TRI COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL
HANDBOOK
2026-2027



Take The H.E.L.M.

(Revised August 2026)

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TRI COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Brian Campbell
Madonna Princer
Jessica Helfmann
Nick Hall
Brandon Monreal
Heather Shadley

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Ryan Biller	Superintendent	(616) 636-5454
Corey Bordo	Director of Business & Finance	(616) 636-5454
Corrie Mervyn	Director of Assessment & Accountability	(616) 636-5454
Tyler Betterly	Director of Special Ed. Services	(616) 636-5454
Tim Goheen	High School Principal	(231) 937-4338
Joe Williams	High School Assistant Principal	(231) 937-4338
Phil Butler	Athletic Director	(231) 937-4338
Jessica Kurtz	Middle School Principal	(231) 937-4318
Jaime Harkness	Middle School Assistant Principal	(231) 937-4318
Brooke Haslacker	Elementary Principal	(231) 937-4380
Jason Rykse	Elementary Assistant Principal	(231) 937-4380
Amy Gould	MacNaughton Learning Center Principal	(231) 937-4391
Dan Clegg	Director of Technology	(231) 937-4338
Thomas Phinney	Director of Facilities	(616) 636-5454
Lisa Newton	Food Service Director	(231) 937-4338
Kim Leyko	Director of Transportation	(231) 937-4386

TRI COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

(231) 937 - 4386

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DISCLAIMER: This student handbook is composed of most of the rules and regulations that students need to know while attending Tri County Area Schools. However, it does not include every rule, regulation, qualification, or other relevant information of the district or buildings. Tri County Area Schools will not waive students' responsibilities simply because a state regulation, district, or building policy is not included in this handbook. We will make every reasonable effort possible to see that students are informed either verbally or in writing. However, i t is the students' responsibility to know the rules they must abide by while at Tri County Area Schools. Any changes made in state law, such as restorative justice practices, and/or school board policy after this handbook has gone to press may require information in the handbook to be amended. An addendum reflecting changes in policy or state law will be issued as soon as possible. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. This does not exempt students or parents from making themselves aware of and following rules and policies added to the student code of conduct.

2026 - 2027
TRI COUNTY AREA SCHOOLS

CALENDAR SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Stay in the know by visiting
www.tricountyschools.com

AUGUST 2026

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AUGUST 20: Tri County Open House
AUGUST 24: First Day of School!
AUGUST 28: No School
SEPTEMBER 4: No School
SEPTEMBER 7: No School - Labor Day
SEPTEMBER 18-19: Homecoming Weekend
OCTOBER 7: Count Day
OCTOBER 12-14: Parent-Teacher Conferences
OCTOBER 15: Early Release Day
OCTOBER 16: No School
NOVEMBER 2: No School - Professional Development Day
NOVEMBER 25-27: No School - Thanksgiving Break
DECEMBER 17: Early Release Day (Middle & High School Only. Elementary Full Day)
DECEMBER 18: Early Release Day
DECEMBER 21 - JANUARY 1: Christmas Break
FEBRUARY 10: Count Day
FEBRUARY 12 - 15: No School - Mid Winter Break
MARCH 1 - 3: Parent Teacher Conferences
MARCH 4: Early Release Day (Elementary Only. Middle & High School Full Day)
MARCH 5: No School
MARCH 26: No School - Good Friday
APRIL 2 - 9: No School - Spring Break
APRIL 26: No School - Professional Development Day
MAY 27: High School Graduation
MAY 31: No School - Memorial Day
JUNE 3: Early Release Day
JUNE 4: Early Release Day - Last Day of School!

SCHOOL CALENDAR KEY

For more information visit tricountyschools.com

NO SCHOOL

EARLY DISMISSAL

SCHOOL EVENT

START & END TIMES:

High School and Middle School:
7:25am - 2:20pm
Elementary School:
8:35am - 3:35pm

EARLY RELEASE TIMES:

High School & Middle School:
7:25am - 11:05am
Elementary School:
8:35am - 12:15pm

GUIDES, POLICIES & STATEMENTS

TRI COUNTY AREA SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT
"Educate. Encourage. Empower."

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

On behalf of all the staff members, I would like to welcome you to Tri County Middle School. It is a privilege to serve as principal of a place filled with enthusiastic students willing to learn, supportive parents/guardians interested in their children's education, and a dedicated professional staff committed to providing the students with a quality education. We are proud to offer our students a wide range of options and support. Students may take accelerated math classes, band, woodshop, art, gym, STEM, theater, choir, and drumline. Our afterschool activities include football,volleyball, cheer, cross country, basketball, wrestling, track, as well as multiple after school clubs.

Each day we see our students improve both academically and socially. We focus on teaching our students the skills necessary not only to achieve at the high school level but also to become college and career ready. When parents partner with teachers, every child succeeds.

We look forward to working with you and your family this school year.

Jessica Kurtz
Principal

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

By **June 2028**, the district will fully implement a clearly defined and communicated **curriculum framework**—including priority standards, required lesson components, instructional resources, and evidence-based instructional/engagement practices—**as a core Tier 1 component of MTSS**, so that:

1. At least **80 % of students** meet or exceed their annual academic growth targets in core content areas as defined by building, and

2. At least **90 % of teachers** demonstrate consistent curriculum implementation as measured by instructional observations, lesson plan reviews, and staff surveys.

TCMS will achieve this goal by providing the following:

1. Implementing a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum
2. Progress Monitoring
3. Professional Learning

ELASTIC CLAUSE

The school and administration reserve the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for things requiring actions that are not covered in the handbook that may arise. In all cases, rules, regulations, and possible consequences shall be a s consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations, and possible consequences for similar incidents. Matters omitted from the final list should not be interpreted as a limitation to the scope of the school's authority in dealing with any type of infraction that may not be in the best interest of the safety and welfare of the students of the middle school.

The policies and regulations within this handbook apply for all school sponsored activities and transportation, including those held before or after school and those held away from Tri County Middle School. Safe transportation is provided for all students through the Transportation Dept. If this is jeopardized, removal from the bus may be necessary.

Parent Notification

Right to Request & Review:
Information Regarding Teacher Qualifications
Assignment of Not Highly Qualified Teacher

As a parent/guardian of a student in the Tri County Area School District, please be aware that only licensed and certified teachers and paraprofessionals are hired to serve our students. As part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, parents and guardians have the right to request specific information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. As a parent/guardian of a student in Tri County, you have the right to know when your child has been assigned to or has been taught , for four or more consecutive weeks, by a teacher who is not highly qualified. You also have the right to request the following information:
(1) Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
(2) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
(3) The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
(4) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Information on how to request the qualifications of your child's teacher(s) will be provided by their building principal.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

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: The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

1. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

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 may ask Tri County Area Schools to amend a record that they believe it is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal; 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 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, which 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 m ember (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

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

Upon request, the District discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

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. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education

600 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202 -4605

STATEMENT OF NON -DISCRIMINATION

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Tri County Schools are hereby notified that this institution does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex,age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, activities or policies.

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity available in any school on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic and language differences, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status,height, weight, marital or familial status, disability or veteran status. Any person having inquiries concerning the Tri County Schools' compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX or Section 504 is directed to contact:

Mr. Ryan Biller
Tri County Area Schools
21338 Kendaville Rd.
Howard City, MI 49329

Discriminatory harassment of any form is unacceptable to this school district and subject to disciplinary action.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and the Michigan Elliott -Larsen civil Rights Act. Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. As sexual harassment i s unacceptable to this school district, it is against the policy of this school district for any administrator, employee, independent contractor or volunteer (subsequently "Employee"), male or female, to sexually harass another employee, student or volunteer. The complaint procedure is available in the principal's office, superintendent's office, and/or guidance office.

ENROLLMENT

Michigan law requires that a person enrolling a student in school provide the local or intermediate school district with a copy of the student's birth certificate and reliable proof of residency.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Michigan state law requires that each new student provide verification of completed immunizations as required by the Michigan Department of Health. Students who have not received the required immunizations will be excluded from school until parents provide proof

that all required immunizations have been given or have a waiver on file.

RESIDENCY

"District of residence" means the district in which a pupil's custodial parent or legal guardian resides [MCL 388.1603]. If a student's parent or legal guardian resides in different districts, either district may enroll the student as a resident, regardless of which parent or legal guardian has custody [MCL 380.1148a]. A student who has reached age 18 or who is an emancipated minor is a resident of the district in which he or she resides. Out of district students may apply for "schools of choice" with participating districts within the specified time frame.

UNIVERSAL SCREENERS

Throughout the school year, students will partake in academic, social -emotional, and health (vision/hearing) screeners. Their screeners are universal for all students. If parents/guardians choose not to have their student(s) participate, please contact, in writing, the building administrator to decline screeners .

VISITORS

For the protection of our students, all doors except the main entrance will be locked. All visitors are asked to report to the office and sign in before going anywhere in the building. Parents bringing things in for students are asked to bring them to the office and the items will be delivered. We ask that parents wait for their children outside at their child's designated pick-up area.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

The Superintendent may direct appropriate screening processes be implemented to assure that adult volunteers are free of criminal convictions for any offenses involving children. Such processes may include the requirement for a criminal background check, application forms that require disclosure of any criminal convictions for crimes involving children, gathering of personal references, and other methods to assure that adult volunteers are suitable and acceptable for accompanying children on field trips, excursions, or as a classroom volunteer.

When serving as a chaperone for District field trips, the parents/guardians, or other adult volunteers, including employees of the District, assigned to chaperone, shall not use tobacco products in the presence of students, nor shall they consume any alcoholic beverages nor use any illicit drug during the duration of their assignment as a chaperone. Chaperones shall be given a copy of these rules and sign a letter of understanding verifying they are aware of, and agree to, these District rules before being allowed to accompany students on any field trip or excursion. Any chaperone found to have violated these rules shall not be used again as a chaperone for any District sponsored field trips or excursions. Employees found to have violated these rules may be subject to disciplinary action.

MEDICATIONS

Medication Policy: TCAS Policy # 5330 & 5330.01
The administration of prescribed medication and/or medically -prescribed treatments to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to do so would jeopardize the health of the student, the student would not be able to attend school if the medication or treatment were not made available during school hours, or the child is disabled and requires medication to benefit from his/her educational program.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription from the child's physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self -medication by the student.

Before any non -prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent who must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child. Medications will be administered by the District in accordance with the Superintendent's guidelines.

Only medication in its original container; labeled with the date if a prescription; the student's name; and exact dosage will be administered. Parents, or students authorized in writing by their physician and parents, may administer medication or treatment.

Students may possess and self -administer a metered dose or dry powder inhaler for relief of asthma, or before exercise to prevent onset of asthma symptoms, while at school, on school -sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity in accord with the Superintendent's guidelines, if the following conditions are met:

A. There is written approval from the student's physician or other health care provider and the student or parent/guardian (if student is under eighteen (18)) to possess and use the inhaler (Form 5330 F1c)

And

B. the building administrator has received a copy of the written approvals from the physician and the parent/guardian.

And

C. there is on file at the student's school a written emergency care plan prepared by a licensed physician in collaboration with the student and his/her parent/legal guardian. The plan shall contain specific instructions on the student's needs including what to do in the event of an emergency.

Students with a need for emergency medication may also be allowed to self -possess and self - administer such medication, provided that they meet the same conditions established above. Students who are prescribed epinephrine to treat anaphylaxis shall be allowed to self - possess and administer the medication if they meet the conditions stated above.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Classes will be held whenever possible. If, however, weather conditions make it unsafe to transport children to school, the office of the superintendent will notify parents via the Apptegy automated messaging system as early as possible, along with area radio, TV stations, and Social Media . If it is necessary to delay the start of school or dismiss early, the same procedure will be followed.

SAFETY DRILL INFORMATION:

SAFETY DRILLS

Tri County Area Schools recognize that there are certain types of emergencies other than weather -related that can occur in our society today. Therefore, we will conduct periodic safety drills.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held regularly to acquaint everyone with a system of clearing the building as safely and quickly as possible.

TORNADO DRILLS

The occurrence of a tornado during regular school hours is extremely unlikely. However, since the possibility exists, reasonable safeguards will be taken. The weather bureau issues the following tornado alerts: Tornado Watch - indicating conditions exist which may result in a tornado. Tornado Warning - indicating that a tornado has been sighted in the area. In In the case of a tornado watch, children will remain at school until the dismissal time. In case of a tornado warning, children will remain in school until the warning is lifted. If the warning extends beyond normal dismissal time, dismissal will be delayed, and buses will not run until the warning is lifted.

PROJECT FIND

In Michigan we know that education begins at birth. We also know that some of our children need extra help or other related special services along the way. That's why Michigan's special education system helps children as young as newborns and up to age 26.

Project Find provides information about special education programs and services and helps arrange free evaluations to find out if a child is eligible for extra help from Michigan's public schools.

If your child, or a child you know is struggling in school or has a physical, emotional or

communication problem that might help prevent success in school, please contact your building principal or Tyler Betterly, Tri County Area Schools Special Education Director at 231-636-5454.

CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

Schools and other institutions shall cooperate with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services MDHHS during an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect. Cooperation includes allowing access to the child without parental consent if access is necessary t o complete the investigation or to prevent abuse or neglect of the child. However, the department shall notify the person responsible for the child's health or welfare about the department's contact with the child at the time or as soon afterward as the person can be reached. The department may delay the notice if the notice would compromise the safety of the child or child's siblings or the integrity of the investigation, but only for the time those conditions exist. The State of Michigan requires that all members of licensed institutions be on the lookout for, and report to the State, any and all cases of suspected abuse or neglect of a child. The staff and other professionals that provide services to Tri County Middle School are therefore obligated by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. If the department has contact with a child in a school, all of the following apply:

a) Before contact with the child, the department investigator shall review with the designated school staff person the department's responsibilities under this act and the investigation procedure.
b) After contact with the child, the department investigator shall meet with the designated school staff person and the child about the response the department will take as a result of contact with the child. The department may also meet with the designated school staff person without the child present and share additional information the investigator determines may be shared subject to the confidentiality provisions of this act.
c) Lack of cooperation by the school does not relieve or prevent the department from proceeding with its responsibilities under this act.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Please refer to the Tri County Transportation Handbook. (*Please note that the Transportation Dept. follows the same discipline policies as the high school and middle school.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY - Athletics

Students are expected to ride the bus to and from all athletic contests when a bus is provided. A student wishing an exception from this policy must present to the coach in charge a note signed by his/her parent or guardian explaining the reasons for the exception and who will be transporting the student. The note must be given to the coach and approved prior to the beginning of the trip. Under no circumstances will an athlete be allowed to ride to or from a contest with another student.

FOOD SERVICE
Tri County Middle School serves meals every school day. Students receive free breakfast and lunch. If a doctor has determined that your child has a disability, and the disability would prevent the child from eating the regular school meal, the school will make any substitutions prescribed by a doctor at no extra charge.

DRUG FREE CAMPUS
The Tri County Area School District is a smoke / vape free and drug free campus. The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. Our school district clearly prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as any part of any of its activities.

In an effort to keep the schools and district premises free of drugs, school authorities may use specially trained dogs to sniff out and alert staff to the presence of illegal controlled substances in school lockers.

Discipline sanctions (consistent with local, state and federal law), up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution will be imposed on students who violate the standards of conduct. Descriptions of those sanctions are listed under Student Discipline Code of Conduct.

STUDENT INSURANCE
The Board will offer students the opportunity to purchase insurance. Payments of medical expenses are made ONLY IN EXCESS over all other family or employer group insurance plans, which must contribute its maximum before the insurance takes effect.

STUDENT CELL PHONE/SMARTWATCHES/PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE (PED) USAGE
Students at Tri County Middle School are expected to keep their phones and personal electronic devices (PEDs) turned off and safely stored in a bag, locker or other secure location during the school day.

Students at TCMS who choose to bring a personal electronic device of any kind to school, do so at their own risk. Teaching staff and administration are not responsible for lost or stolen or broken devices. Students are expected to follow the TCMS technology policy to ensure responsible use of technology at all times, to maximize in class learning, to maximize their safety and the safety of those around them. Administration reserves the right to revoke technology privileges as needed due to students' use/mis use.

- Phones, headphones and PED's must be safely stored in a bag, locker or other secure location and not on your person where it can cause a distraction, before entering TCMS.
- Phones must be on silent or turned off while on school grounds. Vibrating phones will be taken.
- Students' use of cell phones and PEDs in any school bathroom is prohibited.

● Taking pictures or taking video is not allowed while on school grounds during the school day.
● Use of social media on school grounds during the school day is not allowed.
● Students may use their cell phones and PEDs to communicate with home after the end of the day when the bell sounds.
● School day is defined as when the student enters the building to the end of the day bell.
Flow chart of consequences:

Minor Cell Phone/PED (Personal Electronic Devices), and Chromebook misuse: Using PED without teacher permission in class, Taking PED to restroom during class, Using PED to contact parents without permission from staff, PED rings or makes noise, Using PED while in the school building before 2:20pm, and minor chromebook User Agreement violations.	**Cell Phone/PED:** -Report date of Confiscation: -device is to be picked up in the office by student after school **Chromebook:** -call home -warning given for restricted access	**Cell Phone/PED:** -Report Date of Confiscation: -Student Calls Parent -device can be picked up by student after school **Chromebook:** -call home -possible short term restriction	**Cell Phone/PED:** -Report Date of Confiscation: -Admin calls Parent -parent must pick up device from main office **Chromebook:** -Call home -restricted access	**Cell Phone/PED:** -Report Date of Confiscation: -Admin calls Parent -Student must check all PEDs/cell phones in and out in main office every morning and after school (7:05am & 2:15 pm) **Chromebook:** -Admin calls home -possible no use

USE OF OFFICE PHONE/STUDENT MESSAGES
No student will use the office phone except for an emergency. Students may use their cell phone with permission in the office area only. Do not ask the office to deliver messages. Students will not be called from the classroom unless it is an emergency.

Use of Energy Drinks, Supplements, and High-Caffeine Beverages

Prohibited items include but are not limited to: Energy drinks, energy pouches, sports performance supplements and powders, pre-workout beverages and supplements, high caffeine coffee drinks, dietary supplements (unless prescribed by a physician) or any beverage or substance marketed as an “energy booster” or performance enhancer”.

Students are not permitted to bring or consume energy drinks, energy shots, energy pouches, high-caffeine beverages, dietary supplements, or similar substances on school grounds, during school hours, or at school-sponsored events. These substances can cause increased heart rate, anxiety, and sleep disruption, create dependency or addiction, pose health risks - especially for young students, interfere with focus and academic performance, as well as distract from the learning environment.

STATE MANDATED PERMANENT EXPULSION POLICY
Disclaimer: The District will always comply with the most recent Revised School Code and or current law.

PRIOR POLICY AND PRACTICES
This Policy supersedes any prior policies and/or practices with respect to student discipline for the student behaviors and described in this Policy. As stated in the student handbooks, students are also subject to expulsion for behavior in addition to the behaviors described here.

POLICY STATEMENT
District students who possess a dangerous weapon in a weapon free school zone, or who commit arson in a public school or on public school grounds or commit criminal sexual conduct in a public school building or on public school grounds, shall be permanently expelled from this District and all Michigan public schools in accordance with applicable law.

DEFINITION
A dangerous weapon is any object defined as a dangerous weapon by state for federal law; a gun, revolver, pistol, dagger, knife with a blade over 3 inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles. In addition, a firearm, as defined by federal law, is prohibited. A weapon free school zone includes all public and private K -12 school buildings, school grounds and school vehicles used to transport K -12 students. Arson and rape are also defined in the Michigan criminal codes.

EXCEPTIONS
A student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon free school zone shall be permanently expelled, subject to possible reinstatement, unless the student can prove by clear and convincing evidence at least one of the following:
1. The alleged dangerous weapon was not possessed by the student for use as a weapon or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon;
2. The student did not knowingly possess the weapon;

3. The student did not know or have reason to know that the object was a dangerous weapon;
4. The student possessed the weapon at the suggestion, request, or direction of school administrators or police authorities to possess the weapon.
There is a rebuttable presumption that expulsion for possession of a weapon is not justified if both of the following are met:
a. The school board or its designee determines in writing that at least 1 of the factors above have been established in a clear and convincing manner.
b. The pupil has no history of suspension or expulsion.
There are no exceptions for students who commit arson or rape in school or on school grounds.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

MCL 380.1561. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, every parent, guardian or other person in this state having control /charge of a child from age six to the child's sixteenth birthday shall send that child to a public school during the entire school year . The child's attendance shall be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district in which the child is enrolled.

MCL 380.1588. The Attendance Officer, after giving formal notice prescribed in Section 1587, shall determine whether the parent or other person in parental relation has complied with the notice. The attendance officer shall make a complaint against the parent / other person who fails to comply with the court. The court shall issue a warrant upon the complaint and shall proceed to hear and determine it.

MCL 380.1599. A parent / other person who fails to comply with this part is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment for not less than 2 nor more than 90 days or both.

MCL 380.1586. If a child is repeatedly absent without a valid excuse or is failing in schoolwork or gives evidence of behavior problems and attempts to confer with the parent or other person in parental relationship to the child fail, the attendance officer may request the parent or other person in parental relationship to attend a meeting to discuss the child's irregularity in attendance, failing work, or behavior problems with the proper school authorities.

PHILOSOPHY

A. The Tri County Board of Education promotes a policy of high expectations and academic achievement for all students. It is important that children learn the value of prompt and regular attendance.
B. Frequent absences from school disrupt the continuity of instruction and learning. When the student is absent frequently, the benefit of regular classroom instruction is lost and cannot be entirely regained. The process of education requires a continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experience and study in order to maximize each child's educational opportunity. This is the well -established principle of education that underlies

and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory school in this state.
C. Attendance and punctuality in class are proper educational values and are part of the behavior expected of the student both in his/her academic setting and his/her community at large. A specific attendance procedure has been adopted by the Tri County Board of Education that is understandable and reasonable in its expectations of students and parents.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

A. A student receives an excused absence whenever he/she is given permission by the school principal/school attendance officer to leave or be dismissed from one or more classes, school -sponsored program or school -related activities. A student receives an exc used absence when he/she is absent from school for the following reasons:
1. Serious illness of a family member;
2. Death in the family;
3. Illness, injury, dental or medical services of the student. If a student has been absent from school because of illness and is at a school activity that day after school is dismissed, he or she will receive an unexcused absence from school unless prior arrangements have been made with the school principal.
4. A required appearance in court;
5. A required observance of a holiday or ceremony of the student's religion
B. Absence for any reason other than the five (5) above -listed categories will be unexcused unless the principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist. Pregnancy is not an extended illness.
C. The verification of an absence shall be made in accordance with any reasonable method that establishes the fact of the reason for absence, including the following:
1. phone call from parent;
2. note or personal visit from parents;
3. home call; or
4. note from physician
D. Parents/guardians must contact the school by phone or note within 24 hours following an absence to report the reason for absence. Excuses should be presented in the office before classes begin in the morning. The administration reserves the right not to excuse a student's absence if the excuse is known to be invalid.
E. For an excused absence, a student will be allowed (3) days from their return to complete missed assignments. Full credit will be given for these assignments.
F. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to make arrangements for securing schoolwork early enough during an extended absence in order for the student to maintain academic progress. Parents/guardians are to contact the school office before 9:00 a.m. t o request their student's books and assignments.
G. The principal and/or Assistant Principal and/or Truancy Officer will schedule a conference with a student to develop an attendance contract to resolve sporadic absence or attendance problems.
H. Students who have excessive excused absences may be asked to provide a doctor's

note for any future absences.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Attendance guidelines per MAISD regarding unexcused absences:

1. Once your child has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences, the school truancy referral process will start. You will receive a letter, phone call, home visit, or possibly all three, to alert you that your child is missing too much school. The school may refer to the Department of Human Services for prevention/intervention and/or may request MAISD Truancy Officer intervention.
2. Five (5) accumulated unexcused absences, the school refers the case to the MAISD Truancy Officer for follow up.
3. Eight (8) accumulated unexcused absences, the school and MAISD Truancy Officer refers the student/parent truancy case to the Prosecuting Attorney for judicial review/action.

4. Students are expected to arrive at class on time. A student will be marked tardy if they arrive after the start of class. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes after the start of class will be marked with an unexcused absence for that class period.

5. Excessive tardiness impacts student attendance. For attendance purposes, every six (6) tardies will be counted as one (1) full day of unexcused absence.

Any student who is absent without proper verification will be considered truant (unexcused).

2025-2026 Version

According to the MAISD Truancy Guidelines, if the policy is updated TCMS will follow the current guidelines.

OPERATION GRADUATION

Attendance and Truancy Guidelines K-12

3 Unexcused Absences	5 Unexcused Absences	8 Unexcused Absences	8 to 14 Unexcused Absences	15 unexcused absences No Improvement in attendance or failure to meet with school officials
• School sends letter or email correspondence to parents about the importance of attendance. • School will consider referral to school intervention team (match student to appropriate intervention and monitor progress). • School will document all communications with student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s).	• Student and Parent meetings are scheduled with Truancy Officer (Ret. Sgt. Gary Valentine). • School will consider filling out Truancy Diversion Referral Form for Darrell Eck, Juvenile Services Coordinator. • School will consider contacting DHHS regarding participating in the intervention program.	• Fill out truancy referral form with attached documentation and forward to the ISD for review. The ISD will forward the form to the Prosecuting Attorney's office. • Truancy Officer (Ret. Sgt. Gary Valentine) and Prosecutor's Office (APA Miles Feuerstein) will send certified letter to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for students in grades K-5.	• Prosecutor's Office will set up meeting with student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s). • A summary of the meeting and attendance approval plans will be prepared that are agreed upon by the student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s). • If student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) do not attend the meeting, the ISD will be informed and review the form.	• An updated truancy calendar is filled out and sent to the ISD and Prosecutor's Office. • Prosecutor's Office to issue complaint and summons for parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in 64B District Court for students in grades K-5. • Prosecutor's Office to file petition for status offense in Juvenile Court for grades 6-12.

If a student transfers to another school district mid-year, his or her attendance record (CA-60) would follow.

MONTCALM AREA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAISD Truancy Resources

https://www.maisd.com/administrative-services/pupil-accounting/truancy/truancy-resources/

PRE -PLANNED ABSENCES

Planned absences for personal reasons that the principal or his/her designee may consider justifiable when requested in advance. Planned absences for justifiable personal reasons will be based on the student's current academic performance and a pattern of regular school attendance. The student's teachers may be asked to review the request, but the final decision will rest with the principal or his/her designee. If the student does not meet the above mentioned criteria, the request will be denied. If the student chooses to leave after the request has been denied, all days absent will be unexcused. Passing all classes will be considered an important criterion for favorable approval. Planned absence request forms may be obtained from the office.

DISCIPLINE POLICY
The high school, middle school and the transportation department use these discipline policies:

INTRODUCTION
The discipline policy of Tri County Middle School is designed to help students make better choices and decisions in the future. If it becomes apparent one mode of discipline is not effective,others will be tried. The first step is teacher contact with the parent(s) involving behaviors of a minor problem. Major discipline problems will be dealt with immediately and contact with parents made after the fact (i.e., smoking, fighting, disrespectful conduct, etc.). Be aware our discipline philosophy is based on three general goals for our school. They are:

1. To help students mature and learn acceptable behavior.
2. To provide a safe and effective learning environment for all students at Tri County Middle School.
3. To have students show respect to school property, student's property and all people at Tri County Area Schools.

Discipline procedures will range from parent contact and student/teacher discussions, lunchtime detentions, before/afterschool detentions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions.

It is important that parents, staff and students work together to maintain a positive, educational atmosphere. Our goal is that each student learns to be responsible for his or her own actions. Every student and staff member has a right to personal safety and freedom to learn. With regard to discipline procedures, consistency for both administration and staff is held as a high priority. With changing trends in fads and items available on the market it would be impossible for the administrators of this school to list every potential problem that could surface at the school. In cases that for some reason are not listed in the discipline code, where behavior is disruptive to the normal school day or endangers the health, safety, and welfare of students or the student body/school staff, please be assured that discipline will be reasonable and just to correct the behavior.

There are five (5) basic disciplinary actions available to teachers and administrators, which are listed below with a brief explanation of each:

DETENTIONS/SUSPENSIONS
Detentions This hour is considered part of the school day. Students who are assigned this form of discipline will be required to attend for the entire hour. No transportation is provided by the school. If a student receives a detention, a referral slip explaining the reason for the detention will be entered into the student information system. Before school detentions will be served from 7:05 a.m. (bus drop off) until 7:25 a.m., then students will go straight to 1st period. Detention will be served from after school to one hour after school.

A. **BEHAVIORAL DETENTIONS**: Before or after school behavioral detentions may be given to any student who fails to comply with school rules. A student is expected to act in a respectful manner. Appropriate counseling may take place following the first behavioral detention.

B. **STUDY SESSIONS:** Study sessions will be given at the discretion of the classroom teacher. These sessions will be served with the issuing teacher. Academic study sessions will not be counted as behavioral detentions. Missing study sessions may result in receiving no credit for missed work or a behavioral detention.

C. **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** In-school suspensions will result for serious misconduct, missed detentions by assigned due dates, or truancy concerns. Students will be expected to exhibit appropriate behavior while assigned to in -school suspension. A student that is unable to complete the in -school suspension due to behavior issues may receive an out -of-school suspension. All students will receive a lunch at their everyday cost, which meets federal guidelines, and restroom breaks.

D. **LUNCH DETENTIONS:** Lunch detentions are served for minor offenses and tardies. A student is assigned a lunch detention to be served for the entire time of the lunch period including recess. Students can get their lunch but must eat it in a quiet, monitored setting.

E. **OUT -OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** Out-of-school suspensions will result for serious misconducts and/or as part of the progressive disciplinary action to help students modify unacceptable behavior(s) when it appears other measures are ineffective.

Automatic out -of-school suspensions are the possible consequences for the following situations: possession of fireworks, possession of, use of and/or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and fighting. These items do not cover every situation but are only the general areas. Students participating in athletics, band, or other after school activities will be prohibited from participation/practice when they are serving a detention or suspension. If a snow day occurs on an assigned day of out -of-school suspension/in -school suspension, the day will not count as a suspension day. Exclusion from school related activities will occur during the suspension. Homework will be made available .

Out-of-school suspensions/in -school suspensions will be assigned by the principal and assistant principal only and may be from one to ten days in duration. Regardless of the length of suspension, all homework must be made up within three days after returning to class. In cases where suspensions do not change a student's behavior, a contract may be made between the principal, assistant principal, parents and student or a recommendation for expulsion from school will be filed with the Superintendent of Schools for presentation to the Board of Education .

In order to provide the best educational environment for students at Tri County Middle School, good discipline is essential. Mutual respect between students and school staff is important.

SUSPENSION OF EXTRA -CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Since school dances and after school parties are a privilege, a student may lose the privilege of

attending the next activity and future activities if the student is not in good standing. This includes but is not limited to:

1. No in-school suspensions or out-of-school suspensions.
2. No more than 3 detentions.
3. No more than 2 E's.
4. Having a full day of attendance on the day of the event unless a doctor's note is provided.

The administration reserves the right to deny admittance to the dance to any student or guest. Students who are denied the right to attend a dance will be given written notification when they receive their disciplinary action or upon notice of violation of the attendance policy.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE OF CONDUCT

The Tri County Area Schools Board of Education does hereby establish the following categories of misbehavior that may result in a range of disciplinary actions from verbal and written reprimands to out-of-school suspensions or expulsion from school of any student regardless of age, under its jurisdiction. This list is offered as an example of unacceptable behavior (but is not limited to), and it is not intended to be all -inclusive. These policies are applicable to all school - related activities and also apply while the student is on school property, before or after school, enroute to and from school in the district provided transportation .

The disciplinary action identified for the various types of unacceptable behavior enumerated in the student's disciplinary code of conduct; state a range of disciplinary actions that may be imposed. Administration may request parent meetings when negative behavior requires such action. These meetings may also include the presence of the superintendent. The school district reserves the right and discretion to impose more severe disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for unacceptable behavior regardless of whether it is the first offense.

BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

Administration has the right to suspend student attendance and participation in any extracurricular activities (i.e., school dances/athletic events /after school activities) for any of the following infractions.

Academic Dishonesty – Students found to be guilty of "cheating" or plagiarism on assignments and/or tests.

- 1st offense: notify parents, assign a detention, possible zero percent on assignment or redo an assignment
- 2nd offense: grade reduction of one full grade for the class and a "zero" on the assignment
- 3rd offense: failure of class

Alcohol/Illegal Drugs / Dab Pens – Possession of, use of, under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, prescription drugs, inhalants, or drugs, including look -alike drugs or what is

represented as a drug, or any other related paraphernalia, (including rolling papers, such as “zigzags”, pipes, nicotine/caffeine pouches, etc.). Metal detectors may be used to locate contraband.

- Notify Parents /possible notify Police
- 1st offense: 5 -day suspension (Can be reduced with restorative justice.)
- 2nd offense: 10 -day suspension and refer to Board of Education for hearing with possible expulsion.

Alcohol/Illegal Drugs/ Transfer & Sale of – Transfer or sale of alcohol, narcotics, prescription drugs, inhalants, or drugs, including look -alike drugs or what is represented as a drug, or any other related paraphernalia, (including rolling papers, such as “zig zags”, pipes,nicotine/caffeine pouches etc.). Metal detectors may be used to locate contraband.

- Notify Parents/possible notify Police
- 1st offense: Up to 10 -day suspension
- 2nd offense: Possible referral to Board of Education for hearing and up to a 180 -day suspension
- Extra -Curricular activities (dances, sports, etc.) will be revoked until further notice

Arson - (or attempt thereof) on school property or a district -related event

- Notify Parents/Notify police
- Immediate suspension pending a hearing which may lead to an expulsion pursuant to PA 328 of 1994; MCL 380.1311
- Refer to the criminal district of juvenile delinquency system and the appropriate county dept. of social services community mental health agency

Assault -Physical – Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence

- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Immediate suspension and refer to Board of Education for expulsion hearing

Assault -Verbal – Making a bomb threat or similar threat directed against a school building, school property or a school related event; or making a verbal threat of serious bodily injury directed at a staff member, volunteer, or other

- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Immediate suspension up to 10 -days and refer Board of Education for expulsion hearing

Criminal Sexual Conduct – Non-consensual contact, rape and/or other abuses (not restricted to violence)

- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Immediate suspension pending hearing which may lead to an expulsion pursuant to PA 328 of 1994; MCL 380.1311
- Referral to criminal district of juvenile delinquency system and the appropriate county dept. of social services or community mental health agency

Classroom Disruption/Defiance Of Authority/Insubordination

- Notify Parents
- 1st offense: Office referral with possible detention
- 2nd offense and more: Possible detention and up to 10 -day suspension or expulsion

Detentions (failure to serve)

- In-School -Suspension (ISS) (if available) or Out -of-School Suspension (OSS)

Dress Code Violations – failure to follow dress code policy

- Notify Parents
- 1st offense: change inappropriate clothing
- 2nd offense: change inappropriate clothing and detention assigned
- 3rd offense: change inappropriate clothing and one day of In -School Suspension (if available) or Out -of-School Suspension (continued violations will result in out -of-school suspensions)

Extortion

- Notify Parents/possibly notify Police
- 1st offense: 5 -10-day suspension
- 2nd offense: Indefinite suspension, refer to Board of Education for hearing w/ possible expulsion

Fighting/Aggressive Behavior

- 1st offense: 3 -day Out -of-School Suspension and possible referral to Board of Education for expulsion hearing with possible police notification (can be reduced with restorative practices)
- 2nd offense: 5 -day Out -of-School Suspension and possible referral to Board of Education for expulsion hearing with possible police notification
- 3rd offense: Up to 10-day Out -of-School Suspension – refer to Board of Education for hearing with possible expulsion with possible police notification

False Alarms – Setting off fire alarm; deliberately breaking glass or triggering an alarm or removal and/or discharge of fire extinguisher. This policy shall also encompass such actions as bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Payment of damages
- Up to a 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Forgery

- Notify Parents
- 1st offense: Detention
- 2nd offense: Up to a 10 -day suspension or expulsion

Gambling
- Notify Parents
- 1st offense: Detention
- 2nd offense: Up to a 3 -day suspension

Gang Related Activity – there will be zero tolerance for any type of gang related activity, clothing, “flashing signs”, graffiti, or strong -arm tactics etc.
- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Up to a 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Gross Misbehavior – Deliberate or willful conduct detrimental to normal functioning of any school activity
- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Up to 10 -day suspension
- Possible referral to Board of Education for hearing with possible expulsion

Harassment (taunting, bullying, stalking, and or intimidation) *- Deliberate or willful conduct that may lead to/involve physical, emotional or verbal abuse includes emails, instant messaging, etc.
- Notify Parents/notify Victim’s Parent
- Possible notification of Police
- Grievance Procedure for Harassment see page 20
- Detention or up to 10 -day suspension
- Possible referral to Board of Education

Harassment (sexual) *
- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Grievance Procedure for Harassment see page 20
- Up to 10 -day suspension or expulsion
- Possible referral to Board of Education

*Tri County Area Schools will not tolerate harassment of any students or staff member. Incidents of this nature will result in serious consequences upon the establishment of responsibility.

Hazing – An intentional act directed against a student(s) without the regard of physical/emotional health or safety for the purpose of initiation
- Notify Parents/possibly notify Police
- Up to 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Racial or Ethnic Intimidation/Harassment
- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Up to 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Restrooms - Bathroom stalls are for single use only. If more than one student is in a stall:
- 1st offense: Notify Parents and after -school detention
- 2nd Offense: 1 -day suspension

Inappropriate Use of Computer Technology
- Notify Parents
- 1st offense: loss of computer privileges for remainder of semester
- 2nd offense: loss of computer privileges for remainder of school year
- 3rd offense: loss of all computer privileges for time remaining in high school

Look -A-Like Weapons/Pyrotechnics
- Notify Parents/possible notification of Police
- Confiscate
- Up to 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Malicious Destruction ($100 and over)
- Notify Parents/notify Police
- Up to a 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Physical Contact (not at a fight level)
- 1st offense: Notify Parents and Detention
- 2nd offense: 1 -day In -School -Suspension (if available) or 1 -day Out -of-School Suspension
- 3rd offense: Up to 10 -day suspension

Possession of Nuisance Items Disruptive to the Educational Process: Ex: squirt guns, lighters, matches, radios, chains, etc. Knives of any length are not allowed at school!
- 1st offense: Notify Parents, item confiscated and held for parent to pick up
- 2nd offense: Notify Parents, item confiscated and held for parent to pick up – up to 3 -day suspension

Public Display of Affection – Students are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all school related functions.
- Notify Parents.
- 1st offense: Detention
- 2nd offense: Up to 10 -day suspension or expulsion

Profanity/Obscenity

- 1st offense: Notify Parents and detention
- 2nd offense: Up to a 10 -day suspension
- 3rd offense: Up to 10 -day suspension
- If directed toward staff member, 3 -day suspension

Technology Misuse: Ex: Cell Phone, iPad, laptop, etc.

- 1st offense: Confiscation of item, student pick up at end of day
- 2nd offense: Confiscation of item and parent pick up in office
- 3rd offense: Confiscation of item

Please see TCMS Cell Phone /PED Appropriate Usage strategy

Theft/Stealing

- Notify Parents/possible notification of Police
- Return or repayment of stolen item (s)
- Up to a 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Tobacco/ Disposable Vapes (possession or use) Metal detectors may be used to locate contraband.

- Notify Parents/notify Police
- 1st offense: 3 -day suspension (Can be reduced with restorative justice.)
- 2nd offense: 5 -day suspension
- 3rd offense: 10 day -suspension and possible referral to the Board of Education with possible expulsion

Transportation safety Refer to Transportation Handbook

Skipping Classes or School

- Notify Parents
- Detention or In -School Suspension (if available) or Out -of-School Suspension

Unexcused Tardies (by marking period)

- 3 unexcused tardies equals a lunch detention
- 5 unexcused tardies equals placement on the no fly list and a lunch detention

- Students over 10 minutes late will be counted as an absence for that hour.
- Failure to serve detention in designated time will result in a morning or after school detention
- Refusal to serve morning or after school detention will result in an In-School Suspension
- Excessive tardy referrals may result in a Truancy Referral and In-School Suspension

Vandalism -Defacing or Destroying School Property
- Notify Parents/possible notification of police
- Payment of Damages / clean -up
- 1st offense: Up to a 10 -day suspension or possible expulsion

Weapons - Any device or instrument used in a threatening manner that could cause injury or bodily harm. (i.e., pins, needles)
- 1st offense: Notify parent, notify police, up to 180 -day suspension or permanent expulsion

Weapons (dangerous) – A student will not possess, handle, transmit, or use dangerous instruments or tools. A dangerous weapon means: firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over 3 inches, pocketknife opened by mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles.
- 1st offense: Notify parent, notify police, up to 180 -day suspension or permanent expulsion.

Weapons (dangerous instruments) – A student will not possess, handle, transmit or use a dangerous instrument. Dangerous instruments include but are not limited to: Chemical mace, pepper gas, stun guns, air guns, BB guns, pellet guns, razors or box cutters.
- 1st Offense: Notify parent, notify police, suspension or up to 180 -day expulsion.

BULLYING

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior. Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, coaches, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation. To view our complete policy regarding bullying, please refer to our Board Policy, TC -5517 and TC 5517.01, which is available on our website, www.tricountyschools.com . Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior. This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school -sponsored, school -approved, or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school’s control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it is determined to interfere with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights

posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure. Parents/Guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any formal complaint. The results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements will be reported. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file. To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations.

Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation
The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy. This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure
Any student who believes he/she has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or Assistant Principal. The student may also report concerns to a staff member or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building Principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President. Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit after a report or complaint is made. If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action . This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents/guardians, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also b e referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials. The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a completed report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports
Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior. Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentional false reporting may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR HARASSMENT (How to File a Harassment Complaint)

It is a violation of the law and of school rules for any student or staff member to harass or intimidate another student or staff member.

Step 1: If you are the recipient of unwanted behavior, communicate to the offender 1) what you are feeling, and 2) that you expect the behavior to stop. The importance here is your sense of safety. Thus, the following options are available for you to do the above: 1) Tell the person directly to stop the unwanted behavior, 2) communicate to the person in writing to stop the unwanted behavior, or 3) go to a safe contact person, such as your school counselor or a teacher for support in telling the person to stop the unwanted behavior.

Step 2: If the unwanted behavior is repeated, go to a person in authority such as the principal or assistant principal. Document exactly what happened. Give a copy of your written record to the person in authority and keep one for yourself.

Your document should include the following information. Use exact quotes where appropriate and whenever possible.

1. What happened
2. When it happened
3. Where it happened
4. Who did the harassing
5. Who the witnesses were (if any)
6. What you said and/or did in response to harassment
7. How your harasser responded to you
8. How you felt about the harassment

Step 3: If the unwanted behavior is repeated, go back to the principal or assistant principal documenting the behaviors stated in Step 2. Give a copy of your written record to the person in authority and keep one for yourself.

Step 4: If unwanted behavior does not stop, you may either go back to the principal or assistant principal or go to a person in higher authority, such as the superintendent or a school board member documenting the behaviors stated in Step 2 . Give a copy of your written record to the person in authority and keep one for yourself.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to be well groomed and appropriately dressed while in school. Students and parents have the right to determine a student's dress, except when the school administration determines a student's dress is : a danger to the students' health and /or safety ; contains a message or illustration that is obscene, vulgar, profane, or lude; contains messages or illustrations that supports illegal drug use; is substantially disruptive to the teaching and/or learning environment ; when the school administration determines there is a reasonable likelihood that the student's dress will substantially disrupt the teaching and/or learning environment; or invades the rights of others. In these instances, the administrator may find that the dress violates this dress code.

Prohibited Attire

A. Hats of any kind, sunglasses, and head covering of any kind are not to be worn while in the school building during the school day . However, a TC logoed head covering is appropriate for Spirit Days when approved by administration. A head dress worn in conjunction with religious affiliation will be allowed.
B. Clothing which exposes bare midriffs and/or backs or with extremely low necklines that expose cleavage .
C. Tank tops must have a one and one -half inch strap – not exposing under garments .
D. Jackets or coats are not to be worn during the school day unless teacher approved .
E. Mutilated clothing (excessive holes or rips above mid -thigh) .
F. Exposed undergarments .
G. Shorts or skirts shorter than mid -thigh .
H. Sheer Clothing .
I. Any adornment such as chains or spikes that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon

The dress code may be enforced by any staff member. Any questionable clothing is under the discretion of a teacher and/or administrator.

DUE PROCESS

Recommendation for the expulsion of a student from school shall be made to the Board of Education by the Administration. Such action is generally taken upon the recommendation of the principal. The principal's recommendation shall be communicated to the Superintendent in writing, signed by the principal and accompanied by the student's cumulative file. Excepting cases stemming from extreme overt behavior, it is expected that parental conferences would have been held at the building level prior to the expulsion recommendation. The following procedure shall be followed:
A. Written notice of charges against a student shall be supplied to the student and his/her parents/guardians by certified mail. Included within this notice shall be a statement of time and place for the hearing. The time shall be reasonable for the parties involved.
B. Parents/guardians may be present at the hearing and may be represented by legal counsel.
C. The student shall be given an opportunity to give his/her version of the facts and their implications. He/she shall be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him/her.
The student, his/her parents/guardians or legal agent shall be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him/her.
D. The hearing shall be conducted by the Board of Education, which shall make its determination solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing. The hearing is not a court proceeding and court rules of evidence shall not be enforced at such a hearing, whether open or closed.
E. The Board of Education by majority vote shall state within a reasonable time after the hearing

its findings as to whether or not the student charged and its decision to expel.
A majority vote of the Board may be obtained by those present at the meeting.
F. The findings of the hearing authority shall be reduced to writing and sent to the student and his/her parents/guardians.
G. The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be made aware of the right to appeal the decision of the Board of Education to the appropriate judicial authority.
H. Efforts shall be made --but not guaranteed --by the school to provide alternate means by which a student under extended suspension or expulsion may continue his education. Such opportunities may include evening classes, correspondence courses, special programs, or transfer to another school or school system.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY CODE

Representing Tri County Area Schools through interscholastic sports is considered an honor. Once a student achieves a position on a team, that person must abide by certain conduct and eligibility requirements during the entire year (this includes vacations and summertime) and indeed during their entire participation in athletic programs at Tri County. These requirements are necessary because young men and women representing Tri County should be setting a good example for younger students as well as for their fellow students and the community as a whole. We are proud of our athletic teams and only those who maintain satisfactory scholastic standing and good conduct will be part of them.

Weekly Eligibility :

- Teacher's input grades by the end of the day each Wednesday.
- Eligibility checks are run every three weeks, on Wednesday morning, beginning the first week of tryouts and continuing from there on.
- Student -Athletes with one or more E's will be ineligible to compete but will be required to attend all meetings and practices.
- Student -Athletes with E's will be given a letter by the Athletic Department on Wednesday afternoon (see attached)
- Student -Athletes must show this letter to those teachers listed on the letter who are reporting the E. The teachers will check the appropriate box, sign and student -athlete must return the letter back to the Athletic Department before the end of the school day on Friday. Failure to do so will result in automatic ineligibility.
- Once a Student -Athlete is on the Ineligible List, they must take the original letter around to the teachers every Thursday until the E has been raised, following the rules laid out above.
- We will take into consideration excused absences and their effect on his/her grades.
- Ineligibility runs from Sunday - 8:00 am through Saturday - 8:00 pm.
- This process will be considered as the appeal process if a student -athlete feels there is a discrepancy.
- The Building Principal can overrule any eligibility issue at any time.

Conduct Scholastic eligibility is important and so is conduct either in or out of school . Young men and women participating in sports are expected to follow all school rules properly and maintain good
conduct outside of school.

A. Any student suspended from the regular academic program (both in -school or out of school suspension) for a violation of school rules or discipline may not participate in the athletic program during the period of suspension. In addition, the student ma y be declared ineligible to participate in athletics for a period exceeding the period of the academic suspension pursuant to the rules and procedures set forth in this athletic eligibility code.

B. A student suspended from one Tri County Area Schools District school is ineligible to take part in athletics in another school until he presents a clearance card from the school from which he has been suspended.
C. All participants must be in attendance the entire day at school to play in an athletic contest if school is in session all that day. Any exception must be granted by the school Principal before school is dismissed the day of the contest.
D. Athletes must be in school the day after a game played during the week. If they are out of school without a good excuse, they will be ineligible for the next contest. Being tired is not an excuse.
E. Anyone quitting a team must consult with his/her coach and then turn in his/her uniform within one week. Any student failing to follow said procedure will be ineligible to participate during the next athletic season or sport for one game or contest for every week the equipment is late.
F. No student shall be allowed to wear an athletic uniform other than at an athletic contest connected with Tri County unless given permission to otherwise by his coach. The penalty for a violation of this rule will be determined by the coach of the team involved, subject to review by the athletic director and the principal.
G. Use of possession of tobacco products, alcohol or other harmful substances and use or possession of narcotics or habit -forming drugs are prohibited.
H. Any conduct in or out of school that is detrimental to the school or to the team is prohibited. Examples might include, but are not limited to: theft, insubordination, fighting, destruction of property, arson.
I. Tri County Middle School will follow the NCAA List of Banned Substances.
J. Any athlete serving an athletic code violation suspension must remain academically eligible during suspension. If this does not occur, the suspension will be extended to include those weeks the athlete was academically ineligible.

Penalties For G & H Above
The following penalties are considered minimum penalties and may be increased if circumstances
warrant :
1. First offense : Athletes will be suspended for one -half (50%) of the contests in the sport in which they are presently participating in. If the suspension is not fully executed, it will carry over into the next season in which the athlete participates.
2. Second offense : Athlete shall be suspended for three -fourths (75%) of the contests in the sport in which they are presently participating in. If the suspension is not fully executed, it will be carried over into the next season in which the athlete participates.
3. Third offense : Suspension from participating in all athletic programs for a period of one full calendar year.

General Penalty Guidelines:
A. Any athlete turning themselves in for an athletic code violation, or seeking /completes outside treatment on their own, will have their penalty decreased by 10% on a first or second violation only. Administrator and athlete may also apply restorative justice to decrease the penalty by 10%.
B. Any athlete serving a suspension will not be put up for all -conference, all -area, or all -state recognition.
C. Any Tri County student convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to a felony

will lose their eligibility for the remainder of their time at Tri County. If final sentencing is less than a felony, the penalty will be reconsidered if requested by the athlete or their parents, to the Superintendent. A committee comprised of three (3) Board Members, the Athletic Director, and the Superintendent will make the final determination.
D. If suspension cannot be fully served during present sport season, it will carry over into the next sport season the athlete participates in.
E. If violation occurs when the athlete is not currently participating in a sport, the suspension will be served during the next season that the athlete participates in.
F. During suspension, athletes will be required to participate in all practices and attend all games (out of uniform). The athlete will not be allowed to participate, however, on any days she/he is suspended from school.
G. Tri county will uphold any athletic code violation suspension from another school if a student transfers during their suspension/delay of play.

Need Concussion Guidelines added back in here…

DUE PROCESS AND PROCEDURE

A. The coach of the sport in question (Principal and Athletic Director for alleged out-of-season violation) will conduct an investigation and review of any allegation of a violation of the above rules of conduct, excluding questions of scholastic ineligibility. This investigation and review may include consultation with the student under investigation and his parents or guardian. If a student is reasonably suspected of being in violation of a rule, the student shall be notified of the charges against him and given an opportunity to respond. The student may be temporarily suspended from the team pending an immediate investigation and review. The student and parents/guardian shall be informed of any temporary athletic suspension.
B. The investigation and review will be completed by the coach as soon as is reasonably possible. Upon completion of his investigation and review, if an athletic code violation is found to exist, the coach will report to the Athletic Director and investigation and review result in discipline being imposed, the student and/or the student's parents or guardians will be given written notice of the nature of the violation, a brief summary of the evidence in support of the finding of a violation, and notice of the penalty to be imposed.
C. The student and/or the student's parents or guardians will be given an immediate opportunity to meet with the Superintendent or his designee if they so request. At such meeting, the student and/or the student's parents or guardians will be afforded the opportunity to present evidence in extenuation and mitigation of any violation. Upon the conclusion of this review, the Superintendent or his de signee may affirm, modify, or vacate the charged violation and/or the penalty, in whole or in part. The Superint endent's decision is final.
D. Athletic Code Violation Report forms are available from the Athletic Director for any person wanting to report a violation of the Athletic Eligibility Code.

TCAS AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE USE FOR TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

The purpose of this Agreement is to grant access to and define acceptable use of the District's technology resources ('Technology Resources"). Technology Resources are any type of instrument, device, machine, equipment, technology, or software that is capable of transmitting, acquiring, or intercepting, any telephone, electronic, data, internet, audio, video, or radio transmissions, signals, telecommunications, or services, and include without limitation (1) internal and external network infrastructure, (2) Internet and network access, (3) computers, (4)servers, (5) storage devices, (6) peripherals, (7) software, and (8) messaging or communication systems.

In exchange for the use of the District's Technology Resources either at school or away from school, you understand and agree to the following:

A. Your use of the District's Technology Resources is a privilege that may be revoked by the District at any time and for any reason.

B. You have no expectation of privacy when using the District's Technology Resources. The District reserves the right to monitor and inspect all use of its Technology Resources, including, without limitation, personal email and voice -mail communications, comp uter files, databases, web logs, audit trails, or any other electronic transmissions accessed, distributed, or used through the Technology Resources. The District also reserves the right to remove any material from the Technology Resources that the District, at its sole discretion, chooses to, including, without limitation, any information that the District determines to be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, harassing, intimidating, disruptive, or that otherwise violates this Agreement.

The Technology Resources do not provide you a "public forum." You may not use the Technology Resources for commercial purposes or to support or oppose political positions or candidates unless expressly authorized in advance by a teacher or administrator as part of a class project or activity. You may, however, use the Technology Resources to contact or communicate with public officials.

C. The District's Technology Resources are intended for use only by registered users. You are responsible for your account/password and any access to the Technology Resources made using your account/password. Any damage or liability arising from the use of yo ur account/password is your responsibility. Use of your account by someone other than you is prohibited and may be grounds for suspension from Technology Resources and other disciplinary consequences for both you and the person(s) using your account/password.

D. You may not use the Technology Resources to engage in bullying, which is defined as: Any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the

educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health; or
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Use of other communication/messaging devices (including devices not owned by the District) to engage in bullying maybe grounds for discipline under the District's Bullying Policy, (8260)
E. If you misuse the Technology Resources, your access to the Technology Resources may be suspended and you may be subject to other disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Misuse includes, but is not limited to:
1. Accessing or attempting to access material that is "harmful to minors." Material that is "harmful to minors" includes any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that (1) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (2) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (3) taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.
2. Accessing or attempting to access material that is unlawful, obscene, pornographic, profane, or vulgar.
3. Accessing or attempting to access material that is inappropriate for minors. Material that is inappropriate for minors is defined as: (As defined in F1 above)
4. Bullying (as defined in paragraph E). 5. Sexting, which includes, without limitation, possessing, sending, or distributing nude, sexually explicit, or sexually suggestive photographs, videos, or other visual depictions of yourself or another person.
6. Vandalism, which includes, without limitation, any malicious or intentional attempt to harm, steal, destroy, or disrupt user data, school material, or school hardware or software.
7. Hacking, which includes, without limitation, gaining or attempting to gain access to, modifying, or obtaining copies of, information belonging to others or information you are not authorized to access.
8. Unauthorized copying or use of licenses or copyrighted software.
9. Plagiarizing, which includes the unauthorized distributing, copying, using, or holding out as your own, material that was written or created by someone else, without permission of, and attribution to, the author/creator.
10. Posting or distributing confidential or inappropriate information meant to harass, intimidate, or embarrass others.
11. Allowing someone else to use your account or password or not preventing unauthorized access to Technology Resources when leaving them unattended.

12. Using or soliciting the use of or attempting to use or discover the account information or password of another user.
13. Attempting to or successfully disabling security features, including technology protection measures required under the Children's Internet Protection Act ("CIPA").
14. Misusing equipment or altering system software without permission.
15. Commercial for -profit activities, advertising, political lobbying, or sending mass mailings or spam. However, you may contact a public official to express an opinion on a topic of interest.
16. Using the Technology Resources in any way that violates any federal, state, or local law or rule, or the District's Acceptable Use & Internet Safety Policy (# 5517.01).

F. You must promptly disclose to your teacher or other school employee any content you view or receive over the Technology Resources that is inappropriate or that makes you feel uncomfortable, harassed, threatened, or bullied, or that contains sexually explic it content. You should not delete such content until instructed to do so by a staff member.

G. It is the policy of the District, as a recipient of certain federal funds, to monitor the online activities of its minor students and provide technology protection measures on its computers with Internet access designed to prevent minors from accessing vis ual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors.

H. It is the policy of the District to prohibit its minor students from (1) accessing inappropriate matter on the Internet; (2) engaging in hacking or other unlawful online activities; and (3) accessing materials that are harmful to minors. It is also the pol icy of the District to educate students about cyberbullying awareness and response and about appropriate online behavior, including disclosing, disseminating, or using personal information and safely and appropriately interacting with other individuals in social networking websites, chat rooms, by e -mail, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

I. The District does not guarantee that measures described in paragraphs H and I will provide any level of safety or security or that they will successfully block all inappropriate material from the District's students. You agree that you will not intentional ly engage in any behavior that was intended to be prevented by paragraphs G and H.

J. The District does not warrant or guarantee that its Technology Resources will meet any specific requirement, or that they will not be error free or uninterrupted; nor will the District be liable for any damages (including lost data, information, or time) s ustained or incurred in connection with the use, operation, or inability to use the Technology Resources.

K. You are responsible for the proper use of the Technology Resources and will be held accountable for any damage to or replacement of the Technology Resources caused by your inappropriate use.

- I agree to follow this Agreement and all rules and regulations that may be added from time to time by the District or its Internet Service Provider.
- I also agree to follow all rules in the District's Acceptable Use & Internet Safety Policy.
- Any additional rules, regulations, and policies are available in the building offices.

● As a condition of using the Technology Resources, I agree to release the District and its board members, agents, and employees, including its Internet Service Provider, from all liability related to my use or inability to use the Technology Resources.
● I understand that data I send or receive over the Technology Resources is not private. I consent to having the District monitor and inspect my use of the Technology Resources, including any electronic communications that I send or receive through the Techn ology Resources.

STUDENT RECORDS

Introduction

Every student at TCMS has a cumulative folder (CA60). The record was started at the beginning of elementary school. Included in the cumulative folder are the student's identification information, health records,academic transcript, standardized test scores, behavioral history, and other documentation relating to the student's school experience. Under the Family Education Rights and Privileges Act, 1974, the parent/guardian of a student under the age of sixteen years, and a student eighteen years or older, have the right to examine records and data of the school district that is personally related to the student. They have the right to challenge the contents of such records as to their accuracy and fairness.
The procedures for examination and challenge of school records are contained in Board of Education policy and may be obtained from the Tri County Area Schools Superintendent.

Right to Object to Release of Directory Information

In general, school officials will obtain written permission from the parent of a student before releasing information from the student's school records. Federal law allows school districts to disclose directory information about students without parental consent. Directory information includes: student name, gender, address, date of birth,major field of study, participation in extracurricular activities, height and weight of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, and awards received. A parent may request that directory information about the student be released only with written permission.

MISCELLANOUS

Parent's Guide for Communicating Concerns Parents should contact the Middle School by telephone, email, or visit the office to address any concerns. Please check our website for any additional information. Tri County Area Schools @ 616 -636-5454 Tri County Middle School @ 231-937-4318, website www.tricountyschools.com .

Report Cards And Conferences

Report cards are issued two times a year after each marking period. Twice a year we have parent /teachers conferences. These dates can be found on the school calendar at the front of this handbook. This is a time when parents and teachers talk about their students' progress in school and their needs. When we work together as parents and teachers the students will be

successful. We encourage all parents to reach out to their students' teachers with any questions they might have.

Grade Point Average

Marking period grades are translated to a point value that is used to determine a grade point average (GPA).

Grade	Percentages	Points Earned
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	.07
E	59-Below	.0

Not Included In Computing Points:
CR (Credit)
NC (No Credit)
I (Incomplete)

Courses taken at the high school while a student is enrolled in the middle school will be awarded high school credit but not be used for high school GPA calculation.

Retention Policy

The Tri County Area School Board of Education recognizes that the intellectual, academic, physical and social/emotional development of children will vary and that students should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to meet their needs at the various stages of growth and development. It shall be the policy of the Board of Education that each child moves forward in a continuous pattern of growth and achievement relative to the child's development.

A. The administration will inform parents of the possibility of grade level retention.
B. The administration will assure that efforts will be made to remediate a student's difficulties before retention can take place.
C. The administration will provide the right to appeal any decision with regards to placement of a student, by the child's parent or guardian.

Physical Education

● All students are required to take physical education. Any excuse must be verified by a medical (doctor's) statement.

● Students are responsible for all personal belongings stored in the locker room or lockers. In any event, students should not leave money or valuables in their locker.

● Students are required to provide special clothing for use in physical education. Students will receive physical education department rules. Parents should read the rules, especially those regarding illness, injury and uniforms.