

2011-2012
Student/Family Handbook



LEARNING TODAY – LEADING TOMORROW

Mission Statement

Metro Deaf School promotes academic excellence for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students using an ASL/English bilingual approach. Our primary purpose is to empower our students to develop the skills and knowledge to succeed as global citizens.

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[*] Notice required by policy

How to use this Handbook

This handbook includes information for students and parents of Metro Deaf School. The Student Handbook is comprised of four parts:

- 1) Information
- 2) Academics;
- 3) Rules and Discipline; and
- 4) Health and Safety.

Topics within these categories are alphabetized.

****Students/Parents are asked to sign the “acknowledgement” form at the end of this handbook and return it to school.***

Please keep this handbook in a convenient location throughout the school year so that you can refer to it as questions arise.

Policy Information

Parents/guardians and students may want to refer to the school district policies, and information about where those policies can be accessed on the school district’s website, www.mdsmn.org

PART I – INFORMATION

Arrival and Dismissal Hours

School building hours are 8:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Classes are in session from 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

ECSE (Early Childhood Special Education) Program:

- M-TH 3 yr. olds - all day
- M-F 4 yr. olds – all day

Athletics/Extracurricular Activities

Expectations

The school district provides opportunities for students to pursue special interests that contribute to their physical, mental, and emotional health; however, instruction is the school district's priority. MDS expects that all students demonstrate initiative in their academic pursuits and that they work productively toward successful completion of assigned work. Students, who need additional assistance from teachers, should schedule a time to meet with them individually.

Students who participate in school-sponsored activities are expected to responsibly represent the school and community. All rules pertaining to student conduct and student discipline apply to school activities.

Students attending MDS need to learn to balance both schoolwork and extracurricular activities. While extracurricular activities are important, they are meant to enhance the overall school experience and not be the only student experience. Students are expected to prioritize schoolwork above extracurricular activities. Therefore, students who participate in athletics, clubs, or other extracurricular activities must maintain a GPA of 2.0 and be passing all classes (a passing grade is D+ or higher); for Fall sports, students must have maintained a GPA of 2.0 the spring prior to participating in fall sports.

Criteria

Students in Grades 6-12: To ensure that all participating students are meeting the criteria, Academic Eligibility Checks occur every other Friday as indicated on the school calendar. If a student is found to be Academically Ineligible (not meeting the criteria listed above), the student is unable to participate in games or competitions related to any activity starting the following Monday for the duration of two weeks.

If a student is failing a class, the student may request a review of their eligibility one (1) week later. During this week, the student can work to complete missing assignments. It is the student's responsibility to ask teachers for information on missing work. After a mandatory one week suspension of activities, the student's grades will be reviewed. If the student is no longer failing a class and meets the 2.0 GPA criterion, the student may resume extracurricular activities participation.

Student may become Academically Eligible if the criteria are met at the next grade check. If a student does not meet the criteria they will continue to be suspended from activities until the following grade check (two weeks). If a student becomes Academically Eligible, after a suspension, participation can resume on the following Monday.

The Athletic Director or the student's case manager will notify the student and parents, in writing, if there is a change in a student's Academic Eligibility status.

If a student is absent (from school) due to illness, he/she will not be allowed to participate in a practice/game later that day.

An unexcused absence results in no participation at the next practice/game (whichever one occurs first). The student may attend the practice/game, but as a spectator only. An unexcused absence would occur when the coach has not been notified (prior to the practice/game) that the student would be gone.

Careful consideration will be used when implementing and enforcing this policy. Coaches expect students to participate with the understanding that they have committed themselves to the team - both practices and games - but understand that, at times, outside situations may arise where a student would be excused from the practice/game. Each absence will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Fees

As with all Minnesota public schools, extracurricular activities/athletics have a participant fee attached. The fee is based on several factors including transportation, uniform use, league/tournament fees, and equipment use.

Athletes/Coaches/Spectators

All MDS students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities when possible. There is a fee charged for each activity which families are expected to pay within the allotted time frame. Should a family need scholarship assistance, they need to contact the Business Office to discuss financial support.

All spectators at school-sponsored activities are expected to behave appropriately. Students and employees may be subject to discipline and parents/guardians and other spectators may be subject to sanctions for inappropriate, illegal, or unsportsmanlike behavior at these activities or events.

MDS is a member of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). Students who participate in MSHSL activities must also abide by the MSHSL rules. MDS will enforce all MSHSL rules during the school year and in the summer where applicable.

Employees who conduct MSHSL activities will cover applicable rules, penalties, and opportunities with students and parents/guardians prior to the start of an activity. For more information about the MSHSL rules and student eligibility requirements, contact the Athletic Director.

Parents

The school is locked at 3:45 p.m. each day. Parents coming to school to pick up their child from an activity are asked to remain in their vehicles. Parents may not come into the school to wait for their children. Children will meet their parents in front of the building/parking lot escorted by staff. It is encouraged that students returning to school not re-enter the building, but instead have all their belongings with them when they leave for a practice or activity.

Parents who are volunteering to help in an activity may not bring siblings along as they cause for distraction and supervision becomes a liability for the school.

Parents are responsible to notify their child's bus related to pick-up.

****PLEASE NOTE****

Parents need to be on time when picking up their child/ren from an after school activity. If after 10 minutes past the pickup time a parent still has not arrived, a late fee will be assessed of \$5.00 for every 5 minutes they are late.

First offense - verbal warning

Second offense - verbal and written warning
Third offense - parent will be charged

Calendar

The school calendar is adopted annually by the school board. A copy of the school calendar can be found on the school district's website at www.mdsmn.org.

Communicating Concerns/Suggestions

All parents' suggestions and concerns are considered valuable and will be addressed. Ideas and feedback help us make continuous improvements in our education program. We will actively work with parents in resolving problems that may arise. Parents should direct their concerns by speaking to or scheduling a conference with their child's teacher(s). Parents may contact their child's teacher in person, writing, phone or however they chose when needing to discuss concerns.

Teachers are expected to respond immediately to a parent's request/concern. Parents are encouraged to contact the Executive Director should they feel their concerns or suggestions about their child are not being addressed.

We will try, at all times, to answer the phones. Messages are checked frequently. You will be called back if you leave a message. As with all schools, the teachers will get back to you as soon as they can. If it is an emergency, the teacher will be notified immediately. All non-emergency messages are delivered via e-mail.

E-mail is the preferred choice for dissemination of information to staff, students (when applicable) and families. Where e-mail is not available in a home, hard copies of the same information will be mailed home or sent via backpack.

E-mail does not take the place of personal contact with families. If there are issues with missed assignments, discipline, recognition of good work/effort, etc., staff is encouraged to send home personal notes or make a phone call depending on each situation. Follow-up to situations could occur through e-mail or if a teacher is unsuccessful in reaching a parent after several attempts. Personal contact is always best when situations arise.

Communication Guidelines

MDS is a school that recognizes ASL and English as the language of instruction at the school.

MDS wants to foster and encourage growth in ASL among their hearing families. If English is your first language, we want you, as parents, to *feel* comfortable and safe when visiting school. Teachers (hearing or Deaf) will use ASL when conversing with you and we *encourage* you, too, to "practice" your skills when in the school setting. Our staff is here to help you so please do not feel threatened when signing to staff. We are a team - here to support one another. If you would prefer a staff person assist you during and impromptu meeting requiring the use of sign language, please ask for assistance.

All of our families will have some type of IEP meeting or other meetings with staff during the school year. At these meetings, important and sometimes complex information about your child will be discussed. It is the policy of Metro Deaf School to arrange for an interpreter to attend these meetings to facilitate discussion at all times when there is a mix of hearing, hard of hearing and Deaf attendees.

Interpreters are always available for any meeting. Please let your child's teacher know should you wish for an interpreter to be present at any or all meetings you have regarding your child.

Complaints

Students, parents/guardians, employees, or other persons may report concerns or complaints to the school district. Complaints may be either written or oral. People are encouraged, but not required, to file a written complaint at MDS. The Executive Director will respond in writing to the complaining party regarding the school district's response to the complaint.

Eighteen-Year-Old Students

The age of majority for most purposes in Minnesota is 18 years of age. All students, regardless of age, are governed by the rules for students provided in school district policy.

Emergency Forms

Parents are responsible for keeping emergency information current. Emergency forms must be updated if your family situation changes. Please call the office if you need a new emergency form. It is imperative the school have another person to contact in case of emergency should the parent not be reachable.

Teachers must be informed of special needs or medical conditions (in writing) that impact your child's health, well-being or involvement in activities. MDS staff can only provide adequate care when this information is current.

Employment Background Checks [*]

The school district will seek criminal history background checks for all applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district. The school district also will seek criminal history background checks for all individuals, except enrolled student volunteers, who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services to the school district, regardless of whether compensation is paid. These positions include, but are not limited to, all athletic coaches, extracurricular academic coaches, assistants, and advisors. The school district may elect to seek criminal history background checks for other volunteers, independent contractors, and student employees.

Equal Access to School Facilities

The school district has created a limited open forum for secondary students to conduct non-curriculum-related meetings during non-instructional time. The school district will not discriminate against or deny equal access or a fair opportunity on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings. These limited open forum meetings will be voluntary and student initiated; will not be school sponsored; employees or agents of the school will be present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity; the meetings will not interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school; and nonschool persons will not direct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups. All meetings under this provision must follow the procedures established by the school district.

Fees [*]

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. Students may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including (not an inclusive list):

- Cost for materials for a class project that exceeds minimum requirements and is kept by the student.
- Security deposits for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- Field trips considered crucial component to the district's educational program.
- Admission fees or costs to attend or participate in optional extracurricular activities and programs.
- Use of technology equipment owned or rented by the school district.
- A school-district-sponsored driver education training course.

Students will be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact the Executive Director.

Food in the Classrooms

Students in K-5 will have a morning "snack time" that can include purchasing milk. Kindergarten students receive free milk at snack time as part of a State Program. Parents are responsible to provide a snack/beverage should your child desire a morning snack. Candy will not be allowed at "snack time" and is discouraged at lunch.

Students in all grades are encouraged to bring healthy, nutritious snacks to school as we recognize that many of our students board buses very early each morning. Each day around 10:00, students are able to eat a snack in their classroom or cafeteria (depending on grade).

If a student wants to bring a treat for other MDS students, state law requires that these treats be commercially produced.

Gum is not allowed in school during the school day. If a student is seen chewing gum, he/she will be directed to dispose of the gum.

Vending machines may be accessed by students remaining after school for after-school activities, not by students boarding buses to go home since the majority of home-district transportation companies do not allow consumption of food on the bus.

Fundraising

All fundraising activities conducted by student groups and organizations and/or parent groups must be approved in advance by school administration. Participation in non-approved fundraising activities is a violation of school district policy. Solicitations of students or employees by students for nonschool-related activities will not be allowed during the school day.

Gifts to Employees

Employees are not allowed to solicit, accept, or receive a gift from a student, parent, or other individual or organization of greater than nominal value. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to write letters and notes of appreciation or to give small tokens of gratitude.

Graduation Ceremony

Student participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right. Students who have completed the requirements for graduation are allowed to participate in graduation exercises, unless participation is denied for appropriate reasons, which may include discipline. Graduation exercises are under the control and direction of school administration. A formal graduation ceremony will occur for seniors.

Holiday Celebrations and Parties

The school must be careful not to cross the line between teaching about religious holidays (which is permitted) and celebrating religious holidays (which it not permitted). Teaching about a holiday will be constitutional if it furthers a genuine secular program of education, is presented objectively and does not have the effect of advancing or inhibiting religion. Such study serves the academic goal of educating students about history and cultures as well as the tradition of particular religions within a pluralistic society. For the complete policy, please see the District Policy Handbook, Policy #609.

Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies

Students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than a student's parents/guardians or school district officials, employees, and/or agents, except as provided by law and/or school policy.

Library and Media Center

The library/media center is open 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Students may use the library/media center during the school day when a supervisor is present. Fines are charged to students for missing/lost or damaged books. Failure to make restitution will result in loss of library privileges.

Lockers (4th – 12th Grade)

- Lockers are school property and are assigned to students for their use. Locks are not provided, but may be used.
- Lockers are to be used for school materials, books and personal clothing. Keeping items of great value in a locker is not recommended. MDS assumes no responsibility or liability for items stolen from lockers.
- Students may not switch lockers without permission.
- Students should not write on the inside or outside of the lockers.
- Stickers are NOT allowed to be affixed inside/outside the locker.
- If lockers are repeatedly slammed they will break. If your door is stuck, inform your teacher.
- Inappropriate use of the lockers will result in consequences which may result in loss of use.

At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of the students. Inspection of the interior of locker may be conducted by school staff for any reason, at any time, without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules.

Lost and Found

All articles found by students should be turned into the front office to be put into the Lost and Found. MDS is not responsible for any lost or stolen article. Students and parents are encouraged to check the lost and found whenever a student loses something. Items that are turned in are kept for a period of time and then donated to charity.

Lunch

K – 8th Grade lunch is eaten in the cafeteria; 9th -12⁺ lunch is eaten in the High School Commons. Students will be notified of their assigned lunch time on the first day of school. JHS/HS eat first lunch; K-5 eats second lunch.

Students may purchase lunch at school or bring a prepared lunch from home. Milk will be available for purchase to supplement lunches brought from home. Students are not allowed to consume pop or energy drinks during school hours.

Students in grades 11-12+ will be allowed to have access to the outside during lunch but not allowed to leave campus.

Hot lunches must be ordered on a monthly basis using the calendar menu system.

Students in grades 6 – 12 are allowed to microwave their lunches.

Students may be eligible for free and reduced price lunches and/or breakfasts. Free and reduced price eligibility forms are available at the front office. For more information regarding eligibility for free and reduced price meals, contact the school secretary.

Use of vending machines by students in PK-8 is prohibited during the school day. High School students may have access to the vending machines during lunch. Lost money (in the vending machine/s) is not the responsibility of the school and will only be reimbursed to students on a monthly basis or when the vending machine company restocks the machine.

Messages to Students

Office telephones, videophones, and TTYs are not for students' personal use. Students will not be called out of class to receive phone/video/TTY messages except in the event of an emergency. Personal cell/pager phone use during the instructional day is also prohibited.

Nondiscrimination [*]

The school district is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, or age in its programs and activities. The school has designated Jennifer Sweat as the district's human rights officer to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination. Jennifer is reachable via email: jsweat@mdsmn.org and/or phone: 651-259-1053.

Notice of Violent Behavior by Students []**

The school administration will give notice to teachers and other appropriate school staff before students with a history of violent behavior are placed in their classrooms. Prior to giving this notice, school administration will inform the student's parent or guardian that the notice will be given. The student's parents/guardians have the right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

Outside The School Day Activities

Sleepovers and birthday parties are great social events for our students to interact after school; however, invitations are expected to be exchanged outside of school. Please don't send party invitations to be distributed in class unless the entire class is being invited.

Parent-Teacher Group (PTG)

The PTG is a vital part of Metro Deaf School's community. Parents/significant adults provide important support through parent input on school issues as well as important educational information is typically shared during both meetings. We encourage all parents to join the PTG to help make MDS an excellent school for all children and their families. Dates re: PTG meetings can be found on the website:

www.mdsmn.org

Personal Property

All personal items brought to MDS should be labeled. MDS is not responsible for lost or damaged of personal property including, but not limited to: mobile devices, laptops, video games, iPods, hearing aids, cochlear implants, glasses, etc.

Please do not send toys, except for "show and tell" for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, as prearranged with the classroom teacher/s.

Mobile Devices

Students may not bring any devices that may disrupt learning at Metro Deaf School. This includes mobile devices. During the school day (8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.), students' mobile devices must be left in the students' lockers or if in their pockets, turned off (not set to vibrate). If it is an emergency, the student must receive permission to contact their parents. If it is an emergency from home or if your child is expecting information from you, you may call the school and leave a message for your child requesting him/her to check their mobile device.

Consecutive warnings will result in confiscation of the device until it is time for dismissal. Repeated abuse will result in the device being confiscated by school administration and only released to the parent at the end of the day or when arrangements can be made.

Pick Up/Drop Off

Late Drop Off: Students arriving after 8:30 A.M. need to be escorted into the front office and signed in.

Late Pick Up: If a parent will be picking up their student after school, notify the school by phone, Videophone, e-mail or fax by 3:00 pm. It is expected that students will be picked up no later than 3:30 p.m.

LATE FEES

If a parent is picking up their child from school, they are expected at school at 3:15.

If a student is still at MDS after 3:30 due to a late parent, a late fee will be charged.

First offense - verbal warning

Second offense - verbal and written warning

Third offense - parent will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 for every 5 minutes the parent is late

Parent and Teacher Conferences

Parent and teacher conferences will be held two times a year (fall and spring). For more information, contact your child's case manager. A school calendar is distributed at the start of each school year which contains important school event dates and also available on the website: www.mdsmn.org

Parent Volunteers

Parents/guardians are welcome in the schools and are encouraged to volunteer in their children's classrooms. Parent/guardian volunteers play a key role in helping enrich children's education. We also know that children whose parents or relatives help at school do better in school and have higher self-esteem. Whether you can volunteer only once or many times, everything you do is greatly appreciated by your child, your child's teacher and MDS. To volunteer in the school/classroom, parents/guardians should speak to the school secretary. Parents/guardians who visit the school should sign in at the front office before entering a classroom. While a parent volunteers, siblings cannot be accommodated for due to the learning that is taking place in the classroom. For more information, contact the school secretary.

School Closing Procedures

School may be cancelled when the school administration believes the safety of students and employees is threatened by severe weather or other circumstances.

In the event of inclement weather, it may be necessary to close school. This will be announced on all local TV stations no later than 6:45 a.m. It is parents' responsibility to tune into the morning news when the weather looks questionable.

If the resident school district closes or is delayed due to inclement winter weather, the transportation departments is expected to follow the resident schools regardless if MDS stays open. This is to ensure the safety of students in transport. It is assumed that if schools are closed in their area of residence, driving is dangerous and not advised.

*Please note: If your district is open the district may send a bus as they do not always get the message that MDS is closed. **DO NOT** put your child on the bus or allow your child to board the bus if you know

MDS is closed as there will be no one at the school. If this is an oversight, the bus company transporting your child is solely responsible to return them to your home.

Searches

In the interest of student safety and to ensure that schools are drug free, district authorities may conduct searches. Students violate school policy when they carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions or store contraband in their desks, lockers, or vehicles parked on school property. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item, the possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item(s) and, where appropriate, give the item(s) to legal officials for ultimate disposition. Students found to be in violation of this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and, when appropriate, the student may be referred to legal officials.

Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker [*]

According to state law, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Students' personal possessions within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials will provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched, unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

Desks

School desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Personal Possessions and Student's Person

The personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

Vehicles on Campus [*]

Patrols and Inspections

School officials may conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and other school district locations and routine inspections of the exteriors of the motor vehicles of students. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Search of the Interior of a Student's Motor Vehicle

The interior of a student's motor vehicle in a school district location, including the glove and trunk compartments, may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law and/or school policy or rule. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. Such searches may be conducted without notice, without consent, and without a search warrant. A student will be subject to withdrawal of parking privileges and to discipline if the student

refuses to open a locked motor vehicle or its compartments under the student's control upon the request of a school official.

Standardized Testing

In compliance with special education regulations, every three (3) years each student must be re-assessed. The tests need to be given, scored, written up, and shared with parents, staff, and special education Executive Directors at an assessment meeting with the goal of developing an IEP based on the student's needs. For re-evaluation summaries, there needs to be other informal measures and tools used, data collected, (e.g., journals, class work), student interviews conducted and written English and ASL videotapes analyzed, to compile an accurate student profile. Your child's case manager will provide guidance for assessments.

In addition to the three-year reassessments conducted, MDS is also required to collect student performance and evaluation data for our charter school's standards, which have to be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) on an annual basis. Because of concrete data needed, MDS has developed a whole-child evaluation tool in conjunction with Dr. Cheryl Lange. Ensuring our students are making adequate yearly progress is imperative. Dr. Lange will meet periodically with licensed staff. Students in K-1 will be tested using an instrument MDS developed. Students in grades 2-12 take the NWEA/MAP in fall and spring, with results shared with parents.

MDS is required to comply with the MN Academic Standards. Standards are completed on each student for each subject area and can be shared with parents at any time.

Students in 3rd–12th grade will participate in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA II) or the MTAS each spring with results mailed to parents after the Department of Education has released the scores. Individual accommodations or exemptions for students as it relates to state testing are determined by the IEP Team.

Results are mailed to parents. Questions related to mandated testing should be directed to the Dean of Students.

Student Publications and Materials

The policy of the school district is to protect students' free speech rights while, at the same time, preserving the district's obligation to provide a learning environment that is free of disruption. All school publications are under the supervision of the building principal and/or sponsor. Nonschool-sponsored publications may not be distributed without prior approval.

Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises []**

The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes distributing nonschool-sponsored material, subject to school district regulations and procedures, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner. For detailed information, see the complete "Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees" policy in *Appendix 2*.

School-Sponsored Student Publications

The school district may exercise editorial control over the style and content of student expression in school-sponsored publications and activities. Faculty advisors shall supervise student writers to ensure compliance with the law and school district policies. Students producing official school publications and participating in school activities will be under the supervision of a faculty advisor and the school principal.

“Official school publications” means school newspapers, yearbooks, or material produced in communications, journalism, or other writing classes as part of the curriculum. Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is prohibited when the material: is obscene to minors; is libelous or slanderous; advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law; encourages students to commit illegal acts or violate school regulations or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of school or school activities; expresses or advocates sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence or prejudice; is distributed or displayed in violation of time, place, and manner regulations.

Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is subject to editorial control by the school district over the style and content when the school district’s actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. Official school publications may be distributed at reasonable times and locations.

Student Records [*]

Student records are classified as public, private, or confidential. State and federal laws protect student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents/guardians and eligible students with certain rights. For the purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older or who is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. For more complete information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students regarding student records, a complete copy of the school district’s “Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records” policy may be obtained at the Executive Director’s office or via the website at www.mdsmn.org

Student Surveys [*]

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students. For complete information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students about conducting surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical examinations; a complete copy of the school district’s “Student Surveys” policy may be obtained at the Executive Director’s office or via the school’s website at www.mdsmn.org

Transportation

It is the parents’ responsibility to contact transportation office if your child will be absent for A.M. or P.M. busing.

A signed written note, email, and/or fax to the school is necessary for proper boarding on alternate buses for after school activities or a student going home with another student. No verbal permission will be accepted due to liability. Students will be sent home on their regular bus if only verbal permission has been provided. Please note, not all buses allow non-resident students to ride their bus. Be sure to check with the other parent if this is the arrangement made between the two families.

MDS, as required by law, will comply with bus safety training in the fall and spring for students in grades K-12. Each district has their own bus safety and behavior policies and MDS is required to comply with each district’s policies.

Transportation is a privilege not a right. Students are expected to comply with the rules set forth with the home school district’s transportation provider. A continual violation of those rules will result in a student being “written up”, reported the school, parent and also the resident district’s Executive Director of Transportation. All bus drivers are instructed to talk with parents when there are issues on the bus. If a behavior problem persists and students continue to exhibit problems at school, School Administration and your district’s Transportation Executive Director may request a meeting to discuss the situation.

In some special circumstances, should a student demonstrate need for intervention on the bus due to repeated behavioral issues, MDS' Dean of Students and the classroom teacher will develop a plan for that student and communicate the plan with the parent/s and the bus driver. It will be monitored until the behavior ceases or a new plan will to be devised.

Repeated abuses will result in suspension of riding privileges for a set amount of time. Should that occur, the parent is responsible to transport to and from school or it will result in an unexcused absence.

PART II — ACADEMICS

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Students who cheat or commit plagiarism on any test or assignment will be given a failing grade for that test or assignment and will be disciplined in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy.

MDS does not tolerate academic dishonesty. If a student commits academic dishonesty, he/she will receive no credit for the assignment. Additional cases of academic dishonesty will result in no credit for assignments and suspension of privileges, as determined by the teacher and Dean of Students.

Early Graduation

Students may be considered for early graduation after completing the conditions provided in district policy.

Extended School Year Opportunities

The school district provides extended school year opportunities to a student who is the subject of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the student's IEP team determines the services are necessary during a break in instruction in order to provide a free and appropriate public education. For more information on extended school year opportunities for students with an IEP, contact the Executive Director.

Field Trips

Permission slips to specific field trips will be sent home one week prior to each trip. If there is a fee involved, you will also receive that information in a timely manner. Should a family be unable to cover the cost, the student will not be denied. In the case of financial hardship, the family is asked to contact your child's teacher/case manager.

MDS can only take students on field trips with signed written permission. A text, e-mail or telephone (voice) permission will not be accepted. Students remaining behind will have supervision and seatwork to keep them busy.

If you are interested in accompanying your child on a field trip, please check with your child's teacher.

Grades

Report cards are issued after each semester (January & June). Mid-semester report cards (for grades 6-12) are issued twice a year (November & March). End of the semester report cards and mid-semester progress reports are distributed via US mail. As a result of the school's computerized grading system,

teachers post students' grades on a bi-weekly basis for students to review. Students and parents are welcome to inquire about grades at any time during the school year.

Letter grades will be used on report cards to designate student performance in each class. The following letter percentages will be used to indicate letter grades:

100% - 93%	A
92% - 90%	A-
89% - 87%	B+
86% - 83%	B
82% - 80%	B-
79% - 77%	C+
76% - 73%	C
72% - 70%	C-
69% - 67%	D+
66% - 63%	D
62% - 60%	D-
Under 60%	F

Graduation Requirements [*]

Students must meet all course credit requirements and graduation standards and IEP goals/objectives, as established by the state and the school board, in order to graduate from MDS.

Course Credits Required

In order to receive a diploma, students must successfully complete at least 21 credits and comply with the following high school level course requirements:

High School Level Courses Required for Graduation		
Subject Area	Credits	Explanation
Language Arts	4	Include language arts, reading, and literature classes.
Mathematics	3	Must include algebra, geometry, statistics, and probability. Algebra I will be required by the end of eighth grade beginning in the 2010-2011 school year. Algebra II will be required for students scheduled to graduate in the 2014-2015 school year. A career and technical education course may fulfill a mathematics credit.
Science	3	Must include one credit of biology. Students scheduled to graduate in the 2014-2015 school year or later must have one credit in chemistry or physics. An agricultural science or a career and technical education course may fulfill a science credit.

Social Studies	3½	Must include United States history, geography, government and citizenship, world history, and economics.
Arts	1	A career and technical education course may fulfill an arts credit.
Elective Courses	7	

Minnesota Academic Standards

All students must satisfactorily complete the following required Minnesota Graduation Standards:

Minnesota Academic Standards, Language Arts K-12
Minnesota Academic Standards, Mathematics K-12
Minnesota Academic Standards, Science K-12
Minnesota Academic Standards, Social Studies K-12
Minnesota Academic Standards, Arts K-12
Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, students will be required to satisfactorily complete revised Minnesota Academic Standards and high school graduation requirements in the arts.
Beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, students will be required to satisfactorily complete revised Minnesota Academic Standards and high school graduation requirements in language arts.
Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, students will be required to satisfactorily complete revised Minnesota Academic Standards and high school graduation requirements in social studies.

School District Required and Elective Standards

All students must satisfactorily complete the following school district required and elective standards: Health and Physical Education (K-12); School District Standards, Vocational and Technical Education (K-12); and School District Standards, World Languages (K-12).

Students with an individualized education program are eligible for testing accommodations, modifications, and/or exemption. For additional information, see the Executive Director.

Homework

Homework assignments are made by the teachers. The amount of homework varies by teacher and subject area. The school district asks for parents/guardians to encourage their child(ren) to complete homework thoroughly and promptly.

Please set aside time each evening for completing assignments. Your child needs your support and guidance. Guidelines show that homework expectations are approximately 10 minutes per grade, beginning in Kindergarten and increases 10 minutes with each grade.

Homework should be a review of something your child has learned during that school day. Parents are not expected to teach a new concept at home. If your child seems to be unable to complete the assignment because he/she appears to not understand it, please be sure to notify your child's teacher. Do not do your child's homework for him/her.

Classroom projects are typically assigned with plenty of time given for completion. Often teachers will ask parents to sign a form stating that you are aware of the assignment, its expectations and its due date.

For grades 6 – 12, students are expected to complete homework in the amount of time assigned for the assignment, paper, or project. Students will be penalized for late or incomplete work. It is the responsibility of the student to complete their homework. If homework is not handed in by the due date, students will only have one additional day to hand in the homework. Teachers and staff believe that school comes first and therefore choosing to participate in athletics or other extracurricular activities are not acceptable excuses for late work.

Junior High:

one day late = one letter grade lower (B+ becomes C+)

2 days late = 0

High School:

one day late = $\frac{1}{2}$ credit

2 days late = 0

Work missed because of absence must be made up within three (3) days from the date of the student's return to school. Any work not completed within this period shall result in "no credit" for the missed assignment. However, the Dean of Students or the classroom teacher may extend the time allowed for completion of make-up work in the case of an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Extra Credit

Extra credit work may be provided at teachers' discretion. Opportunities to earn extra credit will not be given out during the last 4 weeks of the semester at the high school level (Grades 9-12).

Honor Roll

Students in grades 6-12 have the opportunity to be on the Honor Roll. It occurs at the end of each semester, and is based on GPA (grade point average). Certificates are awarded.

- Gold Honor Roll: GPA 4.00 – 3.75
- Silver Honor Roll: GPA 3.74 – 3.25

Promotion and Retention

All students are expected to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency. Students who achieve at an acceptable level will be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of the school year. Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents/guardians feel that it is in the best interest of the student. The Executive Director's decision will be final. MDS has a variety of services to help students succeed in school. For more information, contact the Executive Director.

Post-Secondary Enrollment Options

Eleventh and twelfth grade students may apply to enroll in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and other advanced enrichment programs. Qualifying credits granted to a student through a PSEO course or program will be counted toward the graduation and credit requirements of the state academic standards. Students wishing to take a PSEO course should contact the high school counselor.

Classes

Students who have completed all of the district's high school requirements may have the option to audit a class. The request to audit a specific class has to be made within the first 2 weeks of each semester. The request has to be made to the Dean of Students. The administration reserves the right to decline the request. The final decision will be made by administration.

Parent Right to Know [*]

If a parent requests it, the school district will provide information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

- whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional licensing status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- 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;
- whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
- In addition, the school district will provide parents with information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The school district also will provide notice to parents if, for four or more consecutive weeks, their child has been assigned to or taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

PART III — RULES AND DISCIPLINE

Attendance [*]

Regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability.

The following are acceptable reasons for excused absences:

- Illness
- Sickness, illness or death of an immediate family member or of a close friend or relative
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be otherwise scheduled outside the school day
- Court appearance
- Religious instruction or observation of a religious holiday
- Family need with prior notification given to school

Students who are absent for any other reason will be given an unexcused absence for that day.

If your student must be absent, please notify school by calling 651-224-3995 v or 651-224-3975 vp or by sending an e-mail to the secretary before 8:45 a.m. on the first day of the absence. If we do not hear from you and have not received a note prior to the absence, we will call you at work or at home. We want to have contact with you when students are absent to ensure that our students are safe and that your child is where you want them to be.

After three unexcused absences, you will be sent a letter about the importance of consistent school attendance with a reminder about the procedure required to excuse an absence. After seven unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to the home and county, and a school administrator will contact you to discuss the reasons for the absences and to develop a plan to make attendance more consistent. MDS is required by law to report possible cases of educational neglect to county officials. If a case is reported by the school administrator, the county will then set up a home visit with the family to try to resolve the absenteeism issues.

Students who display a pattern of excessive excused absence may be required to provide written documentation from a doctor to be excused from school due to illness. Should this be required, the school will send a written note to the parent/guardian as well as the county.

A bus, that is continually late, will be reported to administration. Administration will be responsible to notify the resident district to discuss the on-going problem and to work toward resolution. Students arriving late due to transportation problems are still considered “tardy” but also “excused”.

Truancy Information

Minnesota Law Relating To School Attendance

In the State of Minnesota, it is the law that all students attend school until the age of 18. For students under the age of 12, it is presumed that it is the parents’ responsibility to ensure the student’s attendance. For students ages 12 to 18, it is the responsibility of both the student and parent to assure the student attends school and is not truant.

Note: Students 18+ in the Transition program do not fall under the state’s statute governing truancy. In this situation, a meeting would be called that involved the student, the home school district, Transition Coordinator, and school administration. This meeting is for the district to understand the attendance issues and also for the student to realize that because they are 18+ the district can determine not to provide programming. If absent 14 consecutive days or fall below an 80% attendance rate they will be dropped from services and would need an IEP meeting to re-enroll.

Definition of Truant:

A student is considered a “**habitual truant**” is she or he is under the age of 16 years and is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for **seven school days** or for one or more class period on seven school days. Students ages 16 and 17 will be considered truant if they have not lawfully withdrawn from school with their parents’ permission. [MN Statutes 260C.007, Subd. 19.]

Responsibility of the School:

- Provide a program/schedule that meets the student's educational needs.
- Address problems identified as barriers to the students ability to attend and learn.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and document communication with the students and parents about attendance.
- Refer the student's to the County Attorney's Office for court intervention when students have seven (7) unexcused absences.
- Inform the student and parents of the legal requirements for school attendance and possible consequences if fail to meet the requirements.

Responsibility of the Parent:

- Send your student to school.
- Ensure your student has completed required schoolwork.
- Monitor your student's attendance and progress in school.
- Inform the school when your student may need to miss school for an acceptable reason.

Responsibility of the Student:

- Attend school, every day, every class, and be on time.
- Complete required schoolwork.
- Ask for assistance when needed.

Procedures and Consequences for Violation of School Attendance Laws:

- If a student is absent without lawful excuse on 3 or more class periods on 3 school days, they are considered a "continuing truant."
- State law requires schools to send a written notice to parents when a student has 3 unexcused absences.
- If the truancy persists, the school shall request a meeting with the parents and student to discuss the truant behavior, work on finding a solution, and complete a truancy contract with the parent, student and school.
- When a student is absent without legal excuse for 1 or more class periods on 7 school days, they are now considered a "habitual truant."
- The school is required to report that the student is in violation of the state law on compulsory education to the Social Services department in the student's residing district.
- Social Services will review the truancy report and make a determination if the student should be referred to court.
- If the County Attorney's Office refers the case to court, the student and parent will be required to attend a court hearing in front of Judge. The Judge may order the following consequences:
 - School detention, in-school suspension.
 - Supervision by a County Probation Officer or Social Worker.
 - Community service hours.
 - Participate in individual counseling, or complete a psychological or chemical health evaluation.
 - Participation in a group or in a series of educational programs through your school of community.
 - Parent court ordered to attend school with student.

- Fined up to \$100 or parent held liable for prosecution for your truancy with a penalty of up to 90 days in county jail and/or up to a \$1,000 fine.
- Driver's license suspended or delayed until you are 18 years of age.
- Home detention. (Home detention means that you cannot leave your house without a parent except to go to school or work) If you are put on home detention, someone will be monitoring your whereabouts.
- Placed in a foster home, shelter or correctional facility. Your parents will be responsible for the costs involved according to their ability to pay.

Tips for improving your student's school attendance:

- Make your student's education a priority.
- Tell your student how important his/her education is to you.
- Insist that your student attend school and do his/her homework.
- Understand your student's school attendance policy.
- Make sure your student obey curfew laws and get plenty of sleep.
- Buy your student an alarm clock.
- Tell your student that you love them and show them that you care on a regular basis.
- Do not enable your student by calling the school to cover illegitimate absences.
- If your student does not want to attend school, find out why. Talk to your student and listen for an answer. If there is a problem, try to solve it together.
- If your student refuses to go to school, do not be afraid to ask for help. Talk to school staff and find out if your student has a problem and what resources are available to you.

Why should a student attend school every day?

Regular school attendance helps a student to:

- Learn.
- Succeed – in school, and later.
- Establish good habits.
- Be supervised and safe.
- Prepare for the future.
- Make friends.
- Stay on track with classmates.
- Understand classroom discussions.

Irregular school attendance:

- Isolates students.
- Creates a higher risk of unemployment.
- Creates a greater risk of your student being drawn into criminal and other problem behaviors.
- Seriously disrupts continuity of learning.
- Undermines educational progress.
- Leads to underachievement.
- Creates a greater risk of your student being drawn into criminal and other problem behaviors.
- Reduces likelihood of further educational opportunities and training.
- For students 12 and over, parents may have to appear in Your County Juvenile Court because their student is considered truant.

Give your teen hope for the future

Research says school connectedness is associated with better emotional health, higher academic aspirations and performance, as well as less risk taking behaviors.

- Research also shows that the following are results of poor school attendance:
 - Underemployment
 - Unemployment
 - Criminal Activity/Imprisonment
 - A high school graduate can expect to earn \$244,212 more in his or her lifetime than a high school dropout.
 - 71% of our nation's prison population never finished high school.
 - The correlation between dropping out of school and ending up in prison is higher than there is between smoking and lung cancer.

 - In addition:
 - Be clear early on that attending school is important - this is a firm non-negotiable rule. It is more important than employment, sports or other extracurricular activities.
 - Keep in touch with school – attend parent-teacher conferences, know your teen's class schedules, pay attention to their grades.
 - Make homework part of the family routine. Create time, space, and the expectation that homework is completed.
 - If you have concerns, contact your teen's teachers.

Resource

www.shouldertoshoulderminnesota.org

Bullying Prohibition [*]

The school district is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Acts of bullying, in any form, by either an individual student or a group of students, is prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. For detailed information regarding the school district's "Bullying Prohibition" school district policy #514.

Mobile Devices

Students are prohibited from using mobile devices during the instructional day (see page 8). Students also are prohibited from using a cell phone or other electronic communication device to engage in conduct prohibited by school district policies including, but not limited to, cheating, bullying, harassment, gang activity, etc. If the school district has a reasonable suspicion that a student has violated a school rule or law by use of a cell phone or other electronic device, the school district may search the device. The search of the device will be reasonably related in scope to the circumstances justifying the search. Students who use an electronic device during the school day and/or in violation of school district policies may be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school district's discipline policy. In addition, a student's cell phone or electronic device may be confiscated by the school district and, if applicable, provided to law enforcement. Cell phones or other electronic devices that are confiscated and retained by the school district will be returned in accordance with school building procedures.

Discipline [*]

Misbehavior by one student can disrupt the learning process for many other students. In addition, students must learn to practice good safety habits, value academic honesty, respect the rights of others,

and obey the law. For detailed information on the Student Code of Conduct and consequences for violations, refer to school district policy #506.

Discipline Philosophy

In conjunction with the mission of MDS, the discipline philosophy and policies also work to create a learning environment where all members feel safe and respected. The procedures and policies are meant to guide student in understanding their role in the learning community by establishing boundaries, engaging all members in active and reflective learning, and helping all member understand consequences of behavior.

If any community member chooses to behave in a manner that detracts from the learning environment process; shows disrespect towards other community members; or places any community member or himself/herself in danger, the follow-up consequences will be used to guide the community member to understand the effect their behavior on himself/herself, other community members, and the learning community as a whole.

Discipline Consequences

Consequences will be assigned after careful consideration of as many facts as can be reasonably obtained. Equal is not always fair. Consequences will be designed to fit the problems of individual students, and they may be different even when the problems appear to be the same. Student confidentiality will be maintained, with only parents or guardians and school staff with a need to know being informed. When discussing an incident with parents or guardians, the only student that will be discussed is that parent's or guardian's student. In order to maintain the confidentiality of all of our students, the punishment that is assigned to other students involved in the same incident will not be discussed (Data Privacy Act).

The consequences for inappropriate student behavior may involve, but are not limited to the following actions:

Student/Staff Conference: The student and staff will meet to discuss the student's behavior and its causes, alternative behaviors, and behavioral expectations.

Notifying Parents/Guardians: Parents or guardians of the student may be notified of the student's behavior. This notification may occur in the form of a phone call, e-mail, or letter to the parents/guardians.

Parent Conference: A parent/guardian of student who repeatedly demonstrates difficulty complying with the policies and procedures, may be asked to attend a conference with the Executive Director and other staff members to discuss a behavior plan for the student.

Removal from the area: Students who cannot behave appropriately may need to be removed from an area to regain control. Designated areas are designed for this purpose and staff will assist the student.

Homebound: Homebound services may be arranged if the student continues with non-compliant behavior, and may eventually be asked to transfer to a program that can better meet his/her social/emotional/behavior needs.

Community Service: Students may be asked to give back to the community by performing a limited number of hours of community service.

Detention Hall for 6- 12 grades only: The student will lose lunch and/or recess privileges and may be required to spend recess in the restricted recess room under adult supervision; After School Detention may occur in some cases if repeated "detention halls" persist. Parent will be notified. If a student earns

three detention halls in any one month period, after-school detention is given. After-school detention is served on a pre-determined date and will be communicated to the parent. Detention is 3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. A parent or guardian is required to pick-up the student at 4:15 that day. The parent/guardian, supervising teacher, and the student will meet to discuss why after-school detention was earned and to set goals for improvement. Repeated issues may result in loss of privileges as it relates to sports, after school activities and reward-type field trips.

Work Assignment: A work assignment may be assigned to a student to repair damage or to clean up a mess a student has made. The student will be under the supervision of a school employee at all times.

Loss of Cafeteria Privileges: Eating in the cafeteria is a privilege, not a right. Should a student continuously violate the guidelines for cafeteria use, the privilege will be taken away for a day/week, etc, and the student will eat in a supervised setting (classroom/administration office).

Stand or Sit By the Wall (Grades K-5): The playground supervisor may require a student who is not following the rules to stand or sit by the gym wall or the outside building wall if playing outside. This is a time out procedure to give the student notification of the importance of using equipment in a safe manner or playing properly/fairly.

Financial Restitution: Students who damage school property may be asked to pay for the damage.

In-school Suspension: If the severity or frequency of a student's behavior reach a point of creating excessive disruptions to the learning process or classroom environment, it may be necessary to have the student be removed from the regular daily class schedule, for an entire day or portions of a day. The student will be placed in a designated area and then supervised by a full-time staff member. Parents/guardians will be notified.

Out of School Suspension: A student whose behavior is severe and/or unsafe maybe suspended from school for a predetermined number of days as determined at an administrative conference. A student/parent conference will be required upon admittance. Administration will make reasonable efforts to contact parents or guardians of an out of school suspension and the follow-up plan.

Expulsion: Long term suspension or expulsion is a final step when all other attempts have failed to correct continuous disruptions. This requires a hearing before a School Administrator who will recommend the student be returned to school, suspended for a specific period of time that exceeds ten days, or that the student be referred to the Board for expulsion. Should a student be expelled, or be in the process of being expelled, no other public school in the state has to accept that student. However, parents or guardians are still required by law to be providing for their student's education. It is against school policy for students under suspension or expulsion to enter the campus at any time.

Police Referral: Police will be called for serious violations. Every attempt will be made to have the parent or guardian present before the police interrogate the student. School Administration will be in attendance as an advocate for the student in the absence of a parent or guardian.

Other disciplinary action: Students may be asked to do other appropriate tasks deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

MDS staff may discipline students for conduct on buses to and from the pool (on swimming days), in the parking lot, PE activities taking place outdoors, on field trips, student activities, at competitions or related areas in the same manner as disciplined is imposed for conduct within the school building.

Categories of Behavior and Possible Consequences

The following are guidelines for the disposition of discipline. Depending on the circumstances of the offense and the history of the offender, the action taken may vary at the administrative or the Executive Director's discretion. Consequences vary and range from a conference to recommendation for expulsion.

The police will be called to investigate serious violations. If this occurs, school officials will notify parents or guardians, any action taken by law enforcement officials will be in addition to the action taken by the school.

Problem Behavior	Examples/Definitions	Possible Consequences
Physical Assault of a student	Hurting another student, hitting, pinching, pushing, throwing down, biting, twisting arms, etc.	Suspension Police Referral
Verbal Assault of a student/Ethnic Racial Slurs	Name calling, taunting, saying mean things, teasing, hurting someone's feelings, saying or writing bad things about another person's racial/ethnic background	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall Suspension
Incitement	Telling something to make one student mad at another one	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall Suspension
Intimidation	Saying or writing something to or about someone that is a threat or makes them afraid	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall Suspension
Obscenity or Profanity	Saying bad words, making obscene gestures	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall
Continuous Classroom Disruptions	Behaving so the teacher has to stop teaching and send you to the office for continuously not following classroom rules	Detention Hall Meeting with School Administration Suspension
Destruction of Property	Breaking, tearing, or messing up something that does not belong to you	Meeting with School Administration Restitution Detention Hall Suspension Police Referral
Misuse of Equipment	Not following rules for safe use of playground equipment	Sit or Stand Near Wall Detention Hall Conference with School Administration Suspension
Defiance	Refusing to do what a school adult tells you to do; leaving wall when put there at recess, without permission	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall Suspension
Cafeteria Misconduct	Running, throwing food, shouting, leaving trash	Conference with School Administration Work Assignment Loss of Cafeteria Privileges Detention Hall
Harassment	Touching or saying things	Conference with

	about a student's or someone else's private areas that is embarrassing and makes them feel uncomfortable	School Administration Detention Hall Suspension Police Referral
Physical Assault of a Staff Person	Hurting a school adult on purpose	Suspension Expulsion Police Referral
Verbal Assault of a Staff Person	Swearing at or threatening a school adult	Suspension Expulsion Police Referral
Possession of Forbidden Items	Bringing or having water guns, small pocket weapons like toys, or other things you shouldn't have at school	Confiscation Conference with School Administration Suspension
Out of Area	Being where you are not supposed to be	Sit or Stand Near Wall Detention Hall
Stealing	Taking things from another person or from the school without permission	Conference with School Administration Suspension Restitution Detention Hall Police Referral
Possession of Illegal or Dangerous Items	Bringing or having weapons, (something that can really hurt someone or that you say is to hurt someone), drugs, cigarettes, matches, lighters, firecrackers or other things that explode	Confiscation and Parent Conference Suspension Police Referral Expulsion
Forgery	Writing or using another person's signature or initials	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall Suspension
Lying	Telling things that are not true	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall
Other	Situations that are not listed	Conference with School Administration Detention Hall

Dress and Appearance

Students are encouraged to be dressed appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards.

Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
- Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom).

Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- "Short shorts", spaghetti-strap" tank tops without coverage, tops that expose the midriff, shredded jeans that expose the body, large basketball-type jerseys worn without a t-shirt underneath, and other clothing that is not in keeping with community standards.

- Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
- Apparel promoting products or activities those are illegal for use by minors.
- Saggy pants/shorts worn below the waist that exposes undergarments.
- Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in school district policy.
- Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.
- Hats are not to be worn in the building except with the approval of the Dean of Students (i.e., student undergoing chemotherapy, medical situations, spirit day).

If the administration believes a student's appearance, grooming, or mode of dress interferes with or disrupts the educational process or school activities or poses a threat to the health or safety of the student or others, the student will be directed to make modifications or will be sent home for the day. A parent or guardian will be notified.

Grades 6 – 12 Physical Education: Students are required to wear appropriate clothing and athletic gear for physical education classes. Students in grades 6-12 are required to purchase and use a designated uniform (T-shirt and shorts), which the school makes available for parents to purchase. An order form will be shared with parents prior to the start of the school year.

Swim suits should be modest and cover body parts discretely. If deemed inappropriate for school, the student may be asked to refrain from swimming.

- **Recess:** Clothing appropriate for the weather. PK-5 students will be outside as long as the wind chill is above zero. Your child is expected to wear/bring a jacket, hat, gloves daily. Students without proper attire will not be permitted to play outside. If it is snowing, students will also need to wear snow pants and boots when going outside. It is recommended to have your child leave his or her snow pants and boots at school during the week.

Drug-Free School and Workplace

The possession and use of alcohol, controlled substances, and toxic substances are prohibited at school or in any other school location before, during, or after school hours. Paraphernalia associated with controlled substances also is prohibited. The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who violates this policy.

District policy is not violated when a person brings a controlled substance which has a currently accepted medical treatment use onto a school location for personal use if the person has a physician's prescription for the substance. Students who have prescriptions must comply with the school district's "Student Medication" policy. The school district will provide an instructional program in every elementary and secondary school on chemical abuse and the prevention of chemical dependency.

Harassment and Violence Prohibition [*]

The school district strives to maintain learning and working environments that are free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. The school district prohibits any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. For detailed information on the school district's "Harassment and Violence Prohibition" policy, see school district policy #413.

Hazing Prohibition [*]

Hazing is prohibited. No student will plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in hazing. Students who violate this rule will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school district's "Student Discipline" policy. For detailed information on the school district's "Hazing Prohibition" policy, see school district policy #526.

Internet Acceptable Use

All school district students have conditional access to the school district's computer system, including Internet access, for limited educational purposes, including use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional and career development. Use of the school district's system is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable use of the school district's computer system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, or exclusion; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws. A copy of the school district's "Internet Acceptable Use" policy is available at www.mdsmn.org

Students will receive a copy of the school district's "Internet Acceptable Use" policy and are expected to understand and agree to abide by the policy as a condition of use of the school district's computer system. All students who wish to use the school district's computer system must sign the Internet Use Agreement form once per academic year.

Parking on School District Property

Students

The school district allows limited use and parking of motor vehicles by students in school district location subject to the following rules:

- Driving to school is a privilege;
- Parking is permitted in designated areas only. For information, contact the school secretary;
- Students are not permitted to use motor vehicles during the school day unless an emergency occurs and permission has been granted to the student by the Executive Director;
- Students are permitted to use motor vehicles only before and after the school day;
- Unauthorized vehicles parked on school district property may be towed at the expense of the owner or operator.

The school district may conduct routine patrols of school district properties and inspections of the exteriors of the motor vehicles of students. Interiors of students' vehicles in school district locations may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law and/or school policy or rule. If a search yields contraband, school officials may seize the item and may turn it over to legal authorities when appropriate. A student who violates this policy may be subject to withdrawal of parking privileges and/or discipline according to the school district's "Student Discipline" policy.

Visitors

Visitors are permitted to park in designated school district visitor parking areas. Unattended vehicles left in other locations on school district property may be towed at the owner's expense.

Tobacco-Free Schools [*]

School district students and staff have the right to learn and work in an environment that is tobacco free. School policy is violated by any individual's use of tobacco or tobacco-related devices in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Students may not possess any type of tobacco or tobacco-related device in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Any student who violates this policy is subject to school district discipline. For detailed information on the school district's "Tobacco-Free Environment" policy, see school district policy #419. Contact the Dean of Students if you have questions or wish to report violations.

Vandalism

Vandalism of any district property is prohibited. Violators will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials.

Weapons Prohibition

No person will possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in school district policy. A "weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; airguns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; numchucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stunguns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. A weapon also includes look-alike weapons. Appropriate discipline and action will be taken against any person who violates this policy. The school district takes a "zero tolerance" position in regard to the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students. Discipline of students will include, at a minimum: immediate out-of-school suspension; confiscation of the weapon; immediate notification of police; parent or guardian notification; and recommendation to the superintendent of dismissal for a period of time not to exceed one year. A student who brings a firearm to school will be expelled for at least one year, subject to school district discretion on a case-by-case basis. For a copy of the "School Weapons" policy #501, go to www.mdsmn.org

PART IV — HEALTH AND SAFETY

Accidents

All student injuries that occur at school or school-sponsored activities should be reported to the school secretary. Parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified as soon as possible. If the student requires immediate medical attention, the principal or other district leader will call 911 or seek emergency medical treatment and then contact the parent(s).

Crisis Management

The school district has developed a "Crisis Management" policy. Each school building has its own building-specific crisis management plan. Students and parents will be provided with information as to district- and school-specific plans.

The “Crisis Management” policy addresses a range of potential crisis situations in the school district and includes general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, campus evacuation, sheltering, and communication procedures. The school district will conduct lock-down drills, fire drills, and a tornado drill. Building plans include classroom and building evacuation procedures. To view the Crisis Management Policy (Policy #806), visit the school’s website at www.mdsmn.org.

Health Information

First Aid

The front office in each building is equipped to handle minor injuries requiring first aid. If the front office is not open, assistance can be sought from the Dean of Students’ office. If a student experiences a more serious medical emergency at school, 911 will be called and/or a parent/guardian will be contacted depending on the situation.

Communicable Diseases

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

Students with certain communicable diseases will not be excluded from attending school in their usual daily attendance settings as long as their health permits and their attendance does not create a significant risk of transmitting the illness to other students or school district employees. The school district will determine on a case-by-case basis whether a contagious student’s attendance creates a significant risk of transmitting the illness to others.

Your student will be sent home if:

- If he/she has a temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Has vomited and has other symptoms of illness
- Has complaints of sore throat or earache alone and with a temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Has no temperature but there is evidence of discharge from the ear
- Has an identified active case of head lice
- Has a rash that does not have a known cause
- Has symptoms of illness (chills, body ache, headache, possible fever, sore throat, stomach ache, stiff neck)
- Has diarrhea

What If My Child Is Sick – When Can They Return to School?

Fever symptoms of flu or other illness - Can return to school 24 hours after temperature returns to normal or when symptoms of illness are no longer present unless H1N1 has been confirmed. The school requires five days prior to returning with no symptoms.

Vomiting/diarrhea - Can return to school 24 hours after last episode.

Sore throat/earache - Can return after child has been on an antibiotic for a full 24 hours.

Head lice - Can return after being treated with medicated shampoo (can be in the same day).

Skin rashes - Can return after examinations by medical staff or after the symptoms disappear.

Students can be in school with cold sores and the common cold (unless there are other symptoms of illness, including temperature 100 degrees or more).

Chicken pox - A student who has the chicken pox cannot return school setting until all of the sores formed crusts or scabs.

For students who become ill during the school day:

Parents will be contacted to pick up a student who appears to be ill. Until the parent arrives, the student will be provided a quiet area and because of the illness, will be separated from other students. In an emergency and if immediate attention is needed, MDS will call 911. Staff will then contact the parent(s) or other listed on the student's emergency form.

Immunizations

All students must be properly immunized or submit appropriate documentation exempting them from such immunizations in order to enroll or remain enrolled. Students may be exempted from the immunization requirement when the immunization of the student is contraindicated for medical reasons; laboratory confirmation of adequate immunity exists; or due to the conscientiously held beliefs of the parents/guardians or student. The school district will maintain a file containing the immunization records for each student in attendance at the school district for at least five years after the student reaches the age of 18. For a copy of the immunization schedule or to obtain an exemption form or information, contact the school secretary.

Medications at School During the School Day

The school district acknowledges that some students may require prescribed drugs or medication during the school day. The administration of prescription medication or drugs at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent. An "Administering Prescription Medications" form must be completed once a year and/or when a change in the prescription or requirements for administration occurs. Prescription medications must be brought to school in the original container labeled for the student by a pharmacist, and must be administered in a manner consistent with the instructions on the label. Prescription medications are not to be carried by the student, but will be left with the appropriate school personnel. Exceptions that may be allowed include: prescription asthma medications administered with an inhaler pursuant to school district policy and procedures, medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school district and parent or as specified in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an individual health plan (IHP). The school district is to be notified of any change in a student's prescription medication administration.

No over the counter (OTC) medication will be distributed to students without a doctor's prescription and thus the parent must supply the school with the OTC medication.

Pesticide Application Notice [*]

The school district may plan to apply pesticide(s) on school property. To the extent the school district applies certain pesticides; the school district will provide a notice by September 15 as to the school district's plan to use these pesticides. A parent may request to be notified prior to the application of certain pesticides on days different from those specified in the notice. Additional information regarding what pesticides are used, the schedule of pesticide applications, and the long-term health effects of the class of pesticide on children can be requested by contacting the front office.

Safety

The safety of students on campus and at school-related activities is a high priority of the MDS. While district-wide safety procedures are in place, student and parent cooperation is essential to ensuring school safety.

All parents or persons authorized to pick up students must come to the front office and sign their child out. These procedures are necessary in order to assure the safety of your child/ren.

During the school day, MDS releases students:

1. The parent may pick up the child.
2. The parent must notify the office in writing if someone other than a parent is picking up the child. MDS staff will ask to see the person's driver's license for verification.
3. High School students leaving the building on their own to attend classes or to leave for appointments need to sign out in the office and back in when they return. If leaving for an appointment, they need to have written permission from their parent.

Visitors in the Building

Parents/guardians and community members are welcome to visit the school. To ensure the safety of those in the school and to avoid disruption to the learning environment, all visitors must report directly to the **front office** upon entering the building, with the exception of events open to the public.

All visitors will be required to sign in at the front office and to wear a "visitors badge" while in the building during the school day. Visitors, other than parents, must have the approval of the Executive Director before visiting a classroom during instructional time. An individual or group may be denied permission to visit a school or school property, or such permission may be revoked, if the visitor does not comply with school district procedures or if the visit is not in the best interests of the students, employee, or the school district.

Staff having visitors must notify the Executive Director and upon approval, the front office.

Parents visiting with other children must keep their children with them at all times. Children wandering the halls or left unsupervised pose a threat to themselves and cause a distraction to others. Children must stay in the same room as their parents at all times when visiting MDS, this includes when parents are attending a meeting or observing a class.

MDS welcomes parents to visit for observation purposes but bringing siblings is not encouraged and repeated occurrences will be addressed as it creates a disturbance for the students in the room. Parents are asked to let their classroom teacher know of their desire to come to school so they can plan accordingly or let the parent know if there is a conflict that day due to an event, etc. In situations when a parent needs to come to school for a meeting, but their child is not currently in school (i.e. Pre K), the parent will be asked to remain in the office until the meeting begins.

Students are not allowed to bring visitors to school.

Student Teachers/Practicum Students: MDS does welcome and hosts student teachers from various accredited Deaf and Hard of Hearing teacher-training program throughout the U.S. If your child's classroom has a student teacher, which has been prearranged and approved by school administration

and the student teacher's training institution months prior, you will receive notice of such when the student teacher begins his/her assignment. A typical student teaching assignment is 10 weeks. MDS encourages their experienced teachers to host these future teachers due to the great learning opportunities MDS can provide.

Practicum students may volunteer during their college program for 3-5 weeks as part of their teacher-preparation program. They, too, follow the same approval process.

Questions regarding the contents of this handbook may be addressed to:

Dyan Sherwood, Executive Director

dsherwood@mdsmn.org

651-259-1050 (v)

651-964-1631



Acknowledgement Form

We have received a copy of the 2011- 2012 Metro Deaf School Student/Family Handbook.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date