TRI COUNTY ELEMENTARY

HANDBOOK

2026-2027

EDUCATE • ENCOURAGE • EMPOWER



Tri County Elementary

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INTRODUCTION

The rules and policies of the Tri County Area Schools District apply to any student who is on school property or school - affiliated transportation, who is in attendance at school or any school -sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any place or time creates a substantial disruption to the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school, regardless of location, date, or time.

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, it 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.

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 as consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations, and 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.

The policies and regulations within this handbook apply for all school sponsored activities, including those held before or after school and those held away from Tri County Area Schools.

TRI COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Brian Campbell - President	Jill Fennessy	Madonna Princer
Heather Shadley	Jessica Helfmann	Nick Hall
Brandon Monreal		

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Ryan Biller	Superintendent /Director of Curriculum	(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) 937-4338
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 Operations/ Facilities	(616) 636-5454
Lisa Newton	Food Service Director	(231) 937-4338
Kim Leyko	Transportation Director	(231) 937-4386

TRI COUNTY TRANSPORTATION
(231) 937-4386

WELCOME TO TRI COUNTY ELEMENTARY!
At Tri County Elementary we believe in maintaining high expectations for all learners in safe, nurturing, and welcoming environments. We believe in fostering a growth mindset in our students through developing strong, positive relationships and fostering this through a restorative setting . Collaboration between school and the home is integral in helping all of our students realize their best future.

We look forward to working with you this year and to watching our students grow as learners and as individuals! Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Brooke Haslacker, Principal
Tri County Elementary

Jason Rykse, Assistant Principal
Tri County Elementary

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

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m. First Bell
8:35 a.m. Second Bell -School Begins
3:35 p.m. School Ends

Students arriving after 8:35 a.m. will be considered tardy.
Students arriving after 9:05 a.m. will be considered a half day absent for the morning.
Students leaving prior to 3:05 p.m. will be considered absent for the afternoon.

*Please do not plan to pick up students until dismissal time.
*Students enter the building at 8:30, the first bell.

DISTRICT AND 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.

TCE will achieve this by:

- Monthly sessions where all staff will be provided the opportunity and structure for data review and analysis. PLC Data teams will review data and intentionally plan for instruction based on student data at that time.
- Including discipline data in the PLC review process so that referrals remain reduced, and the proportions are closer aligned to our student population. Disciplinary reports (lowered by 71% from 4429 to 1303) Focus on strategies for reducing discipline with boys as they are consistently a majority of referrals 65.5% in 24-25 and 83% in 25-26
- Attendance will remain a focus in parent communication. Students must be present to learn. (decrease from 95.6% to 94.1%), continue to decrease chronic absenteeism of which 32% of our students miss 15 or more days of school during a school year.

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.

MEDICATIONS

Medication Policy: TCAS Policy # 5330, 5330.01, 5335 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 3 following conditions are met:

1. 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)
2. the building administrator has received a copy of the written approvals from the physician and the parent/guardian.
3. 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.

DRESS CODE

Students need to be dressed appropriately for school. The failure of a student to present himself/herself at school in a presentable manner, or any student dressed in extreme or disruptive attire, as judged by teachers and principal, may result in a student being sent home to change and face possible suspension from school. All shorts, tank tops, skirts, tops or pants that do not provide complete coverage are not allowed. Students may not wear clothing which advertises alcohol, tobacco, nudity, drugs or displays gang symbols. Any buttons or clothing with off -color or suggestive writing and/or pictures are not considered appropriate school dress. Shorts need to be long enough so that they come down to the children's fingertips when their arms are held down at their sides. Hats are not to be worn during class or lunch time. In purchasing shoes, please consider non marking soles. These types of soles help keep our halls cleaner.

We do not encourage students to wear sandals/flip flops to school. If your child chooses to wear this type of footwear, please make sure he/she has a pair of covered shoes (athletic, etc.) to change into for recess/gym class.

FOOD SERVICE

Tri County Elementary serves meals every school day. If it is 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. The MDE forms for this food substitution are in the school office.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Parents will be offered the opportunity to purchase insurance coverage for their children. Forms are available from the school secretary.

MONEY

All money sent to school should be in a sealed envelope with your child's name, the teacher's name, and the purpose of the money written on the outside of the envelope.

PARENT PORTAL WEB

Tri County Area Schools is happy to offer an online portal to your student's contact information, attendance, and behavior. You can call the school office to receive your username and password so you can follow your student's progress, as well as receive email alerts for both attendance and disciplinary referrals.

NEWSLETTERS

Periodically, newsletters are sent home with students to keep families informed of school activities. We hope you will read them and note the coming events.

LOST AND FOUND

Items not claimed at the end of each day will be moved to the lost and found. Twice a year (spring and after the last of school) lost and found items are taken to a local charity.

CURRICULUM

The English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science curriculums at Tri County Area Elementary Schools are based on the Michigan State Standards. In addition to the core content areas, students also receive instruction in Technology, Art, Music, and Physical Education. Copies of curriculums are available in the principal's office of your child's school.

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.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are provided by the school. They should be returned in as good a condition as when they were received taking into account normal wear. Should a book be lost or damaged, a charge will be made to cover the cost of replacement. Materials needed to meet classroom requirements such as pencils and paper are provided.

Grade Level List of suggested supplies

CHILD 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 Tri County Area Schools Special Education Coordinator, at 231-937-4391.

STUDENT CELL PHONE/SMARTWATCHES/PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE (PED) USE

Students at Tri County Elementary 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 TCE 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 TCE 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, or other secure location and not on your person where it can cause a distraction.
- Before entering TCE, phones must be turned off while on school grounds.
- 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 3:35pm, and minor chromebook User Agreement violations.	**1st Incident**	**2nd Incident**	**3rd Incident**	**4th Incident**
	Cell Phone/PED: -Report date of Confiscation: - device is to be picked up in the office by student after school -Parent contact made of first incident **Chromebook:** -call home -warning given for restricted access	**Cell Phone/PED:** -Report Date of Confiscation: -Student Calls Parent -parent must pick up device from main office **Chromebook:** -call home -possible short term restriction/limited use	**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 or student may no longer bring device to school. **Chromebook:** -Admin calls home -possible no use

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
C. The District's Technology Resources are intended for use only by registered users.

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:

- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
- 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;
- Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health; or
- Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

E. Use of other communication/messaging devices (including devices not owned by the District) to engage in bullying may be grounds for discipline under the District's Bullying Policy, (5517 & 5517.01 Neola).

F. 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:

For a complete copy of the TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT CLICK HERE

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.

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.

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.

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. 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 second bell rings. Students who arrive after 9:05 will be marked with an unexcused absence for that morning 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 unexcused.

Montcalm Area Intermediate School District Project Graduation Attendance and Truancy K-12 Policy Chart should be included here (entire table). (MAISD will need to update -names are included that no longer do truancy.)

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/

BEHAVIORS POLICY AND APPROACH

Behavior is often a form of communication especially with our youngest learners. There are many developmental factors that need to be taken into consideration. As a result, administrators will use professional judgment when discerning consequences for behavior. Students violating behaviors in excess of 4 offenses will have further planning to support behavior choice improvement. This could include, but is not limited to: Student behavior plan, check in check out, safety plan, alternate to recess, loss of privileges.

When addressing behavior and considering consequences age, developmental levels, severity of behavior, repeated or isolated events will all factor into the process. The behavior matrix below is how behavior is managed at Tri County Elementary.

PRIDE

Tri County Elementary	Prepare	Respect	Integrity	Dedication	Excellence
Hallway	Walking Feet. Face Forward.	HFO. Hold doors for others. Voice Level 0.	Follow directions. Be respectful as classes are in progress.	Go directly to your destination. Keep to the right.	Set a good example. Keep hallways clear and clean.
Restroom	Wait your turn.	HFO. Respect privacy. Use kind words and actions. Voice Level 0-1.	Problem Solve. Use equipment and supplies properly.	Walking Feet. Keep water in sink.	Go, Flush, wash, leave. Use time wisely. Throw trash in trash can.
Assembly	Stay seated.	HFO. Eyes and ears on speaker. Voice Level 0.	Follow directions from adults. Stay in designated area.	Walking Feet. Enter and exit quietly.	Participate. Use appropriate applause.
Playground	Share and take turns.	HFO. Use kind words and actions. Voice Level 2-3.	Stay in designated area. Problem Solve. Use equipment appropriately.	Line up when you are called. Walk to and from building.	Invite others to play. Play safely.
Cafeteria	Raise your hand for help.	HFO. Respect other's space. Use kind words and actions. Voice Level 1.	Follow directions from adults. Eat only your Food.	Walking Feet. Sit with feet under table.	Leave a clean table, chair, and floor.
Library	Stay on task.	HFO. Respect others trying to read and learn. Voice Level 0-1.	Follow directions from adults. Take care of books and equipment.	Walking Feet. Return materials on time.	Use time wisely.
Classroom	Bodies still. Be ready to learn.	HFO. Eyes and ears on the teacher. Use kind words and actions. Raise your hand to speak.	Follow instructions. Use classroom materials appropriately.	Walking Feet. Stay on task.	Complete your work. Organize. Participate. Try your best!
Bus	Watch for traffic when entering/ exiting. Watch for your stop.	HFO. Use kind words and actions. Voice Level 1-2.	Problem Solve.	Stay seated Face Forward. Remember your bus number. Keep your backpack closed.	Listen to the bus driver. No eating or drinking. Keep track of your belongings.

LEVEL 1	**HORSEPLAY** (SWIS Minor - Staff Managed) "Goofing around" or "playing" that may include pushing, shoving, grabbing, hitting, tripping, "play fighting" or "jumping on". Mean or rude gestures, name calling/teasing, or "just teasing".	**Behavior that hurts the feelings of others:** (SWIS Minor - Staff Managed) • "Mean Physical Horseplay" • Play-fighting • Unkind gestures • Teasing/name calling/mean remarks • Offensive language • Pinching/poking/grabbing • Gossiping • Playing Keep Away
LEVEL 2	**MILD AGGRESSION/TEASING** (SWIS Minor - Staff Managed) Name calling, taunting, ridiculing, insulting remarks, spreading rumors, directed profanity, misuse of internet, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings written or spoken	
	DEFIANT BEHAVIOR DIRECTED TOWARD AN ADULT (SWIS Minor - Staff Managed) Arguing, backtalk, refusing to follow directions, name calling, walking away while staff is talking to student,	**Behavior that could injure others:** (SWIS Major - Staff Managed; 3rd Time Office Managed) • Spitting • Hitting/kicking/slapping • Pushing/tripping • Threatening • Planned shunning or excluding others • Throwing objects with intent to hurt someone
LEVEL 3	**MODERATE AGGRESSION** (SWIS Major - Office Managed) **Physical Contact**: hitting, slapping, pushing, shoving, grabbing, tripping, etc. in an attempt to hurt or control others. **Social Exclusion:** Shunning, planned exclusion, social alienation (prohibiting others from joining the group). **False Reporting** or **Retaliation for Reporting** **Intimidation:** threats of physical or emotional aggression, planned exclusion, etc. **Stealing** **Property Misuse:** disrespect of personal or school property	
LEVEL 4	**SEVERE AGGRESSION** (SWIS Major - Office Managed) **Severe Physical Contact:** Physical contact intending to or resulting in injury: hitting, kicking, fighting, and similar behavior that risks injury to others. **Intimidation:** ethnic/sexual harassment, stalking severe threats of emotional or physical violence etc. **Property Misuse:** stealing or destruction of personal or school property	**Purposeful behavior causing injury or damage including:** (SWIS Major - Office Managed) • Punching/fighting /Biting • Stealing • Vandalism • Any other serious form of physical aggression

Examples of behavior that will be addressed are below, but not limited to:
Aggression/Intimidation
Dishonesty
Disruption to the learning environment
Horseplay
Physical Contact/Fighting
Social Exclusion

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY: The bus and bus stop are an extension of the school day. Any conduct detrimental to the safety of the transportation of students/staff to and from school and including school sponsored events up to permanent removal from bus. SEE TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

WEAPONS - Any device or instrument used in a threatening manner that could cause injury or bodily harm. (i.e., pins, needles) Tri County is a Weapon -Free school. Any item that could be used to cause injury or harm is not allowed on school grounds or at school events. Knives of any length are not allowed on school grounds.
● 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.

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. In addition, he/she shall be allowed to question any witness.
D. The student, his/her parents/guardians or legal agent shall be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him/her. In addition, he/she shall be allowed to question any witness.
E. 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.
F. 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.
G. The findings of the hearing authority shall be reduced to writing and sent to the student and his/her parents/guardians.

H. 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.
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.

BULLYING
Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can be in the form of any written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is verbally threatening or harassing behavior using electronic technology including cell phones, email, social media, or text messaging.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:
A. Physical – intentionally and repeatedly hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or demanding money for the return of items, blocking student movement, and unwelcome physical contact.

B. Verbal – intentionally and repeatedly taunting, excessive teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.

C. Psychological – intentionally and repeatedly spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation.

This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti. Bullying will be investigated in the following manner:

A. Any student who believes she/he/they has been or is the victim of bullying, cyberbullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or Assistant Principal. 8 Revised

October 2025. The student may also report concerns to any school staff member who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator.

B. Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive or bullying behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports can be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action can not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

C. If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may range from one or more restorative practices up to and including suspension for students that engaged in the bullying behavior. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials when an investigation determines that laws have been broken.

BULLYING NOTIFICATION

Bullying Harassment and Aggressive Behavior Notification must be in writing and submitted to the Building Principal (for building issue) Superintendent (if District level issue) or Board of Education member if not addressed prior with Principal or Superintendent. Once received the issue will be investigated following board and district policies. Consequences will be given aligned to policy.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND TITLE IX

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 is 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.

The District encourages anyone within the school community who believes a Title IX violation may have occurred to report their concerns to a District Title IX Coordinator identified below.

Joe Williams
21338 Kendaville Rd.
Howard City, MI 49329
Tri County Area Schools

"School community" means students, parents/legal guardians, administrators, professional and support staff, as well as Board of Education members, agents, volunteers, contractors or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board. "Complainant" or "reporting party" refers to the person submitting a Title IX complaint. "Respondent" or "responding party" means the person identified as violating Title IX. "Third parties" include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with or seeking to do business with the Board of Education ("Board") and other individuals who come into contact with members of the school community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

Title IX protects students and staff from harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex during educational or extracurricular programs and activities, whether they take place at school or elsewhere. Sex discrimination usually involves unequal treatment on the basis of sex and can be perpetrated by students, staff members or employees, volunteers, vendors, contractors or visitors to the school. Title IX protects employees from sex discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault. Sexual harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it denies or limits an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's programs and activities.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcome sexual advances;

▪ Unwelcome sexual verbal expressions, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; unwelcome sexually degrading language, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome sexually degrading language or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls, text messages or email;

▪ Requests for sexual favors and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; ▪ Verbal harassment or abuse;

▪ Pressure to engage in sexual activity;

▪ Repeated remarks with sexual implications;

▪ Unwelcome touching; and/or

▪ Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats.

Grievance Procedures Reporting If students, their parents/guardians, or anyone else on their behalf believe that they have been subjected to sex discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault by school board members, staff, vendors, contractors, or other persons doing business with the District, then a complaint should be immediately reported to the principal of the school where the student attends and/or to Joe Williams, who is the Title IX Coordinator responsible for Title IX complaints involving any of the school community.

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.

VOLUNTEERS

The Superintendent may direct that appropriate screening processes be implemented to assure that adult volunteers are free of criminal convictions for any offences 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, including during the hours following the end of the day's activities for students. 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.

SAFETY DRILLS

We align our procedures and responses with state and local laws and policies. We use a Standard Response Protocol (SRP) that provides consistent, clear, shared language and actions among all students, staff and first responders for all hazards. It is action based, and allows organizations, first responders, students, and parents to share a specific vocabulary for quick and coordinated action.

We have Protocols that include: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate and Shelter. During a Shelter or lockdown situation you will be notified via school messenger and the Apptegy platform and students WILL NOT BE RELEASED at this time nor will parents be able to gain entry to the building.

CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

Schools and other institutions shall cooperate with the Family Independent Agency Department 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 to complete the investigation or to prevent abuse or neglect of the child. 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 State of Michigan required 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 Area Schools are therefore obligated by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, MOOD ALTERING SUBSTANCES AND PARAPHERNALIA FREE CAMPUS

Students are prohibited from possession, use, delivery, transfer, sale or attempted sale of any alcohol, controlled substances, look-alike drugs, mood altering substance (including high caffeine doses) or drug paraphernalia (including but not limited to marijuana, marijuana accessories and/or marijuana-infused products) at any time while they are at school or any school-related activity. Violations will be referred to the appropriate authorities, and students will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

Student or adult use of tobacco products or e-cigarettes (including vaping) are not permitted on school grounds or at any school activity. Failure to comply with this will result in administrative action.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning or a sudden stopping and starting of the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a health care professional says they are okay to return to play.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CONCUSSION:

1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY – A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports.
2. KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF PLAY – Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to play the day of injury and until a health care professional says it's okay.
3. TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION – Schools should know if a student had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

Possible Signs to observe:

Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

PARENT NOTIFICATION and 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 they have met paraprofessional 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:
1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to control disclosure of educational records. Written consent is generally required before schools can release student information. Parents may allow disclosure without written consent in specified situations.
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

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

McKINNEY – VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT defines homelessness as:
The term "homeless children and youths" - means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

- Includes children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;*
- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii)

  Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster care placement" was removed from the definition of homeless on December 10, 2016; the only exception to his removal is that "covered states" have until December 10, 2017 to remove "a waiting foster care placement" from their definition of homeless.

If you are aware of any child who may fit this definition or need assistance yourself, please contact the Tri County Homeless Liaison, Joe Williams at (231) 937-4338

STUDENT RECORDS

Introduction

Every student at Tri County Elementary has a cumulative folder (CA60). The record starts at the beginning of TCAS enrollment. 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 extra -curricular 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.

PARENT'S GUIDE FOR COMMUNICATING CONCERNS

Parents should contact the school by telephone, email, or visit the office to address any concerns. Please check our website www.tricountyschools.com.

Elementary

Tri County Area Schools

2026-2027

Academic Year Calendar









Teacher Day Count		
August	8	
September	20	
October	21	
November	18	
December	14	(1 Half Day)
January	20	
February	19	
March	21	
April	16	
May	20	
June	4	
Total	181	

Student Day Count		
August	5	(+10 Hours for 8/18-8/19)
September	20	
October	21	(1 Half Day)
November	17	
December	14	(1 Half Day)
January	20	
February	18	
March	21	(1 Half Day)
April	15	
May	20	
June	4	(2 Half Day)
PD Days	5	
Total	180	

Start & End Times: HS/MS: 7:25am-2:20pm
Elementary: 8:35am-3:35pm

Teacher ER Workday Hours: 11:15am-1:45pm
Teacher ER Workday Hours: 12:30pm-3:00pm

Early Release: HS/MS: 7:25-11:05am
Elementary: 8:35am-12:15pm

Open House Details (August 20)
Working Hours: 12:00pm - 7:00pm (1 Hr Lunch)
Open House Hours: 3:00 - 5:00PM (Secondary)
Open House Hours: 5:00 - 7:00PM (Elementary)

Semester 1: August 24-December 18 (77 Days)
Semester 2: January 4-June (99 Days)

PD Day Workday Hours: 8:00am-3:00pm (1 Hr Lunch)

Parent Teacher Conference
Fall - Monday HS, Tuesday MS, Wednesday Elem
Spring - Monday MS, Tuesday HS, Wednesday Elem

2025-2026		
Days	**Hours**	**Total Hours Elem / Sec**
Full - 170	6.42	1091.40 / 1091.40
ER - 7	3.08 / 3.33	21.56 / 23.31
PD - 5 (2 @ 5hrs, 3 @ 6hrs)	28 / 28	28.00 / 28.00
Student Totals:		1140.96 / 1142.71

2026-2027		
Days	**Hours**	**Total Hours Elem / Sec**
Full - 170	6.42	1091.40 / 1091.40
ER - 5	3.08 / 3.33	15.40 / 16.65
PD - 5 (2 @ 5hrs, 3 @ 6hrs)	28 / 28	28.00 / 28.00
Student Totals:		1134.80 / 1136.05

5/7/2026

WHY CHOOSE US?

01 Academic Leader - strong core curriculum and instruction, intervention, programming that is research based and proven to show gains outperforming local districts

02 Community Focused - supporting all families and students both in academics and various opportunities for families to partner in their child's education

03 High Caliber Staff - well versed in best practices and student centered. All teacher and paraprofessionals are highly qualified per state requirements

ABOUT US

We are the Vikings, we "Row" together as a unified Kindergarten - 5th grade school housing close to 800 students learning and growing and charting together as we navigate the waters of life.

Family Testimonies

Family Statements to come

working....

Family Statements to come

working....

Family Statements to come

working....

