



Student Handbook 2021-2022

Mission Statement

To inspire and challenge active learners to positively impact a changing world

Shared Vision

Each student will succeed through quality, inspirational and innovative education

Introduction

Welcome to Meridian High School! By working together, we can help ensure that attending high school will be a fun and rewarding experience. You can invest in your future by putting forth your best effort, both academically and through participation in extracurricular activities. Your Meridian High School experience will be shaped by your choices and involvement. In other words, your high school experience will be what *you* want it to be!

Meridian High School offers courses and programs designed to help students with varied interests and abilities grow academically, physically and socially. Included are programs in business, music, home and family life, physical education, agriculture, technology, the arts, English, social studies, world languages, science and mathematics. *In addition, students are eligible to participate in the College in High Schools, Bellingham Technical College, and Whatcom Community College through Running Start and in cooperative programs with other educational institutions.* Students at Meridian High School are encouraged to enrich their four years by becoming involved in student government, athletics, class-sponsored activities, clubs and other extracurricular activities.

This handbook is important and needs to be read carefully. If you have questions regarding any information contained in this handbook, please inquire in the office at (360) 398-8111.

Derek Forbes, Principal dforbes@meridian.wednet.edu

Andy Donahue, Assistant Principal adonahue@meridian.wednet.edu

Non – Discrimination Statement

Meridian School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employee(s) has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator and Title IX Officer: Kurt Harvill, kharvill@meridian.wednet.edu

Section 504 Coordinator: Aaron Jacoby, ajacoby@meridian.wednet.edu

The mailing address for each coordinator is: Meridian School District 214 W Laurel Rd. Bellingham, WA (360) 398-7111

You can report discrimination and discriminatory harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Civil Rights Coordinator, listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint (see below). For a copy of your district's nondiscrimination policy and procedure, contact your school or district office or view it online at the school's website.

Sexual Harassment Statement

Students and staff are protected against sexual harassment by anyone in any school program or activity, including on the school campus, on the school bus, or off-campus during a school-sponsored activity.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior or communication that is sexual in nature when:

- A student or employee is led to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communications in order to gain something in return, such as a grade, a promotion, a place on a sports team, or any educational or employment decision, or
- The conduct substantially interferes with a student's educational performance, or creates an intimidating or hostile educational or employment environment.

Examples of Sexual Harassment:

- Pressuring a person for sexual favors
- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature
- Distributing sexually explicit texts, e-mails, or pictures
- Making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks
- Physical violence, including rape and sexual assault

You can report sexual harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Title IX Officer, who is listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint (see below). For a copy of your district's sexual harassment policy and procedure, contact your school or district office, or view it online at your school's website.

Complaint Options: Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

If you believe that you or your child have experienced unlawful discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment at school, you have the right to file a complaint.

Before filing a complaint, you can discuss your concerns with your child's principal or with the school district's Section 504 Coordinator, Title IX Officer, or Civil Rights Coordinator, who are listed above. This is often the fastest way to revolve your concerns.

Complaint to the School District

Step 1. Write Our Your Complaint

In most cases, complaints must be filed within one year from the date of the incident or conduct that is the subject of the complaint. A complaint must be in writing. Be sure to describe the conduct or incident, explain why you believe discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment has taken place, and describe what actions you believe the district should take to resolve the problem. Send your written complaint—by mail, fax, email, or hand delivery—to the district superintendent or civil rights compliance coordinator.

Step 2: School District Investigates Your Complaint

Once the district receives your written complaint, the coordinator will give you a copy of the complaint procedure and make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The superintendent or designee will respond to you in writing within 30 calendar days—unless you agree on a different time period. If your complaint involves exceptional circumstances that demand a lengthier investigation, the district will notify you in writing to explain why staff need a time extension and the new date for their written response.

Step 3: School District Responds to Your Complaint

In its written response, the district will include a summary of the results of the investigation, a determination of whether or not the district failed to comply with civil rights laws, notification that you can appeal this determination, and any measures necessary to bring the district into compliance with civil rights laws. Corrective measures will be put into effect within 30 calendar days after this written response—unless you agree to a different time period.

Appeal to the School District

If you disagree with the school district's decision, you may appeal to the school district's board of directors. You must file a notice of appeal in writing to the secretary of the school board within 10 calendar days after you received the school district's response to your complaint. The school board will schedule a hearing within 20 calendar days after they received your appeal, unless you agree on a different timeline. The school board will send you a written decision within 30 calendar days after the district received your notice of appeal. The school board's decision will include information about how to file a complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Complaint to OSPI

If you do not agree with the school district's appeal decision, state law provides the option to file a formal complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). This is a separate complaint process that can take place if one of these two conditions

has occurred: (1) you have completed the district's complaint and appeal process, or (2) the district has not followed the complaint and appeal process correctly.

You have 20 calendar days to file a complaint to OSPI from the day you received the decision on your appeal. You can send your written complaint to the Equity and Civil Rights Office at OSPI:

Email: Equity@k12.wa.us | **Fax:** 360-664-2967

Mail or hand deliver: PO Box 47200, 600 Washington St. S.E., Olympia, WA 98504-7200

For more information, visit our [website](#), or contact OSPI's Equity and Civil Rights Office at 360-725-6162/TTY: 360-664-3631 or by e mail at equity@k12.wa.us.

Other Discrimination Complaint Options

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education

206-607-1600 | TDD: 1-800-877-8339 | OCR.Seattle@ed.gov | [OCR Website](#)

Washington State Human Rights Commission

1-800-233-3247 | TTY: 1-800-300-7525 | [Human Rights Commission Website](#)

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GENDER NEUTRAL RESTROOMS

MHS provides gender-neutral restrooms. Civil rights laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender expression and gender equity. According to Board Policy and Procedure 3211, and state and federal discrimination laws, students will be allowed to use the restroom that corresponds to the gender identity they assert at school. No student will be required to use a restroom that conflicts with their gender identity. Any student – regardless of gender identity – who requests greater privacy should be given access to an alternative restroom. However, schools may not require a student to use an alternative restroom because of their transgender or gender-expansive status. In addition to a girl's and boy's restroom, each building has gender-neutral restrooms that are single occupancy and have the ability to lock when occupied. For safety reasons, special locks have been installed to allow access by administrators in an emergency situation. All students seeking greater privacy have access to these restrooms. If a student attempts or uses the bathroom that does not correspond to their gender identity, disciplinary action may be taken by the building administration.

GENDER NEUTRAL LOCKER ROOMS

According to School Board Policy 3211, based on state and federal discrimination laws, use of locker rooms by transgender or gender-expansive students will be assessed on a case by case basis, with the goal of maximizing transgender or gender-expansive student social integration, providing an equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and athletic opportunities and ensuring that student's safety. The district will take an approach that conforms with OSPI 's guidelines. In most cases, the district should provide the student access to the locker room that corresponds to the gender identity they assert at school. Reasonable alternatives to locker room conditions for any student who wants additional privacy include, but are not limited to:

- Use of a private area (e.g., nearby restroom stall with a door, an area separated by a curtain, an office in the locker room, or a nearby health office restroom);
- A separate changing schedule (i.e., utilizing the locker room before or after the other students).

The school will provide accommodations needed to allow the student to keep their transgender or gender-expansive status private. No student will be required to use a locker room that conflicts with his or her gender identity.

WIAA provides guidance regarding transgender or gender-expansive students participating in athletics. They have created the [Gender Diverse Youth Sport Inclusivity Toolkit](#) that provides best practices for supporting all student-athletes. According to this toolkit, "Gender diverse students are not typically offered immediate access to a locker room or team based on a single statement because optimizing the experience for that student often requires some level of preparation." Meridian school district is working with the staff at each building to finalize a support plan for our transgender or gender-expansive students. A student who has questions regarding this process should reach out to their counselor or other trusted staff member.

BEHAVIORAL PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS

To function effectively and safely, a group must have rules and regulations. These are a reflection of the needs of a particular group at a particular time and are subject to change as the needs of the group change. One way to deal with a new environment is to know what the new rules and expectations are; therefore, please read this handbook thoroughly.

All faculty and adult staff members share the responsibility of seeing that Meridian High School rules are followed. Whenever any teacher or staff member gives a direct instruction to a student, that student must follow the instruction. This is not only a school rule but a Washington State law.

STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Behavior expectations and discipline policies outlined in this handbook are based upon School Board Policies and Procedures. All students who attend Meridian High School are expected to comply with the written rights and responsibilities of the Meridian School District and all applicable state and local laws. In addition, all students shall submit to the reasonable discipline of school authorities designated by the Meridian School District Board of Directors.

- *3200 Rights and Responsibilities*
- *3224 Student Dress*
- *3230 Student Privacy (student searches, lockers etc.)*
- *3240 Student Conduct*

- *3241 Student Corrective Actions or Punishment*
- *3242 Closed Campus*
- *6605 Student Conduct and Safety on Buses*

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ACADEMIC POLICY

Academic Support: All students have access to T3 sessions for specific support in academic subjects. Students assigned to a closed session are required to attend. In addition, all students have access to the after-school Trojan Learning Center (TLC) in the library. Students who receive one or more failing grades at a grade check may be put on Academic Alert and assigned an intervention. **Lack of academic progress at periodic reviews may result in consideration of alternative placements or programs of study.**

VISITORS and GUESTS

All visitors and guests must be pre-approved by administration and must sign in and out of the main office upon arrival and departure. Guests will be required to wear clearly visible "Visitor" badges while on campus.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Meridian High School is a closed campus. All parking lots, athletic fields and surrounding crosswalks are off campus areas. The parking lot is not available during lunches, so students will need to bring their materials with them for the entire school day. Students shall remain on school grounds from the time of arrival until the close of school unless officially excused and signed out through the office. Students in the parking lot during times other than lunches will receive an off-campus violation. Students returning to the building must return through the doors at the front of the building next to the office. Other doors will remain locked throughout the school day for school security. Closed Campus expectations are in effect for students participating in after school academic programs.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION

Students may participate in extra-curricular activities only if they have read, understood, signed and turned in their **Meridian High School Student Extra-Curricular Policy**. Please refer to the Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct, contact an advisor or coach, or contact the Meridian High School Athletic Director for specific information about these expectations. Students who have any fines, fees, or overdue materials will be required to have them cleared before participation in extra-curricular activities is approved.

ASSEMBLIES

All students are expected to attend assemblies as part of their school day. However, an alternative, supervised study time may be provided on occasion. While at the assembly, students are expected to behave as they would in the classroom. Disruptive students will be subject to additional school discipline.

GENERAL MISCONDUCT

The following types of conduct may be considered general misconduct:

1. Failure to follow directions of an adult who works for the Meridian School District
2. Cyber bullying
3. Being in a place other than that assigned for that particular time
4. Leaving school property without signing out through the office
5. Misbehavior on a school bus (See Bus Behavior Policy)
6. Excessive physical expressions of affection. In this case the parents will be called as well as the prescribed discipline 7. Use of obscenity or profanity and/or rude or abusive language
8. Disruptive classroom behavior
9. Misbehavior in the cafeteria
10. Use of or possession of skateboards/scooters/wheeled objects on campus, with the exception of bicycles used for transportation purposes.

Students involved in the above behaviors may be subject to the following consequences:

1. **First Offense:** Student may be assigned **at least** one ASD (After School Detention) and parents will be notified.
2. **Second Offense:** Student may be assigned **at least** two ASDs and parents will be notified.
3. **Third Offense:** Student may be assigned Saturday School and parents will be notified.

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4. **Fourth Offense:** Student may be assigned a 1-3 day suspension. A required parent-student-administrator conference is required for re-entry into MHS.
5. **Fifth Offense:** Student may be assigned at least a three day suspension and will be required to adhere to a behavior contract. Failure to comply with the terms of the contract may result in long-term suspension.

TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES

Telecommunication device rules are subject to the individual teacher. MHS is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices or cellphones.

Progressive Discipline is as follows:

1st Offense: Administrator or teacher confiscates the device*, it is logged in at the office and returned to the student at the end of the school day.

2nd Offense: Administrator or teacher confiscates the device*, it is logged in at the office, and a parent/guardian must pick up the device or phone conference with the administrator before it is returned to the student.

Subsequent offenses: Progressive Discipline as determined by administration – this could include losing the ability to have the device to school or requiring students to leave the phone in the office during the school day.

*Students who fail to turn their device over to staff will be sent to the office and disciplined for failure to follow staff direction.

DRESS CODE

At the time this handbook was published, MHS is operating under the Secretary of Health order 20 – 03.3 and Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20.09 -4 which requires schools to comply with the Department of Health's requirement that face coverings be worn in K-12 schools. Students must wear a face covering and remain 3 feet apart in classrooms and 6 feet apart in other indoor areas such as hallways and the lunchroom areas. At the time of publishing, there is no requirement to wear a face covering outdoors. This information is subject to change.

Our goal at MHS is to promote a positive learning and social environment for all students and staff. All members of the MHS community have a right to not be intimidated or marginalized because of clothing choices and a right not to be exposed to a hostile school environment. You and your family can determine what you wear to school using the following standards: All students **must wear:**

- Clothing that fully covers all private parts at all times--genitals, buttocks, and nipples/cleavage

Students **may** wear:

- Shorts that completely cover the buttocks area
- Off the shoulder shirts, allowing bralettes to be shown as long as no cup is showing
- Ripped jeans with low enough rips not to expose the crotch or buttocks area
- Tank Tops of any strap width that cover the cleavage area

Students **may not** wear:

- Clothing that depicts violent language, images, or depictions of weapons
- Language or images promoting drugs (illegal or legal), alcohol, violence, racism, sexism, tobacco, or any illegal activity • Hate speech, profanity, pornography
- Language or images that create a hostile or intimidating environment based on a socio-economic class or consistently marginalized group
- Clothing that reveals undergarments (bralettes excluded)
- Swimwear
- Clothing that is see through
- Any item that covers the face (except for medical or religious observance.)

Dress code enforcement will not create disparities nor will it be more strictly enforced against students because of racial identity, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size, body type, or body maturity.

Concerns about possible dress code violations will be dealt with in a respectful manner. This may involve asking students to find an alternative to their outfit (a sweater, jacket or pants), and/or contacting home. Detentions may be issued for repeat offenses.

SCHOOL DANCE POLICIES

Students are encouraged to attend school dances.

MHS Dance Expectations

1. Appropriate face-to-face dancing only
2. Allow adequate space for chaperones to pass through dance floor
3. Follow all district behavior expectations
4. Limit one guest per Meridian student
5. Guest student must enter and leave with his/her guest
6. Guest must show student photo ID card from his/her home school
7. Guests that do not attend high school must show photo ID (Driver's License) and be under 21 years of age

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MHS Dance Guest Policy

MHS students may bring **one** guest from outside the school as long as the following expectations listed above are met. Students must have a guest passed submitted to the office **before the dance** in order to have a dance pass approved. No guests may attend a dance without an approved pass. Guests who fail to meet the expectations below may not be allowed to attend future dances.

SPIRIT ROCK POLICIES

The Spirit Rock is an important part of the climate and culture of MHS. To respect the contributions and achievements of all our students, the following policies are in place to manage the use of the Spirit Rock to promote school teams and activities:

1. School-approved teams or groups may paint the rock. Exceptions must be approved by building administration.
2. Messages must be centered on the activities endorsed by MHS - the rock is not to be used for political or social messages.
3. To respect the contributions of all students, the rock should remain painted for no less than one week before another group paints over a previous message.

OFF-CAMPUS SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Students attending off-campus, school-sponsored activities such as athletic events, field trips, and other such affairs, will follow the same rules and regulations as if they were being held at Meridian High School. Failure to conduct themselves in this manner will result in disciplinary actions in accordance with the same principles that are used events held at school.

When violations of rules occur at extra-curricular activities, the consequences will typically also include loss of the privilege of participation in similar activities for a period of time.

DRIVING AND PARKING POLICY

In order to have the privilege of parking at school, students must abide by certain rules that include driving behaviors and parking lot protocol. Driving in a way that endangers a person or property in the parking lot or in front of school may result in loss of parking privileges as listed below.

Students will park their cars **only** in a parking spot in the assigned student parking lot. Please make sure you understand the law about parking in the **fire lanes** and in the **handicapped parking spots**. In addition to a ticket and monetary fine through the legal authorities, you may also be assigned Saturday School for the violation.

Students may not occupy a vehicle or loiter in the parking lot at any time **during the school day**. Students found to be doing either of these things will be considered truant and in violation of the closed campus policy.

Vehicles using the school parking lot must be free of adornments (i.e. bumper stickers, window stickers, etc.) that offend the sensibilities of others. (For further clarification please see the dress code provisions.)

Students who violate the driving or parking policy may be subject but not limited to the following disciplinary action:

1st Offense: Administrative warning and notification of parents.

2nd Offense: One week loss of parking privilege and notification of parents.

3rd Offense: Two week loss of parking privilege and notification of parents.

4th Offense: Loss of parking privilege for the remainder of the school year and notification of parents.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (PLAGIARISM & CHEATING)

What is Plagiarism

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

According to the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, to "plagiarize" means

1. to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own
2. to use another's production without crediting the source
3. to commit literary theft
4. to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of *fraud*. It involves both **stealing** someone else's work and **lying** about it afterward.

But can words and ideas really be stolen? According to U.S. law, the answer is "yes". In the United States and many other countries, the expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some media (such as a book or a computer file).

What is Cheating?

Cheating includes but is not necessarily limited to:

- Using an unauthorized cheat sheet during a quiz/test.
- Copying during a quiz/test.
- Copying assignments.
- Turning in another student's work as your own.
- Turning in your own work again in another class.
- Collusion: Giving or sharing your work resulting in that work being used by another student.

Discipline for Academic Dishonesty

IF A STUDENT:	THEN:
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<p>Commits academic dishonesty (plagiarism or cheating)</p>	<p>Incident 1: Parents will be notified and the student will be expected to complete an alternate assignment. Cheating will be recorded into Skyward and become a part of the student's record.</p> <p>Incident 2: Parents will be notified and the student will be expected to complete an alternate assignment. Cheating will be recorded into Skyward and become a part of the student's record. After school detention will be assigned.</p> <p>Subsequent Incidents: Parents will be notified and the student will be expected to complete an alternate assignment. Cheating will be recorded into Skyward and become a part of the student's record. Saturday school will be assigned.</p> <p>* Please note incidents of academic dishonesty are cumulative during a student's time at MHS.</p>
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Preventing Plagiarism: Student Resources

In a research paper, you have to come up with your own original ideas while at the same time using work that's already been done by others. But how can you tell where their ideas end and your own begin? What's the proper way to include sources in your paper? If you change some of what an author said, do you still have to cite that person? Confusion about the answers to these questions often leads to **plagiarism**. If you have similar questions, or are concerned about preventing plagiarism, we recommend using the checklist below.

A. Consult with your teacher

Have questions about plagiarism? If you can't find the answers on our site, or are unsure about something, you should ask your teacher. They will most likely be very happy to answer your questions. You can also check out the guidelines for [citing sources properly](#). If you follow them and the rest of the advice on this page, you should have no problems with plagiarism.

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B. Plan your paper

Planning your paper well is the first and most important step you can take toward preventing plagiarism. If you know you are going to use other sources of information, you need to plan **how** you are going to include them in your paper. This means working out a balance between the ideas you have taken from other sources and your own, original ideas. Writing an outline or coming up with a thesis statement in which you clearly formulate an argument *about* the information you find, will help establish the boundaries between your ideas and those of your sources.

C. Take effective notes

One of the best ways to prepare for a research paper is by taking thorough notes from all of your sources, so that you have much of the information organized before you begin writing. On the other hand, poor note-taking can lead to many problems – including improper citations and misquotations, both of which are forms of plagiarism! To avoid confusion about your sources, try using different colored fonts, pens, or pencils for each one, and make sure you clearly distinguish your own ideas from those you found elsewhere. Also, get in the habit of marking page numbers, and make sure that you record bibliographic information or web addresses for every source right away – finding them again later when you are trying to finish your paper can be a nightmare!

D. When in doubt, cite sources

You want to get credit for your own ideas and you don't want your teacher to think that you got all of your information from somewhere else. But if it is unclear whether an idea in your paper really came from you, or whether you got it from somewhere else and just changed it a little, **you should always cite your source**. Instead of weakening your paper and making it seem like you have fewer original ideas, this will actually strengthen your paper by: 1) showing that you are not just copying other ideas but are processing and adding to them, 2) lending outside support to the ideas that are completely yours, and 3) highlighting the originality of your ideas by making clear distinctions between them and ideas you have gotten elsewhere.

E. Make it clear *who* said *what*

Even if you cite sources, ambiguity in your phrasing can often disguise the real source of any given idea, causing inadvertent plagiarism. Make sure when you mix your own ideas with those of your sources that you always clearly distinguish them. If you are discussing the ideas of more than one person, watch out for confusing pronouns. For example, imagine you are talking about Harold Bloom's discussion of James Joyce's opinion of Shakespeare, and you write: "He brilliantly portrayed the situation of a writer in society at that time." Who is the "He" in this sentence? Bloom, Joyce, or Shakespeare? Who is the "writer": Joyce, Shakespeare, or one of their characters? Always make sure to distinguish **who** said **what**, and give credit to

the right person.

F. Know how to paraphrase:

A paraphrase is a restatement **in your own words** of someone else's ideas. Changing a few words of the original sentences does NOT make your writing a legitimate paraphrase. You must change **both** the **words** and the **sentence structure** of the original, **without** changing the content. Also, you should keep in mind that paraphrased passages **still require citation** because the ideas came from another source, even though you are putting them in your own words.

The purpose of paraphrasing is not to make it seem like you are drawing less directly from other sources or to reduce the number of quotations in your paper. It is a common misconception among students that you need to hide the fact that you rely on other sources. Actually it is advantageous to highlight the fact that other sources support your own ideas. Using quality sources to support your ideas makes them seem stronger and more valid. Good paraphrasing makes the ideas of the original source fit smoothly into your paper, emphasizing the most relevant points and leaving out unrelated information.

G. Evaluate your sources

Not all sources on the web are worth citing – in fact, many of them are just plain wrong. So how do you tell the good ones apart? For starters, make sure you know the **author(s)** of the page, where they got their information, and when they wrote it (getting this information is also an important step in avoiding plagiarism!). Then you should determine how credible you feel the source is: how well they support their ideas, the quality of the writing, the accuracy of the information provided, etc. We recommend using Portland Community College's "[rubrics for evaluating web pages](#)" as an easy method of testing the credibility of your sources.

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AFTER SCHOOL AND SATURDAY SCHOOL

Detention may be assigned by teachers or the administration as a consequence. *Detention takes precedence over turnout, work study programs, Running Start, and any other school activity.* Failure to make up detention when assigned is truancy and will result in additional disciplinary action. School detention is **Monday through Thursday from 2:40 to 4:00 pm**, and students are to have homework or a book to read when they report to ASD (After School Detention), and/or be prepared to engage in community service around the school grounds. Students are not to leave campus and return for after school academic programs. If students do not come to detention prepared they may be asked to leave and have additional disciplinary action. When making up detention for teachers, students may request a postponement, but that must have teacher approval. Any reason for postponement must be approved by the administration.

Saturday School is an assigned detention from 9:00am until 12:00pm on those days designated by the administration. In case of emergency situations where a student is unable to attend, a parent or guardian needs to contact an administrator as soon as possible; email is an acceptable form of communication outside of regular school hours.

Detention which is assigned but has not been completed by the end of the school year will be completed at the beginning of the following school year before grades or records are released. Seniors must complete detention prior to graduation.

SUSPENSION

While suspended away from school, students are **not to be on campus nor at any school sponsored events** except when prior approval has been granted by the administration.

EXCEPTIONAL MISCONDUCT

In accordance with Board Policy 3241, certain actions that are damaging to people, property or the educational process are classified as exceptional student misconduct and may be punishable by suspension or expulsion on the first offense. Parents will be notified and consequences will be imposed. When appropriate, students may be referred to the police. When the violation is related to or occurs at a student activity, consequences may include removal from similar activities for an extended period of time.

- Arson;
- Assault, if the assault involves
 - Injury to another; ○ Bodily fluids; or ○ A weapon
- Commission of any crime on school grounds, or the commission of a crime or other dangerous conduct anywhere that indicates the student's presence on school grounds poses a danger to other students or staff;

- Cumulative violations;
- Causing intentional, substantial damage or destruction to school property or the property of another on school grounds or at school activities;
- Dangerous use of motor vehicles on school grounds or at school activities, or endangering students on a school bus; • Disruption of the school program by bomb scares, false fire alarms, firecrackers, etc...;
- Extortion;
- Fighting: Fighting and instigating, promoting, or escalating a fight, as well as failure to disperse. Engaging in any form of fighting where physical blows are exchanged is prohibited, regardless of who initiated the fight. This prohibition includes hitting, slapping, pulling hair, biting, kicking, choking, and scratching or any other acts in which a student intentionally inflicts or attempts to inflict injury on another;
- Harassment/intimidation/bullying of others;
- Knowingly possessing stolen property;
- Possession, use, sale, or delivery of illegal or controlled chemical substances, including marijuana or substances containing marijuana and alcoholic beverages, as well as possession of items reasonably determined to be drug paraphernalia as used or possessed;
- Presence on school property or at a school activity following the consumption or use elsewhere of an alcoholic beverage or a controlled substance, including marijuana;
- Sexual misconduct on school grounds, at school activities, or on school provided transportation;
- Theft on school grounds, at school activities, on school provided transportation, or of school property at any time; • Threats of violence to other students or staff;
- Use or possession of dangerous weapons, including firearms, air guns, knives, nun-chu-ka sticks, throwing stars, stun guns, explosives and other weapons prohibited by state law and Policy 4210.

Factors affecting the length of suspension or the decision to expel include (but are not limited to) intent, premeditation, degree of danger, amount of damage, loss or injury to persons or property, degree of disruption, legal classification of the action and/or degree of involvement.

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While on school grounds, in school provided transportation, or at school events, a student shall not possess or transmit a knife of any kind or any object that can reasonably be considered a firearm, air gun or a dangerous weapon. Violation of this rule with a firearm shall result in a minimum one-year expulsion, unless modified by the superintendent. The parent/guardian as well as law enforcement shall be notified. Parents have the right to appeal such disciplinary action as specified in board policy.

TOBACCO POLICY

The **possession and/or use of tobacco products including E-Cigs** by Meridian students on or within 1,000 feet of school property or at school sponsored events is a violation of Washington State Law. Students who are found to be in violation of this policy will face the following consequences:

1st Offense: Required to attend a meeting with the drug and alcohol intervention specialist. Parents will be contacted. **2nd**

Offense: Two-day suspension and a meeting with the drug and alcohol intervention specialist. Parents will be contacted. **3rd**

Offense: 5-day suspension and a conference to be held with the parent, student, and administrator.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, and MOOD-ALTERING SUBSTANCES

Meridian School District Board Policy #2121 expresses a strong commitment to providing schools that are drug free. **Prevention** (promoting a strong no-use message to alcohol and other drugs) and **intervention** (identifying and intervening with students exhibiting certain behaviors) are two key components of this policy. The following regulations and procedures will apply in all cases involving drug and alcohol violations on, or adjacent to, district campuses or at school-related events off campus:

When there is **reasonable suspicion** to believe that a student illegally uses, sells, distributes, or possesses drug paraphernalia, drugs, over the counter or prescription drugs, alcohol, or other mood-altering substances in school, on or adjacent to school property, or at school functions, the student will be subject to the disciplinary procedures contained in this regulation. All investigative procedures will be performed with discretion and will be documented. Refusal to submit to a request to any of the procedures will result in immediate notification of parents or guardians. Disciplinary action will follow. All contraband and paraphernalia shall be confiscated by authorities.

As used in this regulation, **“reasonable suspicion”** shall mean the existence of specific, observable evidence or behaviors that can be described.

As used in this regulation, “reasonable suspicion” means there are grounds to suspect a search will provide evidence a student has violated a school policy or rule. Examples would include but are not limited to the smell of alcohol, impaired speech, impaired coordination, erratic behavior, defiance or disrespect toward authority or other recognizable characteristics unusual for the particular student.

1st offense for use or possession: Student will be suspended for up to 5 days. Parents and law enforcement will be contacted and CPS (child protection services) may be contacted as well. A reengagement plan is mandatory and requires family input.

2nd offense for use or possession: Student will be suspended for up to 10 days or may be emergency expelled depending on the circumstances of the offense. Parents and law enforcement will be contacted and CPS (child protection services) may be contacted as well. A reengagement plan is mandatory and requires family input.

3rd offense for use or possession: Student will be suspended for 10 days or may be emergency expelled depending on the circumstances of the offense. Parents and law enforcement will be contacted and CPS (child protection services) may be contacted as well. A reengagement plan is mandatory and requires family input.

1st offense for selling and/or delivering: Student shall be placed on a long term suspension for a minimum of 10 days. Parents and law enforcement will be contacted and CPS (child protection services) may be contacted as well. A reengagement plan is mandatory and requires family input.

2nd offense for selling and/or delivering: Student shall be emergency expelled from the Meridian School District. Parents and law enforcement will be contacted and CPS (child protection services) may be contacted as well. A reengagement plan is mandatory and requires family input.

2020-2021 POLICY/BECCA TRUANCY LAW

Washington State Law (RCW) and Meridian School District Board policy 3122 require students to attend all assigned classes during a stated school day. Students, who consistently accomplish this, develop the skills and work habits necessary for individual academic success. Furthermore, district policy requires documentation for any absence from school. ***Authentic communication is needed to provide this documentation: a phone call, written note, or email from the parent or guardian of record.***

BECCA Bill—Washington State Truancy Law RCW 28A.225.030

IF A STUDENT:	THEN:
Has three (3) unexcused full day absences in one month (an unexcused absence is defined as missing more than fifty percent of the classes in one day)	MHS is required by the Washington State BECCA Law to schedule a conference with the student and parents to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance. A letter will be mailed home.
Has seven (7) absences in one month or ten (10) unexcused absences during the entire school year (an unexcused absence is defined as skipping/missing more than fifty percent (50%) of the classes in one day)	MHS is required by the Washington State BECCA Law to file a petition with Whatcom County Superior Court.

The BECCA truancy law is in effect for all students who are under eighteen years of age. BECCA requires that students attend an appropriate educational program without trancies. Truancy is defined as an absence that has not been excused for a justifiable reason by the parent/guardian/school. Students will be referred to the courts when there are a series of unexcused absences within a month and/or within an academic year (see above). **Further information on BECCA and Washington State Truancy law may be obtained by contacting the secretary for BECCA administration, 360 - 318-2260 or the attendance/BECCA administrator, Mr. Donahue, 360 - 318-2281.**

ATTENDANCE PHILOSOPHY

Regular and continued attendance is vital for the following reasons:

1. **To support academic achievement:** A direct correlation exists between student conduct, student attendance and academic achievement. When a student is frequently tardy or absent, his/her academic achievement suffers.
2. **To ensure a positive learning environment:** Students who are absent or out of class for discipline reasons miss valuable instruction as well as collaborative learning opportunities. Students who are tardy disrupt the educational environment upon arrival
3. **To support employability skills:** Meridian High School graduates will be prepared to find and keep living wage jobs. MHS graduates will understand the value of positive behavior, punctuality and regular attendance as it relates to the world of work.

ATTENDANCE DEFINITIONS AND PROTOCOL

Excused Absences (Board Policy 3122)

- Personal illness
- Medical or dental appointment which cannot be made any other time.
- Court appearance
- A death in the immediate family
- A legitimate (to be determined by the administrator) family emergency that requires a student to be absent.

Planned absences for personal or educational purposes that have been approved in advance.

- A completed and assigned contract must be turned in for review and approval five school days before the absence.
- Following consideration of the circumstances and teacher input and comments, an administrator will determine the final approval.
- Students will be liable for work missed during a contracted absence, understanding that all work may not be adequately duplicated outside of the classroom environment.

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Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences fall into two categories:

- A. A submitted excuse which does not constitute an excused absence as defined previously; or
- B. A failure on the part of the parent, guardian, or adult student to submit any form of documentation for an absence will be defined as truancy.

Absence Notification

When a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian of record, or the adult student must notify the attendance office through authentic communication; phone call, email, or in writing within 48 hours of the absence. Official documentation is required for an absence to be excused. When the proper documentation is provided and absences are excused, the student's opportunity for academic credit is not impacted. If no official documentation is provided, absences will not be excused (See- *Impact of Attendance on Academic Credit*). Absences that are related to illness that continue for more than three (3) consecutive days may require medical documentation in addition to the parent/guardian note. Furthermore, six (6) or more cumulative period absences in a semester that are a documented as illness by the parent, may require further medical documentation.

Extenuating Circumstances

Any extenuating circumstance that is not listed above must receive prior approval from the principal or designee. Please contact the attendance office directly for further information.

Make-Up Work

If a student's absence is excused, school board policy states that "the student shall be permitted to make up all missed assignments outside of class under reasonable conditions and time limits established by the appropriate teacher except that in participation-type classes a student's grade may be affected because of the student's inability to make up the activities conducting during a class period" (Policy No. 3122).

ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

Students – Attending all classes and being on time:

- Submitting a properly documented written excuse note within 48 hours after the return to school: ▪ Authentic communication: a phone call, email, or written note from the parent/guardian of record within 48 hours of the absence in order for it to be excused.

- Filling out and returning a pre-arranged absence form if a student is planning to miss school.
- Follow procedures for checking in and out of the attendance office.
- Monitoring their attendance.
- Making up all work due to absences according to each teacher's specifications.
- Excessive (more than three (3) consecutive school days or more than six (6) cumulative) medical/ illness related absences in a semester may require documentation from a medical care provider

Parents/Guardians –

- Providing authentic communication within 48 hours after the student's return to school:
 - Excuse notes will only be accepted from the parent/guardian of record.
 - Authentic communication: a phone call, email, or a written note within 48 hours of the absence in order for it to be excused.
- Carefully monitoring their student's attendance to ensure absences are permissible and appropriate. • Calling the attendance office or making appointments with school personnel to address issues regarding their student's attendance.
- Regular monitoring of student attendance using Family Access, which is available through the MHS website. • Excessive (more than three (3) consecutive school days or more than six (6) cumulative) medical/ illness related absences in a semester may require documentation from a medical care provider

Meridian High School – Notifying the home when there is an unexcused absence:

- Sending an automated phone message for each unexcused absence.
- Sending a letter home after a student accumulates three unexcused absences.
- Family Access attendance is updated weekly.
- Providing attendance reports upon request to students and/or parents/guardians.
- Implementing and enforcing the BECCA Bill-Washington State Truancy Law RCW 28A.225.030, Washington State Law, and MSD Board Policy.

Early Release and Late Arrival

The following are approved early release and late arrival activities:

- Running Start Students • Northwest Career Academy Students • Contract Students

Students are required to sign in and out at the attendance office. Parents should pick their students up at the attendance office.

Students needing to leave for individual medical or dental appointments or other justifiable reasons must bring a parent/guardian note and/or official documentation to the attendance office or have a parent/guardian phone or email the attendance office. When this verification is obtained the student will receive an off-campus pass which is good only for the specific date and period(s) requested by the parent/guardian and approved by the attendance office.

TRUANCY

Students who are truant from school are in violation of Washington State law and district rules & regulations. As such, students who are truant may face disciplinary action. Some examples of truancy include:

1. Leaving a class without permission or without a hall pass
2. Not going to class
3. Leaving campus without permission or following procedures
4. Being absent without parental and school permission
5. Not attending an assigned T3 session

A student who chooses to be truant will have disciplinary action applied based upon frequency or severity of the offense.

MERIDIAN HIGH SCHOOL TARDY POLICY

Students are allowed five minutes to pass from one class to the next. Arriving to class on time ensures that students receive the most complete educational experience. In general, daily objectives, instructions, and reviews are often conducted at the start of class and arriving on time is important. This is also a habit that is important for future jobs, so timeliness is expected of all students.

1. Students must be in the classroom and in the proximity of their assigned seat when the bell rings. (*Note: Individual teachers may have additional expectations outlined in their syllabus that students are expected to know and follow.*)
2. Students arriving late from another class/counseling office/main office will need a note from a MHS staff member (eg counselor, teacher of a late

test taker, etc.). These should not be considered a tardy.

3. A tardy may be excused by the office in cases of medical appointments or family emergencies.

4. Students arriving late to school must check in with the office. Failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence and discipline.

IF A STUDENT:	THEN:
Is more than 15 minutes late to a class without communication from the office or another teacher	S/he will be marked absent (unexcused).
Is tardy to any class in a school day	In a semester: Tardy 5: Student will receive a formal warning Tardy 8: Student will receive an after-school detention Tardy 12: Student will receive two after school detentions Tardy 15+: Parents will be contacted and Saturday school may be assigned

ATTENDANCE PHONE LINE: 318-2295
 Call any time to excuse your student's absence.

Co-Curricular
Meridian School District
Co-Curricular Code of Conduct

As participants in Meridian School District's extra-curricular programs and activities, it is understood that the following rules apply for the entire year. These rules are in effect from the first day of practice/ meeting one year, through the first day of practice/meeting the following year.

MHS encourages students to get involved in an activity, club, or sport. Research has found that students who are connected to extra curricular activities have greater success academically, attend school more, and enjoy school more as well! The following clubs have been functioning in the past and is based on student interest in a given year: Chamber choir, cheerleading, chess, drama, dungeons and dragons, gaming, FFA, pride alliance, international club, jazz ensemble, tech/video, mock trial, trojan café', powerlifting, FISH, and honor society. Any questions about clubs should be directed to Mr. Michaelson.

Fall athletics: Cross country, football, girls soccer, volleyball, cheerleading

Winter athletics: Girls bowling, boys basketball, girls basketball, girls wrestling, boys wrestling, cheerleading

Spring athletics: Track and field, softball, baseball, boys soccer, boys golf, girls golf

Attendance

A student participant must be in school the entire day of a game/activity in order to participate in that game/activity unless he/she has a prearranged excused absence. Students must also be in attendance the entire day following a game/activity unless they have an administrative approved, prearranged excused absence (for example: Dr. appointment, funeral) or an absence excused for illness or injury; not more than one of these exceptions is allowed in a school quarter. Any exception to this due to additional extenuating circumstances must be appealed through our building administration. Any unusual circumstance should be discussed with the principal and parent before it becomes a concern.

Behavior

The first violation of the following rules may result in a probationary period of one year (after the applicable discipline has been imposed). A further violation of the following rules, after a violation-free probationary period of one year, may be eligible to begin the "offense count" back at a first offense.

- No excessive use of profane or vulgar language

- No engagement in any behavior that violates the co-curricular code
- No cheating or plagiarizing on coursework, tests or exams
- Abide by all regulations as prescribed by the Meridian Board of Directors and understand that any act of exceptional misconduct as outlined in the Meridian Student Handbook will also be considered a violation of the MSD Co-Curricular Code of Conduct.

All violations of the following rules are cumulative during the student’s time at each school.

- No smoking, vaping (e-cigarettes) or chewing of tobacco
- No use or possession of intoxicating beverages or illegal drugs
- No misuse of OTC or prescription drugs (See WIAA rule 18.26.2 on Legend drugs, controlled substances and the consequences).
- Commit no unlawful acts (See note below).
- Not to be present at any function or in any circumstance where alcohol or illegal drugs are involved.

High School Discipline

• **First Offense:**

The student will be immediately suspended from activities for fourteen calendar days, this will include suspension from a minimum number of contests or events. Each sport/activity specific suspension is illustrated in the table below. Should the period of suspension be less than fourteen days, the student will forfeit participation in games/events in a subsequent sport

or activity. The table below illustrates each sport/activity specific suspension. The student may, at the discretion of the coach, be allowed to participate in practices but cannot take part in contests during the time of suspension.

Length of Season (Contests)	Activity	Contests Missed	If remaining season is less than 14 days
Less than 10	<i>All Clubs</i>	<i>1 week to include 1 contest</i>	<i>1 week of practice</i>
Less than 10	Cross Country	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
10	Football, Track, Fall Cheer	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
12	Golf, Swim	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
16	Soccer, Volleyball	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
18	Girls Bowling	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
20	Basketball, Baseball, Fastpitch,	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests
33	Wrestling,	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 contests

40	Winter Cheer	14 day to include a minimum of 2 contests	2 Contests
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**Activities in which students represent Meridian High School as an extension of a course requirement for which students receive a grade are governed by the Student Handbook and are not considered co-curricular activities.*

• **Second Offense:**

The student will be dismissed from the team/group for the remainder of that season. Should the period of suspension be less than twenty-one days, the student will forfeit participation in one-third of the games or events in a subsequent sport or activity. The student may, at the discretion of the coach, be allowed to participate in practices but cannot take part in contests during the time of suspension.

• **Third Offense:**

The student will be suspended from participating in all extracurricular activity programs within the Meridian School District for the remainder of his/her high school career.

• **Appeal:**

A student may appeal any offense within 1 week of the punishment. An appeal meeting will take place with the principal, athletic director, student, and parent/guardian present.

A student's appeal will be approved or denied within 2 school days of the appeal hearing.

If a student win's his/her appeal they will be placed back on the previous step.

Administration may enforce alternative punishment if appeal is granted but discipline is warranted.

MHS and MMS

In all cases involving the use of illegal drugs or alcohol, the student shall be required to submit to a MSD drug/alcohol counselor or an accredited community drug/alcohol evaluator employed by a community agency and must abide by the recommendation of that agency before being reinstated.

Note: The continued eligibility for students involved in criminal offenses, even though it may not be committed on school property or at a school event, will be subject to a review by a committee consisting of the administration, athletic director, coach and school counselor. A student may be found ineligible for one game, a number of games or placed on behavior probation. Repeated criminal offenses either in school or outside of school will likely result in ineligibility for the remainder of the season depending on the circumstances involved.

**Meridian High School
Co-Curricular Academic Eligibility**

In order to participate in Co-curricular activities, students must continuously demonstrate academic achievement. Evidence of passing grades must be presented every two weeks. If there are any failing grades, the student must bring the grade up to passing or have special circumstances approved by administration before participating in the next competition. A student must pass all classes during the previous grading period as well as maintain passing grades throughout the quarter. If the student earns a grade of F, NC, or I, the student may begin participating in interscholastic competitions when...

- If the student received a grade of I or incomplete...
When the incomplete has been made up and the teacher has submitted a passing grade to the registrar.
- If the student received a grade of NC or no credit...
When a weekly progress report shows that the student has 90% or better attendance for a minimum of three school weeks during the current semester.
- If the student has received a grade of F... (see below)

Previous Semester Grades

- Fall student athletes who fail two or more previous semester classes are ineligible to compete for five weeks (WIAA). •

Fall student athletes who fail one semester class are ineligible to compete in the first 15% of their next sports season.

- Spring student athletes who fail one or more previous semester classes are ineligible to compete in the first 15% of their next sports season.

- Alternative Education (Running Start, IMPACT!, etc) student athletes who fail one or more previous quarter classes are ineligible to compete in the first 15% of their next sports season. If the quarter ends mid sports season the student will have the choice to impose the penalty of 15% immediately, or when the next quarter starts.

Length of Season	Activity	% Games Ineligible	Contests Missed
Less than 10	All Clubs/Activities	15%	1 contest/performance
Less than 10	Cross Country	15%	1 meet
10	Football, Track, Fall Cheer	15%	1.5 (consecutive contests at highest level)
12	Golf, Swim	15%	2
16	Soccer, Volleyball	15%	2 games OR 1 game AND 1 tourney
18	Girls Bowling	15%	2.5 (consecutive contests at the highest level)
20	Basketball, Baseball, Fastpitch,	15%	3 games
33	Wrestling,	15%	5 matches OR 1 tourney OR equivalent
40	Winter Cheer	15%	6 games

***Activities in which students represent Meridian as an extension of a course requirement for which students receive a grade are governed by the student handbook and are not considered co-curricular activities**

- Students who document successful completion of course work (pre-approved by the school) that makes up credit for the classes failed may recover their entire eligibility.

- Note: Class makeup/credit recovery: Students attempting to recover credit from failed course work (i.e. summer/online) must re-take the same class. Any exceptions to this must have prior administrative approval.

Current Semester Grades

- Goal: All students will earn a C- or better.
- Grades will be checked on a two-week basis.
- The first two-week grade check (to occur on the Monday, at least 10 days after the start of the semester) of each semester will place failing student athletes on a probationary “grace period”. Students with failing grades retain full eligibility status. This is considered a “status” warning and takes into consideration the infancy of the term.
- The second grade check (week five) of the semester will identify those with failing grades as ineligible for competition.

- For the remainder of the semester, any student whose grades in any class slip under 60% are ineligible for competition.
- MHS Students may restore their athletic eligibility at any point in time. There is no set term of suspension. Note: Passing status must be communicated from the teacher to administration, in person, electronically (email, text), or by phone. (*Hand notes are not acceptable. The WIAA penalty for forgery is a one calendar year athletic suspension).

In addition, it is understood that as a member of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, all students in the Meridian School District are subject to WIAA regulations.

INTERNET POLICY

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on school computer networks just as they are in the classroom. Access to network services is a privilege given to students who agree to act in a responsible and considerate manner. Please sign the student handbook page and note any permissions that you do not want to grant. Progressive discipline will apply including legal action as necessary.

MERIDIAN SCHOOL DISTRICT INTERNET PERMISSION GUIDELINES	
<p>Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.</p> <p>The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required. Access entails responsibility.</p> <p>Individual users of the district computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over those networks. It is presumed that users will comply with district standards and will honor the agreements they have signed. Beyond the clarification of such standards, the district is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, or controlling the communications of individuals utilizing the network.</p> <p>Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity. Users should not expect that files stored on district servers will always be private.</p> <p>Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. During school, teachers of younger students will guide them toward</p>	<p>appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.</p> <p>As outlined in Board policy and procedures on student rights and responsibilities (3200), copies of which are available in school offices, the following are not permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures ◆ Using obscene language ◆ Harassing, insulting or attacking others ◆ Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks ◆ Violating copyright laws ◆ Using another's password ◆ Trespassing in another's folders, work or files ◆ Intentionally wasting limited resources ◆ Employing the network for commercial purposes
<p><i>Violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.</i></p>	



Meridian High School 2020-2021 “Need to Know”

The Complete Student Handbook can be found on the Meridian High School website. <http://www.meridian.wednet.edu/mhs/resources>

You are responsible for reading and knowing ALL of the information in the MHS student handbook

Visitors and Guests (pg. 4)

All visitors and guests must be pre-approved by MHS administration and must sign in and out of the main office. Guests must wear a clearly visible “Visitor” pass while on campus. Dance guests must have an approved dance pass submitted **before the dance**.

Closed Campus (pg. 4)

Meridian High School is a closed campus. All parking lots, athletic fields and surrounding crosswalks are off campus areas. The parking lot is not available during lunch. Students will need to bring their materials with them the entire school day. Students shall remain on school grounds from the time of arrival until the close of school unless officially excused and signed out through the office. Students in the parking lot during times other than lunches may receive an off-campus violation. Students returning to the building must return through the doors at the front of the building next to the office. Other doors will remain locked throughout the school day. Closed Campus expectations are in effect for students participating in after school academic programs.

Telecommunication Devices (pg. 5)

Devices may be turned on and operated during class times **ONLY** with the explicit permission of the classroom teacher or an administrator. Students in violation of this policy will be subject to progressive discipline including confiscation of the device. Meridian High School is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices or cellphones.

Dress Code (Pg. 5)

Please read the entire dress code, noting that some health and safety requirements may be added based on the most recent guidelines by the governor and/or health department.

Driving and Parking Policy (Pg. 6)

Students must abide by rules surrounding driving behaviors and parking protocol to maintain the privilege of parking on campus. Driving in a way which endangers a person or property may result in the loss of parking privileges. Student may **only** park in an approved student parking spot during school hours. Parking in fire lanes or handicapped parking spots is not allowed. Vehicles in the school parking lot must be free of adornments (i.e. bumper stickers, window stickers, flags, etc.) that may offend the sensibilities or others (please refer to dress code provisions for further clarification).

Academic Dishonesty – Plagiarism & Cheating (Pg. 7 & 8)

Students at Meridian High School are expected to do their own work and not share their work with others unless directed by staff. Teachers will provide academic consequences and school officials may add additional discipline as described in the handbook policy. Academic dishonesty offenses accrue across all classrooms. Students and parents are encouraged to refer to the resources listed in the handbook to limit the likelihood of committing plagiarism.

Attendance Philosophy & Policy (Pg. 11, 12, & 13)

Meridian High School’s attendance philosophy is to support academic achievement, ensure a positive learning environment, and support future employability skills of our students. Regular attendance and coming to class on time are critical pieces of this philosophy. The State of Washington and Meridian School District School Board (3122P) provides the following reasons for valid, excused absences: Participation in a district or school approved activity or instructional program; Illness, health condition or medical appointment; family emergency; religious or cultural purposes; court, judicial proceeding or serving on a jury; post-secondary, technical school or apprenticeship program visitation, or scholarship interview; state-recognized search and rescue activities consistent with RCW 28A.225.055; absence directly related to the student’s homeless status; absence resulting from a disciplinary/corrective action; and principal (or designee) and parent, guardian, or emancipated youth mutually agreed upon approved activity. Absences which do not meet the above criteria may result in an unexcused absence. Students who miss 3 consecutive school days or 6 days in a semester due to illness or medical reasons may need to provide a note from a medical care provider. Parents may call 318-2295 to notify the office of a student’s absence.

Student attendance in an assigned T3 session is required for students. Failure to attend an assigned section may result in discipline.

Tardy Policy (Pg. 13)

Students are allowed 5 minutes to pass between classes and must be in the classroom, within proximity of their assigned seat when the second bell rings. Students who are late from another class or the office must have a note to prevent accumulating a tardy. Students who arrive late to school must sign in with the office; failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence. Tardy discipline is defined below:

- Tardy 5 – across all classrooms: Student receives a formal warning.
- Tardy 8 – across all classrooms: Student receives a formal after school detention
- Tardy 12 – across all classrooms: Student receives 2 formal after school detentions

Extra-Curricular Policy and Code of Conduct (Pg. 14, 15, & 16)

Every student who participates in athletics must have the following on file with the Athletic Director: ASB card, physical examination and concussion form, informed consent form, eligibility form, and paid participation fee.

Students participating in athletics and activities at MHS are expected to be in attendance for the entire day of a game/activity and the entire day following a game/activity to maintain eligibility – exceptions must be approved through administrative approval, prearranged excused absence, or absence for illness or injury. No more than 1 exception is allowed during a quarter or sports season.

Students violating behavior expectations defined on Page 14 are subject to suspension from team activities.

I have read and understand the information stated in this handbook. I know that I am expected to read and have full knowledge of the information in the student handbook, and I am expected to ask for help from any staff member at Meridian High School about rules and guidelines I do not understand.