any other method of mass communication.

- To request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.
- To review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine tests that have been administered to your child.
- To inspect a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to your child.
- To review your child’s student records. These records include:
 - attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admission, health and immunization information, other medical records, teacher and counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral patterns, and state assessment instruments that have been administered to your child.
- To grant or deny any written request from the District to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a video or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances:
 - when it is to be used for school safety;
 - when it relates to classroom instruction or a co-curricular or extracurricular activity; or
 - when it relates to media coverage of the school.
- To remove your child temporarily from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level and graduation requirements as determined by the school and by the Texas Education Agency.
- To request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required moment of silence or silent activity that follows. [See Pledges of Allegiance and a Minute of Silence and policy EC.]
- To request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3-12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement

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

- To request in writing, if you are a non-custodial parent, that you be provided, for the remainder of the school year, a copy of any written notice usually provided to a parent related to your child's misconduct that may involve placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) or expulsion. See policies FL(LEGAL) and (LOCAL), FO(LEGAL) and the *Student Code of Conduct*.
- To request the transfer of your child to another classroom or campus if your child has been determined by the Board or its designee to have been a victim of bullying as the term is defined by Education Code 25.0341. Transportation is not provided for a transfer to another campus. Contact Robin Bullock, Deputy Superintendent at 972-775-8296 for information. See policies FDA and FDB(LEGAL).
- To request the transfer of your child to attend a safe public school in the District if your child attends school at a campus identified by TEA as persistently dangerous or if your child has been a victim of a violent criminal offense while at school or on school grounds. [See the District's (LOCAL) policy on School Safety Transfers.]
- To request the transfer of your child to another campus or a neighboring district (High School level only for neighboring district) if your child has been the victim of a sexual assault by another student assigned to the same campus, whether that assault occurred on or off campus, and that student has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for that assault. [See the District's (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) policies on School Safety Transfers.
- To request in writing, if your children are multiple birth siblings (e.g., twins, triplets, etc.) assigned to the same grade and campus, that they be placed in either the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Your written request must be submitted no later than the 14th day after enrollment of your children. [See FDB(LEGAL).]

Accommodations for Children of Military Families

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

Immunization requirements.

Grade level, course, or educational program placement.

Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

Graduation requirements.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent related to leave or deployment activities may be excused by the district.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Communication is an essential part of the educational process. It is critical for parents to keep close contact with their child's teacher concerning progress in all areas. Conferences and conversations are regularly encouraged.

Report cards with each student's grades or performance, conduct grades, and absences/tardies in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 6 weeks.

At the end of the first three weeks of a grading period, parents will be given a written unsatisfactory progress report if their child's performance in any course (in English/language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies) is below 75, or is below the expected level of performance. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parent may be requested to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject.

Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the central administration pursuant to the board-adopted policy and are designed to reflect each student's relative mastery of each assignment for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District's grading policy. [See policy EIA(LOCAL).]

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

Report cards and unsatisfactory progress reports must be signed by the parent and should be returned to the school within 2 days.

Midlothian ISD Elementary Grading Procedures/Guidelines

Midlothian ISD shall establish scope and sequences of instructional objectives that relate to the TEKS and for the grade level subjects or courses. These objectives shall address the skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses. EIA (Local)

Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities shall be designed so the student's performance indicates the level of mastery of the designated District objectives. The student's mastery level shall be a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course. EIA (Local)

Regular attendance is an academically related factor that can affect the determination of a student's grade. Students shall be permitted to make-up assignments and tests after an absence. EIAB (Local)

Students shall receive credit for satisfactory make-up work after an absence. For every day that a student is absent (excused/unexcused), the student has one day to make-up the work. (Example: If a student is absent for 2 days; then the student may have 2 days to make-up the work.)

The District shall not impose a grade penalty for make-up work after an absence because of suspension. The grade for make-up work after an unexcused absence shall be reduced by 20 percent. EIAB (Local)

In addition to following the above Board Policies for grading, the elementary staff will use the following guidelines for further determining grades:

Re-teach / Grades

1. Students who do not make a satisfactory grade of 70 or above on assignments will be re-taught the skill(s) and may be given the opportunity to re-do the assignment being evaluated.
1. Upon the successful completion of a redone assignment resulting from re-teach/re-test, the two grades will be averaged with a resulting grade no higher than 70.
2. Tests/assessments will count as one grade when averaging grades.

Report Card Grades

1. Teachers will be required to have at least 6 grades in each subject area for each six weeks period.
2. Modified Instruction will be noted by the subject grade as determined by an ARD committee.
3. Accommodations will be noted by the subject grade as appropriate.

4. The Language Arts grade in grades 2 – 5 are weighted accordingly:
40% = Language
40% = Writing
20% = Spelling

Elementary Grading Scale

PK: **S = Successful**
 N = Needs Improvement
 U = Unsatisfactory

Kindergarten: **S = Successful**
 P = Progress
 N = Needs Improvement

The above scales are used to indicate progress on district/state curriculum.
Progress is also noted on personal behavior points and work habits.

First Grade: **S = Satisfactory**
 N = Needs Improvement
 U = Unsatisfactory
 A = Instruction with Accommodations

The above scale is used to indicate progress on district/state curriculum.
Study skills and social skills are also noted if improvement needed or if satisfactory.

Second Grade through 5th Grade - Academics

A = 90 - 100
B = 80 – 89
C = 75 – 79
D = 70 – 74
F = 0 – 69

Numerical grades are reported using the above scale.
E, S, N, and U are used for conduct grades.

Notices of Concern

Notices of concern will be sent at least every three weeks to parents of all students averaging below 75% in any subject. Copies of these notices shall be filed with the Principal for documentation.

Conduct Grades

In Midlothian ISD, student conduct is taken seriously. It is important that students learn to conduct themselves properly in all settings (both formally and informally). Conduct grades shall

be a true reflection of the student's behavior. The following stipulations are in effect for any student in order for the student to receive a grade below an "S" in conduct:

- There must be prior contact with the parent during the six weeks for which the grade is given. This contact will occur as early as the teacher believes the student has reached the point where his/her conduct grade is a low "S". This contact can be in the form of a written note or documented telephone call.
- If a student is in danger of receiving a grade below "N" in conduct, the teacher must set up a conference with the parent.

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

**** The final decision for promotion, placement, or retention will be made by the campus administrator, attendance committee, or the grade placement committee as appropriate.**

HOMEWORK

The District believes homework should be an extension of classroom learning experiences. Specific guidelines regarding homework are established on each elementary campus.

STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENT TESTS

Students at certain grade levels will take state assessment tests (such as TAKS: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the following subjects, as well as routine testing and other measures of achievement:

- Mathematics, annually in grades 3–11
- Reading, annually in grades 3–9
- Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grades 4 and 7
- English language arts in grade 10 and 11
- Social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11
- Science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11
- Any other subject and grade required by federal law.

[See policy EKB(LEGAL).]

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

All decisions either to promote or retain a student shall be based upon what is determined to be in the best interest of the child. A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district. To earn credit in a course, a student must receive a grade of at least 70 based on course-level or grade-level standards. Students in grades PK – 1 must demonstrate satisfactory progress

in order to be promoted. In addition, students at certain grade levels will be required to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) as a further requirement for promotion:

- In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must perform satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 5 assessment test in English or Spanish.
- In order to be promoted to grade 9, students enrolled in grade 8 must perform satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 8 assessment test in English.
- In addition, students in grades 5 and 8 must meet promotion standards established by the State and District in order to be promoted.

Parents of students in grades 3 – 8 who do not perform satisfactorily on his or her exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year.

A student in grade 5 or 8 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If the student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the District, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year. [See policies at EIE.]

**** The final decision for promotion, placement, or retention will be made by the campus administrator, attendance committee, or the grade placement committee as appropriate.**

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

STUDENT RECORDS

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

The law specifies that certain general information about Midlothian I. S. D. students is considered “directory information” and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. That information includes:

- A student's name, address, telephone number, and date and place of birth.
- The student's photograph, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams.

- The student’s dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status, honors and awards received in school, and most recent school previously attended.
- The student’s e-mail address.

Release of any or all directory information regarding an enrolled student may be prevented by the parent or an eligible student. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days of the child’s first day of instruction for this school year. [See the acknowledgement form inserted in the elementary folder of materials to sign and return to the school.]

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

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. Federal law requires that, as soon as the student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- District staff members who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, administrators, and principals), school staff members (such as teachers, counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff), a person or company with whom the District has contracted to provide a particular service (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on a school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official or staff in the performance of his or her duties.
- Various governmental agencies.
- Individuals granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

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

The District is required by federal law to comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings, unless parents have advised the District not to release their child’s information without prior written consent.

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

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances effectively prevent inspection during these hours, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records, or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

A parent (or eligible student) may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are considered inaccurate or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request to correct a student's record should be submitted to the principal. The request must clearly identify the part of the record that should be corrected and include an explanation of how the information in the record is inaccurate. If the District denies the request to amend the records, the parent or eligible student has the right to request a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the parent or eligible student has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, contesting a student's grade in a course is handled through the general complaint process found in policy FNG(LOCAL).

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

The District's policy regarding student records found at FL(LOCAL) is available from the principal's office or superintendent's office or on the District's website at: www.midlothianisd.net.

The parent's or eligible student's right of access to and copies of student records do not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records – such as a teacher's personal notes about a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher – do not have to be made available to the parents or student

Please note:

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

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

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

See the *Directory Information Notice Form (FERPA)* sent home separately.

STUDENT OR PARENT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply—by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a standard complaint policy at FNG(LOCAL) in the District's policy

manual. A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal's office or on the District's website at: www.midlothian-isd.net.

In general, the student or parent should discuss the complaint with the campus principal following a discussion with the classroom teacher. If unresolved, a written complaint and a request for a conference should be sent to the Deputy Superintendent. If still unresolved, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

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

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the campus sign-out procedures. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

A student who will need to leave school during the day must bring a note from his or her parent that morning. A student who becomes ill during the school day should, with the teacher's permission, report to the school nurse. The nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent according to District health guidelines.

Early release from school may affect perfect attendance.

LATE ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

Tardiness interrupts your child's instructional time. Class begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. each school day. It is imperative students are in the classroom and prepared for class to begin prior to the 7:45 a.m. tardy bell. Students arriving at school after 7:45 a.m. and/or who are not present in their classrooms when the tardy bell rings at 7:45 a.m. are considered tardy and must report to the office for a tardy slip. Students arriving after 10:00 a.m. without a note from a health care professional will be counted absent for that day.

The MISD Elementary Schools have adopted the following tardy guidelines:

- Students should report to the office for a tardy slip upon arrival after 7:45 a.m.
- Upon the 5th tardy, a parent or guardian is notified.
- During any six-week period, a student will not be eligible for perfect attendance recognition upon receiving 5 tardy slips during that six weeks time period.
- If tardies are excessive over the course of the year, a student will not be eligible for perfect attendance recognition at the end of the year.
- Beginning with the 6th tardy slip, a student will be assigned one detention for every tardy. Parents will be notified.
- Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action.
- At the beginning of the second semester, the tardy records will revert to zero tardies.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

A student under 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from the parent at least 24 hours in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. A withdrawal form may be obtained by the parent from the principal's office.

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

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

SECTION II

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The school counselor provides students and parents information regarding academic programs to prepare for higher education and career choices. [For more information, see Counseling in this handbook and policies at EIF.]

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws, one dealing with **compulsory attendance**, the other with **attendance for course credit**, are of special interest to students and parents. Each is discussed in the following sections:

Compulsory Attendance

State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school and District-required tutorial sessions unless the student is otherwise excused or legally exempted.

A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day. However, if a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the District may revoke the student's enrollment. The student's presence on school property is then unauthorized and may be considered trespassing.

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

A student in grades 3 – 8 will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and applicable subject area.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences. These include the following activities and events:

Religious holy days;

Required court appearances;

Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship

Service as an election clerk; and

Documented health-care appointments, including absences for recognized services for students with autism spectrum disorders.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance

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

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

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

Prearranged Absences Requirements

Prearranged absences require prior arrangement and shall be subject to the following requirements [for further information see policy FEA(LOCAL)]:

The parent shall be required to notify the principal in writing at least one week in advance. A maximum of five consecutive school days or **ONE trip per school year** shall be allowed. Prearranged absences are subject to the 90 percent attendance requirement in order for credit to be earned in each subject or class missed [see FEA/FEC(LOCAL)]. Make-up work resulting from the absences shall be required to be turned in to the teacher within the same number of days that the student is absent from school. Permission shall not be granted for absences during six-week testing, semester exam testing, or state-mandated testing periods.

Attendance for Credit

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

Parent’s Note After an Absence

When a student must be absent from school, the student—upon returning to school—must bring a note, signed by the parent that lists the full name of the student, describes the reason for the absence, the date of the absence and contact information for the parent. A note signed by the student, even with the parent’s permission, will not be accepted unless the student is 18 or older.

Doctor's Note After an Absence for Illness

Upon return to school, a student absent for more than four consecutive days because of a personal illness must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. [See FEC(LOCAL).]

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

- All absences will be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.
- A transfer or migrant student incurs absences only after his or her enrollment in the District. For a student transferring into the District after school begins, including a migrant student, only those absences after enrollment will be considered.
- In reaching consensus about a student's absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that its decision is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student's absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student's parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
- The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

The student or parent may appeal the committee's decision to the District's Board of Trustees by filing a written request with the Superintendent in accordance with policy FNG(LOCAL).

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

MAKEUP WORK

Routine and In-Depth Makeup Work Assignments Because of Absence

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

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

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher. [For further information, see policy EIAB(LOCAL).]

A student who does not make up assigned work within the time allotted by the teacher will receive a grade of zero for the assignment.

Teachers may assign a late penalty to any long-term project in accordance with time lines approved by the principal and previously communicated to students.

DAEP Makeup Work

A student removed to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP) during the school year will have an opportunity to complete coursework before the beginning of the next school year, a foundation curriculum course in which the student was enrolled at the time of removal. The District may provide the opportunity to complete the coursework through any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The District will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the District. [See policy FOCA(LEGAL).]

In-school Suspension (ISS) Makeup Work

A student removed from the regular classroom to in-school suspension or another setting, other than a DAEP, will have an opportunity to complete before the beginning of the next school year each course the student was enrolled in at the time of removal from the regular classroom. The District may provide the opportunity by any method available, including a correspondence course, distance learning, or summer school. The District will not charge the student for any method of completion provided by the District. [See policy FO(LEGAL).]

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

COMPUTER RESOURCES

To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the District has made a substantial investment in computer technology for instructional purposes. Use of these computer resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and their parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these resources; violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and their parents should be aware that e-mail and other electronic communications using District computers are not private and will be monitored by District staff. [For additional information, see policy CQ.]

CONDUCT

Applicability of School Rules

As required by law, the District has developed and adopted a *Student Code of Conduct* that prohibits certain behaviors and establishes standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of the standards. Students and parents need to be

familiar with the standards set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as campus and classroom rules.

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

Discipline

It is necessary for students to develop self-discipline in order to further their learning. Please discuss the importance of and need for positive behavior and a good learning attitude while at school each day. Fighting, disrespect toward others, inappropriate language, destruction of property, or disruption of the learning environment will not be tolerated. Corporal punishment, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or alternative educational settings may be used as a means of punishment for more serious offenses as stated in Board policy.

Social Events

School rules apply to school social events to which a student brings a guest. Guests are expected to observe the same rules as students attending the event, and the person inviting the guest will share responsibility for the conduct of the guest.

A student attending a social event will be asked to sign out when leaving before the end of the event; anyone leaving before the official end of the event will not be readmitted.

****All guests to classroom events, field trips, field day, class parties, etc. must pass a Criminal History Background Check (CHBC) through MISD and then may check in through the school office, present a valid state approved photo ID, sign in, and receive a V-soft building pass.**

Disruptions

In order to protect student safety and sustain an educational program free from disruption, state law permits the District to take action against any person—student or nonstudent—who:

- Interferes with the movement of people in an exit, an entrance, or a hallway of a District building without authorization from an administrator.
- Interferes with an authorized activity by seizing control of all or part of a building.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent participation in an authorized assembly.
- Uses force, violence, or threats to cause disruption during an assembly.
- Interferes with the movement of people at an exit or an entrance to District property.
- Uses force, violence, or threats in an attempt to prevent people from entering or leaving District property without authorization from an administrator.

- Disrupts classes or other school activities while on District property or on public property that is within 500 feet of District property. Class disruption includes making loud noises; trying to entice a student away from, or to prevent a student from attending, a required class or activity; and entering a classroom without authorization and disrupting the activity with loud or profane language or any misconduct.
- Interferes with the transportation of students in vehicles owned or operated by the District.

Telecommunications Devices, Including Mobile Telephones

For safety purposes, the district permits students to possess telecommunications devices, including mobile telephones; however, paging devices, beepers, cellular phones, and other legally defined communication devices shall not be used during the instructional day, including all testing. These devices must be kept in the student's locker or concealed in the student's backpack, purse, or pocket in a deactivated mode during the instructional day. The device must be kept out of view at all times.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall have the item confiscated for five school days and returned to the parent or student only after a payment of a \$15.00 administrative fee.

If a telecommunications device is not retrieved, the District shall dispose of the device after providing notice required by law. [See policy FNCE.]

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

Other Electronic Devices Policy

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, MP3 players, video or audio recorders, DVD players, cameras, games, or electronic devices at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, teachers will collect the item and turn it in to the principal's office. The principal will determine whether to return items to students at the end of the day or to contact the parents to pick up the items.

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

Inappropriate Use of Technology

Students are prohibited from sending or posting electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal. This prohibition applies to conduct off school property if it results in a substantial disruption to the educational environment. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, sexually oriented, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be disciplined according to the *Student Code of Conduct* and may, in certain circumstances, be reported to law enforcement.

Bullying

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

The Board has established policies and procedures to prohibit bullying and to respond to reports of bullying. [See FFI(LOCAL).]

Child Sexual Abuse

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml

Reports may be made to:

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1 800-252-5400 or on the Web at <http://www.txabusehotline.org>).

Dating Violence, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

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

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

Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or part dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. This type of conduct is considered harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; or substantially interferes with the student's academic performance.

Examples of dating violence against a student may include, but are not limited to, physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engage in these behaviors.

Discrimination

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

Harassment

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

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

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee or volunteer does not include necessary or permissible physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature. However, romantic and other inappropriate social relationships, as well as all sexual relationships, between students and District employees are prohibited, even if consensual.

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment may include, but not limited to, touching body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; sexual advances; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Retaliation

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

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

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced dating violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should immediately report the problem to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other District employee. The report may be made by the student's parent. See policy FFH(LOCAL) for the appropriate District officials to whom to make a report.

Investigation of Report

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

In the event prohibited conduct involves another student, the District will notify the parents of the student alleged to have experienced the prohibited conduct when the allegations, if proven, would constitute a violation as defined by policy.

If the District's investigation indicates that prohibited conduct occurred, appropriate disciplinary or corrective action will be taken to address the conduct. The District may take disciplinary action even if the conduct that is the subject of the complaint was not unlawful.

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

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Questioning of Students

When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities wish to question or interview a student at school:

- The principal will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and ask for an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school.
- The principal ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the parents unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal ordinarily will be present unless the interviewer raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection.
- The principal will cooperate fully regarding the conditions of the interview, if the questioning or interview is part of a child abuse investigation.

Students Taken Into Custody

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

- To comply with an order of the juvenile court.
- To comply with the laws of arrest.
- By a law enforcement officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision.
- By a probation officer if there is probable cause to believe the student has violated a condition of probation imposed by the juvenile court.
- To comply with a properly issued directive to take a student into custody.
- By an authorized representative of Child Protective Services, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, a law enforcement officer, or a juvenile probation officer, without a court order, under the conditions set out in the Family Code relating to the student's physical health or safety.

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

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will ordinarily attempt to notify the parent unless the officer or other authorized person raises what the principal considers to be a valid objection to notifying the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

Notification of Law Violations

The District is also required by state law to notify:

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

[For further information, see policies FL(LEGAL) and GRA(LEGAL).]

COUNSELING

Guidance Counseling

The school counselor is responsible for the guidance program at each elementary campus. The purpose of the guidance program is to assist each individual in reaching his/her highest growth mentally, emotionally, and socially. The counseling and guidance program provides services in the school by:

- helping the new student feel at home in the school;
- providing individual conferences whenever a student, teacher, or parent believes it is necessary;
- supervising a testing program designed to monitor student progress;
- implementing classroom guidance including test-taking strategies.

Personal Counseling

The school counselor is available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. The counselor may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns. A student who wishes to meet with the counselor should contact the campus counselor.

Psychological Exams, Tests, or Treatment

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes or by the Texas Education Agency for child abuse investigations and reports.

[For more information, refer to policy FFE and FFG(EXHIBIT).]

DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS OR DOCUMENTS

School Materials

Publications prepared by and for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor, or teacher. Such items may include school posters, brochures, flyers, etc. All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal.

Nonschool Materials – From Students

Unless a student obtains specific prior approval from the principal, written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials over which the school does not exercise control may not be posted, sold, circulated, or distributed on any school campus. To be considered, any non-school material must include the name of the sponsoring organization or individual. The decision regarding approval will be made in two school days. The principal has designated an appropriate location for approved nonschool materials to be placed for voluntary viewing by students. [See policies at FNAA.]

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

Birthday or party invitations may not be distributed at school.

Nonschool Materials – From Others

Written or printed materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, films, tapes, or other visual or auditory materials not sponsored by the District or by a district-affiliated school-support organization will not be sold, circulated, distributed, or posted on any District premises by any District employee or by persons or groups not associated with the District, except as permitted by policies at GKDA. To be considered for distribution, any nonschool material must meet the limitations on content established in the policy, include the name of the sponsoring person or organization, and be submitted to the deputy superintendent for prior review. The deputy superintendent will approve or reject the materials within two school days of the time the materials are received. The requestor may appeal a rejection in accordance with the appropriate District complaint policy. [See policies at DGBA, FNG, or GF.]

Prior review will not be required for:

Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a school-sponsored meeting intended for adults and held after school hours.

Distribution of materials by an attendee to other attendees of a community group meeting held after school hours in accordance with policy GKD(LOCAL) or a noncurriculum-related student group meeting held in accordance with FNAB(LOCAL).

Distribution for electioneering purposes during the time a school facility is being used as a polling place, in accordance with state law.

All nonschool materials distributed under these circumstances must be removed from District property immediately following the event at which the materials are distributed.

DRESS AND GROOMING

In order to maintain an orderly environment conducive to the attainment of the educational mission and purpose of the district, all students shall be required to meet the expectations of the dress and grooming code. Dress and apparel that unduly attract the attention of other students often precipitate comments and/or other reactions that are disruptive. Safety, general health, hygiene and modesty are factors that are considered in the establishment of this dress and grooming code.

It is important to read all of the pages of this Student Dress Code.

Hair

Hair will be kept clean.

The use of natural colored hair dye is permitted. Any colors that are not deemed natural color will not be allowed.

Tipping or highlighting hair will be permitted as long as it is a natural hair color.

Any unusual streaks or patterns will not be permitted.

Unusual haircuts or styles such as Mohawks, fauxhawks, dreadlocks, spikes, patterns or shaving of all or part of the head are prohibited.

Tight weaves close to the scalp are acceptable for boys and girls.

Wigs may not be worn, except for medical reasons.

Apparel

Apparel will not display obscene prints or symbols.

Apparel such as jeans and shirts that students write on and/or allow other students to write on are prohibited.

Lewd, vulgar, obscene, or suggestive language/designs on clothing is prohibited.

Logos of clothing manufacturers, universities, colleges, or professional teams will not normally be challenged.

Advertisements or symbols that can be interpreted as promoting, depicting, or insinuating the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, demonism, violence or of a sexual nature are prohibited in the academic classroom.

Sweat suits, and cotton pants with drawstrings or elastic waistbands are prohibited in the academic classroom.

Wind-suits worn in an appropriate manner are permitted in the academic classroom.

Appropriate undergarments shall be worn, and see-through or excessively tight fitting garments are prohibited.

Torn clothing and clothing with holes above the knee are prohibited.

Trench coats, dusters, and one-piece jump suits are prohibited.

Accessories

Chains attached to pants or wallets are prohibited.

An item of apparel or make-up that is considered extreme in dress is prohibited.

Tattoos which are visible that are distracting or inappropriate are prohibited.

Hats, caps, bandanas, or sunglasses may not be worn inside the school building.

Garments with hoods may not be worn with the hood over the head inside the building during the school day.

Clothing

All shirts, blouses, tee shirts and sweaters must be modest in nature.

Immodest and/or revealing clothing is prohibited.

Shirts and blouses must have sleeves or cap sleeves and must be hemmed to fit around the arm.

Off-the-shoulder shirts, blouses, or sweaters are prohibited.

Shirts, blouses, and sweaters that show the torso when arms are raised above the head are prohibited at all times.

Shirts will be worn with only one button opened at the collar.

Tank tops and spaghetti straps are prohibited.

Un-tucked shirts may not extend below the middle of the thigh.

All pants, skirts, and shorts shall be sized appropriately and worn at the waist with no sagging.

Pajama-styled pants or pants that break or tear are prohibited.

All shorts, skirts (including skirts with a split up the front, side or back), and dresses must cover three-quarters of the thigh at all times.

Dresses must have sleeves that are hemmed to fit around the arm or cap sleeves.

If suspenders or overalls with straps are worn, both must be worn with suspenders or straps over the shoulders.

In grades 6-12, athletic style shorts may be worn only during physical education classes and other school-related activities such as athletic practices, cheerleading, etc. and are permitted only in designated workout areas. In grades PK-5 pants with elastic waistbands and athletic style shorts are permitted. The building principal in connection with the sponsor, coach or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity.

Immodest, tight fitting pants are prohibited.

Gang-Related Clothing

Clothing, shoes, boots, jewelry, bandanas, or grooming styles that identify a student as a member of a gang or other unauthorized group are prohibited.

Shoes and Sandals

Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times.

Shoes with metal cleats, taps, or wheels on the heels or soles, or shoes that can damage or mark floors are prohibited.

Heels no higher than 1" are permitted in grades PK-5.

Male General Dress Code

Facial hair, mustaches, goatees and beards are prohibited. Sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the ear.

Hair may not extend over the top of the collar of a T-shirt in back and may not extend below the middle of the ear on the side. In front, hair must be cut so that it is out of the eyes.

Hair may not be tucked, curled, or groomed to meet the dress and grooming code.
Hair may not be worn in a ponytail.
Visible objects in any body piercing are prohibited.
Beads or decorative items in the hair are prohibited.
Make-up is prohibited.

Female General Dress Code

Girls may wear no more than three earrings per ear, and spacers are prohibited. Visible objects in any other body piercing are prohibited.

Girls in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade are prohibited from wearing makeup.

Leggings may be worn with a skirt of an appropriate length.

Compliance with Dress Code

The building principal or his/her designated representative will be the sole authority in deciding whether a student's appearance is a distraction and might interrupt the learning process for other students. Any violations of this dress and grooming code must be corrected immediately at the direction of the building principal.

Students, teachers, parents and administrators must work together to assume responsibility for complying and enforcing the dress code adopted by the MISD.

Revised by Staff and Principals on 2-3-09; submitted to MHS/FSMS/WGMS Student Councils for review on 2-10-09; and submitted to and approved by the MISD 2-16-09.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

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

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

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

Please note: Sponsors of student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior—including consequences for misbehavior—that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the ***Student Code of Conduct*** or by local policy will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization. [For further information, see policies FM and FO.]

FEES

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

- Costs for materials for a class project that the student will keep.
- Membership dues in voluntary clubs or student organizations and admission fees to extracurricular activities.
- Security deposits.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Voluntarily purchased pictures, publications, class rings, yearbooks, graduation announcements, etc.
- Voluntarily purchased student accident insurance.

- Musical instrument rental and uniform maintenance, when uniforms are provided by the District.
- Personal apparel used in extracurricular activities that becomes the property of the student.
- Parking fees and student identification cards.
- Fees for lost, damaged, or overdue library books.
- Fees for driver training courses, if offered.
- Fees for optional courses offered for credit that requires use of facilities not available on District premises.
- Summer school for courses that are offered tuition-free during the regular school year.
- A reasonable fee for providing transportation to a student who lives within two miles of the school.
- Any required fee or deposit may be waived if the student and parent are unable to pay. Application for such a waiver may be made to the campus principal. [For further information, see policies at FP.]

Check Acceptance Policy

A check to any MISD campus must include a driver's license number and the date of birth. In the event a check written to any Midlothian ISD campus, club, or organization is returned unpaid by your bank, Midlothian ISD or its agent will redeposit your check electronically. Additionally, you understand and agree we may electronically collect a returned check fee of \$30.00. The use of a check for payment is your acknowledgement and acceptance of this policy and its terms.

FIELD TRIPS

To maximize the instructional experience for all students involved no siblings will be allowed to attend field trips. For further information on school trips, see the Transportation section of this handbook.

FUND-RAISING

Student groups or classes and/or parent groups may be permitted to conduct fund-raising drives for approved school purposes. An application for permission must be made to the building principal at least 30 days before the event. [For further information, see policies FJ and GE.]

GANG-FREE ZONES

Certain criminal offences, including those involving organized criminal activity such as gang-related crimes, will be enhanced to the next highest category of offense if they are committed in a gang-free zone. For purposes of the district, a gang-free zone includes a school bus and a location in, on, or with 1000 feet of any district-owned or leased property or campus playground.

HEALTH

MEDICATION GUIDELINES FOR MIDLOTHIAN ISD

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

Only authorized employees, in accordance with policies at FFAC, may administer:

Prescription medication provided by the parent, along with a written request or doctor's note, and in the original, properly labeled container.

Medication from a properly labeled unit dosage container filled by a registered nurse or another qualified District employee from the original, properly labeled container.

Nonprescription medication provided by the parent along with a written request, and in the original, properly labeled container.

Herbal or dietary supplements provided by the parent if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities.

In certain emergency situations, the District will maintain and administer to a student nonprescription medication, but only:

In accordance with the guidelines developed with the District's medical advisor; and

When the parent has previously provided written consent to emergency treatment on the District's form.

A student with asthma or severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) may be permitted to possess and use prescribed asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school or school-related events only if he or she has written authorization from his or her parent and physician or other licensed health-care provider. The student must also demonstrate to his or her physician or health-care provider, and to the school nurse the ability to use the prescribed medication, including any device required to administer the medication. The student and parents should see the school nurse if the student has been prescribed asthma and/or anaphylaxis medication for use during the school day. Students are encouraged to keep an extra inhaler and anaphylaxis pen in the clinic as a backup.

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

Only those medications that are necessary for a student's medical care and that cannot be given outside of school hours will be administered. If a medication is ordered three times a day, the

second dose may be given at home, after school. If medication is ordered four times a day, the second dose may be given at school. Please request your pharmacist provide you with two labeled bottles of medication: one for home and one for school.

ALL MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE UPON ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL.

According to the *Nurse Practice Act*, the school nurse may refuse to give any medications or specified dosage that may be considered not in the best interest of the student.

All requests for the administration of prescription and non-prescription medication must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. At the end of a school year, all medication will be returned. Any medications not retrieved will be immediately discarded.

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS

Teachers and other District employees may discuss a student's academic progress or behavior with the student's parents or another employee as appropriate. In addition, a District employee who is a registered nurse, a licensed vocational nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a physician, or a certified or credentialed mental health professional can recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner, if necessary.

“Psychotropic drug” means a substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of disease or as a component of a medication and intended to have an altering effect on perception, emotion, or behavior. It is commonly described as a mood- or behavior-altering substance. (For further information, see policies as FFAC.)

IMMUNIZATIONS

A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized. For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the District. This form may be obtained by writing the DSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at <https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immco/affidavit.shtm>. The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or school nurse within 90 days of notarization. If the parent is seeking exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are:

DPT/DTaP/Td – five doses if less than 7 years old. Ages 7 and older must have four doses. In either case, the last dose must have been since the fourth birthday and within the last ten years;

Polio – three doses of OPV/IPV including one after the fourth birthday;

MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) – two doses with the first dose on or after the first birthday.

Hepatitis A – Two doses

Hepatitis B – Three doses

Chicken Pox (Varicella) – two doses

Hib – required of ages four or less. One dose of HibCV on or after age 15 months unless a schedule for a primary series and a booster was completed prior to or at 15 months of age.

Additional Pre-Kindergarten Immunizations

Pneumococcal Conjugate – 1 dose

The school nurse can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the Department of Health State Services. Proof of immunization may be personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation.

A student may be provisionally admitted to the District Schools if the student has begun the required immunizations and continues to receive them as rapidly as is medically feasible. If a student transfers from one school to another, a grace period of no more than 30 days may be allowed at the new school while awaiting the transfer of the immunization record, during which time the student may be provisionally enrolled.

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

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Vision and Hearing Screenings: Any student new to the District who does not present documentation of recent vision and hearing screening results will be screened prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment. Routine screening of students in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 5 and 7 shall be performed for vision and hearing problems annually at any time during the reporting year prior to May 31. If the screening indicates the student may have vision or hearing problems, the school shall send the original copy of the screening report to the student's parent/guardian along with a letter advising them to schedule an exam with a professional healthcare provider.

Spinal Screening: Students in grades 6 and 9 shall be screened for abnormal spinal curvature before the end of the school year. If the screening indicates the student may have an abnormal spinal curvature, the school shall send the original copy of the screening report to the parent/guardian along with a letter advising them to schedule an exam with a professional healthcare provider.

Acanthosis Nigricans (AN) Screening: Students in grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 shall be screened at the time of hearing and vision screening. If this marker indicating too much insulin in the blood is present, the school shall notify the parents and advise them to schedule an exam with a professional healthcare provider.

*If parents/guardians prefer to have the spinal screening or acanthosis nigricans screening performed by a physician, please submit the physician's report within the first two weeks of school.

Medical Records: The parent/guardian of a student is entitled to access the student's medical records maintained by the District and, upon request, will be provided a copy.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES / CONDITIONS

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

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

Bacterial Meningitis

State law requires the District to provide the following information:

What is meningitis?

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

What are the symptoms?

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

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

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

How serious is bacterial meningitis?

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

How is bacterial meningitis spread?

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

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

How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?

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

While there are vaccines for some other strains of bacterial meningitis, they are used only in special circumstances. These include when there is a disease outbreak in a community or for

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

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

You should seek prompt medical attention.

Where can you get more information?

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

Head Lice Information

What are head lice?

Head lice are small wingless insects about the size of a small seed. Head lice infest human hair. They are grayish in color but may be red/brown when feeding. Lice can live for 20-30 days on a human host.

What is a “nit”, and where do they live?

A nit is a louse (lice) egg. You may see the nits before lice. Each nit is attached to a hair at the scalp with a waterproof, cement-like substance. Nits are often found on the hairs at the nape of the neck, (where the hair stops and the neck begins) and behind the ears, although they can be anywhere on the head. The nits are usually white, about 1 mm long, and are shaped like a long teardrop.

What are the symptoms of head lice?

Lice are hard to see because they are small and they move quickly. The first sign is usually intense itching on the scalp. ANYBODY can get head lice. A child is not sick or unclean if he or she has head lice.

How are lice spread?

Lice cannot hop, jump or fly. They crawl and can move from child to child through close body or head contact. Head to head play or being together on a mat at nap time can spread lice. Sharing combs, brushes, hair bands, hats, caps, coats, and even neck scarves can spread lice. Sharing a locker or cubby hole with a lice-infested child is a very common mode of transmission. If left behind, lice can attach to your child while sitting on carpets or furniture or even car upholstery. Lice may also attach to stuffed toys.

How long do lice live and how many eggs do they lay during their life span?

Lice can live on a human host for up to 30 days while feeding on blood every 3-6 hours, and laying from 50-150 eggs. The eggs hatch in 5-10 days and become adults in 2 weeks. If the lice do not have a human host, they will die after 24 hours.

What can my family do to avoid becoming infested with head lice?

It is a good idea to check your child’s head for signs of lice occasionally. You should teach your children not to share combs, brushes, hair bands, hats, coats, and neck scarves. You can also remind them not to share nap mats, pillows, beds, and stuffed toys. You can encourage your child to keep their belongings in their own cubby at school.

What should I do if my child has head lice?

The hair must be shampooed with a lice shampoo, following the manufacturer's directions, and then the nits removed. The shampoo will kill the lice, but not the nits. It is very important to remove all visible nits with a metal tooth lice comb or your fingernails (nit-picking) so that these nits don't hatch. A follow-up lice shampoo treatment should be done again in 7 -10 days to ensure that any nits that were not found and removed and may have hatched, will be killed. All family members should be checked and if lice or nits are found, the hair must be treated. All household items should be washed in hot water. This includes clothing, hats, towels, sheets, pillows, blankets and anything else that could be infested. Furniture and carpeting should be thoroughly vacuumed. Any items that cannot be washed or vacuumed may be placed in plastic garbage sacks for two weeks. Combs and brushes should be soaked in the lice shampoo for one hour. It is a good idea to continue to check your child's hair every day for two weeks and then occasionally. Please inform your child's school nurse if your child has head lice, so the child's class can be checked at school.

What is done at school?

The school nurse instructs students on how to prevent the spread of head lice. If a child is found to have head lice or nits at school, parents are called to come pick up the child from school. The parent is given instructions on how to treat head lice and given readmission criteria. The child will be checked upon readmission and signs of treatment and nit removal must be present. All children in the classroom will be checked and parents notified if their child has head lice. If a case of head lice goes untreated, the nurse will involve the campus administration in a meeting with the parents.

It is important that parents help the school do the right things to teach children how to stop the spread of lice. For further information, please contact your child's school nurse.

HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS

Physical Activity for Students in Elementary Grades

In accordance with policies at EHAB, EHBG, [and FFA], the District will ensure that students in full-day prekindergarten through grade 5 in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week. For additional information regarding the District's requirements and programs regarding elementary student physical activity requirements, please see the campus principal.

Physical Fitness Assessment

Annually, the District will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3 – 12. At the end of the school year a parent may submit a written request to the campus principal to obtain results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment for the school year.

The Clinic and School Health Guidelines

The clinic should be used for the purpose of receiving first aid treatment for injuries or for sudden illness. When it is necessary for a student to visit the nurse, he/she must first receive a pass from the teacher.

For the protection and well being of all students and staff on campus, these district guidelines will be followed in accordance with sending a student home for the day:

- Fever of 100 F or above;
- suspected contagious disease;
- vomiting or diarrhea;
- undetermined rash over any portion of the body;
- presence of lice or nits on shaft of hair;
- red or pink eye with watering or crusting;
- feels too badly to remain at school.

If your child has any of the previously mentioned symptoms or conditions in the morning before coming to school, please keep the child at home. A child should remain at home until he/she is clear of fever or symptoms for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

School Health Advisory Council

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

Steroids

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

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

Students participating in UIL athletic competition may be subject to random steroid testing. More information on the UIL testing program may be found on the UIL website at

http://www.uil.utexas.edu/athletics/health/steroid_information.html.

Other Health Related Matters

Tobacco Prohibited

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

Asbestos Management Plan

The District's Asbestos Management Plan, designed to be in compliance with state and federal regulations, is available in the MISD Maintenance Office. If you have questions, please contact the MISD Maintenance Office at 972-775-1148.

Pest Management Plan

The District applies only pest control products that comply with state and federal guidelines. Except in an emergency, signs will be posted 48 hours before application. Parents who want to be notified prior to pesticide application inside their child's school assignment area may contact the MISD Maintenance Office at 972-775-1148.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the district's Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths listed in the preface of the handbook.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE

Texas law requires students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag each day. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow recitation of the pledges. The student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that minute so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

PRAYER

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

SAFETY

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

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the ***Student Code of Conduct***, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or bus drivers.
- Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal safety hazards, such as intruders on campus and threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, bus drivers, and other District employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

Accident Insurance

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

Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Other Emergencies

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

Given the circumstances of the world situation, please be assured that every precaution is being taken to ensure safety at school for all students and staff. Each campus has an Emergency Operation Plan in place based on each school. Staff have been trained to implement the plan. Certain security procedures remain in place on each campus. Please remember to always enter through the front doors of the building during school hours in order to sign-in with the office during your visit on campus.

In case of school emergency, messages will be posted on the MISD website, www.midlothian-isd.net. Please check the District site or listen to the Waxahachie radio station KBEC-1390 for emergency information.

Emergency Medical Treatment and Information

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school will need to have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency care consent form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the school nurse to update any information that the nurse or the teacher needs to know.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Arrival / Dismissal

Elementary campuses start the instructional day at 7:45 a.m. (the actual tardy bell time). For those students who ride to school with a parent, please arrive no earlier than 7:20 a.m. when adult supervision begins. Students will be dismissed at 2:45 p.m. daily. Parents picking up children will need to use the designated area at each campus. If your child is to ride with someone other than you, please send a signed note making this request.

Use By Students Before and After School

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are required to remain in the area where their activity is scheduled to take place.

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

After dismissal of school in the afternoon, and unless involved in an activity under the supervision of a teacher, students must leave campus immediately.

Conduct Before and After School

Teachers and administrators have full authority over student conduct at before- or after-school activities on District premises and at school-sponsored events off District premises, such as play rehearsal, club meetings, athletic practice, and special study groups or tutorials. Students are subject to the same rules of conduct that apply during the instructional day and will be subject to consequences established by the *Student Code of Conduct* or any stricter code of conduct for extracurricular participants established by the sponsor in accordance with Board policy.

Use of Hallways During Class Time

Loitering or standing in the halls between classes is not permitted. During class time, a student must have a hall pass to be outside the classroom for any purpose. Failure to obtain a pass will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Cafeteria Services

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced-price lunches are available based on financial need. Information about a student's participation is confidential and only those who wish to apply need to return the forms. The District follows the federal and state guidelines regarding foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) being served or sold on school premises during the school day. [For more information see policy CO(LEGAL).]

Library / Media Center

Each campus library / media center is a learning laboratory with books, computers, magazines, and other materials available for classroom assignments, projects, and reading or listening pleasure. The library / media center is open for student use from the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily.

Vandalism

The taxpayers of the community have made a sustained financial commitment for the construction and upkeep of school facilities. To ensure that school facilities can serve those for whom they are intended—both this year and in the coming years—littering, defacing, or damaging school property is not tolerated. Students will be required to pay for damages they cause and will be subject to criminal proceedings as well as disciplinary consequences in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

SEARCHES

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

Students' Desks and Lockers

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

Students are fully responsible for the security and contents of the assigned desks and lockers. Students must be certain that the locker is locked, and that the combination is not available to others.

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

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

Vehicles on Campus

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. School officials may search any vehicle any time there is reasonable cause to do so, with or without the presence of the student. A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. [See also the *Student Code of Conduct*.]

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The District provides special programs for gifted and talented students, homeless students, bilingual students, migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator of each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered in the District or by other organizations. Parents of students with learning difficulties or who may need special education services may request an evaluation for special education at any time. A student or parent with questions about these programs should contact the campus principal's office.

Options and Requirements For Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education Services

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

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the District must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The District must complete the evaluation and the report to share

within 60 calendar days of the date of the District receiving written parental consent. The District shall provide a copy of the report to the parent.

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

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

T. E. Baxter Elementary – Nena Challenner, principal (972-775-8281)

J. R. Irvin Elementary – Jean Embry, principal (972-775-8239)

Longbranch Elementary – Kelly Madden, principal (972-775-2830)

LaRue Miller Elementary – Beth Van Amburgh, principal (972-775-4497)

Mt. Peak Elementary – Karen Childers, principal (972-775-2881)

J. A. Vitovsky Elementary – Cherie Wagoner, principal (972-775-5536)

If a student is receiving special education services at a campus outside his or her attendance zone, the parent or guardian may request that any other student residing in the household be transferred to the same campus, if the appropriate grade level for the transferring student is offered on that campus. The District is not required to provide transportation for the student transferring under this provision. See policies FDB(LOCAL) and FD(LEGAL).

STUDENT SPEAKERS

The District provides elementary students the opportunity to introduce the following school events: opening announcements and greetings for the school day. At the elementary level, only those students in the highest two grade levels of the school at which the student is publicly speaking who have had no disciplinary consequences for the current and preceding semester and who hold the following positions of honor based on neutral criteria are eligible to use the limited public forum: those who have earned the “A” honor roll and have earned at a minimum an “E” in citizenship. [See FNA(LOCAL).]

TEXTBOOKS, ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS, AND TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENT

State-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for each subject or class. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. Electronic textbooks and technological equipment may also be provided to students, depending on the course and course objectives. Students are responsible for all items and library books issued to them during the school year. A student who is issued a damaged item should report the damage to the teacher. Any student failing to return an item in acceptable condition loses the right to free textbooks and technological equipment until the item is returned or paid for by the parent; however, the student will be provided textbooks and equipment for use at school during the school day. All monies collected are recorded and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes. If a lost book is recovered by the student, money paid will be refunded.

TRANSFERS

See parental rights, SECTION I, and Options and Requirements for Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need or May Need Special Education, SECTION II, for other transfer options.

TRANSPORTATION

School-Sponsored

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips shall be required to ride in transportation provided by the school to and from the event.

Exception may be made if the student's parent or guardian requests in writing that the student be allowed to ride home from the event with the parent or presents a written request to the principal the day before the scheduled trip that the student be allowed to ride from the event with an adult designated by the parent. For further information on student trips, see the Field Trip section of this handbook.

Buses and Other School Vehicles

The District makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school. This service is a privilege and provided at no cost to students. Bus routes and any subsequent changes are posted at the school. Further information may be obtained by calling the transportation office at 972-775-1805 or on the District website at www.midlothian-isd.net,

See the ***Student Code of Conduct*** for provisions regarding transportation to the disciplinary alternative education program.

Students are expected to assist District staff in ensuring that buses remain in good condition and that transportation is provided safely. When riding in District vehicles, students are held to behavioral standards established in this handbook and the ***Student Code of Conduct***. Students must:

- Follow the driver's/monitor's directions and instructions at all times.
- Be seated at all times.
- Enter and leave the bus or van in an orderly manner at the designated stop nearest home.
- Keep feet, books, band instrument cases, and other objects out of the aisle.
- Not deface the bus, van, or its equipment.
- Keep head, hands, arms, or legs inside the bus window, not hold any object out of the window, or throw objects within or out of the bus or van.
- Not possess or use any form of tobacco on school buses.
- Follow school rules at all times.
- Be courteous to students, driver, and monitor.
- Wait for the driver's signal upon leaving the bus or van and before crossing in front of the vehicle.

When students ride in a District van or passenger car, seat belts must be fastened at all times. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*; bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

VIDEO CAMERAS

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

The principal may review the video/audio recordings routinely and document student misconduct. Discipline will be in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

General Visitors

Parents and others are welcome to visit District elementary schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office, present a valid state approved photo ID, sign in, and receive a V-soft building pass.

Visitors and volunteers in the classroom must also pass a Criminal History Background Check (CHBC) through MISD prior to being in the classroom setting. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and so long as the duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted. The building principal will have the final decision on visitors to school.

Criminal History Background Check (CHBC)

This form is available from the school office and must be completed and returned to the office. The school office will forward to administration for processing. A classroom-setting visitor or volunteer must pass the CHBC to be in that setting. This process could take several business days. Please allow processing time.

V-soft

V-soft tracks visitors, students, faculty, contractors and volunteers at our schools, thus providing a safer and closely monitored environment for students. The system was acquired to help protect your children, our students.

When visitors, volunteers or contractors check-in (or anyone that is coming into the school and is needing access outside the confines of the front office), they will be asked to present a valid state-issued ID for entering into the system. The system has the ability to provide alerts on people who may jeopardize the safety of the campus as it checks records in 48 states. It will also provide the visitor with a stick-on badge that contains the visitor's name and picture for them to wear while on campus.

MISD is committed to keeping our campuses safer, and asks for your cooperation in presenting a valid state-issued ID (drivers license) when checking in or visiting one of our schools. This

process can take up to 2 minutes, so please arrive a few minutes early. Thank you in advance for your help in this matter and your patience as this system is implemented.

SUMMARY

We trust you find this elementary handbook informative and comprehensive in addressing concerns you may have. Please study the ***Student Code of Conduct*** immediately following the Glossary in this handbook. Should you have additional questions or concerns, please direct your inquiries to your child's home campus. Additionally, you may find our adopted Board policies (frequently referred to throughout this document) online located at the bottom of the District home webpage at: www.midlothian-isd.net.

Welcome and best regards for an outstanding year of educational excellence.

Midlothian ISD Elementary Campuses for 2009-2010:

T.E. Baxter Elementary	972-775-8281
1050 Park Place Boulevard, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
J.R. Irvin Elementary	972-775-8239
700 W. Avenue H, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
Longbranch Elementary	972-775-2830
6631 FM 1387, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
LaRue Miller Elementary	972-775-4497
2800 Sudith Lane, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
Mt. Peak Elementary	972-775-2881
5201 FM 663, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
J. A. Vitovsky Elementary	972-775-5536
333 Church Street, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
L.A. Mills Administrative Complex	972-775-8296
100 Walter Stephenson Road, Midlothian, Texas 76065	
MISD Transportation	972-775-1805
601 E. Avenue E, Midlothian, Texas 76065	

GLOSSARY of TERMS:

Accelerated instruction is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

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

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

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

CHBC stands for Criminal History Background Check. A CHBC through MISD must be completed and passed before visitors and volunteers are allowed in classroom settings or social events.

DAEP stands for a disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the *Student Code of Conduct*.

FERPA refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as directory information, unless the student's parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

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

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

NCLBA is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that, along with other requirements for schools, provides for parent information and opportunities for "opting" their students out of certain activities or surveys.

Personal Graduation Plan (PGP) is a new state requirement for any student in middle school or higher who fails a section on a state-mandated assessment test or is determined by the District

as not likely to earn a high school diploma before the fifth school year after he or she begins grade 9.

SAT refers to the second of the two most frequently used college or university admissions exams: the Scholastic Aptitude Test. The test may be a requirement for admissions to certain colleges or universities. SAT can also refer to the campus' **Student Assistance Team**, serving as a primary intervention committee for at-risk students prior to seeking additional assessment by the Special Education team.

Section 504 is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined by an ARD committee to be eligible for special education services, appropriate regular educational services will be provided.

State assessment tests are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. Successful performance is a condition of promotion and the grade 11 exit-level test is a condition of graduation. Students have multiple opportunities to take the tests.

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

Student Code of Conduct, developed with the advice of the District-level committee and adopted by the Board, identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from the classroom or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a disciplinary alternative education program. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The **Student Code of Conduct** also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

TAKS is short for the **Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills**, the state's current standardized achievement test given to students in certain grade levels and subjects in grades 3–11.

TEKS is short for the **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**, the state's current curriculum guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education for Pre-K – 12th grades.

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

V-soft is a web-based software application that has been developed with the purpose of aiding educational facilities in tracking their visitors, students and faculty. V-soft not only provides an effective, efficient method for tracking, but also goes beyond conventional applications by utilizing available public databases to help control campus security. The system checks for sex offenders in 48 states, tracks visitors to the campuses, and has provided alerts to the administration helping us keep our students safe. It will also provide the visitor with a stick-on badge that contains the visitor's name and picture for them to wear while on campus.