

Meridian CUSD 223



MONROE CENTER

Grade School

#WeAreMCUSD

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK **2024-20252025-2026**

17500 Hwy. 72
Monroe Center, IL 61052
Phone: (815) 654-2230
Fax: (815) 393-4530

District Office: (815) 645-2230 ext. 7002
Bus/Transportation: (815) 645-2230 ext. 7010
Food Service: (815-645-2230 ext. 4351

District Website

www.meridian223.org

Like us on Facebook at Meridian CUSD 223

Like us on Twitter at @MCUSD223

Mrs. Deana L. Simpson – Principal
dsimpson@mail.meridian223.org
Phone: (815) 645-2230 ext. 3370

Dear Monroe Center Grade School Students, Parents and Guardians,

I cannot explain just how excited I am to welcome you to Monroe Center Grade School and to the start of the ~~2024-2025~~2025-2026 school year! I'm incredibly optimistic for the school year ahead. Please read your student handbook thoroughly and make sure that you have a clear understanding of all policies and guidelines for Monroe Center Grade School. As a proud Leader in Me school that has worked together to gain Lighthouse Status recognition, we look forward to being a positive part of the academic, physical, and emotional growth of our students this year. Let's work together to make this a great year for our children.

Please involve yourself by volunteering to help when you can. Continue to support the PTO by providing support and assistance for our major fundraiser and fundraising activities. The PTO helps raise funds for supplies and activities that greatly benefit all of our students. Parents and guardians are needed to help as room parents, with helping in the classrooms as teachers need assistance, and for organizing and working with PTO on various fundraisers throughout the year. Library helpers are needed each week, and individual classroom assistance is needed. Many opportunities are available to get involved!

We will email a comprehensive newsletter quarterly and a calendar at the beginning of each month. Please read all of the latest news about your child's grade level activities through communications provided by their classroom teachers, look for opportunities to volunteer in our school, and please feel free to fill out a volunteer form at the beginning of the year. Also, check your child's backpack nightly for homework and notes from school that will keep you informed of special events and academic progress.

Thank you to parents and guardians for being good role models and teachers of honesty, manners, respect, and responsibility. Your role in leading and teaching is invaluable. Read to your child and have your child read to you. We're looking forward to moving towards additional family nights and morning events, once again. Every experience you have with your child is an opportunity for learning. Keep your child actively engaged in the learning process and continue to help your child to develop as a responsible, well-behaved, and productive citizen and leader.

As educators, we encourage excellent attendance from bell to bell to minimize the disruptions to the students in their classrooms. Please refrain from picking your child up before the end of the day. Dismissal is at 2:30 p.m. Schedule regular doctor and dentist appointments for times before or after normal school hours when possible. Attendance habits develop early. Give your child the greatest start in developing these skills for a productive future.

Monroe Center Grade School will strive to give each child an exciting and educationally profitable experience in a warm and caring environment. The rules and regulations provided in this handbook for Monroe Center Grade School are general guidelines designed to promote safety and freedom from interruption in your child's academic program. As parents, we encourage you to stay actively involved in your child's education. Your participation this school year will enable us to provide the most positive educational experience for your child.

Parents and guardians please read this handbook thoroughly and go over all major points with your child. I look forward to hearing from you at any time to share celebrations and to discuss any educational concerns. We look forward to working together towards another incredible year of learning and growing at Monroe Center Grade School. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Deana L. Simpson
Principal

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SECTION 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

MERIDIAN COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #223 **SCHOOL DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY**

The School District, in an active partnership with parents and community, will promote excellence in a caring environment in which all students learn and grow. This partnership shall empower all students to develop a strong self-esteem and to become responsible learners and decision-makers. The School District is committed to developing and using a visionary and innovative curriculum implemented by a knowledgeable and dedicated staff.

MERIDIAN CUSD #223 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Meridian CUSD #223 is to educate students to be self-directed learners, collaborative workers, complex thinkers, quality producers and community contributors.

Administration

~~Dr. PJ Caposey~~ Dr. Michael Plourde- Meridian Superintendent of Schools (815) 645-2230 x7001

~~pcaposey@mail.meridian223.org~~ mplourde@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Leslie Showers- Stillman Valley High School Principal (815) 645-2230 x5005
lshowers@mail.meridian223.org

Mr. Jeffrey Voltz- Asst. High School Principal (815) 645-2230 x5002
jvoltz@mail.meridian223.org

Mr. Henry Robison - Activities Director (815) 645-2230 x5004
hrobison@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Jen Speakes- Meridian Junior High School Principal (815) 645-2230 x4302
jspeakes@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Tara Jepson – Meridian Junior High School Asst. Principal
tjepson@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Deana Simpson- Monroe Center Grade School Principal (815) 645-2230 x3370
dsimpson@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Jacque Buchanan- Highland Elementary School Principal (815) 645-2230 x2103
jbuchanan@mail.meridian223.org

Mrs. Heather Alderks – Director of Safety and Operations (815) 645-2230 x7005
haldерks@mail.meridian223.org

Board of Education - Meridian Unit District #223 (will update as needed)

John Smith - President
jsmith@mail.meridian223.org

Jill Huber - Vice President
jhuber@mail.meridian223.org

Tim DeVries - Secretary
tdevries@mail.meridian223.org

Dustin Collins
dcollins@mail.meridian223.org

Kristine Youman
kyouman@mail.meridian223.org

Marsha Weldon
mweldon@mail.meridian223.org

Matt Rhodes
mrhodes@mail.meridian223.org

The Board of Education meets the first Thursday of each month at 6:030 P.M. in the District Board room located in Meridian Junior High School. Check the district web page at <http://www.meridian223.org/> for specific dates and times.

The ~~2024-2025~~ 2025-2026 Monroe Center Grade School Student Handbook is:

1. Only a summary of board policies governing the district; board policies are available to the public on the district website at www.meridian223.org
2. A document that may be amended during the year without notice
3. Is a communication tool of all policies to persons expected to execute and comply with them

**THE MERIDIAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT #223 IS A NON-DISCRIMINATING SCHOOL DISTRICT.
~~2024-2025~~2025-2026 School Personnel Monroe Center Grade School**

Monroe Center Faculty & Staff

Principal	- Deana Simpson	dsimpson@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (3D)	- Joi Dundas	jdundas@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (3M)	- Kathleen Mandzen	kmandzen@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (3I)	-Jamie Ivy	jivy@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (3S)	-Ashley Stahl	astahl@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (3TO)	- Jennifer Tompkins	jtompkins@mail.meridian223.org
Third Grade (TBA)		
Fourth Grade (4G)	- Ann Green	agreen@mail.meridian223.org
Fourth Grade (4L)	- Michelle Lassard	mlassard@mail.meridian223.org
Fourth Grade (4P)	- Mandy Poliska	mpoliska@mail.meridian223.org
Fourth Grade (4V)	- Jennifer VanHise	jvanhise@mail.meridian223.org
Fourth Grade (4S)	- Kristen Sapoznik	ksapoznik@mail.meridian223.org
Fifth Grade (5B)	- Danielle Bond	dbond@mail.meridian223.org
Fifth Grade (5L)	- Gretchen Lagerhausen	glagerhausen@mail.meridian223.org
Fifth Grade (5MC)	- Michele McDevitt	mmcdevitt@mail.meridian223.org (TBA)
Fifth Grade (5MA)	- Michele Massari	mmassari@mail.meridian223.org
Fifth Grade (5P)	- Christa Papke	cpapke@mail.meridian223.org
Fifth Grade	TBA	
Special Education	- TBA	
Special Education	- Kristina Porter	kporter@mail.meridian223.org
Special Education	Doug Schiltz	dschiltz@mail.meridian223.org Macie Boyd mboyd@mail.meridian223.org
Title I Reading	- Teresa Eden	teden@mail.meridian223.org
ESL	- Megan Zamora	mzamora@mail.meridian223.org
Speech Therapy	- Darcie Omiotek	domiotek@mail.meridian223.org
Art Education	- Monika Huhn	mhuhn@mail.meridian223.org
Music Education	- Rachel Zern	rzern@mail.meridian223.org
Physical Education	- Lucas Johnson	ljohnson@mail.meridian223.org
Physical Education	Scott Wilhite	swilhite@mail.meridian223.org Lucas Hunt lhunt@mail.meridian223.org
Librarian	Dana Brooks	dbrooks@mail.meridian223.org Michele McDevitt
mmcdevitt@mail.meridian223.org		
Library Assistant	- Sarah Kerr	skerr@mail.meridian223.org
Instructional Coach	- Amy Metzger	ametzger@mail.meridian223.org
Instructional Coach	- Nicole King	nking@mail.meridian223.org
School Counselor	Stephanie Haugh	shaugh@mail.meridian223.org (TBA)
School Psychologist	- Nicole Connell	nconnell@mail.meridian223.org
School Social Worker	- Laura Zarembski	lzarembski@mail.meridian223.org
Full Time Substitute	TBA Judy Kohler	jkohler@mail.meridian223.org

Education Support Personnel

Administrative Assistants	- Jennifer DeWindt & Kitra Ross Sofia Ingram
Paraprofessionals & Interventionists	- Heather Bennett, Lindsey Grobe, Kristen Kerner, Cindy Meyers, Stephanie Zinke, Deb Sweeney, Lori Wetzels, Tonja Cline, Amber Bennett, Judy Kohler (changes TBA)
Math Interventionist	- Angie Meyer
Reading Interventionist	- Cindy Brown
School Nurse	TBA Carrie Boehle
Head Cook	- Barbara Thompson

Kitchen Staff	- Isabelle Keegan
Kitchen Staff	-TBACarol Carlson
Head Custodian	- Danny Burright
Evening Custodian	- Mike Zolwicki
Evening Custodian	-Craig ArnsSofia Ingram (TBA)

Meridian Elementary PTO

The Meridian Elementary Parent Teacher Organization's objectives are to fundraise for resources that benefit students at Highland and Monroe Center Schools, to further parental involvement in the school system, provide events that promote family togetherness, and support our teachers. The Meridian PTO has been instrumental in providing our elementary students and teachers with invaluable tools. Through the "Christmas in May" program the PTO provides "wish list" items to educators in areas such as technology, reading, special education, and library programs to broaden the educational opportunities of our grade school students.

Your support is crucial to continue to fund the many educational experiences and resources for our classrooms. Each year, the Meridian PTO funds thousands of dollars in resources for our students including guided reading material, literacy materials, math and reading intervention materials, and bilingual materials and books. The PTO also funds time-honored traditions in our school district such as the Daddy Daughter Dance, Santa and Elves Christmas store, the Library's Monarch and Bluestem programs, and Field Day.

If you are a parent or guardian with a child in the elementary schools, you are already a member of the Meridian PTO. The PTO traditionally meets on the fourth Monday of every month at 6:00 pm and alternates the meetings between both elementary buildings. For a schedule of our meeting dates, please go to the PTO link on the Meridian School District website. Please join us as our meetings are open, and we welcome any input. There are no dues, but there are numerous ways to support our organization. Any person interested in joining the board, should contact a member listed below. If you cannot make the time commitment to join the board but would still like to be involved, you can volunteer at any of our events or join a committee to help plan events.

Make time to stop by the PTO table at Open House to see the fundraisers and family fun events we have scheduled throughout the year. The PTO will keep you up to date and informed with numerous flyers and newsletters. Any concerns, questions, or feedback can be emailed to meridianelempto@gmail.com.

We thank you in advance for your interest and support!

President	Kristin Vincent	kristinlearn@yahoo.com
Vice-Pres.	Emily Grugel	e.afflerbaugh@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Sara Grobe	snkers10@yahoo.com
Secretary	Meghan Henry	meghanhenrydesigns@gmail.com

**Meridian Community Unit #223
State Health Requirements for Student**

Dear Parents:

The Illinois School Code requires that all pupils entering the grades below must have completed the following before being admitted to school:

PRE-K HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Proof of required physical exam.
2. Proof of the following vaccinations in accordance with IL Dept. of Public Health requirements:
 - a. DTP/DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
 - b. Polio
 - c. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - d. Varicella (Chickenpox)
 - e. Hepatitis B
 - f. Hib (Haemophilus influenza type b)
 - g. PCV (Invasive Pneumococcal Disease)

KINDERGARTEN HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Proof of required physical exam.
2. Proof of the following vaccinations in accordance with IL Dept. of Public Health requirements:
 - a. DTP/DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
 - b. Polio
 - c. MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
 - d. Varicella (Chickenpox)
3. Proof of dental exam (or waiver) prior to May 15th of the school year.

2ND GRADE HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Proof of dental exam (or waiver) prior to May 15th of the school year.

6TH GRADE HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Proof of required physical exam (**not** a sports physical). *This DOES fulfill the sports physical requirement for 6th grade.*
2. Meningitis vaccine.
3. Tetanus (Tdap) booster.
4. All other required immunizations current in accordance with IL Dept. of Public Health requirements.
5. Proof of dental examination (or waiver) prior to May 15th of the school year.

9TH GRADE HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Proof of required physical exam (**not** a sports physical). *This DOES fulfill the sports physical requirement for 9th grade.*
2. All required immunizations current in accordance with IL Dept. of Public Health requirements.
3. Proof of dental exam (or waiver) prior to May 15th of the school year.

12TH GRADE HEALTH NEEDS:

1. Meningitis vaccine (2nd dose)

Please note: Physical exams must be completed in their entirety by a qualified medical professional on the State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Exam form. If the above immunizations have not been completed at the time of the physical exam, a written schedule from your physician to complete the required doses must be presented with the physical exam. According to the Illinois School Code, students are subject to exclusion from school on and after October 15th if the physical examination and immunization requirements have not been completed and returned to the school.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joe Mullikin
Superintendent

Kayla Richolson, RN, BSN
Director of Health Services

Revised 3/24

SECTION 2 SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

REQUIRED PHYSICALS:

According to Illinois State law, **all** students entering Pre-K or K (first entrance), 6th, and 9th grades are required to present evidence of a physical examination, completed within the last year, with a complete immunization record, and the recommended dental exam. Students who do not fulfill these requirements will not be allowed

to enroll and/or will be excluded until records are presented. In case of transfer from another school/state, the student will be given 30 days to comply with any health record requirement. A “sports” physical does NOT satisfy this requirement. Please refer to the district website for required physical immunizations, dental, and vision exams.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

If a circumstance exists where medication is necessary during school hours, a MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION form **must be** signed by the parent **and** the physician and kept on file in the nurse’s office. This authorization is required to be renewed EACH school year. The medication must be in the original prescription or over the counter container and stored in the nurse’s office unless otherwise directed by the physician and parents. All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be brought to the nursing office by a parent or guardian. No medications are allowed on the bus. During school field trips, all medication must be sent with the supervising teacher. No student shall possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in the Administration of Medications policy and its implementing procedures. A student **MAY** possess **emergency** medications (i.e. Epipens, inhalers) provided a “Medication Authorization” form has been completed by the physician AND the parents/guardians. At the end of the school year, a parent or guardian must come pick up remaining doses of medications or consent for disposal.

An **occasional** acetaminophen may be taken by a student during school hours, in the absence of written doctor’s orders, **ONLY** after evaluation AND direct telephone contact has been made with the parent/guardian for verbal consent. The school nurse will keep documentation of this administration.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICAL CANNABIS

In accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program, qualifying students are allowed to utilize medical cannabis infused products while at school and school events. Please contact the building principal for additional information. Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver pursuant to this procedure is prohibited. The District may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

UNDESIGNATED MEDICATIONS

The school may maintain the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use: (1) Asthma medication; (2) Epinephrine injectors; (3) Opioid antagonists; and (4) Glucagon. No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

EMERGENCY AID TO STUDENTS

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS DURING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCY

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably. Your child’s

school and district play an essential role, along with the local health department and emergency management agencies, in protecting the public's health and safety during a pandemic or other health emergency.

During a pandemic or other health emergency, you will be notified in a timely manner of all changes to the school environment and schedule that impact your child. Please be assured that even if school is not physically in session, it is the goal of the school and district to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Additionally, please note the following:

1. All decisions regarding changes to the school environment and schedule, including a possible interruption of in-person learning, will be made by the superintendent in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.
2. Available learning opportunities may include remote and/or blended learning. Blended learning may require your child to attend school on a modified schedule.
3. Students will be expected to participate in blended and remote instruction as required by the school and district. Parents are responsible for assuring the participation of their child. Students who do not participate in blended or remote learning will be considered truant.
4. All school disciplinary rules remain in effect during the interruption of in-person learning. Students are subject to discipline for disrupting the remote learning environment to the same extent that discipline would be imposed for disruption of the traditional classroom.
5. Students and parents will be required to observe all public health and safety measures implemented by the school and district in conjunction with state and local requirements.
6. During a pandemic or other health emergency, the school and district will ensure that educational opportunities are available to all students.
7. School personnel will work closely with students with disabilities and other vulnerable student populations to minimize the impact of any educational disruption.
8. Students who have a compromised immune system, live with an individual with a compromised immune system, or have a medical condition that may impact their ability to attend school during a pandemic or other public health emergency should contact school officials.
9. During a pandemic or other health emergency, teachers and school staff will receive additional training on health and safety measures.
10. In accordance with school district or state mandates, the school may need to conduct a daily health assessment of your child. Parents and students will be notified of the exact assessment procedures if this becomes necessary.
11. Parents should not send their child to school if their child exhibits any symptoms consistent with the pandemic or other health emergency.
12. Please do not hesitate to contact school or district officials if you have any concerns regarding your child's education, health or safety.

WHEN SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD AT HOME?

For school purposes, a temperature of 100.0° F or above is considered a fever. Students should not return to school until they have been "fever-free" for at least 24 hours (without medication) and until symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) subside. Also, if your child has vomited, they should not return to school until they have not vomited for at least 24 hours and are able to keep a light meal down without feeling nauseated.

HEAD LICE (PEDICULOSIS)

Meridian CUSD has a **no-nit** policy. A student with evidence of head lice and/or nits will be sent home for treatment. Upon their return to school, they must be brought in by a parent or guardian to be checked by the school nurse, or designee, to verify their hair is free of lice and nits before being permitted to attend class.

PINK EYE

Students with pink eye are to be excluded from school until 24 hours after treatment begins or child is examined by a physician and approved for readmission to school.

SCREENINGS

The school nurse conducts vision and hearing tests. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months. Parents of those students who do not pass these screenings will be contacted and are urged to comply with the recommendations made by the nurse.

EMERGENCY CONTACT IN CASE OF INJURY

If a student incurs serious injury requiring medical attention, parents will be notified immediately. Parents are asked to supply the **name and phone number** of a responsible adult to be notified when the parent cannot be reached. In the event that the parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, the student will be transported to the hospital for emergency treatment.

ILLNESS

In the event a student becomes ill at school, the school nurse will contact the parent or guardian to discuss the course of action to be taken. Students will not be sent home unless a parent or guardian is there to care for them. Students will only be released to individuals who are on the emergency contact list within Skyward. Children should be fever and symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. This will help keep the student from picking up another illness with an already weakened immune system and will decrease the likelihood of them sharing their illness with others. Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines regarding communicable illnesses will be used by the school nurse to determine when students may not be in attendance.

ALLERGIES

State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, state statutes, federal regulations and state rules.

If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify the building Principal or Nurse at (815) 645-2230.

Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan will be developed and implemented to provide the needed supports so that your student can access his or her education as effectively as students without disabilities.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

All students will make every effort to be neat and clean. Routine personal hygiene should be taken care of at home. This includes daily bathing, brushing of teeth and hair, etc. If the need arises, parents will be notified of any problems. Please ensure your student has a spare set of season-appropriate clothing to be kept in their locker.

ANNUAL HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION

Each school year a presentation on health and development is scheduled to be shared with 4th and 5th grade students in accordance with the district policy. These presentations will be presented to 4th and 5th grade boys and girls separately. Permission slips will be sent home in advance and must be signed in order for the student

to participate. The videos will be shared with parents and/or guardians in advance of the student screening dates.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling services provide students with an opportunity to increase their self-awareness, self-esteem, and social/emotional growth. Maximizing these areas gives students the ability to excel at academic tasks as well. The school counselor provides individual and group counseling, classroom presentations, parent education programs, consults with classroom teachers and parents, makes referrals to outside agencies when appropriate, increases student awareness of career opportunities, and assists students with life transitions. Every student will have the opportunity to interact with a counselor through classroom presentations, individual, and/or group settings. Parents/guardians, students, or school staff may request counseling services. The counselor can be reached by calling Monroe Center School at (815) 645-2230. We also use a platform ~~as an SEL screener~~ called **TEAMtalk** which is designed to directly support and understand a child's social, emotional, and mental well-being. There will be more information shared at the beginning of each year.

Erin's Law requires that all public schools in each state implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program which teaches: students in grades preK – 12th grade, **age-appropriate** techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and tell a trusted adult, school personnel all about child sexual abuse, and parents & guardians the warning signs of child sexual abuse, plus needed assistance, referral or resource information to support sexually abused children and their families. This program is implemented by the school counselor.

SECTION 3 SCHOOL FEES INFORMATION

SCHOOL FEES

Parents frequently ask why we have a book fee and what the fee supplies. State law forbids school boards from distributing textbooks to students without charge unless the voters have approved a special enabling referendum. Voters in District #223 have not been asked to approve such a referendum. School fees are due at registration or payable during on-line registration. These fees defray the cost of the hard and soft covered books used by the students.

REGISTRATION FEES

Third Grade-	Registration Fee: \$158.00
Fourth Grade-	Registration Fee: \$153.00
Fifth Grade-	Registration Fee: \$153.00

Registration Fees can be paid using a credit card or debit card during the on-line registration period. Checks should be made payable to the **Meridian Community Unit School District #223**.

NOTICE TO PARENTS

This is to advise you that you may be eligible for a waiver of student fees if you receive public aid; if your gross household income is under that which is set in federal guidelines for free lunches; or if you are otherwise able to establish that you cannot afford to pay these fees. Applications requesting waiver of fees should be submitted to the District Office at the time of registration. Forms for submission of such requests are available in each principal's office. The use of false information to obtain such waiver is a felony under Illinois law. Any inquiries should be directed to the principal of the building in which your child is enrolled.

INSURANCE

Accident insurance is offered for grades K-5. This insurance covers your child from the time he leaves home until he returns, provided he goes directly to and from school. While carrying this insurance is optional, we recommend that each student, especially those in athletics, elect this coverage. This will aid in expenses

incurred in the event of an accident. Insurance applications are available in the school office. Emphasize to your child that reporting to the event supervisor any injury is important in collection of insurance.

BOOK REFUND POLICY

Any student entering Monroe Center Grade School shall pay the full year's price for books. A student leaving will not receive a refund for books. All partially used books will be returned to the office so they may be used for new students entering school.

SECTION 4 SCHOOL AND OFFICE OPERATIONS INFORMATION

CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

It is important that we have your address and telephone number at all times. This information is especially important in cases of emergency. **Please notify Mrs. Nicholson at the district office with three proofs of residency immediately upon changing your address or telephone number.**

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades - 3 rd , 4 th , & 5 th	8:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.
Wednesdays - District Late Start	8:30 A.M to 2:30 P.M.

OFFICE HOURS AND POLICY

The school office is officially open from 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. Your principal embraces an "Open Door Policy." This means that all may feel free to come in to discuss matters with the principal at any time. Many times, a school administrator is required to be out of her office for different reasons. For your convenience, it might be wise to call to make an appointment prior to coming. If you do not mind taking a chance on waiting to see the principal, you may come at your convenience.

USE OF SCHOOL PHONE

Messages will be taken for students and teachers, but it is not always possible to deliver these immediately. Parents wishing to confer with teachers on the phone are requested to limit their calls to before school, noontime, and after school. **Students are not allowed to use the classroom phones except in cases of emergencies. Student cell phones & device watches are to remain off and in backpacks during school hours. The consequence for a student using his or her cell phone during school hours may be up to a Lunch Detention. If a student's cell phone is on during the day, it will be confiscated and kept in the office until a parent or guardian can pick it up.**

ARRIVAL TIME

Every parent should ensure that their child does not arrive at school **before 7:30 AM**. We do not have available play areas inside the building nor adequate supervision to permit children to come to school long before school starts. Bus students will be admitted and supervised upon their arrival at school.

PICK-UP TIME

Our school-day ends at 2:30 PM. Doors will remain locked and closed and school staff will facilitate the after-school dismissal process. Students that are picked up are done so at the back of the building and parents/guardians can enter at the west entrance and follow the drive to the back of the building on the east side. Students should be picked up no later than 2:45 PM.

BEFORE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

1. Students should arrive at school from **7:30–7:55 AM** unless special arrangements have been made for them to arrive earlier or later.
2. Once children are under the supervision of school personnel, the expectations outlined in the **Monroe**

Center School PBIS Policy are in effect as well as our referring to the **7 Habits from Leader in Me**.

3. After the bell rings, students should walk quietly and in an orderly manner to their classrooms.

THE SCHOOL CODE OF ILLINOIS: 10.22.6

The building principal has authority over all students in District #223.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT & LEADER IN ME

PBIS stands for **Positive Behavior Intervention and Support**. At Monroe Center Grade School, we are committed to creating a learning environment that will encourage positive behavior and interactions, while discouraging inappropriate behaviors. This approach is based on directly teaching students the behaviors we expect to see, reminding them to use those behaviors, acknowledging them when they do, correcting them when they do not, helping them build the skills necessary to do so, and celebrating their successes. The goal is to create a positive school culture by using the 7 habits from their learning in Leader in Me alongside, reducing inappropriate behavior and providing maximum academic time for students and staff. We ask parents to support their child and the school in guiding children to make good choices.

Students will be awarded Cardinal Cash when caught making positive choices. Staff will acknowledge the student by stating what positive choice has been made. Cardinal Cash may be put into the quarterly drawings from the office whenever the student chooses to enter. School-wide assemblies will be held at the end of each quarter to promote positive character, have the drawings and celebrate the school's success. Students also have the option of saving their Cardinal Cash to purchase an item or items in our M.C. School Store.

Behavior interventions and restorative conversations are necessary when the behavior expectations are not followed. Some examples of Minor Behavior Offenses that will be documented by staff are: throwing small objects, noncompliance, minor disruptions, cheating, put downs, attitude, chewing gum, inappropriate dress code, etc. Parents will not be called after the first minor behavior offense unless a lunch detention is assigned. After the second minor behavior offense, parents will be notified. The third minor behavior offense will result in an automatic lunch detention. If the student receives a fourth minor behavior offense, it will result minimally in a lunch detention. More serious offenses are considered Major Behavior Offenses. These offenses are dealt with immediately by the administration and will result in a lunch detention or an in-school or out- of-school suspension. Some examples of major behavior offenses that will be documented by staff are: fighting, bullying, vandalism, discriminatory/inflammatory/inappropriate language, severe insubordination, verbal threats, etc. Parents will be contacted on any major behavior offenses. Board of Education Policy will direct more serious disciplinary issues.

As we continue to work to instill good values and positive character in all of our students, we cannot make progress without the support of our families. We also, with the learning of the 7 Habits through Leader in Me and our work with our counseling department, would like to mention that we do try to work with students through learning more about restorative practice. It is very important that you talk with your child about making positive choices. Parents are asked to support the mission of our school, along with our behavior expectations and any disciplinary actions taken at school.

STUDENT BEHAVIORS/DISCIPLINE

The principal maintains the authority to assign discipline and/or supportive consequences for student infractions that he/she deems developmentally and behaviorally appropriate.

Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint

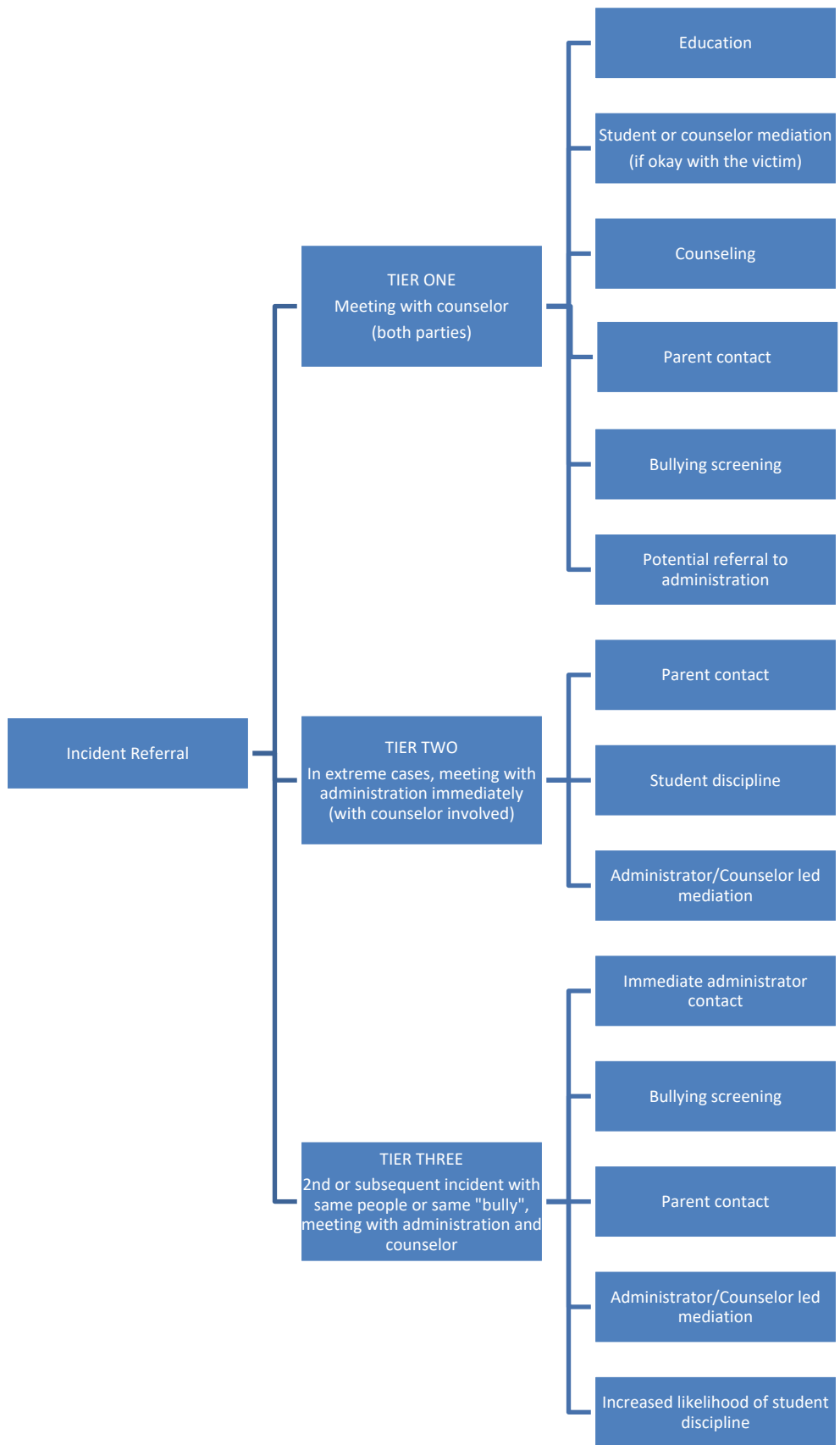
Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

PREVENTING BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT

Protocol:



Definitions:

Bullying: *Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.*

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- *An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.*
- *Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.*

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Harassment: *Unwelcome conduct or communication that either substantially interferes with a student's school performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment at school. This includes the use of ethnic or racial slurs.*

ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

Problems arise each year because children bring articles to school that are hazards to the safety of others or interfere in some way with school procedures. Such items as guns, caps for cap guns, water guns, knives, matches, hard balls, bullets, lighters, cigarettes, and e-cigarettes brought to school will be confiscated and disciplinary measures will be taken. **All electronic devices, including cell phones smart watches, radios, iPads, and iPods, must be turned off and kept in a student's backpack during the school day. If a student is found using an electronic device during the school day, it will result in an After-School Detention and a parent or guardian will be required to pick up the electronic item from the school office. Students may use electronic games, tablets, or cell phones while waiting for the bus in the** afternoon. Heelies, or similar shoes with wheels, as well as skateboards, scooters, etc. are also not allowed at school. All types of toys are discouraged, including trading cards. When a student has such items at school, they are subject to being broken or stolen. The school cannot be responsible for such items. There are no locks on the students' lockers, and students are not permitted to bring locks from home. The lockers are the property of Meridian District 223 and must be accessible by a building principal. Parents are requested to help children keep these items at home. Check backpacks at night and in the morning to reduce the presence of these items at school.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any damage done to school property must be repaired or replaced at the expense of the offender. Parent cooperation is requested in helping us teach children to respect school property, material, furnishings, equipment and the building itself.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment.

- Student dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or picture alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.
- Student dress (including accessories) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
- Hats, coats, bandannas, sweat bands, and sun glasses may not be worn in the building during the school day.
- Hair styles, dress, and accessories that pose a safety hazard are not permitted in the shop, laboratories, or during physical education.
- Clothing with holes, rips, tears, and clothing that is otherwise poorly fitting, showing skin and/or undergarments may not be worn at school.

- The length of shorts or skirts must be appropriate for the school environment.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
- If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, the building principal will make the final decision.
- Student whose dress causes a substantial disruption of the orderly process of school functions or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, staff or others may be subject to discipline.
- Also, snow pants and winter boots are required for any student planning to play in the snow during recess (this includes all recess areas other than the blacktop). **Please contact our School Counselor if your child needs these items.**

Obviously, these are general guidelines and there can always be some situations that are not covered by generalities. Should any questions arise regarding a student's dress, the building principal will determine the acceptability of the attire. The district feels that parents have the responsibility of having their children dress in an appropriate manner. Your impression upon others and their impression of the entire school are influenced by what you wear. If students have pride in their school, they will dress accordingly.

SECTION 5 **ATTENDANCE**

ATTENDANCE: Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1st) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session (unless the child has already graduated from high school). Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS¹, or other reason as approved by the principal. Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support posting. All other absences are considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the principal.

Parents should provide documentation explaining the reason for a student's absence.

In the event of any absence, the student's parent or guardian is required to call the school before 9:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent or guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

HOME & HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant or licensed advance practice registered nurse anticipates his or her absence from school, because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse.

Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

For more information on home or hospital instruction, contact Mrs. Simpson at dsimpson@mail.meridian223.org

TRUANCY

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a serious issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school and district.

Students who miss more than 1 % but less than 5% of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are truant. Students who miss 5% or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause are chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue. District policy indicates that letters to attend will be sent home after 5 absences, 7 absences, and 10 absences, to ensure that communication about potential truancy cases have been exhausted.

- If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district will take further action, including Referral to the truancy officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.

A referral may be made to the Lee/Ogle Regional Office of Education LODIS Truancy Intervention/prevention Program after (5) five unexcused absences during the previous 180 days of school attendance.

NOTES REQUIRED

The school requires notes from parents or guardians for the following reasons:

1. Absence
 2. Requests for special dismissals
 3. Field Trips (permission slips will be supplied)
- (covered in Administrations of Medications section)

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students will not be released to any individual who is not designated in Skyward. In the event a parent must remove a child from school before the close of the day, a note should be sent to school in advance to inform the teachers of this change from the normal routine.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Teachers have been instructed not to excuse any child without a written or personal request from parent or guardian, nor to permit any child to go from the school premises with an unidentified person. This has been done in order to help protect your child. When a child leaves early the office should be notified when that child is leaving the building. Students will **only** be allowed to leave early with a guardian and/or an emergency contact, as listed in Skyward.

WEDNESDAY LATE START

Each Wednesday, school will start at 8:30 AM rather than 8:00 AM. This time will be utilized to allow for teachers to collaborate on instruction, assessment, and student learning. Monroe Center will be staffed at normal hours and students will be able to be dropped off as normal. Students riding busses will be picked up 30 minutes later on Wednesdays.

EMERGENCY LATE START

A late start time may be used due to inclement weather or other emergencies. If an emergency late start is utilized, all schools would start two hours later than usual, and all morning bus pickups would occur two hours later than usual. Dismissal times would remain the same. The schedule within the building will be accommodated in order to ensure that students miss as little instructional time as possible, while also allowing us to keep students safe coming to school

MERIDIAN #223 WEATHER RELATED / EMERGENCY RELATED SCHOOL CANCELLATION / EARLY DISMISSAL

As a general rule, Meridian C.U.S.D. #223 believes it is best to transport students to and from school at the regular times because area drivers are accustomed to our busses on the roads at these times and statistics prove less bus/traffic problems occur at these times. Under unusual circumstances or approaching winter storm advisories, we may make the decision to close schools early. We plan to make this decision by noon and notify the below listed media immediately and use our Parent Notification Call System to inform parents. Early dismissal means the students will be dismissed one hour early at 1:30 PM.

The decision to cancel school because of weather/other emergency will be made by 6:00 AM if possible with the below listed media notified immediately. Our district-wide All-Call Notification Phone System will also be used to inform parents of a school closure. Every attempt will be made to follow this 6:00 AM time line. The decision to cancel school is made in consultation with national/state weather radar, township road commissioners, and school district personnel. The philosophy of the district is to cancel school rather than transport students to school and have to send them home. While this is the general rule, occasionally storms develop during the day and an early dismissal is warranted. We only have 175 days of school each year. Making up missed school days is done in the spring when weather is not an issue.

GENERAL WEATHER GUIDELINES FOR CANCELLATION/EARLY DISMISSAL

A heat index of approximately 100 degrees for an extended number of days will generally warrant early dismissal or a Wind Chill Index of approximately -30 to -35 degrees will generally warrant school cancellation. While these are general guidelines used by the district, we understand parents are the final authority for their children. Only parents know the specific health and transportation concerns of their children.

Therefore, parents should feel comfortable in determining whether or not their children should attend school due to weather conditions. If you determine your children should not attend school due to weather, please call the school and notify the office of your child's absence as early as possible.

Media Notified: School Cancellation/Early Dismissal

Radio: Rochelle: WRHL

Rockford: WZOK, WROK, WXRX, WRRR, & WKMQ

Television: Rockford: WIFR-23, WREX-13, & WTVO-17

Facebook: Meridian CUSD223

If you have any questions about our policy related to school cancellation or early dismissal, please feel free to contact your building principal or the Superintendent of MCUSD #223.

SECTION 6 BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Meridian Community School District #223 uses a food service payor account program. The payor needs to be the same person listed as guardian on the registration form. All students are given a lunch card with a barcode. The lunch card is scanned and items purchased are then subtracted from the payor account. This system is used like a debit card, not a credit card. Therefore, money needs to be in your account. This is a prepaid program. Meridian C.U.S.D. #223 realizes that for families with more than one student, it may be easy to lose track of how much may be left in your payor account. Payor balance notices are distributed to your student(s) at each school about twice a month. Remember to ask your student(s) to give you your payor balance sheet when they get it. If you would ever want more detailed account information, please contact Food Service at 815-645-2230 X4351. Money can be deposited into your payor account at any of the schools your student(s) attend or e-pay on the main Meridian223.org web page.

Each of our school kitchens will offer many great grab-and-go style meals for breakfast. When your student arrives at school breakfast will be available for them at each school. The cost for your child to have breakfast at school is \$1.70 and Free and Reduced student meals, automatically qualified to receive breakfast at a \$0.40 price or free.

BREAKFAST

Monroe Center food services offers many great grab-and-go style meals for breakfast. When your student arrives at school breakfast will be available for them at the cost for your child normal price \$1.80 Reduced student \$0.30 cents, and free student at no cost. Breakfast is served from 7:10am to 8am in the cafeteria area. Please have money in your account to cost of the meal.

Lunch

Hot lunch is served daily in the school cafeteria. Lunch prices will be \$3.05 for students, Reduced and \$0.40 and free student at no cost. Milk is 45¢ each. All hot lunches must be paid for in advance. Checks for payment of lunch fees should be made payable to Meridian Community Unit #223.

FREE/REDUCED BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM Free/Reduced breakfast/lunch applications are available during the on-line registration process or may be picked up in any of the school offices. The Superintendent of Schools follows established federal guidelines for the free and reduced lunch program in determining a family's eligibility for the program. Applications will be available after July 18th for the 2025-2026 school year.

PREPAYMENTS All schools have a computerized point of sale (POS) system. Parents are able to prepay a sum of money to a student's account, which will then be debited for daily purchases. Funds can be added to a student lunch account with a credit/debit card through E-PAY system found on the Meridian School District webpage under the Food Service Department. You can also send money with your student to be turned into the office, please remember to have your students first and last name on the envelope along with where teachers name.

LUNCH ACCOUNT BALANCES

- All negative account balances are the parent/guardian's responsibility to bring up to, at least, a \$0.00 balance.**
- "Negative Balance Alerts" are sent to the parent/guardian email of record with the district every Wednesday.**
- "Low Balance Alerts" are sent to the parent/guardian email of record with the district every day their student's account balance falls below positive \$5.00. Parents/guardians have the option to toggle this alert notification on or off in Skyward Family Access.**
- Parents can monitor their child's accounts 24/7 in Skyward Family Access.**

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PRICES

A hot lunch will be served daily in the school cafeteria. Lunch prices will be \$2.95 for students and \$3.50 for adults. Milk is 40¢ each. All hot lunches must be paid for in advance. Breakfast is \$1.70. Checks for payment of lunch fees should be made payable to Meridian Community Unit #223.

FREE/REDUCED BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM

Free/Reduced breakfast/lunch applications are available during the on-line registration process or may be picked up in any of the school offices. The Superintendent of Schools follows established federal guidelines for

~~the free and reduced lunch program in determining a family's eligibility for the program. Applications will be available after July 18th for the 2023-2024/2025-2026 school year.~~

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- ~~• Parents can monitor their child's accounts 24/7 in Skyward Family Access.~~

SECTION 7 **ACADEMIC/ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING TO GRADES 3-5:

1. Two forms of proof of residency
2. Signed transcript request
3. Completed registration form and payment of fees
4. Out-of-state students need to have current information regarding physicals
5. Academic screenings to determine reading and math proficiency

TRANSFERS FROM MONROE CENTER

When a child is to be transferred from Monroe Center Grade School to another district, please notify the school office at least one week in advance. This will enable the teacher to complete necessary records. A transfer slip will be prepared which the parent or child may pick up the last day of the child's attendance. School records will be forwarded upon request by the other school.

ACCELERATED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Meridian CUSD 223 provides an accelerated placement of students in multiple ways. Students may be accelerated by early entrance to Kindergarten or 1st Grade, single subject acceleration, and grade acceleration. Every accelerated placement program is initiated by a referral process that may be initiated by staff or parent/guardian(s), followed by an evaluation and eligibility determination. This process is outlined in detail on the district website and is in alignment with Board Policy 6:135. Classroom and grade level changes are seldom made mid-year as this is a process based on data driven decisions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

Third, fourth, and fifth grade students are required to participate in organized physical education classes. Students will be required to participate in physical education five days a week. The policies pertaining to these requirements follow.

1. All third, fourth, and fifth grade boys and girls are required to have tennis shoes for physical education

- classes. They should be marked with the student's name.
2. If a student is physically unable to participate in physical education class or if certain restrictions are required due to poor health, a note from the student's doctor should be presented to the physical education teacher as soon as this condition is evident. The doctor's note should indicate the restriction specifically.
 3. A daily excuse from gym must be accompanied by a parent's note and presented to the gym teacher before gym class. It is strongly urged that parents use discretion in providing this type of excuse. Often, physical activity serves a therapeutic purpose for students who don't feel up to par or who are returning to school after an illness. In such cases, the parent's request will be honored.
 4. Growing up videos are viewed each year for 4th and 5th grade girls and boys based on state requirements. Age appropriate videos will be shared with parents prior to viewing at school and permission slips will be required to attend.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

1. Make it clear that you value the work and think it is important.
2. Provide a quiet, well-lit location good for studying.
3. Provide appropriate additional resources as necessary.
4. Do not complete your child's homework. Instead, be available to informally go over directions and check the work.
5. Check assignment notebooks/planners to see what work your child has.
6. Look over homework to see if the assignment is completed and placed back into the child's backpack or folder.
7. Ask your child to explain the homework to you.
8. Praise your child's efforts and encourage them through challenges.
9. Notify your child's teacher when family emergencies prevent the completion of given assignments.
10. Vacation homework – Teachers will use their discretion as to what will be made up and what will be sent home prior to vacation.

**** If you have special circumstances regarding your son/daughter's absence, please see the teacher. ****

THIRD GRADE HOMEWORK POLICY

Our policy is limited or controlled homework. The purpose of homework is to practice newly taught skills, review previously learned skills, develop study habits, and to enrich the curriculum. Completion of homework is important. If homework is unfinished a child may need to use some of their time to complete it with adult supervision during the school day. If this becomes a repeated habit, you will be notified and other alternatives will be discussed.

FOURTH GRADE HOMEWORK POLICY

A fourth-grade student should expect to complete homework assignments on a daily basis. The length of time will vary due to time allowed in class and the student's utilization of this time during class. If your fourth grader does bring his/her work home, it is to be finished and returned the next day. Completion of homework is important. If homework is unfinished a child may need to use some of their time to complete it with adult supervision during the school day. If this becomes a repeated habit, you will be notified and other alternatives will be discussed.

FIFTH GRADE HOMEWORK POLICY

A fifth-grade student should expect to receive assignments on an "everyday" basis. Any class work not completed during the school day will become "homework". The length may vary due to time allowed in class

and the students' utilization of this work time. Most times the students should not be spending more than an hour per night on regular assignments.

CHEATING

Cheating on tests, plagiarism, or any other type of deception to get credit without effort is universally recognized as improper conduct. This type of violation of classroom standards will be dealt with very severely by the classroom teacher. Students found cheating on homework/daily work will earn a Minor Discipline form. Students found cheating on formal assessments (Tests, Quizzes, Projects, Essays, etc.) will earn a Major Discipline Referral. Parents will be notified by the teacher and/or principal.

REPORT CARDS AND REPORTS TO PARENTS

The report card in grades 3, 4 and 5 reflects academic grades per subject, figured as a collective average of a child's academic progress during a given term. We are continuously developing our assessments and grading practices and this year we will begin, in some subject areas, using rubrics that represent the development of skills rather than specific grade letters as we shift to standards-based learning and reporting. We are using Forefront to help represent a clearer picture to both students and parents of the levels of understanding students have of each standard being practiced. Comments that reflect a child's practice using the 7 habits as well as conduct and behavior, may be included by the teacher.

Midterm progress reports are generally sent home at the half way point of a term, and quarterly progress reports are typically sent home shortly after the completion of a given quarter.

Parents and guardians can view their son or daughter's grades at any time by logging in through Skyward. If you need help accessing your Skyward account, please contact the Monroe Center office. Parents and guardians are encouraged to check their child's grades often.

PARENT – TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent - Teacher conferences will be held two evenings in the fall this year. A conference of approximately 15 minutes will be held between the teacher, parent, and with students if a conference is student led. Teachers will schedule before or after school conferences to accommodate parent schedules. Parents should arrange additional conferences directly with the classroom teacher. Occasionally, teachers will request that parents come in for special conferences during the school year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Meridian Community Unit Schools are members of the Ogle County Education Cooperative. As a member of the co-op, Highland School has the services of a school psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, teacher of the visually impaired, teacher of the hearing impaired, and a school social worker.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION

As part of the district responsibility for Special Education Child Find, the district requires all requests for special education evaluations be put in writing and addressed to the building Principal where your child attends.

TITLE I ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The committee supports the development and implementation of the District's Title I plan. At the Superintendent's directive, its activities may include:

1. Facilitating the active involvement of parents/guardians in their children's academic success by such activities as coordinating Title I parent-teacher conferences, providing information to help parents/guardians assist their children, coordinating volunteer or paid participation by parents/guardians in school activities, and establishing a process to respond to parents'/guardians' inquiries and recommendations.
2. Distributing Title I informational materials.
3. Preparing and monitoring revised School Improvement Plan(s).
4. Supporting the implementation of Board of Education policy 6:170, Title I Programs. Committee members include parents/guardians and teachers of Title I children.

SECTION 8 **TRANSPORTATION**

PARKING AREAS / BUS LOADING ZONES

When entering the parking lot, please enter on the west side of the parking lot and exit on the east side. Please park in the north row at Monroe Center Grade School during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal times. When dropping students off please use the crosswalk in the main parking lot and when picking up students at dismissal please proceed to the back-parking lot behind the school. The busses take up a large segment of the available space and these busses will be given priority on this parking space. If you have signed up to attend one of our school parties, directions for parking and building entry will be given prior to such events. During school functions that occur after regular school hours, the blacktop area in back of school may be used for parking. Please stay on the hard surfaces.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

All eligible students will be provided transportation to school from their homes or a designated location such as a baby-sitter, grandparent, etc. If a student is to be transported from a location other than the home where he/she resides, the school must be aware by August registration. Please contact the school office and transportation if any changes should occur during the year. If a change does require any adjustment on the part of the school district, the parent will be responsible for the transportation of their child. Day to day changes in pick up and drop off locations are the direct responsibility of the parent.

REQUIRED USE OF BUS SCAN CARDS

To ensure efficiency and safety in student transportation, all students are **required** to use their **bus scan cards** when entering and exiting route buses. If a student doesn't not have their bus card for **three consecutive days**, parents will be contacted, and a **\$2 replacement fee** will be added to your **Skyward account**. Fees are for the current school year and subject to change. Please help remind your student to bring their bus card daily. If a replacement is needed, please reach out to the Transportation Department 815-645-2230 ext. 7011 or 7013 or your student's bus driver.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

Many Meridian C.U.S.D. #223 students are transported each day to school on buses provided by the school district. Since bus drivers must follow a rigid schedule, there is a set of rules, which applies to those who ride buses.

1. Students are expected to be at their designated bus stop 5 minutes prior to their bus arrival time. If the driver were required to wait for tardy pupils, it would be unfair to other families, prolong the duration of the trip, and possibly contribute to unsafe practices. Help keep the bus on schedule.
2. When pupils must cross the road to be picked up in the morning, the driver, after looking for approaching cars, will signal when it is safe to cross. Children should be instructed to wait for a proper signal and to cross promptly. They should wait completely back from the street or road.
3. Students who live on the left side of the road always cross 10-15 feet in front of the bus when getting off the bus in the afternoon. The student should be instructed to walk to a point 10-15 feet in front of the bus on the right shoulder of the road and remain there until a signal is given by the driver to cross.

4. All students must remain in their seats at all times while the bus is in motion. Please get on and off the bus without pushing or shoving.
5. Students should refrain from marking, defacing, or in any way damaging school buses on the inside or outside. The parents of the students will pay for any such damage. School buses are very expensive to purchase and maintain. Please help your child to see the importance of maintaining school property. Pupils must refrain from unnecessary conversation with the driver. Drivers are very busy with the job of safe driving. Shouting and screaming is not a part of bus riding. Neither students nor driver should use any profanity. Students should be absolutely quiet at all railroad crossings and dangerous roadway intersections.
6. Students should be a safe distance from a moving bus for the safety of everyone. Students, not on the bus, should not touch the bus when it is moving.
7. School buses are required to travel only public roads to pick up school children.
8. One and one-half miles is the legal distance a child may be required to walk to meet transportation or to the school building.
9. In case of school being dismissed early during the day (hot weather, snow, etc.), parents should have an emergency plan in place.
10. Conditions regarding bus schedules due to bad weather:
 - a. We will utilize our calling system. Make sure that we have your preferred notification number on file.
 - b. Bad weather (snow): When it is decided that buses will not run, television stations will be informed. This information is to be broadcast no later than 7:00 A.M. We will do our best to broadcast the information over T.V. channels 13, 23 and 17. We will also utilize our District Emergency Notification Call System to keep you informed.
 - c. Please remember these stations are very hard to contact on mornings such as this and all cannot be informed at once.
11. It will be the parents' responsibility to bring children to or from school if portions of the routes are impassable.
12. Students are not to eat, chew gum, or drink on the bus.
13. If the bus driver and school officials have difficulty with a student's behavior, after he/she has been warned, a school official will contact the parents of the child. If the call or letter does not correct the behavior problem, the student will be removed from the bus. Parents will then supply the transportation.
14. Problems or complaints concerning the transportation of your child should be of concern to all of us. Safe transportation is made possible by the cooperative efforts of many people. If you have a concern or a question, please contact the transportation director at (815) 645-2230 x7002 or your child's building principal.
15. All students must remain in their seats facing forward at all times while the bus is in motion.
16. Be courteous to the driver. Use a whisper voice to talk to your friend in your seat.
17. Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
18. Be alert to traffic, look both ways, and always walk in front of bus when boarding or leaving the bus.
19. No throwing of any type of article on the bus.
20. Students should be a safe distance from a moving bus for the safety of everyone.
21. Students should get the driver's permission before opening or closing windows. It is also very important that students not lean or reach out of bus windows at any time.

The driver has the authority and responsibility to maintain proper conduct on his/her bus.

**The bus driver has the authority to assign seats on his/her bus for as long a period as he or she considers it necessary. **

Regular bus students must ride the bus unless a note from the parent is given to the teacher, or they are attending a scheduled activity.

BUS CODE

Expectations	Bus Stop	Entering /Exiting Bus	While Riding
Respect Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes early * Line up oldest student first youngest last * Keep hands/feet body parts to self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Be prompt *Wait your turn to enter / exit *Keep / hands feet body parts to self *Feet on the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Listen to your driver *Respect others *Eliminate driver distractions *Use appropriate language / voice volume *Ask Permission before opening windows *Keep all items inside bus *Refrain from littering
Respect Safety Educations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Follow directions and procedures *Report unsafe situations and behavior *Stand 5 giant steps away from edge of road or curb *Keep balls and games at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Wait for driver to completely stop before walking toward the bus *Wait for your drivers signal to come to the bus or cross in front of the bus *Use the handrail when entering / exiting the bus *WALK up and down the steps *Immediately walk away from the bus, do NOT stop and get mail from mailbox 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Talk quietly * Remain seated while bus is moving, seat to seat and back to back feet on the floor until completely stopped *Keep arms and legs inside your own seat area and out of the aisle *Book bags on lap or under the seat *Maintain a food, gum, and candy free environment due to students with food allergies as well as a choking hazard
Respect Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Keep area clean *Stay out of roadway *Respect others, people, property and lawns *Dress appropriately for the weather while following school dress code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stay 10 feet away from the bus, all the way around *ALWAYS cross in front of the bus *Keep hands to self *Emergency exit you must leave everything on the bus and listen for instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Throw away garbage in proper container *Report any damage or issues to the driver *Do Not stand on the seats *Quiet at RR tracks is signaled by interior lights coming on *Low volume and earphones when using electronics * Keep all body parts inside the bus *Refrain from throwing items *No Spraying perfume, hairspray, glitter etc. *NO recording or picture taking of other students at any time

SECTION 9

LIBRARY INFORMATION

CIRCULATION POLICY

The Monroe Center Grade School Library has books for every grade and reading level. More books can be checked out when all other books are returned. Lost or damaged books must be paid for. Library reference books may be taken to the classroom, but must remain in the building.

THIRD – FIFTH GRADES:

Students are allowed to check out two books at a time. Overdue books are charged a fine of \$0.05 per day. There is a three-day grace period; if the book is returned in the first three days it is overdue, the fine is waived. On the fourth day, the fine is retroactive to day one. A student may not check out any other books until all overdue books are returned and fines are paid.

POLICY FOR LOST AND DAMAGED BOOKS

LOST BOOKS:

1. Fine: Replacement cost plus \$3 processing fee
2. Minimum amounts due: Hardcover: \$10 plus \$3 processing fee, Paperback: \$5 plus \$3 processing fee
3. *Note: Please do not purchase replacement books for the library. We order from special companies who use library binding.

LOST/FOUND/RETURNED BOOKS:

1. Book returned before replacement ordered: no fine
2. Book returned after replacement ordered: no refund

DAMAGED BOOKS:

1. \$3 repair fine if book can be salvaged
2. Replacement fines go into effect if book is beyond use
3. Please note that wet books, even slightly wet, become brittle and can develop mold. Wet books will usually need to be replaced.

SECTION 10

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE (Steady horn sound)

1. Students and staff leave their rooms according to the designated routes, quickly and orderly.
2. Extra rooms and washrooms are checked.
3. Students walk completely away from the building to a designated, grassy area where the teacher calls roll and utilizes their emergency procedures.

TORNADO (P.A. announcement, intercom buzzer, and/or air horn)

1. Teachers are notified if a tornado watch is in effect. They are later notified if the watch is lifted.
2. In case of a warning, classes report to their assigned locations. They crouch on the floor (on their knees), facing a wall if possible, with their hands covering their heads.
3. Classes outdoors will try to reach their inside location of safety or lie flat on the ground.

EARTHQUAKE

1. If indoors, stay indoors. Hide under sturdy furniture. Stay near the center of the building.
2. Stay away from glass.
3. If outside, stay away from building and utility wires.

NUCLEAR EMERGENCY OR HAZARDOUS SPILL

In the event of a nuclear emergency or a hazard spill, our students will be evacuated by bus to Jefferson High School in Rockford, IL, where parents may pick them up. If students were to be evacuated to another location, parents would be notified by the district messaging/calling system, radio and television.

We also practice additional emergency drills; such as, Lockdowns and Reverse Evacuations.

SECTION 11

OTHER INFORMATION

VISITORS

The safety of our students and faculty is a top priority at Monroe Center Grade School. Parents are welcome to

visit our school. **All visitors**, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and proceed immediately to the main office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school.

All visitors must sign in through the LobbyGuard system in the office at Monroe Center. A photo ID or driver's license should be brought to help facilitate this process. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag to their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. Visitors will also sign out in the office through the LobbyGuard system when leaving.

If you need to visit a teacher *before, during, or after* school, you must have an appointment with that teacher. Parents will not be allowed to visit with a teacher without an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period. The School Visitation Rights Act permits employed parents/guardians, who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict, the right to time off from work under certain conditions to attend necessary school functions such as parent-teacher conferences, academic meetings and behavioral meetings. Letters verifying participation in this program are available from the school office upon request.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespass and/or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, or any other person.
2. Behave in an inappropriate manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and district policies.
11. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
12. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
13. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
14. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
15. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

SCHOOL PARTIES

There will be three parties per year school-wide for grades 3, 4 and 5. These are Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Times will be shared as the day approaches with parents via [school-messengerRooms](#) and principal communication. Please be considerate of classroom parties for the grade-level students. Siblings are

not to attend classroom parties, along with other family members. **Only room parents who are signed up to volunteer may attend the classroom parties due to our limited parking space. Please remember that all treats must be store-bought. If you signed up to provide an activity on the day of the party, please be sure to plan an activity that will fill the allotted time slot.** Also, birthday treats must also be store-bought and left in the office. An office staff member will deliver the treats to your child's classroom.

NAME LABELS

Any articles of clothing that your child removes at school should be labeled (boots, caps, sweater, etc.) Money sent to school with all children should be placed in an envelope with the student's name, and the amount of money written on the outside.

LOST ITEMS

Lost and found areas are maintained in the school. Money found should be turned in to the teacher or office.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are correlated with the educational program and are used to either introduce or review a unit. Field trips are considered to be an extension of the classroom. Field trips are planned experiences, which can best be taught outside the classroom. It is also used as a part of the enrichment program. This is concrete learning rather than abstract. Adequate preparations in the subject area and definite objectives are made before each trip. Evaluation and review of material seen on the field trip is made after the trip has been completed. Children should attend school when a field trip has been scheduled. **All students must have a signed permission slip to go on a field trip.** Safety rules along with the Monroe Center Grade School PBIS Policy are strictly enforced on these trips and students not following rules may be removed from the trip that day and/or barred from participating in future trips.

CLASSROOM SUPPLY LISTS

Classroom supply lists are available for each grade level on the district website under the Monroe Center Grade School link. If you do not have online access, you may pick-up a hard copy at the school office.

SECTION 12

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice Regarding Public Act 94-0994

The purpose of this notice is to help the school and district comply with the state law placing restrictions on child sex offenders' access to school, school property or loitering within 500 feet of a school property when

persons under 18 are present. In an effort to keep you informed and increase awareness of the Illinois Sex Offender Registry legislation, school districts are required to notify parents that information about sex offenders is available to the public. The names and addresses of all registered sex offenders in the State of Illinois listed by county are posted for public access on the following website: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor>. You may search the site database by name, zip code or county.

TITLE I SCHOOL NOTIFICATION

In accordance with ESEA Section 1111(h)(6) *PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW*, the Meridian CUSD #223 School District is notifying every parent of a student in a Title I school that you have the right and may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. This information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If at any time your child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher not highly qualified, the school will notify you. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your district superintendent at 815-645-2230 ext. 7002.

MERIDIAN CUSD #223 LEGAL NOTICE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION POLICY

It is the purpose of this policy to comply with P.A. 89-191 of *The School Code* on the use of behavioral interventions for students with disabilities.

The Meridian District #223 recognizes that appropriate interventions are necessary for all students, disabled or non-disabled, whose behavior is not acceptable, and that administrators, teachers and other school personnel who work with students with disabilities require training and guidance in the use of behavioral interventions. A goal of this policy and procedure (hereafter collectively, "Policy") is to make available training and guidance to administrators and teachers of students with disabilities who require behavioral intervention, that provides ways for working successfully with said students, in order to provide an environment in which said students can learn. The policy recognizes that the use of positive or non-aversive interventions is generally most consistent with the educational goals of promoting students' academic, social and personal growth. Therefore, non-aversive or positive desirable interventions designed to develop and strengthen desirable behaviors should be used to the extent possible and are generally preferable to the use of aversive or more restrictive procedures. While positive approaches alone may not always succeed in controlling inappropriate behavior, the use of more restrictive procedures may be necessary and should be utilized as provided in the Policy.

MERIDIAN CUSD #223 LEGAL NOTICE ANNUAL ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTICE

This is to inform you of the status of the Meridian CUSD #223 asbestos management plan(s). It has been determined by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency that asbestos containing materials are in the school building.

As required, our buildings were initially inspected for asbestos in 1988. The AHERA law requires that a visual surveillance of asbestos containing areas be completed every six months and a re-inspection conducted every three years. Any evidence of disturbance has been, and will continue to perform the required inspections through the services of IDEAL and Associated Environmental Engineering Services, Inc.

The Inspection/Management Plan is available for public review in the District Office at Meridian Junior High School. Should you wish to review the plans, please call to make an appointment between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM on weekdays. Any concerns relative to asbestos containing materials should be directed to Mr. John Finley.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROHIBITED

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. Any person, including a district employee or agent, or student, engages in sexual harassment whenever he or she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
 - a. Substantially interfering with a student's educational environment;
 - b. Creating an intimidating hostile, or offensive educational environment;
 - c. Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
 - d. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT STANDARDS

School districts are required to include in their student handbook the District's Employee Code of Professional Conduct. These standards, in part, define appropriate conduct between school employees and students. A copy

of these standards can be found on the District's website or requested from the Superintendent's office.

See Meridian #223 policy 5:120.

MAKING A COMPLAINT - ENFORCEMENT

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidences of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the building principal or superintendent. A student may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined. **See Meridian #223 policy 7:20.**

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

The superintendent or designee shall assign students to classes. **See Meridian #223 policy 7:30.**

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

In accordance with ESEA Section 1111 (h)(6) PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW, the Meridian CUSD #223 District is notifying every parent of a student in a Title I school that you have the right to and may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. The information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher will include, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status, through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.

3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, if so, their qualifications.

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, the District must provide students with disabilities with appropriate special education and related services to address their educational needs. If your student receives related services from the District through their Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) document, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, nursing services, and speech and language therapy, you may request copies of related service logs developed and maintained by the District for your child. These related service logs include information regarding the type and duration of related services administered to your child. If you have any questions regarding your child’s special education services, please contact Mr. Matt Zilm, Special Education Director of Ogle County Educational Cooperative, at mzilm@ocecil.org.

Annual Notice to Parents About Educational Technology

School districts throughout the State of Illinois contract with different educational technology vendors for beneficial K-12 purposes such as providing personalized learning and innovative educational technologies, and increasing efficiency in school operations.

Under Illinois’ Student Online Personal Protection Act, or SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/), educational technology vendors and other entities that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes are referred to in SOPPA as *operators*. SOPPA is intended to ensure that student data collected by operators is protected, and it requires those vendors, as well as school districts and the Ill. State Board of Education, to take a number of actions to protect online student data.

Depending upon the particular educational technology being used, our District may need to collect different types of student data, which is then shared with educational technology vendors through their online sites, services, and/or applications. Under SOPPA, educational technology vendors are prohibited from selling or renting a student’s information or from engaging in targeted advertising using a student’s information. Such vendors may only disclose student data for K-12 school purposes and other limited purposes permitted under the law.

In general terms, the types of student data that may be collected and shared include personally identifiable information (PII) about students or information that can be linked to PII about students, such as:

- Basic identifying information, including student or parent/guardian name and student or parent/guardian contact information, username/password, student ID number
- Demographic information
- Enrollment information
- Assessment data, grades, and transcripts
- Attendance and class schedule
- Academic/extracurricular activities
- Special indicators (e.g., disability information, English language learner, free/reduced meals or homeless/foster care status)
- Conduct/behavioral data
- Health information
- Food purchases
- Transportation information
- In-application performance data

- Student-generated work
- Online communications
- Application metadata and application use statistics
- Permanent and temporary school student record information

Operators may collect and use student data only for K-12 purposes, which are purposes that aid in the administration of school activities, such as:

- Instruction in the classroom or at home (including remote learning)
- Administrative activities
- Collaboration between students, school personnel, and/or parents/guardians
- Other activities that are for the use and benefit of the school district

<u>Chromebook Charges</u>	<u>Cost</u>
<u>Replace keys on keyboard (not a keyboard replacement)</u>	<u>\$5.00</u>
<u>Headphone Jack Replacement</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
<u>LCD Screen Replacement</u>	<u>\$45.00</u>
<u>Keyboard Replacement</u>	<u>\$65.00</u>
<u>Touchpad Replacement</u>	<u>\$15.00</u>
<u>USB Port</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
<u>Body/Hinge Replacement</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>
<u>Charger Replacement</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
<u>Chromebook total Loss/Damage</u> <u>August 01, 2022, a Replacement Chromebook cost \$359.00.</u>	<u>\$359.00</u>

UNIFORM GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member should notify any District Complaint Manager if he or she believes that the School Board, its employees, or its agents have violated his or her rights guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy, or have a complaint regarding any one of the following:

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, excluding Title IX sexual harassment complaints governed by policy 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §791 *et seq.*
4. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*
5. Equal Employment Opportunities Act (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act), 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*
6. Sexual harassment prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a); Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.* (Title IX sexual harassment complaints are addressed under policy 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*)
7. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60
8. Bullying, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

9. Misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children
10. Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs
11. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180/
12. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112/
13. Provision of services to homeless students
14. Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/
15. Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/.

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this policy, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this policy may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to this grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parents/guardians); this includes mediation.

Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed under this policy shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the District will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

Deadlines

All deadlines under this policy may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the District's main office is open.

Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any District Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For any complaint alleging bullying and/or cyberbullying of students, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy. For any complaint alleging sexual harassment or other violation of Board policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy.

Investigation Process

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. If the Complainant is a student under 18 years of age, the Complaint Manager will notify his or her parents/guardians that they may attend any investigatory meetings in which their child is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as

required by law or this policy, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this policy about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days after the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time.

The Superintendent will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

If a complaint contains allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), the written report shall be filed directly with the Board, which will make a decision in accordance with paragraph four of the following section of this policy.

Decision and Appeal

Within five school business days after receiving the Complainant and the accused by first class U.S. mail as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

Within 10 school business days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board.

Within 30 school business days, the Board shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Superintendent's decision or direct the Superintendent to gather additional information. Within five school business days after the Board's decision, the Superintendent shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Board's action.

For complaints containing allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), within 30 school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's or outside investigator's report, the Board shall mail its written decision to the Complainant and the accused by first class U.S. mail as well as to the Complaint Manager.

This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Superintendent or Board. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

Appointing a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers

The Superintendent shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with Title IX.

The Superintendent shall appoint at least two Complaint Managers, one of each gender. The District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator, if any, may be appointed a Complaint Manager. The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of current Complaint Managers. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students, parents/guardians, employees, and members of the community are informed of the contact information for the District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers on an annual basis.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Title IX Coordinator:

PJ Caposey, Superintendent
207 W. Main St., Stillman Valley, IL 61084
pcaposey@mail.meridian223.org
815/645-2230

Jen Speakes, District Staff Officer
207 W. Main St., Stillman Valley, IL 61084
jspeakes@mail.meridian223.org
815/645-2230

Complaint Managers:

Jen Speakes, District Staff Officer
207 W. Main St., Stillman Valley, IL 61084
jspeakes@mail.meridian223.org
815/645-2230

PJ Caposey, Superintendent
207 W. Main St., Stillman Valley, IL 61084
pcaposey@mail.meridian223.org
815/645-2230

LEGAL REF.:

Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. §621 et seq.

Americans With Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.

Equal Employment Opportunities Act (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act), 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq.

Equal Pay Act, 29 U.S.C. §206(d).

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq.

Immigration Reform and Control Act, 8 U.S.C. §1324a et seq.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §791 et seq.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq.

Title IX of the Education Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.; 34 C.F.R. Part 106

State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a).

105 ILCS 5/2-3.8, 5/3-10, 5/10-20.7a, 5/10-20.60, 5/10-22.5, 5/22-19, 5/24-4, 5/27-1, 5/27-23.7, and 45/1-15. Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act, 410 ILCS 513/.

Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/.

Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/.

Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180/, 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 280.

Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112/.

Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.240 and 200.40.

CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:170 (Title I Programs), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities), 8:95 (Parental Involvement), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Sexual harassment affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from sexual harassment is an important District goal. The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, and it complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106) concerning everyone in the District's education programs and activities, including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and third parties.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Sexual harassment as defined in Title IX (Title IX Sexual Harassment) is prohibited. Any person, including a District employee or agent, or student, engages in Title IX Sexual Harassment whenever that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's educational program or activity; or
3. *Sexual assault* as defined in 20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v), *dating violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(10), *domestic violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8), or *stalking* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(30).

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

Definitions from 34 C.F.R. §106.30

Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances where the District has substantial control over both the *Respondent* and the context in which alleged sexual harassment occurs.

Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint means a document filed by a *Complainant* or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a *Respondent* and requesting that the District investigate the allegation.

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of the conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Supportive measures mean non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the *Complainant* or the *Respondent* before or after the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* or where no *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* has been filed.

Title IX Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the District prevents and responds to allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment as follows:

1. Ensures that the District's comprehensive health education program in Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, incorporates (a) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention programs in grades pre-K through 12, and (b) age-appropriate education about the warning signs, recognition, dangers, and prevention of teen dating violence in grades 7-12. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the District's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Board policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.
2. Incorporates education and training for school staff pursuant to policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and as recommended by the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, or a Complaint Manager.
3. Notifies applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and collective bargaining units of this policy and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator by, at a minimum, prominently displaying them on the District's website, if any, and in each handbook made available to such persons.

Making a Report

A person who wishes to make a report under this Title IX Sexual Harassment grievance procedure may make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking. A person who wishes to make a report may choose to report to a person of the same gender.

School employees shall respond to incidents of sexual harassment by promptly making or forwarding the report to the Title IX Coordinator. An employee who fails to promptly make or forward a report may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy and keep current the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.

All District Employees are responsible to follow Board Policy 5:120 regarding Employee Ethics, Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest

Title IX Coordinator:

Jen Speakes

207 W, Main Street

Stillman Valley, IL 61084

jspeakes@mail.meridian223.org

815-645-2230

Processing and Reviewing a Report or Complaint

Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator and/or designee will promptly contact the *Complainant* to: (1) discuss the availability of supportive measures, (2) consider the *Complainant's* wishes with respect to *supportive measures*, (3) inform the *Complainant* of the availability of *supportive measures* with or without the filing of a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*, and (4) explain to the *Complainant* the process for filing a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint*.

Further, the Title IX Coordinator will analyze the report to identify and determine whether there is another or an additional appropriate method(s) for processing and reviewing it. For any report received, the Title IX Coordinator shall review Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*; and 7:190, *Student Behavior*, to determine if the allegations in the report require further action.

Reports of alleged sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational program or activity that is productive, respectful, and free of sexual harassment.

Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Grievance Process

When a *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will investigate it or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement procedures to ensure that all *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaints* are processed and reviewed according to a Title IX grievance process that fully complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45. The District's grievance process shall, at a minimum:

1. Treat *Complainants* and *Respondents* equitably by providing remedies to a *Complainant* where the *Respondent* is determined to be responsible for sexual harassment, and by following a grievance process that complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45 before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions against a *Respondent*.
2. Require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and provide that credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a *Complainant*, *Respondent*, or witness.
3. Require that any individual designated by the District as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by the District to facilitate an informal resolution process:
 - a. Not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual *Complainant* or *Respondent*.
 - b. Receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's *education program or activity*, how to investigate and grievance process (including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable), and how to serve impartially.
4. Require that any individual designated by the District as an investigator receiving training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
5. Require that any individual designated by the District as a decision-maker receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the *Complainant's* sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.

6. Include a presumption that the *Respondent* is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
7. Include reasonably prompt timeframes for conclusion of the grievance process.
8. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the District may implement following any determination of responsibility.
9. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.
10. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
11. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
12. Not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any District student who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with student behavior policies. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy does not increase or diminish the ability of the District or the parties to exercise any other rights under existing law.

Retaliation Prohibited

The District prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, has made a report or complaint, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under this policy. Any person should report claims of retaliation using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

Any person who retaliates against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in any manner under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

LEGAL REF.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999).

Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Conduct, and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior)