***News and Notes***

(Not Addressed in Handbook)

**Short Days:** (caused by snow, ice, plumbing, electrical problems, etc.) In case of a shortened school day, parents will be notified by announcements on the local radio, social media, and television stations. If available, please sign up for the Remind text alerts; this system will be used when needed. If anything changes, please make sure the office and classroom teacher are notified. We must have confirmation from an adult before we allow students to leave the building. For everyone’s safety, if we do not have confirmation, the student will remain in the building with us.

**Change of Address, Phone, etc.:** It is very important that the school has current addresses, phone numbers, and emergency information. Please notify the school if there are changes in your home address, phone numbers, place of employment, babysitter, guardian, or emergency numbers. You MUST come into the office to make changes on the registration form.

**First Aid Emergencies:** First aid for minor injuries will be given at school (minor cuts and scrapes will be washed off and a Band-Aid applied, if necessary.) In the event of serious accidents or sudden illnesses, the parent will be notified. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE EMERGENCY NUMBER ON THE STUDENT’S FORM BE UP-TO-DATE. WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO HAVE AT LEAST 3 EMERGENCY NUMBERS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY FORM.

**Emails:** Please make sure you neatly write your email address on the registration form. We hope to start emailing you some of the school correspondence. We must have a valid email. The email address on the registration form must also be used to make changes to students’ dismissal. You may list more than one email.

**Fever Policy:** Your child should be kept home from school any time he/she has a fever and should not be sent back to school until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours. A fever is considered any temperature over 99.0.

**Telephone:** The line at school is a business phone line and will not be used to make arrangements to go home with friends. These plans should be made at home. We also do not interrupt the learning environment for parent/teacher phone calls. You may NOT call the school phone and speak to your child. We are more than happy to take a message and ask the teacher to contact you, or give your student a message.

**Recess:** Kindergarten-4th grade students are required to receive additional minutes of physical activity per school week, including a 15 minute per day recess break. Most recess will be outdoor but during inclement weather (rain, extreme heat or cold) students may use GoNoodle in the classroom. Snack cannot be included in this activity time. Students will not be expected to go outside if the heat index is above 100 or if the wind chill is below 32…

**Custody:** Updated and current custody information must be on file in the office. We will not be responsible for any situations that have not been filed properly.

\*\*\*If you bring your child late after the sign has been turned for being tardy at 7:50 a.m., you MUST come in to sign your child in at the front office. Please always come in to do this, as this is our rule.

**PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

Every child needs to see the parent and teacher are working together as a team. Please make a special effort t to meet your child’s teacher and help build a positive working relationship for your child’s total education. We need each other’s support to ensure a child succeeds in school. At MES, OUR door is ALWAYS open. If you have any questions, concerns, praise or comments please reach out to our teachers and/or administration.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** We have regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences. The dates will be included on the school calendar. If you need a conference with your child’s teacher, please call or send a note to make an appointment.

**Parent-Teacher Communication:** If you need to talk with your child’s teacher, be certain to make an appointment at a time convenient for both of you so that instruction time is not lost. Please do not ask the teacher to step into the hall to talk with you. During the times teachers are supervising students, they are no available to conference. We encourage notes from hone or emails to inform the teacher of any immediate concerns or problems, such as sickness, death in the family, problem with schoolwork, changes in child’s normal routine, etc. When needed, your child’s teacher will contact you as soon as possible.

**Volunteers:** If you would like to volunteer your time at our school, please let us know.

**Visitors:** During school hours, (7:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.) all visitors will report to the school office when entering the school. Visitors must be listed as an authorized visitor on the registration form and present a valid state issued photo ID. Visitor passes shall be issued for all persons other than students and employees of the school. This is to ensure the safety of every child. The principal or designee can deny or delay entry into building in order to preserve instructional time.

**Guidance Counselor**

The guidance counselor, Natasha Clark, provides periodic classroom instruction, as well as small group and individual counseling. Students benefit by having a professionally trained counselor to assist with academic, emotional, social problems, etc.

**Cafeteria Policy**

Breakfast Program: Our cafeteria serves a nutritious breakfast each morning. Breakfast is served from 7:05 a.m. until 7:40 a.m. This year breakfast is FREE for all students. A la carte items can be purchased if students want more.

**Lunch Program:** Our cafeteria also serves a nutritious lunch every day. This year the cost of lunch is also FREE for all students. The cost for an adult lunch is $3.75. A la carte items can be purchased if students want more. If you wish to have lunch with your child, please send a note or call the cafeteria before lunch so enough food can be prepared to serve everyone. Marion County Schools operate on a closed lunch period, which means students are not permitted to leave campus for lunch. Only school lunches and sack lunches from home will be eaten in the cafeteria. In order to promote the National School Lunch Program, no deliveries from commercial restaurants will be allowed in our schools. Kids are not to have carbonated beverages.

**Pre-Truancy Board:** There shall be a pre-truancy board meeting at each school for students having 3 unexcused absences or 4 unexcused tardies.

**Excused Absences:** A DETAILED written excuse will be requested from the parent or guardian when a student is absent or tardy. Students are allowed to provide 5 parent notes for absences per semester. After 5 parent notes are used, students must provide a signed doctor’s note in order for absences to be excused. The written statement explaining the absences must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian and given to the homeroom teacher or office staff. The note should be filed on the first day the student returns and no later than 3 days.

**Excessive Absences:** The State School Compulsory Attendance Law, Tenn. Code Ann. 49-6-3006, requires the school system to file a juvenile truancy petition once a student accrues 5 unexcused absences from school.

**Early Dismissals:** Students who plan to leave school before the end of the school day must bring a note from their parent/guardian with the reason and time for the early dismissal stated in the note. The note should be given to the secretary in the main office. Students will remain in their classroom until a parent/guardian comes into the office to sign them out. The school must be notified in writing if a parent designee is to pick up your child.

FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A MARION COUNTY STUDENT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE WITH ANYONE WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PARENT/GUARDIAN WHO MUST BE VERIFIED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN. ANY PERSON PICKING UP A STUDENT MUST BE LISTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM THAT IS COMPLETED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

It is very important that parents/guardians keep the registration form updated, especially with legal alerts and current phone numbers. Fax notes or messages will not be accepted at any time. Faxed doctor notes will be accepted. It is parent/guardian’s responsibility to make sure school receives fax.

**Perfect Attendance**: Students with perfect attendance for the year will receive a certificate with their report card each 9 nine week grading period. Perfect attendance means being present every minute of every day. Students with excused absences, early dismissals, or tardies do NOT have perfect attendance.

**Tardiness:** Tardiness is also a part of attendance. Be in class on time. Students must be seated and ready to learn at 7:50. When students are tardy to school, they will: (1) sign in (2) get an admit slip to class, and (3) report directly to their assigned area. A student is to be considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom with textbooks and required materials with which to work when class starts.

**Attendance Incentives:** In order to improve the attendance of students, we will use an incentive program.

Individual Student Incentives:

\*Perfect attendance will be recognized each 9 weeks with a certificate and announcement on the news.

\*Perfect attendance will be rewarded for the entire year with either money, a gift, gift card, or similar.

**Classroom Incentives:**

\*Daily perfect classroom attendance will be recognized on the news the following morning. Upon recognition of your class’ perfect attendance, the attendance letter can be posted for the previous day.

\*Each teacher will have laminated letters that spell the words PERFECT ATTENDANCE!. Each day that your class has perfect attendance, you will add a letter to the word in the hallway. Each time your class has 18 days of perfect attendance (days do not have to be consecutive) they earn an award.

**Marion County Board of Education Promotion and Retention Policy**

All students will normally progress annually in sequential order from grade to grade with promotion being recorded at the end of each school year with the presentation of final report cards. The professional staff will place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally. Retentions may be made when, in the judgment of the teacher, such retentions are in the best interest of the students. Decisions to retain are subject to review and approval of the principal after consultation with the teacher. In order to enhance the opportunity for remediation, students with problems shall be identified as early as possible in the school year. Parents shall be notified when problems are identified and shall be informed periodically of remedial efforts and given progress reports.

The parents of any student who is deemed to be in danger of retention shall be informed in writing and requested to participate in a conference at least 6 weeks prior to the end of the school year. A copy of this document shall be included in the student’s permanent record file, along with minutes of the meeting with parents, if one occurs.

The following factors shall be considered in making a decision on promotion and retention:

1. Mastery of essential competencies. Students shall have mastered essential skills sufficiently to ensure a likelihood of success at the next grade level.
2. Special procedures for special students. Students who have been identified as having special problems, including high risk students and others with special needs, shall be given special consideration. Placement of students with IEPs shall be determined by the IEP-Team.
3. Flexible placement. Use of conditional promotion, remedial summer programs, assignment transitional classes and other approaches to meeting the needs of students shall be given consideration.
4. Attendance shall become a relevant factor only when excessive absenteeism becomes an educational problem.
5. Conduct. Retention shall not be used as a disciplinary measure.
6. Previous retention. Except under unusual circumstances, students shall not be retained more than once in the same grade.
7. Grade level. Retention shall be considered more appropriate in grades K-3.

Once the decision to retain has been made:

1. A report of each student retained shall be made to the director of schools.
2. Documentation verifying student deficiencies shall be place in the student’s record.
3. Parents shall have the right to appeal any decision through appeal procedures established by board policy
4. The teacher shall be consulted at each level of the appeal procedure. Educational experiences for the repeated year shall be varied in order to provide an appropriate instructional program. Variations may include, but are not limited to, the following:
5. Different teacher(s)
6. Different techniques and strategies
7. Different materials
8. Varying lengths of time per subject and/or physical setting in classroom.

For the purpose of determining the effectiveness of retention toward improving student achievement, the progress of retained students shall be monitored for at least 3 years. Any student may repeat any course as long as space is available. The first grade earned in the course shall be the grade of record unless the student is repeating the course has been retained.

Searches: New Tennessee laws authorize the principal and his/her designee to conduct searches of students and any visitor entering the building for reasonable suspicion of any violation of illegal drugs, weapons, or items not allowed by school rules. This law extends to cover the search of all automobiles driven to school by visitors. All automobiles, lockers, book bags, purses, or items brought onto school grounds are subject to search by school officials, police, or bomb-sniffling dogs at any time. (T. C.A. 40-6-420)

TENNESSEE SCHOOL BOARD POLICY MEDICINES

No school official or teacher will routinely dispense medication to students except in unique situations in which the child’s health is dependent upon medical aid. If under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take oral medication during school hours, and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication in compliance with the following regulations:

 Written instructions signed by the parent will be required and included:

1. Child’s name
2. Name of medication
3. Name of physician and signature
4. Time to be administered
5. Dosage and directions for administration
6. Possible side effects, if known
7. Termination date for administering the medication

The medication must be delivered to the main office, in person, by the parent or guardian of the student unless the medication must be retained by the student for immediate administration (i.e. student with asthma). The medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.

Unless these requirements can be met, medication will not be administered at school. The administrator/designee will:

1. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication being administered.
2. Keep an accurate record of the administration of medication.
3. Keep all medication in a locked cabinet except medication retained by a student per physician’s order.
4. Return unused prescription to the parent or guardian only.

The parent or guardian is responsible for informing the designated official of any change in the student’s health or change in medication. Forms must be completed and returned to the main office before medication can be administered.

Custody/Parental Access

The Board presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student’s custodial parent. Unless a Tennessee court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent shall be the one whom the school district holds responsible for the education and welfare of the child.

 Parents or guardians shall have the right to receive information contained in school records concerning their minor child. The Board, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent’s right; the custodial parent shall be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order, which curtails these specific rights.

 Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, shall be given access to all of the student’s educational records including but not limited to the student’s cumulative file and the student’s education file, if applicable.

 No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless:

1. The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child.
2. The person seeking custody gives the school reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the student at school.

The following procedures have been developed for situations involving child custody, visitation, and release of records.

1. Upon request, non-custodial parent shall be entitled to experience all parental rights to the extent that a legally binding instrument or court order does not restrict such rights.
2. A reasonable attempt will be made to publicize this policy so those affected parents will be informed of their option.
3. The Requesting parent will initiate the written request which must include the fill legal name and address of the student, the full name and addresses of both parents, and the requesting parent must sign int. The request must be renewed annually or whenever the student changes school, whichever occurs first.
4. Once the request has been made, the Principal will have cause to duplicate and mail/deliver to the requesting parent of record, timely copies of any official information (not to exceed two (2) weeks).
5. Official information for the purpose of this requirement is limited to annul parent and student calendars, report cards issued to alert parents to unsatisfactory midterm progress, notice of suspension and/or expulsion, and standardized test score reports routinely distributed to parents.
6. When information is to be provided through a teacher-and/or Principal-teacher conference, the requesting parent, upon his/her request, will be invited to attend the conference provided there is no legal document to forbid it, and the presence of both parents does not compromise the integrity or quality of the conference.
7. Duplicate reports may be photocopies and do not need to be duplicate originals.
8. The requesting parent may also ask that all other materials distributed by the school (newsletters, notices of special functions, disciplinary notices, etc.) be provided as well. To activate this request, the requesting parent may be required to provide a supply of self-addressed stamped envelopes to the school. Such arrangements are to be worked out by the parent and the building Principal.
9. The Staff will be oriented as to the rights of the non-custodial parents.