



Information & Guidelines

MESA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
There's no better place to learn

2007-2008
SECONDARY STUDENTS

63 East Main Street #101 • Mesa, Arizona 85201-7422 • www.mpsaz.org • An equal opportunity organization

This publication is designed to answer the questions parents ask most often. It does not include all of the policies and regulations of Mesa Public Schools (MPS). For additional information on a particular topic, please speak to the school administrator.

Throughout this handbook, "parent" means a parent (unless parental rights have been judicially limited or severed), a legal guardian or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian.

Throughout this handbook, parents are asked to refer to Governing Board policies for more detailed information on particular topics. Each school has a copy of the policies that parents can review. A copy also is available at the school district's Administrative Services Center. Phone (480) 472-0223. In addition, policies are available on the Internet at www.mpsaz.org.

Una versión en español de este documento está disponible en la oficina de la escuela o llamando la Línea de Ayuda, al (480) 472-9832.

Attendance

State law requires that you authorize your child's absence from school and notify us in advance or at the time of the absence. Your call to us will save time and help protect your child. If your child is absent and you have not notified the school, this absence will be reported to you by the school's automatic telephone system the evening of the absence. It's vital that we have one or more telephone numbers to contact you. If your numbers change, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you are unable to notify us in advance or at the time of an absence, please notify us that the absence was authorized on the morning your child returns to school. If no notice of authorization is received by one day after your child returns, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. If a student is habitually truant, the parents and student may be cited by the court for truancy. By law, a student is considered habitually truant if absent without excuse for five or more days or if absent, with or without excuse, for 18 or more days.

Students must attend at least 90 percent of class sessions in a semester to receive a passing grade or credit. If a student is absent more than nine days in a semester, grades or credit may be withheld. Cases involving prolonged illness or unusual circumstances will be reviewed by the school administrator.

According to Arizona's compulsory attendance law, students must be in school until they reach the age of 16 or successfully complete the 10th grade.

Cafeteria

Nutritious, affordable meals are served at all secondary schools. All of the meals in our schools are prepared and served by well-trained food service professionals. The quality and variety of choices provide a value that is an integral part of the educational process.

Breakfast is available at all secondary schools for \$1.00 per day or \$5.00 for five meals. Lunch at all junior high schools is \$2.00 per day or \$10.00 for five meals. Lunch at all high schools is \$2.25 per day or \$11.25 for five meals.

Free and reduced-price meals are available to qualified students. Applications are included with all mail-in registration packets and are available on the Internet at www.mpsaz.org/food.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Students may carry and use cell phones and other electronic devices. However, they may not be used in a classroom or elsewhere in a manner that violates the privacy of others or disrupts the school's objective of providing a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

All cell phones, MP3 players and other electronic devices must be turned off and placed in the student's backpack or purse while in a classroom. Administrators and teachers are authorized to confiscate electronic devices that are used in a classroom or used in any other manner that violates district or school policy. The parent or guardian of a student whose electronic device has been confiscated may recover the item from the school administrator. Repeated misuse of a cell phone or other device may result in loss of the privilege of carrying or using the item at school.

Child Abuse Reporting

State law requires all employees who, when acting in the scope of their employment, develop a reasonable belief that a child is or has been a victim of child abuse to immediately report it to Child Protective Services (CPS) or police. Each school has a child abuse reporting and education (CARE) team for processing suspected cases of physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse.

Although the child abuse reporting law applies most often to an adult abusing a child, the legal definition of child abuse also includes any situation in which a child is the victim of sexual abuse or nonaccidental injury, regardless of the age or maturity of the alleged abuser. A fight between students that results in nonaccidental physical injury may be investigated by the police. Likewise, an act of sexual harassment by one student against another that meets the elements of sexual abuse also could be investigated by the police to determine criminal charges.

Incidents of student sexual harassment, fighting and bullying are carefully reviewed. If the details of a situation indicate possible child abuse,

MPS employees will submit a report unless a police officer advises that a report is not appropriate. Reports of child abuse are confidential records.

To ensure the safety of students, employees will err on the side of caution by reporting an incident. By doing so, employees are carrying out their legal duty. This approach to child abuse reporting helps our schools continue to provide the safe and orderly learning environment that we all want for our children. We ask that you support this effort by reminding your child to always comply with the student conduct code and to discuss any safety concerns with his or her teacher or principal.

Communication on Safety Issues

If a safety issue arises on a school campus, school administrators will determine the best way to provide information to parents. This may be through a letter sent home with students or a message recorded on the school's telephone system. To access a voice message, call the school's main number and listen for instructions to reach the Principal's Emergency Bulletin Board.

Computer and Internet Use

The district provides computers and Internet access to support the educational mission of its schools and to enhance curriculum and learning opportunities for students. The rules listed here are intended to provide students with general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses, but they do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Failure to comply with these rules may result in loss of computer and Internet access privileges, disciplinary action and/or legal action. Please refer to Governing Board Policy JFCH for more information.

Parents should understand that while reasonable precautions will be taken to supervise student use of the Internet, MPS cannot prevent all inappropriate uses, including access to objectionable materials and communication with persons outside the school.

You may choose to deny Internet access for your child at any time by completing an Opt Out form and submitting it to the school office. The form is available online at www.mpsaz.org/comrel or in the school office. A new Opt Out form must be submitted each year.

A. Computer Use Is a Privilege, Not a Right

Student use of a school's computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable use/activity may result in suspension or cancellation of privileges as well as additional disciplinary and/or legal action.

B. Acceptable Use

Student access to the school's computers, networks and Internet services is provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the school's educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals. The same rules and expectations that govern student conduct and communications apply to student use of computers and the Internet.

C. Prohibited Use

The user is responsible for his/her own actions involving school computers, networks and Internet services and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. Examples of unacceptable uses include the following:

1. **Inappropriate Materials**: Accessing, submitting, transmitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning or displaying materials that are defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal.
2. **Illegal Activities**: Using the school's computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or activity that violates district policies and/or school rules.
3. **Violating Copyrights**: Copying or downloading copyrighted materials without the express authorization of the student's teacher or school administrator.
4. **Plagiarism**: Representing as one's own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, etc.).
5. **Copying Software**: Copying, downloading or installing software without the express authorization of the student's teacher or school administrator.
6. **Nonschool-Related Uses**: Using the school's computers, networks and Internet services for nonschool-related purposes.
7. **Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access**: Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords without permission and/or accessing other users' accounts.

8. **Malicious Use/Vandalism**: Any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school's computers, networks and Internet services.

9. **Unauthorized Access**: Accessing unauthorized communication methods, such as chat rooms, social networks, instant messaging or e-mail.

D. No Expectation of Privacy

The school retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, networks and Internet services owned or leased by the school. The school reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students.

E. Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

The student and/or the student's parent/guardian is responsible for compensating the school for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school related to violations of policy JFCH and/or these rules.

F. School Assumes No Responsibility for Unauthorized Charges, Costs or Illegal Use

The school assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by students.

G. Student Security

A student will not reveal his/her full name, address or telephone number on the Internet without prior permission from a supervising teacher. Students should never meet people they have contacted through the Internet without parent permission. Students should inform their teachers if they access information or messages that may seem dangerous or inappropriate.

H. System Security

The security of the school's computers, networks and Internet services is a high priority. Any user who identifies a security problem must notify a supervising teacher. The user will not demonstrate the problem to others.

Custody

In cases where custody/visitation affects the district, the school follows the most recent court order on file with the child's school. School employees do not wish to be placed in the middle of custody disputes. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent or of parents having joint custody to provide the district with the most recent court order. Please refer to Governing Board Policy JH(2) for more detailed information on child custody issues.

District and News Media

The media sometimes cover events at our schools. Your child may be interviewed, recorded, photographed or videotaped by the media or district staff for a story in the newspaper, radio or television. In some cases, photos and videos may be placed on the Internet for public access.

You may choose to opt out of district/media coverage for your child at any time by completing an Opt Out form and submitting it to the school office. The form is available online at www.mpsaz.org/comrel or in the school office. A new Opt Out form must be submitted each year.

Dress and Grooming Standards

The district recognizes that student dress and grooming are the responsibility of the student and parent or guardian and are generally a matter of personal choice. However, the district also recognizes that there is a relationship between student dress and grooming and school pride, self-esteem, the safety and general welfare of the students and staff, and the accomplishment of curriculum goals and educational objectives. For this reason, the district has adopted specific standards that outline its expectations with regard to dress and grooming practices in all of the district's schools.

Students must refrain from displaying tattoos or wearing clothing, jewelry or other accessories that communicate a message that:

- Is related to tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Is sexually suggestive, vulgar, obscene or offensive.
- Advocates or promotes violence or terror.
- Expresses gang membership, affiliation or support.
- Causes a reasonable person to feel insulted, demeaned, threatened, intimidated or harassed because of the person's race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Student dress and grooming standards are communicated annually to students and parents and are available in the school office or by referring to Governing Board Policy JFCA.

Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of the district to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment and to ensure that students are free from discrimination in any district program or activity on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability.

Under certain conditions, discrimination can include harassing conduct by students or by district employees if, among other things, the harassing conduct is based on the student's race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability and if the conduct creates a hostile learning environment under the law.

District policy provides detailed procedures on handling complaints of discrimination. If a student believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination by the district, the student should report the discrimination to any teacher, guidance counselor or school administrator.

Please refer to Governing Board Policies JB and JFD for more detailed information on discrimination and on the procedures for reporting and handling complaints of discrimination.

Lack of English language skills shall not be a barrier to admission and participation in district programs.

Federal law prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion or disability.

Assistant Superintendent David Shuff is the district's compliance officer with respect to Title IX (gender-based discrimination), Title VI (discrimination based on race, ethnicity and national origin), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (handicap-based discrimination) and the Americans With Disabilities Act (disability-based discrimination) regarding students. If you feel that any person has discriminated against your child, or if you have questions that can't be answered at your school, please contact David Shuff at 1025 N. Country Club Drive, Mesa, AZ 85201. Phone (480) 472-0702.

Any student who knowingly makes false accusations of discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action.

Extracurricular Participation

To take part in extracurricular activities, students in grades seven through 12 must pass all their classes. Ninth- through 11th-graders must take a minimum of five high school credit courses. Seniors may enroll in fewer than five classes as long as they meet graduation requirements.

Grading and eligibility periods are nine weeks long. When students are in danger of failing, parents and students are notified via a progress report. The report card serves as notice of eligibility status for the next eligibility interval.

Please check with your school administrator or sponsor for more specific information.

Field Trips

Only students who are approved for a particular activity and their assigned sponsors, teachers, coaches and district-approved chaperones may participate in field trips. Friends and relatives who may be visiting a student's family are not permitted to take part in any field trip unless they are doing so as chaperones who have been approved through the district's Volunteer Program.

Gang Activity

Students are prohibited from engaging in any gang activity, regardless of where the activity occurs or the means by which the activity is conducted, if it has a substantially detrimental impact on school activities or on district students or employees in relation to school attendance, school operations or the school environment. Any student who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action. Please refer to Governing Board Policy JFCE for more information.

Graduation Requirements and Diploma Options

The district requires that its graduates complete 21 credits. Some credits are in required areas. Others are elective courses chosen by students. Refer to the Course Description Catalog for requirements (also available on the Internet at www.mpsaz.org).

Students who earn the required number of credits, meet attendance standards, and demonstrate competency in reading, writing and math on the AIMS Test are eligible for a Standard Diploma.

Students who complete more rigorous course work than required and maintain a high grade-point average may be eligible for Arizona Academic Scholar status or Mesa's highest academic honor, a Scholastic Diploma. Refer to the Course Description Catalog for specific requirements.

Harassment/Bullying/Hazing

Harassment, bullying and hazing of students are prohibited on campuses, during school-related activities or circumstances, and when traveling to and from school. Students should also be aware that verbal insults and attacks via e-mail or Internet social networks that substantially hinder another student's right to attend school or participate in school activities constitute harassment and bullying. **Accordingly, students and parents should be aware that Internet communications that cause problems between students on campus will be dealt with as a serious student discipline matter.**

Harassment and bullying mean any severe or persistent physical or psychological abuse of a student by means of physical threats or assaults, verbal threats or insults, or other hostile or degrading acts. Harassment and bullying include acts that are inflicted because of a student's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Harassment and bullying also include any type of sexual harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome written, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may, in certain circumstances, constitute sexual harassment.

Hazing means forcing a student to risk or suffer physical or mental harm or degradation to join, participate in or remain in a school-affiliated organization or activity.

If a student believes that he or she has been harassed, bullied or hazed, the student should report the behavior to a teacher, counselor, school nurse or school administrator. Likewise, all school employees are obligated to report such incidents. All reports of harassment, bullying and hazing are confidential and will be investigated.

Students who engage in harassment, bullying or hazing will be subject to disciplinary action. Sexual harassment that meets the legal definition of sexual abuse will be referred to police, as required by state law.

Refer to Governing Board Policies JFD and JFCM for detailed information.

Health and Accident Insurance

The district does not carry accident and health insurance for students' medical or dental costs if they become sick or are injured during school-related activities. Parents are responsible for their children's insurance.

An optional school-day accident and health policy is available for purchase at the beginning of the school year through a private agency. Information on the coverage and cost is provided to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Immunizations

Arizona law requires children to be up-to-date on their immunizations to attend school. Documented proof of required vaccinations is needed for students entering MPS. If an immunization would put your child at risk for medical reasons, you and the child's physician must sign a Request for Exemption form. Personal or Religious Exemption forms are also available and can be obtained from the school health office. Exempt students will be excluded from school if there is an outbreak for which they have not been immunized.

Liability for Vandalism

Students who cut, deface or otherwise damage any school property may be suspended or expelled from school. Under Arizona law, parents may be liable for damage done to school property by their children.

Medication and Dietary Supplements

School personnel are sometimes asked to administer medication to students during school hours. School personnel may cooperate if the following conditions are met:

1. All medication must come in its original container. Prescription medication must have an unaltered pharmaceutical label attached. Over-the-counter medication, dietary supplements and other non-prescribed medication must be labeled with the student's name, medication name, dosage directions and time of day to be taken.
2. The parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a Parent's Consent for Giving Medication at School. A new form must be completed at the beginning of each school year and anytime the medication or dosage changes.
3. Medication must be administered and stored in the health office.
4. The parent or guardian is notified when additional medication is needed and when unused or discontinued medication needs to be picked up from school.

A student may carry and self-administer prescribed emergency medication or an inhaler if it is properly labeled and written parent consent has been provided to the school nurse. No other medication, including over-the-counter medications and dietary supplements, may be carried unless an Individualized Health Care Plan has been developed and signed by the school nurse and school administrator. Please refer to Governing Board Policy JHCD for more information.

Open Enrollment

District schools accept applications for enrollment from resident students seeking enrollment in a school outside their attendance zones and from students who are nonresidents of the district but are residents of the state. You may request an Open Enrollment Application at any school. Applications are also available on the Internet at www.mpsaz.org. Applications should be returned to the school of your choice by the first Friday in February for enrollment the next school year.

Parking

Student parking on school grounds is a privilege limited to juniors and seniors who possess a valid driver's license and vehicle insurance. Student vehicles parked on school grounds must be registered with the school and display a current decal on the driver's side windshield.

Students are given information about parking regulations when a decal is issued. A violation of any regulation may result in suspension of the parking privilege, towing of the vehicle, citation by the police and/or suspension from school.

Neither the school nor the district is responsible for theft or damage to any vehicle or its contents when the vehicle is parked on campus by a student, parent or other visitor.

Payment for Optional Materials, Services, Lost and Damaged Items

When students enroll in school, there are some required and some nonrequired materials and services. Basic course materials, identification cards and some lockers and locks are required. They are provided to all students at no cost.

Other lockers and locks, physical education towels, activity cards, yearbooks and supplemental course materials and services are not required. They are not provided free of charge. Details on more specific situations are provided to students as they progress through the enrollment process.

Lost or damaged textbooks and other required materials must be replaced.

If students do not meet their financial obligations, they may not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities or graduation exercises.

Physical Education and Athletics Participation

Parents are responsible for informing the school/coaching staff of any student illness or injury that may have an impact on the student's health and safety during participation in physical education and athletic programs.

Interscholastic team members are prohibited from using steroids without prior disclosure to the school athletic director. Violation of this rule will result in suspension from Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) participation for the remainder of the season.

Police Visits

Police may ask to interview a student at school. If the purpose of the interview is to investigate child abuse or neglect, the school cannot notify the parent without police authorization. In all other cases, the school will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent. After reasonable efforts to notify the parent, the school will allow the interview unless the student does not wish to be interviewed or wishes to first speak with the parent.

If police wish to take a student into custody, the school must comply with the request. The school will notify the parent unless the police have directed the school to refer the parent to the police.

Product Sales

Groups that wish to sell products on campus must be officially recognized school organizations and must have the sale approved by the student council and school administrator. All funds collected must be deposited in the school's student funds account.

Questioning Grades and Absences

Students have the right to question grades, attendance records and other school records. If you think an error has been made, the first level of appeal is the teacher.

The second level of appeal is the appropriate assistant principal, and the third level is the principal.

Safety of Students and Their Property

Students must obey traffic laws and are encouraged to wear helmets when bicycling to and from school. Suspicious behavior observed when traveling to or from school should be reported immediately to a school administrator or police officer. Bicycles should be locked when parked at school. The school is not responsible for bicycles that are lost, stolen or damaged on school grounds.

Students should not carry valuable personal items with them at school. The district cannot guard students' personal belongings and is not responsible for these items, including cell phones and other electronic devices that may be lost, stolen or damaged at school.

Silent Witness Telephone Line

Students are encouraged to report any situation that threatens the safety or security of people or property at school or school-sponsored activities. Students may report information to any school staff member, or they may call the district's Silent Witness telephone line. Call (480) 472-STOP — (480) 472-7867 — 24 hours a day to leave a message. For any emergency, call 911.

Special Education

Federal and state law requires school districts, charter schools and other public education agencies (hereafter referred to as the "school") to provide a free, appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities.

This free, appropriate public education refers to special education and related services, described in an Individualized Education Program and provided to the child in the least restrictive environment.

Children with disabilities who are at least age 3 but less than 22 years of age, and their parents, are guaranteed certain educational rights, known as procedural safeguards. The law and its implementing regulations also provide methods to help you assure that your input is considered.

If you want a copy of the procedural safeguards, please call the district's Special Education Department. Phone (480) 472-0719.

If your child is having difficulty in school, please check with the teacher to determine what interventions have been tried to help your child succeed.

If the interventions are unsuccessful, a referral for special education evaluation may be necessary. You may contact the school administrator or school psychologist if you wish to make a referral personally.

If special education disabilities are suspected, we are required to evaluate your child to identify and document whether your child has any disabilities that affect his or her learning and, if so, to determine what special education and related services are required.

The evaluation will be done only after we have explained what we plan to do during the evaluation. We will use tests and procedures selected specifically for your child. The evaluation will not include basic tests or procedures used routinely for all students within a class, grade or school.

This evaluation will be conducted according to federal and state requirements and will include information you provide. Following the evaluation, we will provide you the complete results within 60 calendar days of your written consent.

If your child is found to be eligible for special education services, we request that you serve as part of a team to help us develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and identify the special education and related services and any other support services your child needs. You may ask others to be present at the IEP meeting, if you wish.

Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

Student Education Records

Parents have the right to inspect and review all education records and all other rights guaranteed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Destruction of Education Records

The district destroys all psychological and special education records on students five years after those students have been removed from special education, have been withdrawn from the district or have graduated.

The parent or emancipated student may obtain these records, rather than having them destroyed, by submitting a written request to Mesa Public Schools, Psychological Records, 1025 N. Country Club Drive, Mesa, AZ 85201.

Prior Notice of Unilateral Private Placement

If you disagree with the district and consider enrolling your child in a private special education school, you must provide the district with a written notice 10 business days before you enroll your child. The notice must include a statement that you are rejecting the placement offered by the district, what your concerns were about the offered placement, and your intent to enroll your child in a private school at public expense.

Arizona Scholarships for Pupils With Disabilities

The Arizona Department of Education administers a limited scholarship fund for students with disabilities to attend an adjacent public school or qualified private school. Information about this option is available from the Department of Education. Phone (602) 542-0413.

More Information

If you want more information about our special education program and what it may offer your child, you should speak with the child's teacher, school psychologist or school administrator where your child receives educational services or the director of special education.

Parent Information Network Specialists, a support group sponsored by the Arizona Department of Education, can also help you to better understand the procedure. Phone (602) 542-3852.

The Exceptional Student Services Division of the Arizona Department of Education is also available to assist you. Phone (602) 364-4000.

Student Groups

Unless specifically noted, the district does not endorse the aims, policies and opinions of any student group or its members. The district's name shall not be identified with the aims, policies and opinions of any student group or its members.

Student Privacy and Surveys

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment gives parents and eligible students (emancipated minors or students who are 18 or older) certain rights regarding protected personal information, instructional materials, physical exams and health screenings. These include the right to:

1. Provide written consent before a student participates in any survey funded by the U.S. Department of Education that requests protected information:

- Political affiliations;
 - Family mental or psychological problems;
 - Sexual behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
 - Critical appraisals of family members;
 - Privileged relationships recognized by law, such as with attorneys, doctors and ministers;
 - Family religious practices, affiliations or beliefs; or
 - Income, unless required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Be notified and choose to opt out of certain activities, surveys and exams including:
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure or use of personal information obtained from students to market, sell or otherwise distribute information to others;
 - Surveys requesting protected information, regardless of funding; and
 - Any nonemergency, invasive physical exam or screening required for attendance, administered by the school and not necessary to protect students' health and safety — except for hearing, vision or scoliosis screenings, or any exam or screening permitted or required by state law.
 3. Inspect the following material, upon request, before the district administers or uses:
 - Surveys and instructional material involving protected information;
 - Documents to collect students' personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
 - Instructional material in the educational curriculum.
 4. Receive notification at the start of each school year, and after substantive changes are made, about the district's policy for complying with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment.
 5. Report any violation of rights by filing a claim with:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Student Records

A student's education records are located in the student file, which consists of two major areas: (a) permanent records, such as grade and attendance reports and health records, and (b) discipline records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents, and students over 18 years of age (eligible students), certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access.
Parents or eligible students should submit to the school administrator a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school administrator will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The term "parent" includes persons acting in the place of a parent, such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, as well as other persons who are legally responsible for a child's welfare.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
Parents or eligible students should write to the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.
Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; or a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist).

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

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Noncustodial and divorced parents have equal rights relating to student records unless the school has been provided a court order to the contrary.

A student's education records will be forwarded to any school inside or outside the school district that requests those records if the student seeks, or intends, to enroll in that school. These records will include the student's disciplinary records with respect to any suspension or expulsion, as required by state and federal law.

Directory Information

Certain student education records are considered "directory information," including the following: student's name, mailing address, e-mail address and telephone number; names of the parents; address and telephone number of the parents; date and place of student's birth; class designation (grade level, etc.); extracurricular participation; weight and height if a member of an athletic team; enrollment dates; awards received; and photograph.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to use this type of information in certain school publications, such as music performance programs, athletic programs or honor rolls. Unless you direct otherwise, the district will disclose student directory information under limited circumstances. The district will not release directory information for commercial purposes, other than to companies designated to sell school yearbooks and other such items.

Request by Military Recruiters

By law, the district must comply with a request by a military recruiter for a secondary student's name, address and telephone number unless the parent or eligible student has "opted out" of providing such information by giving written notice to the district that such information should not be made public without prior consent. Any such notice must be given to the school office.

Opt Out Form

The district provides an Opt Out form that you can use to give written notice to the district that you do not want directory information released to military recruiters or other members of the public. This form is available online at www.mpsaz.org/comrel or in the school office. A new Opt Out form must be submitted each year.

Student Speech

Students are entitled to certain free speech rights in public schools. However, these rights are not automatically the same as the rights of adults in other settings, as this freedom must be applied in light of the special characteristics of the school environment.

Prohibited student speech includes, among other things: speech that causes a material and substantial disruption; speech that is vulgar, lewd, obscene or plainly offensive; speech that harasses, bullies or otherwise substantially interferes with another student's right to attend school or participate in school activities; speech that advertises or promotes alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs; fighting words and threats of violence.

Please refer to Governing Board Policy JFH for more detailed information on student speech.

Teacher Résumés

Résumés describing educational background and teaching experience are maintained for all teachers and other instructional personnel. If you wish to review the résumés for your child's teachers, contact the school office where your child is enrolled.

Testing

MPS uses two types of tests — criterion-referenced and norm-referenced. Criterion-referenced tests, such as district final exams or Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS), show us if students have mastered material that should be learned in class. Norm-referenced tests, such as TerraNova, tell us how our students compare to students nationally. These two types of tests allow us to monitor student, class, school and district academic achievement.

Tests Administered in Mesa Public Schools

Test	Grades	When Tested
MPS tests in English, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Languages	7-12	Once per semester for most courses (e.g., final exams)
TerraNova*	7-9	April
AIMS*	7-8	April
AIMS*	10-12	October, February & April
National Assessment of Educational Progress*	Varies	January-March

* Required by state of Arizona

Copying another student's answers, stealing tests and other activities that would result in test scores not accurately reflecting what a student learned can lead to a variety of punishments, up to suspension from MPS, and any additional sanctions imposed by the Arizona Department of Education.

District Report Card

The Arizona Department of Education provides a report card that lists the AIMS results of each district in the state. This report is available on the Internet at www.ade.az.gov, and each school office has a paper copy for review.

Visiting Your Child's School

You are encouraged to visit your child's school. For safety reasons, we require all visitors to report to the school office upon arrival if visiting during the school day. Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. Parents and others must comply with directions from the principal and teachers when visiting.

If you wish to meet with your child's teacher or school administrator, please make prior arrangements to avoid conflicts with school schedules. If your child needs to be released from school during the day for a medical appointment or for any other reason, we request that you complete the sign-in/sign-out log in the school office before taking your child off campus.

Students from other schools are not allowed on campus during the school day.

Guidelines for Student Behavior

To assist you and others in the pursuit of a quality education, we have established some guidelines for student behavior. These guidelines are based on existing policies and procedures of the district and are designed to create a pleasant and safe environment for all students in our schools.

You must remember that you are responsible for your own actions. If your actions are in violation of school guidelines, you will have to accept the consequences. **You should also understand that Arizona law allows the district to hold you accountable for your behavior on school property, on the way to and from school, during any school-sponsored activity, at school bus stops, and in other locations outside school grounds if the behavior has a negative impact on other students, teachers or school activities.**

Throughout the Guidelines for Student Behavior, "parent" means a parent (unless parental rights have been judicially limited or severed), a legal guardian or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian.

When a special education student engages in misconduct that could result in suspension or expulsion, the district shall follow state and federal laws governing suspension and expulsion of special education students. Such procedures are set forth in Governing Board Policy JGD/JGE and Administrative Regulation JGD/JGE-R (2).

Disciplinary Actions

Students involved in inappropriate behavior are subject to certain disciplinary actions. Depending upon the behavior problem of the student, one or more of the following actions may be taken by school officials. Misconduct may also result in suspension or loss of the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities.

Informal Talk

A school official (teacher, administrator or counselor) talks to the student and tries to reach an agreement on how the student should behave.

Conference

A formal conference is conducted with the student and one or more school officials.

Parent Involvement

The parent is notified by telephone, personal contact, letter or certified letter. A conference may be conducted with the student, parent, appropriate school officials and any other individuals concerned.

In-School Discipline

The student is subject to consequences that do not require suspension from school, such as loss of privileges, detention, temporary removal from class, time-out and assignment to an alternative learning classroom (ALC).

Short Suspension

The student is subject to a suspension of 10 school days or less. A short suspension may be imposed by school administrators. During that suspension, the student is not permitted on district property or at district functions.

Long Suspension

The student is subject to a suspension of 11 school days or more. A long suspension may be recommended by the school administrator and imposed by the assistant superintendent. During that suspension, the student is not permitted on district property or at district functions.

Intervention Program

This may take the form of a short suspension combined with a counseling program in place of a long suspension.

Alternative Learning Classroom

Temporary assignment to an alternative learning classroom (ALC) is an alternative to off-campus suspension. An ALC may be imposed for part of a day or for one or more days. The student is removed from the regular classroom setting and is assigned to a location isolated from classmates. Class assignments will be given to a student placed in an ALC. The parent will be notified.

Alternative School Assignment

The school administrator or assistant superintendent may assign a student to an alternative school of the district in place of a long suspension.

If the assistant superintendent believes that a long suspension may be appropriate, the student and parent are provided the opportunity to meet with the assistant superintendent to discuss the situation. If the assistant superintendent determines that good cause exists for a long suspension, the assistant superintendent may make an alternative school assignment (ASA) in place of a long suspension, with or without the agreement of the student or parent.

If a student is assigned to an alternative school in place of a long suspension, there is no right to a formal hearing on the incident.

Additionally, under Arizona law, the district may reassign any student who refuses to comply with rules, refuses to pursue the required course of study or refuses to submit to the authority of teachers, administrators or the Governing Board.

Expulsion

The student is subject to permanent expulsion from all schools in the district. Expulsion may be recommended by a school administrator and imposed by the Governing Board following a hearing before a board-designated hearing officer.

Only the Governing Board can expel a student. Upon expulsion, a student is not permitted on district property or at district functions unless the student has been readmitted to school by the Governing Board.

Problem Areas

This list is not all-inclusive. A student committing an act of misconduct not listed will, nevertheless, be subject to the discretionary authority of the school administrator or assistant superintendent.

Any student who knowingly assists another in committing an act of misconduct may be subject to the same disciplinary action as the student who commits the act of misconduct.

These problem areas may also involve criminal violations of state or federal law. State law requires schools to report to police: (a) drug violations, (b) firearm possession, (c) sexual abuse and other forms of child abuse, and (d) other serious criminal or physical-threat incidents. Our schools also have discretion to advise police of other incidents that may constitute a crime.

Abuse of a teacher or other school employee while performing official duties is a criminal violation of Arizona law.

Academic Misconduct/Cheating

Cheating, plagiarism or any other type of academic misconduct that enables a student to receive a grade or score that was not or would not have been earned legitimately.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Loss of credit for the assignment	Removal from class and loss of credit

Alcohol Violation

Use, possession, sale, purchase or distribution of alcoholic substances. This violation includes drunkenness at a school event. An alcohol violation preceded by a drug violation will be treated as a repeated occurrence for disciplinary action.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC and intervention program	Suspension for two semesters/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Arson

Damaging or attempting to damage property by fire or incendiary device.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Assault

A physical attack on a person who does not wish to fight or provoke it. This violation includes a student who encourages another to commit an assault.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Automobile Violation

Misuse of an auto on school property, including unauthorized parking.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Conference
Maximum	Long suspension	Expulsion

Bus Violation

Violation of bus rules.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Warning	Denial of bus-riding privileges
Maximum	Denial of bus-riding privileges	Denial of bus-riding privileges

Dangerous Weapon/Instrument

Use, display or possession of a knife, ice pick, CO₂- or spring-powered pellet or BB gun, laser beam pointer, brass knuckles, nunchakus, club, fireworks, explosive ammunition or any other instrument not designed for lethal use but which may be capable of causing death or other serious physical injury. This violation also includes anything perceived by a reasonable person to be capable of causing injury, given the manner in which it is used or threatened to be used, such as a toy gun or a starter gun.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Deadly Weapon/Firearm

Use, display or possession of (1) any operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded weapon that will or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (3) a firearm muffler or firearm silencer; (4) any destructive device, including (a) any explosive, incendiary or poison gas device, (b) any weapon that will, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant and that has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter, and (c) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device and from which a destructive device may readily be assembled. This violation includes handguns, pistols, rifles, shotguns and flare guns.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	#Expulsion	#Expulsion
Maximum	#Expulsion	#Expulsion

The Governing Board may, on a case-by-case basis, provide for a lesser disciplinary action after consideration of all relevant circumstances.

Defiance of Authority/Disrespect

Failure to comply with reasonable requests of school officials or other disrespectful behavior. Physical resistance to school officials may result in expulsion, regardless if such resistance is a first occurrence.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Conference	Parent involvement
Maximum	Long suspension	Expulsion

Discrimination

Mistreatment based upon race, ethnicity, gender, religion or disability. This violation includes false accusations of discrimination or harassment.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Disorderly Conduct

Conduct that disrupts the orderly operation or educational environment or mission of the school. This violation may include profanity, obscene gestures and excessive public displays of affection.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Parent involvement
Maximum	Short suspension	Expulsion

Dress Standard Violation

Failure to comply with district and school dress standards.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Conference
Maximum	Short suspension	Short suspension

Drug Violation (Distribution)

Distribution, manufacture or sale of marijuana, other illegal drugs and inhalants, and other noxious substances. It also includes distribution, manufacture or sale of drug paraphernalia and imitations of illegal drugs and other noxious substances. Distribution of a medication or a dietary supplement for recreational use will be treated as a drug violation (distribution).

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Suspension for two semesters/ASA	Suspension for two semesters/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Drug Violation (Possession/Use)

Use, possession or purchase of marijuana, other illegal drugs and inhalants, and other noxious substances. This includes off-campus use and then being on district property or at a district function. It also includes use, possession or purchase of drug paraphernalia and imitations of illegal drugs and other noxious substances. Possession of medication or a dietary supplement for recreational use will be treated as a drug violation (possession). A drug violation preceded by an alcohol violation will be treated as a repeated occurrence for disciplinary action.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension and intervention program	Suspension for two semesters/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Fighting

Mutual participation in physical violence against a person or persons.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Short suspension	Expulsion

Forgery

Using the signature or initials of another person.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Conference
Maximum	Short suspension	Long suspension

Gambling

Participating in games of chance for money or other items of value.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Short suspension	Long suspension

Gang Activity/Association

Gang-related behavior that threatens the safety of persons or property, creates an atmosphere of intimidation, or substantially disrupts the educational environment or mission of the school.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Short suspension/ALC
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Harassment/Bullying/Hazing

Physical or psychological abuse of another student by means of verbal or physical threats, intimidation, insults or other aggressive behavior. This violation includes abuse based upon race, ethnicity, gender, religion or disability, and forcing a student to risk or suffer physical or mental harm or degradation to join, participate or remain in a school-affiliated organization.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Information Systems/ Electronic Devices Violation

Inappropriate use of electronic devices, such as computers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), cell phones, cameras and audio/video recorders, and other information systems devices, such as the Internet and e-mail. This violation includes the use of any recording or video device in such a way that it violates the privacy of others.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Short suspension/ALC
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Lying/False Accusation

Knowingly giving false or misleading information, including false accusations against others.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Parent involvement
Maximum	Short suspension	Long suspension

Medication or Dietary Supplement (Unauthorized Possession)

Unauthorized possession or distribution of a medication or dietary supplement on school grounds or while traveling between school and home. Possession or distribution of medication or a dietary supplement for recreational use will be treated as a drug violation.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Short suspension/ALC
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Robbery/Extortion

The solicitation of money or property in return for protection or under threat to inflict harm.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Long suspension	Expulsion

Sexual Abuse

Sexual contact without consent.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, regardless of whether the conduct is verbal or physical. Sexual harassment may also constitute sexual abuse.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Sexual Offense

Sexual conduct on school property or during school-related activities that is immoral by community standards. This violation includes indecent exposure, sexual intercourse, lewd phone calls and possession of sexually explicit materials.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Student Speech

Prohibited speech or violation of valid school restrictions on the time, place or manner of speech or other communications. This violation includes speech that causes a material and substantial disruption; lewd, vulgar or plainly offensive speech; "fighting words;" and threats of violence.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Short suspension/ALC
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Tardiness

Late arrival to a scheduled class or appointment.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	Parent involvement
Maximum	In-school discipline	In-school discipline

Theft

Taking or concealing property that belongs to others. This violation includes copyright violations and passing counterfeit money.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Long suspension	Long suspension

Threats/A.R.S. §13-2911

Threatening the safety of persons or property. This includes violations of A.R.S. §13-2911: (1) bomb threats and other actions that disrupt or interfere with normal operations through either threats of physical injury to a student, employee or other person on district property; or threats to cause damage to district property or to the property of any student or employee; (2) going on or remaining on district property for the purpose of disrupting or interfering with the use of district property by students or staff; and (3) disobeying a lawful order to leave district property.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Short suspension/ALC	Long suspension/ASA
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Tobacco Violation

The use, distribution or possession of a tobacco product.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Short suspension	Long suspension

Trespassing

Unauthorized presence on district property.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Informal talk	In-school discipline
Maximum	Short suspension	Long suspension

Truancy/Unexcused Absence

Any absence that is not excused by the student's parent or legal guardian and approved by the appropriate school official.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Long suspension	Expulsion

Vandalism

Destroying or defacing property of the district, staff or students. This violation includes graffiti.

Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
Minimum	Parent involvement	Parent involvement
Maximum	Expulsion	Expulsion

Guidelines for Student Behavior

Bus Rules

Students being transported are under the authority of the school administrator and the bus driver and shall observe established and appropriate standards of classroom behavior and dress while riding a bus. Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on buses. Students shall also observe the following specific standards:

1. Obey the driver's instructions at all times, which includes giving the driver your correct name, if it is requested, and correcting the behavior after a warning is given.
2. Keep aisles clear.
3. Remain seated until your scheduled stop.
4. Keep your hands, arms, feet, legs and head inside the bus.
5. Talk quietly. Do not yell or use vulgar or abusive language.
6. Keep your hands off others. Be courteous.
7. Do not throw anything inside the bus or from the bus.
8. Do not eat on the bus.
9. Do not drink on the bus unless allowed to do so by the bus driver.
10. Do not carry skateboards, glass objects, animals, weapons, explosive devices, tobacco, alcohol or drugs on the bus.
11. Do not play radios or tape recorders without headphones. Items brought on board must comply with school rules.
12. Sit in assigned seats if seats are assigned.
13. Maintain appropriate standards of conduct while traveling to and from school and at the bus stop.
14. Do not abuse or deface the bus or bus equipment.
15. Keep cases, band instruments and other belongings under control at all times.

Denial of School Bus Service

Bus riding is a privilege—not a right. Inappropriate conduct at bus stops, on buses or in the process of boarding or disembarking from a bus may result in the denial of bus-riding privileges. When school bus rules are violated, the following will occur:

Warning—the bus driver may warn a student to correct his or her behavior before taking disciplinary action.

First Infraction—following the first infraction that is documented in writing, the student may be denied bus-riding privileges on all buses for a minimum of one day.

Second Infraction—the second infraction that is documented in writing may result in a minimum of three days' denial of bus-riding privileges from all buses.

Third Infraction—a third infraction that is documented in writing may result in a minimum of five days' denial of bus-riding privileges from all buses.

Fourth Infraction—the fourth infraction that is documented in writing may result in a denial of bus-riding privileges from all buses for one month or the remainder of the semester, whichever is longer.

If an infraction is deemed serious enough by the school administrator, the student may be denied bus-riding privileges on all buses for an entire school year.

Search and Seizure

Students possess the right to privacy of person, as well as the right to freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property, as guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution. These individual rights, however, are balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students and staff.

School officials may conduct searches when they have reason to suspect that a law or school rule has been violated or that the health, safety or welfare of students or staff may be in danger.

Search of Lockers and Desks

The district is the owner and has control of student lockers and desks, which are provided as a convenience to students for storage of personal items. School officials may search desks and/or lockers at any time without notice and without consent whenever reasonable suspicion exists that a law or school rule has been violated, or that the health, safety or welfare of students or staff may be in danger.

Search of a Student's Person

A search of a student's person, backpack or other belongings shall be undertaken only if there is reasonable suspicion that the student possesses a dangerous, prohibited or illegal substance, or object or items that may interfere with school purposes and/or present a threat to people or property.

Search of a Motor Vehicle

A school official may search a motor vehicle when there is reasonable suspicion that the vehicle contains evidence a student is violating a law or school rule.

Guidelines for Student Behavior

Your Due Process Rights

Relative to student discipline, due process means that students are entitled to certain notice and hearing procedures before they can be suspended or expelled. In some situations, there are also procedures that students may follow if they do not agree with the school's actions.

If a student is faced with a possible suspension or expulsion, the appropriate due process procedure will be implemented. The following summary provides an overview to acquaint students and parents with the existing procedures.

Short Suspension

A short suspension is 10 school days or less. The notice and hearing required for a short suspension are more informal and abbreviated than for a long suspension or expulsion. There is no legal right to appeal a short suspension to any person other than the school principal.

The school administrator has the authority to suspend a student for 10 school days or less. When a short suspension is the anticipated disciplinary action, the school administrator will provide the student the opportunity to participate in an informal hearing between the school administrator and student, which may include other people associated with the incident. The school administrator will verbally inform the student of the alleged behavior that is considered a violation of the rules. The student will be given an opportunity to respond and present his or her version of the situation. If, after these procedures are completed, the school administrator decides that a short suspension is appropriate, the suspension will begin, and the parent will be notified.

The school administrator may, in addition to imposing a short suspension, recommend to the assistant superintendent that a long suspension be imposed. The short suspension will, nevertheless, take place.

The school administrator may immediately suspend a student when the student's presence creates a danger to any student or school personnel. As soon as the danger subsides, the due process procedures for a short suspension shall be initiated.

A parent/student may appeal to the principal the disciplinary action taken by an assistant principal or other administrative designee within two school days of its imposition. The principal will act upon the appeal within two school days of its receipt.

During the appeal process, suspended students will be assigned to an alternative learning classroom unless the offense involves assault/fighting, drug possession/distribution, dangerous instruments/deadly weapons or any other offense that presents an immediate threat to safety. Appeals made after completion of a disciplinary action are not subject to review.

Long Suspension

A long suspension is 11 school days or more. In addition to imposing a short suspension, the school administrator may recommend that a long suspension be imposed.

The assistant superintendent has the authority to impose a long suspension following appropriate due process.

Notice shall be given to the student and parent that the school administrator is recommending to the assistant superintendent that the student be suspended for 11 school days or more. The student and parent shall be given notice of applicable due process procedures.

If the assistant superintendent believes that a long suspension may be appropriate, the student and parent are provided the opportunity to meet with the assistant superintendent to discuss the situation in an informal setting. The assistant superintendent then determines whether a long suspension should be imposed or, if good cause exists for a long suspension, whether the student should be assigned to an alternative educational program of the district in place of a long suspension.

If a student is assigned to an alternative school in place of a long suspension, there is no right to a formal hearing. If the assistant

superintendent imposes a long suspension, a formal hearing may be requested by the parent. A request for the formal hearing must be made to the assistant superintendent within two working days after notification that long suspension has been imposed.

If a formal hearing is requested, the hearing will be conducted at the district level by an appointed hearing officer. The parent and student shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing at least five working days prior to the hearing.

A long suspension shall take effect upon receipt of the hearing officer's decision, subject to appeal to the Governing Board. The hearing officer's decision may be appealed by sending a written notice of appeal to the board within five working days after receipt of the hearing officer's decision. The notice of appeal must be received no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting where the appeal will be heard.

Taking Charge and Next Step Programs

These educational/counseling programs are combined with a suspension for students who use or possess drugs or alcohol on campus if it is their first offense.

Expulsion

Expulsion means the permanent withdrawal of the privilege of attending any school in the district, unless the Governing Board reinstates that privilege. Only the Governing Board can expel a student. Expulsion shall take effect only after a formal hearing is conducted and the Governing Board has made a decision to expel. If the assistant superintendent believes that expulsion is appropriate, the assistant superintendent shall give written notice to the student and parent that expulsion is being recommended and that a hearing on expulsion will take place. The student and parent also shall be given notice of applicable due process procedures.

The parent and any student subject to expulsion shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing at least five working days prior to the hearing.

The Governing Board has decided that all expulsion hearings shall be conducted by a hearing officer who shall hear the evidence, prepare a report and bring a recommendation to the board for action. The hearing shall be closed to protect the privacy of the student unless the parent requests that it be open to the public.

The hearing officer's recommendation may be appealed by sending a written notice of appeal to the board within five working days after receipt of the hearing officer's recommendation. The notice of appeal must be received no less than 24 hours prior to the board meeting or session where the hearing officer's recommendation and any appeal will be considered. The board is the ultimate authority in the district and is not bound to accept the hearing officer's recommendation.

Police Involvement

School officials are not required to initiate or complete due process procedures prior to notifying law enforcement officers. If law enforcement officers are notified, parents will be contacted by telephone or certified letter. Any action taken by law enforcement officers will be separate from disciplinary action taken by the school district.