

Mount Savage School

2016-2017



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Parents/Guardians:

Middle school years are unique. They are very different from elementary and high school experiences. During these years, youngsters grow and develop physically, emotionally, socially, and academically. This growth process can be turbulent and exciting.

To help make these transition years easier and productive, some basic rules and guidelines are needed. This handbook is designed to outline basic policies and procedures to help students and parent/guardian(s) to be the most successful. Please read it carefully and adhere to these procedures. Contact the school office if you have questions.

I extend my best wishes for a great middle school career.

Sincerely,

Mr. Martin Crump
Principal

Mount Savage School

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

MEALS

All students will receive applications for free and reduced-price meals. Those students whose applications have been approved by the Food Service office will be notified in writing. **ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE TURNED INTO THE MAIN OFFICE BEFORE THE DEADLINE LISTED ON THE APPLICATION. If an application is not received after this deadline, the student will be charged, and it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to pay for charges or balances.** On a regular schedule, Mount Savage School will have a breakfast and a lunch program. During half (1/2) days, breakfast will **not** be served. *All financial questions should be directed to the Cafeteria Manager at (301) 264-4740 or Food Service at (301) 722-0637.* Parents **may not** bring lunch from restaurants or bring lunch for students other than their own.

LOCKERS

For security and safety reasons, all students are **REQUIRED** to keep their lockers locked at all times. Homeroom teachers make locker assignments the first week of school. Lockers and lock combinations are **NOT** to be shared with other classmates. The physical education teachers will assign gym lockers. Students should not place money or valuables in lockers and should keep their lockers locked. Each student is responsible for the contents of his/her locker. The school is not responsible for items or money stolen from lockers.

STUDENT SEARCH

The Principal or Assistant Principal may conduct a search of a student, the student's possessions, if there is a reasonable cause to believe that the student has in his/her possession an item which is in violation of school rules or which constitutes a criminal offense under the laws of the State of Maryland. The search of a person will be conducted in the presence of a third party. Lockers are the property of the school and may be searched at any time.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Since the vast majority of our students are bussed to school, safety is a very high priority and concern for us; therefore, any type of disruptive behavior on the bus will result in strong disciplinary action. Repeated violations of bus regulations will cause temporary or possibly permanent suspension of a student's privilege to ride the bus. Please be aware that space for additional passengers is limited on several of our buses. Therefore, mass changes to a particular bus may not be possible to accommodate students going to practices at the high school, parties, sleepovers, etc. Please call the office in advance to check if space is available in these situations. **Notes should be turned in to the office upon arrival.**

SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY STUDENTS FILE: JICH – R1

I. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- A. Notice that possession or use sale, or distribution of proscribed substance by students is prohibited in the Allegany County Public School System shall be provided to students, parents, and staff members at the beginning of each school year and when deemed appropriate by the principal.
- B. Prescription medication and over-the-counter products require written medication orders and are to be administered in accordance with medication administration guidelines.
- C. The Allegany County Public School System has developed its Health Education curriculum to conform to state and federal mandates for Safe and Drug-Free Schools. The goal of the Health Education curriculum is for students to obtain and demonstrate the ability to utilize knowledge of the adverse effects of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, and to develop skills and attitudes that promote drug- and violence-free living.
 - 1. The Health Education Curriculum:
 - a. Helps students recognize internal pressures, like wanting to belong to a group, and external pressures, like peer attitudes and advertising, that influence them to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;
 - b. Facilitates development of personal, social, and refusal skills to resist these pressures;
 - c. Teacher that using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is not the norm among teenagers, correcting the misconception that “everyone is doing it”, and promoting positive norms through bonding to school and constructive role models;
 - d. Uses interactive teaching techniques, such as role plays, discussions, brainstorming and cooperative learning;
 - e. Actively involves the family and the community so that prevention strategies are reinforced across settings;
 - f. Includes teacher training and support in order to assure that curricula are delivered as intended;
 - g. Contains material that is easy for teachers to implement and culturally relevant for students.

II. VIOLATION OF POLICY

- A. It is a violation of this policy for any student to:
 - 1. Possess, use (including passive participation), sell or distribute, or be under the influence of proscribed substances on school property or at school-related activities.
 - 2. Possess, use (including passive participation), sell or distribute, or be under the influence of prescription medication or an over-the-counter product, in the absence of, or inconsistent with a written medication order on school property or at a school-related activity.
 - 3. Engage in passive participation as defined in the policy.
- B. In accordance with other Board policies, students participating in extracurricular and co-curricular activities may be disciplined for violations of this policy even if the activity does not place on school property or at a school-related activity.
- C. Consequences for violations of this policy are cumulative. Subsequent offenses may affect the nature and severity of the consequences. Consequences will be determined in accordance with the Discipline Policy JK. Mandatory assessment to determine the

possible need for counseling and/or education through a licensed addictions program or a state-certified addictions counselor will accompany all consequences issued. A referral for this assessment will be made by school administration to the Allegany County Health Department (ACHD). However, the parent and/or student may elect to seek assessment through a licensed private provider. In any event, the student must provide documentation from an appropriate provider of his/her participation in the assessment. Failure to provide such documentation may result in additional consequences pursuant to the Discipline Policy.

D. Confidentiality of Student Records - Provisions to protect student rights to confidentiality of information regarding their use proscribed substances shall include:

1. Maintaining as few education records as possible;
2. Identifying students on certain sensitive, confidential records by first name and last initial; and
3. Disposing of records when they are no longer useful in accordance with procedures set forth in COMAR 13A.08.02.05 (Retention, Disposition and Destruction of Student Records), 13A.08.02.06 (Review and Updating), and other applicable law.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY

Mt. Savage School has a progressive discipline policy for minor infractions. Minor infractions consist of tardiness, minor class disruptions and/or disrespect, being unprepared for class, not following classroom or school procedures. Teachers will complete three of the following steps before sending a written referral to the Administration: **warning and conference with the student; phone call home; parent conference; teacher detention; guidance conference; parent notification form.**

When the student has been referred to the office, the Administration will implement the county discipline policy. Students who receive three referrals may begin with the suspension process. Students who receive five suspensions while in middle school may be referred to the Board of Education with a request for expulsion. **Students who commit major infractions will be referred immediately to the Administration. PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN FIGHTS OR OTHER REPORTABLE OFFENSES MAY BE REFERRED TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

FIRE DRILLS AND OTHER EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Fire Prevention code of Allegany County requires that each school conduct drills each year. These drills will be held without warning (except for the first drill), and all personnel and staff will leave the building. Directions for leaving the building are posted in every classroom. Students are reminded that they should leave the building quickly without running. **TALKING AND PUSHING ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Other emergency drills, such as lockdown drills and tornado drills, will also be conducted during the school year in accordance with school and county emergency preparedness plans.

DETENTION

Detention is used as a part of our progressive discipline policy and may be issued by teachers as well as by the administration. A Detention Notice will be sent home with the student for parents to sign and return to the teacher. **Detention will be held after school for 30 minutes after regular school dismissal in ROOM 135 or detention may occur in the teacher's classroom.**

Detention will be assigned on a delayed basis (within the next day or two of the infraction) so that parent/guardians may be informed and make transportation arrangements. Students who are serving detention must report on time and bring academic work to complete. Additional disciplinary action may be taken for those students who do not arrive on time or who do not bring work to do.

A student's transportation home after school is the responsibility of the parent. Any student without transportation at 3:00 p.m. will need to reschedule detention by calling the school.

Students are to be picked up promptly at 3:00. Students who have not made appropriate transportation arrangements will need to have their detention rescheduled.

FUNDRAISING

School policy prohibits fundraising during the school day by individuals or groups not affiliated with Mount Savage School.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is a form of cheating that occurs within an educational setting. It includes plagiarism, which is claiming another person's work as one's own. This may include, but is not limited to, copying another student's homework, cheating on a test or exam, and not providing proper credit to sources when writing papers, completing projects, etc. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will at a minimum receive a zero for the assignment from the classroom teacher. Academic dishonesty is subject to an office referral and may result in a suspension.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mount Savage School is fortunate to have a health nurse. Students who become ill or injured are to go to the health room for medical attention. The parent/guardian will be contacted by the nurse to provide transportation home for his/her child, if necessary. If a parent/guardian or his/her designee cannot be reached, we then must decide if the situation warrants contacting the Rescue Squad for assistance. Any student who is admitted to the health room must either return to class or be transported home within a reasonable length of time. **At no time should a student directly contact a parent to pick him/her up for sickness/health reasons unless he or she has been evaluated by the health nurse.**

MEDICATION

The State of Maryland and the Board of Education of Allegany County prohibit the dispensing of medication without a written consent from a physician. Forms are available at most physicians' offices and at all school offices. All medication must be in the properly labeled bottle from the pharmacy. Medication brought to school that is not accompanied by the permission form and signed by both the physician and the parent will not be dispensed to your child. We urge parents/guardians to schedule dosage of medication in such a manner that it may be taken at home when possible.

PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) must bring all medications to school and deliver them to the nurse.

Students will not be permitted to transport medications including over-the-counter medicines, cough drops, and cough syrup. Likewise, parent/guardian(s) are responsible for picking up unused portions of medications at the end of the school year or whenever the time period ends for which the medications are prescribed.

ATTENDANCE

Except when ill or excused, all students have a responsibility to attend scheduled classes and other required activities throughout the school day. The school must receive a note from the parent explaining the absence/tardiness of a student within two days following the student's return. When a student has a medical or professional appointment, a note from that appointment should be supplied within two days. **ALL NOTES FROM A PHYSICIAN OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL MUST BE ORIGINAL – COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Upon returning to school, **PLEASE GIVE ALL NOTES TO THE OFFICE.** Parents are encouraged to call school in the morning on a day his/her child is absent.

- A. When a student accumulates five (5) days of absences regardless of the reason, parents/students will be notified by written communication from the school system. The case will be referred to the school attendance/discipline committee which shall be composed of the principal or his/her designee, the school's pupil personnel worker and other staff members assigned by the principal. The committee may invite the student's parents to come to the school for a conference and to determine available courses of action to improve attendance.
- B. Should absences continue, the parent will be notified by written communication from the school system, no later than the ninth (9) day of absence. Within this written communication, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the school administration and or the school pupil services team.
- C. Should absences continue, the parent will be notified again by the school system in writing, no later than immediately after the twelfth (12th) day of absence. The school system will send written communication, by mail. A conference with the parent and/or the student will be held.

At the conference, the principal or designee may indicate one or more of the following outcomes as a result of the conference:

1. Establishing a probationary period with verbal agreement
2. Developing a written contract (to be signed by the parent)

3. Assigning to after school detention
 4. Assigning additional days of attendance
 5. Removing school privileges
 6. Restricting extracurricular activities
 7. Explanation given to the parent of the criteria for, and the services provided to, a student who may qualify for Home and Hospital Services, if appropriate, given the situation surrounding the student's absences.
 8. Written notification to the parent will be immediately mailed to the parent, confirming the above action(s) taken.
- D. When a student accumulates a total of twenty absences, with at least five (5) of those absences being unlawful, or ten (10) consecutive unlawful absences, the school's PPW will file charges with the State's Attorney's Office against the parent/guardian and/or the student for non-attendance. This action will be confirmed in a letter written by the PPW to the parent/guardian. The letter will also indicate additional consequences issued by the school which may include retention in the grade (grades K through 8).

The student/parent may appeal the school decision by contacting the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel in writing within 10 days.

LATE ARRIVAL

If students are late to school, parents must bring the child into the office and sign him/her in. If the student is absent, parents must call the school to verify his/her absence. Students must pick up an "Admit to Class" slip before going to class. Excessive tardiness will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Board of Education of Allegany County Discipline Policy.

HOMEWORK DURING AN ABSENCE

A written excuse must be presented in the attendance office following an absence. This is to be done when students arrive and before going to homeroom. Students are responsible for any assignments that may have been missed. All students are expected to make up all work missed when an absence occurs. Students tardy or late to class for lawful reasons will be given the same opportunity to make up work. Teachers will work with students to allow them time to do work missed because of a lawful absence. At the beginning of the school year, students are to make a notation of phone numbers of two classmates that may be called to get assignments or information about other activities that may have occurred. If a student is going to be absent **THREE OR MORE DAYS**, the parent/guardian may call the school **before 9:00 a.m.** and request that homework be collected. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the homework assignments and any books that may be needed.

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Any student desiring to be excused during the school day must have a parent call and notify the main office or bring a written excuse from home stating the reason and present it to the attendance officer upon his/her arrival to school. For the safety of your child, please call prior to 2:00 pm so that adequate time is available to relay the change to the teacher and student. **Doctor notes should be turned in the following day so that early dismissal can be coded as lawful.**

A written excuse for **vacation** must be made at least one week prior to the absence. These notes are to be taken to the Attendance Office and then will be taken to the Principal for approval and then to the student's teachers so that sufficient arrangements can be made for assignments.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

Our county provides parents with a phone call, email, and/or text through SCHOOL MESSENGER when delays, closings, or other events are occurring. You may also listen to the local radio stations (Q94, GO106, WFRB 105.3, WROG 102.9) or go to the board web page at www.acpsmd.org to determine whether or not school will be delayed or closed during inclement weather. **DO NOT call radio stations or the school, as this will serve only to slow down communications.**

PRIDE IN YOUR SCHOOL

Any vandalism in our school is considered the concern of the total school population. It is your duty and responsibility to report all acts of vandalism that you observe to the office or a teacher.

Students are not to have gum or other food. It takes the custodians many hours to remove the gum from desks, floors, walls, etc. **Students are also not to have permanent markers!** Teachers will be asked to enforce these rules.

Keep our school clean. Always put trash in wastebaskets; pick up any paper on the floor. No marking or writing should be done in bathrooms, on walls, on lockers or on desks. At the conclusion of class, be certain to leave the desk and area clean. Treat our school as you would your home! Respect it and be proud of it!

SCHOOL DEBTS

All financial payments by pupils will be made at the time of purchase, prior to the deadline date, or at whatever time a financial obligation must be met. There should be no charging of any financial matters. Students who have outstanding debts may not be able to participate in extra school activities (i.e. school dances, field trips, end-of-year activities).

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

School telephones are not to be used by pupils unless permission has been obtained from the Administration. **When ill, students are not to call home and ask parents to pick them up. Administration or the health nurse must make all early dismissals because of illness. Failing to do so may result in disciplinary action.**

FLOWERS AND BALLOONS

Please do not send flowers or balloons to students at school. They have no place to store them, they create disruption, and they are safety hazards on school buses. Send them directly to the student's home.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students must wear a gym uniform when participating in physical education class. All students must purchase one complete gym suit, which will consist of shorts and a t-shirt. Orders and payments should be made during the first full week of school, unless prior arrangements have

been made with the teacher and/or the administration. **EXTRA GYM SUITS WILL NOT BE ON HAND.**

SCHOOL DANCES

Throughout the school year, Mount Savage School will sponsor middle school dances. Snacks will be available for purchase. Parents are required to pick students up promptly at the conclusion of the dance. Students may not leave the cafeteria for any reason and will not be allowed to leave early unless requested by a parent in person or in writing. All school rules for behavior apply during the dances. ***Students who are absent the day of a dance, suspended, or have an office referral in the week prior to the dance will not be permitted to attend dances.**

Recently, we have had problems with students having no transportation home following dances; therefore, any student who is not picked up within 10 minutes after a dance is over will not be permitted to attend the next dance.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The Allegany County Public Schools is committed to establishing a safe and orderly school environment that fosters the education for the youth of Allegany County. School attire worn by students may not disrupt the educational mission of the schools. It is therefore a violation of the rules of the Allegany County Public Schools for a student to dress in a manner that endangers the health or safety of students or others during school hours and school activities or to wear attire that causes a substantial or material disruption to school activities or to the orderly operation of the school. (Book bags are to be kept in lockers.)

The Allegany County Public School prohibits the wearing of any of the following:

1. Attire that causes a health or safety risk for students. This standard requires that students wear safe shoes or sandals at all times in the school building and prohibits students from wearing sunglasses in the school building during the school day.
2. Headgear in the school building during the school day (i.e., hats, bandannas, forehead and sweatbands, and visors). Students in vocational skill areas may wear appropriate safety headgear as directed by their vocational instructors.
3. Attire that can be used as a weapon (e.g., chains, dog collars, hats with spikes).
4. Attire that unduly exposes or reveals skin or undergarments. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Tops that do not cover the shoulders (e.g., tops that are strapless, tops with spaghetti straps, halter-tops).
 - b. Pants, skirts, dress, or tops which due to their cut or because they hang loose expose undergarments.
 - c. Bare midriffs
 - d. Mesh tops, pants, skirts, or dresses.
5. Coats or jackets in the classroom.
6. Attire that depicts gang affiliation (including but not limited to hats, gloves and shirts).

7. Attire that depicts the use of weapons, or that is obscene, defamatory, or contains profanity.
8. Attire that promotes the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
9. Attire that contains sexually suggestive messages.
10. During cold weather months, students should dress appropriately for the weather conditions and parents should use their discretion as to the health and safety needs of their child should they need to be outside for an extended period of time. (i.e. – Bus and school evacuations)

If the Principal or his/her designee determines that a student has violated the dress code policy, the Principal or his/her designee will allow the student to remove or change the attire. Attire worn for medical or religious reason shall be given special consideration under this policy. Additionally, students may be required to make changes to their dress depending on the activity. (i.e., earrings may have to be removed during physical education or intramural sports, hair might have to be worn in a hair net during labs).

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The school guidance program is a planned, systematic program of counseling, consulting, appraisal, information, and placement services for the students in Mount Savage Middle School. Services are provided to assist students in their personal and academic growths, to make appropriate educational and career decisions, and to learn to productively interact with others.

A student can see the counselor immediately upon receiving permission from the teacher to leave the classroom, though students are encouraged to make appointments with the counselor at the beginning of the school day.

CONFERENCES

All parent conferences regarding academics, scheduling, testing, and other related topics can be made with the appropriate teacher. Entire team conference can be made through the guidance office. Other parent conferences relating to attendance, discipline, or other school policies may be made through the Administration office. Teams meet each day and a conference may be scheduled. **NO APPOINTMENT IS NEEDED ON PARENT CONFERENCE DAY.**

STUDENTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY AFTER HOURS

It is school policy that students leave the building and grounds after dismissal unless they are participating in a school-sponsored activity. Students may remain with permission of the Administration or a staff member, provided that they have proper supervision by a staff member. If a situation arises that requires the student to remain on school premises for any reason other than those stated, the student or the parent must notify the office.

COMPUTERS

Computers at Mt. Savage School are to be used for academic research and classroom work only. Students are not to access sexually explicit or violent material. Anyone who accidentally obtains such a website must immediately report the incident to the teacher in charge. Any violations will result in disciplinary action described in the Allegany County Discipline Policy.

WEAPONS

Possession or use of any weapon (gun, knife, or anything used to injure others) is strictly prohibited and shall result in a request to the Superintendent for expulsion for one year. **Lasers** - students may not bring laser pens or such items to school. Any student who violates this policy and uses the device to threaten, intimidate, or harm another student will be charged with a weapons violation.

PERSONAL PROPERTY/CELL PHONES/PAGERS/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students should not bring valuable or breakable items to school. **The school is not responsible for personal items that are confiscated, damaged, or stolen.**

Mount Savage School discourages students from bringing cell phones to school. If it becomes a necessity, according to county policy, students may possess cell phones, but they are ***not*** permitted to use them during the school day. Cell phones must be ***off*** and out of sight. Students will be disciplined according to the Allegany County Schools Discipline Policy for failure to comply. *It is unlawful to willingly intercept, endeavor to intercept, or procure any other person to intercept or endeavor to intercept, any wire, oral, or electronic communication.* Sexting is unlawful. Charges may result in failure to report suspected child abuse and possession of child pornography as well as school and Board of Education reprimands. **If there is reasonable suspicion that the cell phone has been used in a manner that would violate school policy and/or has been used in connection with criminal activity, the school administration reserves the right to retrieve the cell phone and contact necessary authorities.**

DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Inappropriate displays of affection between students are not to occur during the school day, at school activities, or on school property.

ENERGY DRINKS/AEROSOL SPRAYS/BOTTLES & GLASS CONTAINERS

Mt. Savage School prohibits the consumption of high energy drinks (i.e. Red Bull) during the school day, including at lunch. No glass containers are allowed to be brought to school. Any bottle used in a lunch must be disposed of in the cafeteria. Aerosol sprays of any kind are not allowed. Students may use only roll on or stick deodorant in the Phys. Ed. locker room. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary actions.

HARASSMENT

The Allegany County School System will not tolerate harassment toward any student. Harassment is repeated and unwanted, inappropriate, verbal, written, or physical conduct toward others. No one is to be threatened or intimidated by anyone in our school. We want to maintain a safe and orderly environment. Report any harassment to a school official.

****The information in this guide is not all-inclusive. School Board or school policy may change throughout the school year, and every effort will be made to inform students of these changes.**