

# MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL

*“Where Great Minds Come Together”*

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020



### *Home of Puma Pride*

Bronawyn O’Leary  
PRINCIPAL

11 Broadlawn Drive  
Livingston, NJ 07039

973-535-8000 ext. 8070

Web: <http://www.livingston.org/mpm>

“Call For Safety” Attendance Line: 973-535-8000, ext. 7108

#### ***This agenda belongs to:***

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM \_\_\_\_\_

HOMEROOM TEACHER \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Board of Education***

Mr. Charles “Buddy” August, President  
Mrs. Ronnie Ferber Konner, Vice President  
Mrs. Pamela Chirls, Member  
Ms. Samantha Messer, Member  
Dr. George Shen, Member  
Nirav Patel, Student Representative

## ***Central Administration***

Dr. Matthew Block, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Lisa Capone-Steiger, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Steven Robinson, Business Administrator/ Board Secretary  
Mrs. Marybeth Kopacz, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development  
Mrs. Erin Borino, Director of Instructional Technology  
Mrs. Sinead Crews, Director of Guidance  
Dr. Blair Rosenthal, Director of Special Education  
Mrs. Emily Sortino, Supervisor of Secondary Special Education  
Mrs. Natalie Topylko, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Testing, Data, Assessment and Accountability

## **MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION**

Mount Pleasant Middle School supports Livingston Public Schools and shares in its mission, strategic goals and core beliefs in its endeavor to provide the best possible education for its students.

### ***Mission Statement***

Empowering all to learn, create, contribute, and grow.

### ***Strategic Goals***

1. The District’s Pre K-12 research-based curriculum will encourage and empower each student to achieve his/her respective potential.
2. The District, students, staff members, parents, and community will provide and maintain a safe, civil, and sustainable environment in which to learn and teach.
3. The District will attract, hire, retain, and develop a quality staff that will implement *best practice* to address the diverse needs and learning styles of students.
4. Parents and the community will be encouraged to be partners in the education of their children and support of their schools.
5. District decisions will be based on multiple sources of data.

### ***Core Beliefs***

We believe:

- All children can learn.
- The District’s focus must be on making decisions that are in the best interest of the students, and that such decisions are preferably made through collaborative teamwork in an atmosphere of trust, respect, and open communication among all relevant stakeholders.
- Students must be prepared to live in an interdependent and competitive society by developing proficiency in the responsible use of technology and problem solving and learning how to contribute to a democratic society.
- A sense of balance and emotional well-being is critical to the development of the whole child and to his/her achieving success as an adult.
- High expectations should be established and communicated to all, and a supportive and committed community facilitates the achievement of these high expectations.
- Teaching is a reflective and dynamic process that can be provided in a variety of effective manners, requires a commitment to developing an understanding of emerging research and *best practice*, and demonstrates a willingness to take risks.
- Teachers, parents, other responsible adults, and peers serve as models for teaching and learning.
- Human resources are the District’s most important asset and continued focus on the attraction, retention and development of highly effective staff members is paramount to the success of the District.
- Resources need to be used in a sustainable, efficient, and effective manner.

**Mount Pleasant Middle School Phone Extensions**  
**Main Number 973-535-8000      Fax Number 844-861-2999**

*Administration*

Principal:	Mrs. Bronawyn O’Leary	8075
	Secretary, Mrs. Gina Covello	8070
Secretary/Guidance Support:	Mrs. Michelle DiStasio	8071
School Counselors:	Mr. Nick Guardabasco	6940
	Ms. Mary Kate O’Brien	8099
Attendance/Office Support:	Mrs. Nancy Mullin	2938
Nurse/Health Office:	Mrs. Hila Gal	8079
Child Study Team:	Mrs. Helene Fersko	8081
	Ms. Jessica Anema	8076
Media Specialist/Librarian:	Mrs. Jessica Sental	8083
Physical Education:	Women’s Office	7726
	Men’s Office	8082

*Supervisors for the Middle School Program*

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Ext.</b>
Mathematics	TBD	8073
Physical Education	Mr. Robert Grosso	8174
Science	Mrs. Dorian Gemellaro	8078
Social Studies	Mr. Chris Bickel	7368
Special Education	Mrs. Emily Sortino	8048
Technology & Business Ed.	Mr. James Novotny	8053
World Language	Dr. Frank Ruggiero	8056
Visual and Performing Arts	Mrs. Mara Rubin	8114

**Mascot: Puma**  
**School colors: Red & White**



**Motto: “Where Great  
Minds Come Together”**

# 2019-2020 Schedule

Important Notes:

PERIOD	SUBJECT	TEACHER	ROOM #
HR			
1			
2			
3			
4			
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## **Welcome to Mount Pleasant Middle School**

The Mount Pleasant Middle School is tailored to the unique intellectual, social and physical needs of the early adolescent. We want every student to have a positive, safe, and successful school year and to feel good about coming to school each day. This will happen when students work with the school staff in a constructive and positive manner; take responsibility for learning, behavior, and decisions; give each and every class their best effort; ask for help when needed; and treat themselves and others with respect and consideration.

This handbook provides information about the procedures, policies and rules that make learning and working together a positive and worthwhile experience for everyone. We have clearly defined the expectations and rules affecting students at Mount Pleasant Middle School. The rules, policies and procedures described in this handbook reflect the mission, goals and policies of the Livingston School District.

Both students and parents should read this handbook carefully and refer to it for information throughout the school year. Students are expected to use the agenda/planner section of this book as a way of learning time management and organization skills, and to assist them in setting goals and developing good work habits. As a member of the community and having a middle school child, it is the parents' responsibility to understand and be familiar with all policies within the Livingston School District. All of these policies, including the Code of Conduct, are available on the district website. <http://www.livingston.org>

### **I. MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Please note that any revisions made to NJ Statutes, Livingston Board of Education policies or regulations, or the District Code of Conduct will supersede information contained herein.**

#### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

In order to maintain learning and working environments that are in compliance with state regulations and are free from harassment, the Board of Education has developed policies and procedures on affirmative action, equal educational opportunity, sexual harassment, and grievances. The Board of Education affirms that no student shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity of this district on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, marital status, ancestry, national origin, place of residence, social or economic background, or disability. (Livingston Board of Education Policies 5750, 5751 and 5755)

Information about grievance procedures, Board of Education policy, and informational brochures are available from the building principal or the District Affirmative Action Officer. A grievance is defined as a complaint of discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or disability. A middle school student who has a grievance should discuss the problem with a parent/guardian first. The parent and/or the student should meet with or contact the principal. Staff or pupils may file a formal grievance related to harassment on any of the grounds addressed in this policy. The affirmative action officer will receive all complaints, carry out an investigation, and protect the rights of both the person making the complaint and the alleged harasser.

The district-level Affirmative Action Officers are Mr. Andrew Espinoza, Mr. Amro Mohammed, and Ms. Chrystie Young. The District Section 504 Compliance Officer, Mrs. Lisa-Capone Steiger, Assistant Superintendent, is responsible for compliance with the ADA/Section 504, which addresses the issues of accessibility to programs and facilities for handicapped individuals. The building-level ADA/Section 504 coordinator and building-level Anti-Bullying Specialist is the building principal, Mrs. Bronawyn O'Leary.

#### **Bias, Racial, or Ethnic Crimes**

Students are cautioned against the use of any verbal or written statements, pictures, or symbols directed to any members of our school community or made in a general or anonymous fashion. Any alleged incident of bias/racial/ethnic crimes will be reported to the appropriate local/county police authorities and may also result in school-based sanctions. All school-reporting practices will be in compliance with law.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Absences, Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals

Students are expected to attend school every day that school is in session. Absences and tardies impact the education of the missing student, as well as all other students in the class. When teachers are required to remediate for absent students, it removes time from the rest of the class. Livingston Public Schools places a high emphasis on student attendance to ensure that all children meet state-mandated criteria and to hold the expectation that every student will attend every day to assure maximum progress. **Board of Education Attendance Regulation #5200 states: A student must be in attendance a minimum of 90% of the school year in order to receive credit.** As such, a student absent more than **18 days of school** shall be subject to penalties up to and including retention. (Livingston Board of Education Policy #5200)

Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege. A student must attend classes regularly in order to be eligible to participate in these activities. **A student must be in school for at least four hours and 30 minutes in order to participate in extracurricular and evening activities.** All student absences, with the exception of those resulting from field trips, school activities, court appearances, administrative prerogative or exclusion, and religious observances as defined by the State, will be applied against the attendance requirements set forth by the Board of Education. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the building principal.

### Attendance Procedures for Truancy Determination

In implementing policies and procedures regarding student attendance, District Administrators shall first determine whether a student's failure to report to school is an "unexcused" or "excused" absence for determining truancy. The determination as to whether to grant an excused absence lies in the sole discretion of the building principal or principal's designee. In making this determination, an "unexcused" absence shall be based on the definition of a "school day" as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3. This section provides that a "school day" shall consist of not less than four (4) hours of actual instruction. The determination of whether a student's failure to report to school is an "unexcused" or "excused" absence shall also be based on the following six considerations:

1. Student Illness. If the child is anticipated to be absent for more than three (3) consecutive school days or a pattern of absence is suspected, **a written medical excuse must be provided by the child's physician** and verified by the school nurse. The parent or legal guardian must consent to allow for communication between their personal physician and the school physician for the purpose of verification. If it is determined that the parent or legal guardian meets the State criteria for financial hardship, the parent or legal guardian should contact the building principal to request assistance in obtaining the appropriate medical documentation. A student with a chronic medical condition should submit documentation to the school nurse for the possible development of an Individual Health Plan. Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT FEVER-REDUCING MEDICATION before returning to school. Your child cannot return for 24 hours after any episode of vomiting or diarrhea. Do NOT send your sick child to school because there is a class trip or assessment. If you have any questions regarding your child's symptoms or questions concerning sending your child to school, please contact our school nurse. Additionally, please notify the nurse of any communicable disease such as strep throat, flu, stomach virus, chicken pox, etc.
2. Family illness or death.
3. Extraordinary Educational Opportunities. Educational opportunities include those tied to the student's course of study, and may not be of a duration which unduly disrupts the continuity of student instruction. These will only be considered for approval when a student has exemplary attendance. The "Request for Extraordinary Opportunity" form is available online under "Parent Resources." Extraordinary opportunity forms must be submitted, two weeks prior to the requested date.
4. Written parental permission. For instances in which an absence shall be an undue disruption to the continuity of the child's instruction, the request for an excused absence may be denied notwithstanding receipt of written parental permission.
5. Excused religious observances. Please see the State Department of Education website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/holidays.htm> for the list of State Approved Religious Holidays.
6. Provisions of an IEP, where applicable. Matters concerning excessive absence or a pattern of absence shall be referred to the Child Study Team as needed.

Except in the event of an emergency, the parent or legal guardian must submit to the building principal or principal's designee an advance written request that their child be excused from school, or from a portion of the school day, on a given date or dates for one of the reasons set forth above. This written request must be accompanied by any documentation that the parent or legal guardian wishes the building principal or principal's designee to consider. Where emergent circumstances prevent the submission of a written request in advance of the anticipated absence(s), this documentation must be submitted as soon as practicable thereafter.

### Attendance Chart for School Absences

UNDOCUMENTED	DOCUMENTED	ADMINISTRATIVELY EXCUSED (NON-CHARGEABLE)
<p>The following items will be marked as undocumented, and therefore count toward the retention threshold of 18 absences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No note provided</li> <li>• Note not approved by administration</li> <li>• No note from doctor for 3+ consecutive days for illness</li> <li>• Truancy</li> </ul>	<p>The following items will be marked as documented; however, they still count toward the retention threshold of 18 absences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illness for 1-2 days as documented by parent</li> <li>• Illness for 3+ consecutive days as documented by a physician</li> <li>• Family Illness</li> <li>• Written parental permission as approved by the administration</li> </ul>	<p>The following items must be documented and will be listed on the attendance record for the student, but do not count against attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative exclusion or prerogative</li> <li>• Suspension</li> <li>• Court Appearance</li> <li>• Religious observance as documented by the parent and approved by State Guidelines</li> <li>• Death in the immediate family</li> <li>• Educational opportunities as approved by the administration</li> <li>• School-sponsored field trips</li> <li>• School-provided Home Instruction</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Consequences for Undocumented Absences:</u></b>  <u>1-4 undocumented absences:</u>                      The administration will contact the parent to develop an action plan.</p> <p><u>5-9 undocumented absences:</u>                      The administration will contact the parent to review/revise the action plan.</p> <p><u>10+ undocumented absences:</u>                      The cumulative absences will be considered truancy and referred to the court system.</p>	<p><b><u>Consequences for Documented Absences:</u></b>  <b>90% requirement for attendance, a student absent more than <b>eighteen (18) days</b> of school, <b>regardless of whether the days are considered excused absences or unexcused absences</b>, shall be subject to sanctions up to and including retention.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Consequences for Non- Applied Absences:</u></b>                      There are no consequences for Non-Applied Absences. The administration, however, reserves the right to deny field trips and extraordinary opportunity requests based on a student's attendance record.</p>
<p><b><u>CONSEQUENCES FOR TOTAL ABSENCES:</u></b> Upon the 10<sup>th</sup> documented or undocumented absences, the parent will speak with the building administration regarding the frequency of absences.</p>		<p>The absences listed in this column are not applied toward the attendance requirements for either class or daily attendance as stated in the Code of Conduct.</p>

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to manage their child's attendance for the year. Automatic notification from the district will be sent to parents/guardians during the school year when their student has reached a threshold of 10 absences. A second notification will occur when a student reaches 15 days. This is done to ensure that the school and the family of each student work together to monitor attendance and the completion of school work. If you receive a notification, please follow the directions in the letter to establish an appointment with the appropriate school administrator.

Because of the **90% requirement for attendance**, a student absent more than **eighteen (18) days** of school, **regardless of whether the days are considered excused absences or unexcused absences**, shall be subject to sanctions up to and including retention. If the parent or legal guardian wishes to appeal the categorization of any particular student absence, the parent or legal guardian must submit a written petition to the Principal. In keeping with the dictates of the due process procedure, the building administration shall review appeals brought by petition.

Parents or legal guardians may apply to the building principal and Superintendent/Designee for a waiver of the 90% attendance requirement for an extraordinary opportunity. The application must be made at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the event, unless there are emergent circumstances that prevent the parent or legal guardian from making the request in a timely manner. It is within the discretion of the Superintendent or building principal to determine whether an event qualifies as an extraordinary opportunity that will result in the waiver of the 90% attendance requirement.

This regulation is independent of Livingston Board of Education Regulation #5200 relating to the calculation of absences for purposes of determining truancy. The **Code of Conduct** of the Livingston School District details the Board of Education Policy and Regulations. The complete policy and related regulations can also be found on the Livingston School District's website.

Students at Mt. Pleasant Middle School are expected to be in school on time and to stay for the entire school day. Students are expected to be in homeroom by 8:35 am. Dismissal for a regular school day is at 3:23 pm. Absences, tardies and early dismissals could be subject to the following:

- **Detention:** Students who have three or more tardies in any given marking period may be assigned central detention. Continued excessive tardies could lead to further disciplinary consequences. Excessive tardies can result in a Saturday detention.
- **Principal Notification:** Students who accumulate a total of 10 absences/tardies/early dismissals shall be contacted by the school principal to discuss these patterns and helpful interventions.
- **Principal Conference:** Students who accumulate a total of 10 absences or 10 tardies/early dismissals shall require a conference with the principal to develop an action plan to improve attendance/tardies.
- **Superintendent/Designee Conference:** Students who accumulate a total of 15 absences or 15 tardies/early dismissals shall require a conference with the Superintendent/designee.

### **Reporting Absences and Late Arrivals**

In order to assure the safety of our students, parents/guardians should call the middle school office's **CALL FOR SAFETY** phone line and report the student's name, day or dates the student is absent or tardy, and reason for the absence or tardy. **The CALL FOR SAFETY number is 973-535-8000, ext. 7108.**

Parents/guardians should leave a voice message **EVERY** day that their child is going to be **late or absent** from school by 8:30 am **on the day of the absence or tardy**. When a student is reported as absent from homeroom and the parent/guardian has not contacted the school, the school office will utilize the emergency contact information provided by the parent to verify the whereabouts of the student. The Superintendent's office will be notified if a family member cannot be reached. If necessary, the attendance officer and/or the Livingston Police Department will be alerted. **A note from the parent or guardian explaining the absence or tardy must be submitted to the main office upon the student's arrival or return to school regardless of whether or not the absence or tardy is considered excused.**

**Students are expected to be in school and seated in their homeroom classrooms before the homeroom bell rings at 8:35 am, or they will be considered late to school and MUST report to the office to sign in, present their late arrival note written by the parent/guardian (if applicable), and receive a pass before proceeding to class. Students who demonstrate a pattern of tardiness are subject to central detention. Students with excessive tardies may be assigned further disciplinary consequences.**

### **Anticipated or Prearranged Absences and Early Dismissals**

Family vacation days are considered absences. Family vacations or trips should coincide with holiday periods scheduled on the district calendar. Scheduling vacation during regularly scheduled school time creates excessive stress for students as they must make up work upon their return, while concurrently learning new subject matter. Parents are expected to discuss extenuating circumstances with administration **prior** to making such arrangements.

**School work will not be provided to students in advance of such trips.** It is also unreasonable to expect teachers to devote substantial time to one student before and after school to make up hours of missed instructional time. Instead, students should take advantage of assignments and information provided by teacher websites as a primary means of keeping up with work.

### **Early Dismissals**

Early dismissal requests must be in writing from a parent/guardian and presented by the student or parent to the attendance secretary in the main office **before** first period. The note should include the date and time of the early dismissal. The student will be given an early dismissal pass, which is to be shown to the classroom teacher before leaving class for early dismissal. No student will be dismissed from class without the early dismissal pass. The parent/guardian (or person given written permission by the parent or guardian to pick up the student) must personally sign out and pick up the student at the main office



when leaving before 3:23 pm. Students must go to the main office just prior to the stated early dismissal time. If returning later in the day, the student must sign in upon return to receive a pass **before** proceeding to class or locker. Students who are dismissed early due to illness must be evaluated by the school nurse prior to leaving school. The nurse will contact parents directly for early dismissals due to illness. Students **may not** use cell phones to contact parents independently.

### **Make-up Work for an Absence**

If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days due to an extended illness, parents may request make-up work. Parents should contact the Guidance Office, 973-535-8000 x8071 and plan to pick up assigned work after school on the day following their request for make-up work.

Students who have been absent for one or two days are expected to make up work/assessments within two class days of returning to school. If the absence is three days or longer, the missed work must be made up within five class days after the student returns to school unless previous arrangements have been made with the teacher, due to extenuating circumstances. Missing assignments will be posted as a zero (0) until the work has been submitted or until the time frame for completing the work has expired. If work is not made up within the designated time frame, a grade of zero (0) will be maintained. (For just cause, a teacher/administrator may extend the time frame for completion of missing assignments.)

### **Entering School Upon Arrival**

For personal safety and security reasons, we ask that students arrive between 8:00 and 8:25 am. Homeroom begins promptly at 8:35 am. Upon arrival, students who walk or are dropped off at the curb may enter the side door near the cafeteria (Door 3) to gain access to the cafeteria at 8:00 am. Bus students will enter through the Mt. Pleasant Avenue side door (Door 6) and sit in the auditorium. Students may purchase breakfast in the cafeteria. Students with early study or co-curricular meetings must obtain passes from teachers and club advisors. Students assigned an AM central detention may also enter school early, but they must report to the main office through the main entrance (Door 5).

### **Staying After School for Activities and Events**

The school day ends at 3:23 pm. Students may not stay after school unless they are participating in a supervised co-curricular activity or athletic program, seeking academic assistance from a teacher, or serving extended detention. All other students are to wait for pick-up on the sidewalks or in the designated area in front of school.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

School-wide announcements concerning special activities are delivered to students during lunch periods. Daily announcements are also posted on the Mount Pleasant website <http://www.livingston.org/mpm>.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

For security reasons, all visitors must enter through the front door and are required to report to the main office upon arrival to obtain identification badges. Parents are not permitted to move about the school for any reason without arranging appointments in advance, and must follow the stated procedures for visiting the building.

## **COMMUNICATION DEVICES/CELL PHONE USE**

Cellular phones may be used as part of a classroom lesson/activity or as assistive technology as deemed appropriate by the staff member in charge. Otherwise, **cell phones must be turned off and kept in a student's hall locker**. Personal communication between parents and students via cell phones is disruptive to the school environment; emergency communication must be coordinated through the main office. Use of the cell phone during the school day is strictly prohibited. If a cell phone is seen or rings during the school day, it will be taken from the student and brought to the main office and returned at the end of the school day. Upon the second offense or thereafter, a parent will be contacted to come and pick-up the confiscated cell phone.

- Camera-equipped cellular phones or similar devices **may not** be used by students. Camera use during the school day, on school grounds, or on the school bus is strictly prohibited.
- The transmitting, storing, or sharing of inappropriate photographs on cellular phones or other wireless communication devices may constitute criminal behavior which would be reported to the proper authorities.

The office staff can only allow use of the office phones to students in emergency situations. Office phones may be used during non-instructional time and for school purposes only.

## DRESS CODE

The Livingston Public Schools recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a reflection of that student's personal style and individual preferences. The Livingston Public Schools will impose its judgment on students and parents/legal guardians only when a student's dress and grooming are a distraction to other students' ability to learn, inappropriately expose their bodies, or affect the educational program of the school.

Please adhere to the following:

- Proper and safe footwear is required at all times. When students are participating in Art, Family Consumer Science, Technology, or science labs, shoes should cover all parts of their feet.
- Clothing that sexualizes a student's body is not to be worn to school. Students should be able to dress with current fashion trends, but in a respectful and school appropriate manner that does not draw negative attention to their bodies. These standards extend to all gender identities.
- Clothing that could cause harm to any student or damage school property is not to be worn.
- Slogans, patches and emblems that are obscene, drug/alcohol related, gang related or violent in nature are not permitted in school or at any school-sponsored activity.
- Hats may not be worn in the Mount Pleasant Middle School building.
- A change of clothing must be worn in gym and/or on the athletic field at the middle and high school levels. Clothing worn while actively participating in physical education class is not to be worn in the classroom in schools where lockers are available.

Should students report to school or to a school activity in clothing which does not conform to the Dress Code, school staff will review the circumstances and determine the measures to be taken to properly address the violation.

These measures may include:

- Parent/legal guardian bringing a change of clothes to school
- Parent/legal guardian student conference
- Detention

## EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSALS

When school is closed or delayed due to inclement weather, or when school has an emergency/early dismissal, automated phone messages and a district-wide e-blast will be sent to families of children in Livingston Public Schools. Additionally, up-to-date information can be viewed on the Livingston district website at [www.livingston.org](http://www.livingston.org).

- **DELAYED OPENING:** Opening Bell is **10:35 am** for Mt. Pleasant Middle School.
- **EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL:** Dismissal time is **12:45 pm** for Mt. Pleasant Middle School.
- **EXPRESS HALF DAY SCHEDULE:** Opening Bell is **8:35 am** and ends at **12:45 pm**.

A modified lunch service will be available for any partial-day schedule.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Mt. Pleasant Middle School has a detailed Emergency/Crisis Plan approved by the District administration and the Livingston Police Department in conjunction with the Essex County Emergency Management Office. We have a Crisis Team which reviews our plans and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that all precautions are taken for the safety and security of our students.

As per state law N.J.S.18A:41-6, one fire drill and one security drill will be conducted each month throughout the school year. Students who do not comply with emergency procedure guidelines and behavioral expectations are subject to administrative disciplinary consequences.

## Fire Drill Procedure

As per state law, one fire drill will be conducted each month throughout the school year. Expectations include:

1. When the fire alarm is rung, all students and staff – including visitors and substitute teachers – must leave the building. An evacuation sign with a designated exit route is posted in each room.
2. All windows and doors must be closed.
3. Students must stay with their class and pass through the halls quickly and silently.
4. When exiting the building, move away from the exits and doorways so that everyone can safely vacate the building.
5. Students and staff will remain outside the building until directed by announcement to return to classes.
6. Teachers will stay with their class and have their roll book with them to verify attendance.

## Lock-Down/Evacuation

A lock-down or evacuation will be initiated by the principal or his/her designee, or by the Superintendent of Schools. Procedures and directives are in place for a lock-down, as well the evacuation of the building. All teachers are trained in these procedures, and copies of these procedures are provided for substitutes.

For any emergency drill, students are expected to be quiet, follow all teacher directions, and comply with all security guidelines. Additionally, the expectation is that any visitor in the building will follow the protocols and directives for all emergency drills. Parents and visitors will be prohibited from entering the school building if a drill is in progress.

## HALL PASSES

Hall passes, signed by a teacher or staff member, are necessary for students in the following instances:

- Entering the building before the entry bell unless going to the cafeteria for early breakfast;
- Going to their locker, the lavatory, or another classroom during the school day. Students must also use the class sign out sheet both when leaving and returning to class;
- An appointment in the main office, principal's office, or guidance area.

**FOR ALL OCCASIONS**, students must notify their teacher **before** going to the area for which they have a pass; students who do not follow this rule are subject to disciplinary action.

## HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

An important goal of the middle school is to maintain a strong and positive link between home and school. We welcome and encourage every parent and guardian to become an active part of his or her child's school life. To keep parents and guardians informed of important information, MPMS **maintains its own website at <http://www.livingston.org/mpm>**. **Please check it daily** for information updates. Teacher web pages also contain useful information to help you stay informed. The Home and School Association on the web includes updates, school announcements, community events and parenting information. A principal round table discussion and Back to School Night, held during the beginning of the school year, offer parents the chance to meet team leaders, administrators, guidance counselors, teachers and other staff members who work daily with our students.

**The primary link and first contact for discussing concerns and questions about a student is the classroom teacher.** Parents should contact the main office to speak with a teacher or leave a message requesting that the teacher contact them. If a student wishes to email a teacher with a question or concern, the student must email with their school-assigned email address. As per BOE Policy 3283, all e-mails between a teaching staff member and a student must be sent or received through the school district's e-mail system. Teachers also maintain on-going communication with parents through email and class pages on the website. For other questions and concerns beyond the scope of the classroom, parents may also contact their child's guidance counselor, the Child Study Team, and/or principal.

All teachers maintain a website in which students/parents will be able to view assignments, upcoming events, study guides, and long-term projects. Many of them also include study skill suggestions for their subject area, current topics and notes, practice questions or problems, and blogs.

## Leaving Messages and Items for Students

Classroom disruptions interfere with teaching and learning; therefore, **the office staff will not interrupt a class to deliver messages or belongings to students.** Parents should drop off any messages or items for students in the main office. Students can pick these items up during their lunch period.

Please be sure to clearly label any delivered items with the student's first and last name and team number. Students who know of a delivery ahead of time may pick up their item during a passing period; otherwise, the item will be given to the student during lunch. Students will be called to the office at the end of the school day to retrieve any unclaimed items.

## LOCKS and LOCKERS

All gym and hall lockers are considered the property of the Livingston Board of Education and its schools. **The school administration has the right to inspect any locker when reasonable grounds for a search exist.** Students are cautioned **NOT** to keep any valuables or expensive items inside any lockers. The school is not responsible for theft of personal items; students are responsible for their own possessions. Each student is assigned a hall locker and lock. The student will be charged \$6.00 for a lost lock. Only school-issued locks are permitted on lockers. Students should learn their lock combination and keep it to themselves. Lockers are to be closed quietly and kept locked at all times.

Anyone using a locker other than his or her own, or tampering with another person's locker, will be subject to disciplinary action, including loss of locker privileges. Students are held responsible for any damage to their lockers by being assessed repair or replacement costs. Students are to keep their lockers clean and neat. Students should remove lunch items on a daily basis. Decorations may not be placed on the outside of lockers; however, magnetic (**not adhesive**) decorations and organizational shelves may be placed on the inside of lockers by **students only** after school hours up until 3:55 p.m.

## LOST AND FOUND

Items lost in the locker room or gym areas will be kept in the lost and found closets. See the physical education teachers for lost items. All other items are kept in the hallway outside of the main office, except items of value, which are kept in the main office. At various intervals during the school year, the general lost-and-found is cleaned out. Found items should be taken to the office as soon as possible. Students should ask the secretary for permission to look in the lost and found area for lost items any day before school, after school or during lunch periods.

## LUNCHES

Menus, with prices, are posted in the cafeteria and are published on the website. For the occasional forgotten lunch or lunch money, the cafeteria will issue an alternate lunch, which must be repaid the next school day.

Celebrations (parties) **are not permitted.** Food and refreshments may not be delivered to the cafeteria during lunch periods, nor are students permitted to bring treats to share with others. ARAMARK is the District's food management company. They can be reached at ext. 8051.

Mount Pleasant Middle School follows the Livingston School District's nutrition policies to ensure that our food selections are healthy. We also enforce the District's policy on Anaphylaxis to Food and Other Substances (#5331) to ensure the safety of all children. We encourage healthy and safe choices for all students. With allergies throughout the school, it is best for students **NOT** to share their food items with other students. Students should also be cautious about sharing lotions, creams, cleansers or sprays with other students. Young people may not know what reaction they may have to any of these substances.

## PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Parents or guardians should not permit their children to bring expensive or fragile objects to school. **School personnel and the school district are not responsible for any damage, theft, or loss of personal possessions and property.**

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The following rules and regulations **ARE REQUIRED** by the Physical Education Department for the safety and health of the students:

- **Only sneakers may be worn on the gym floor.** Students must “dress” for physical education classes in clothing appropriate for physical activity – sneakers and socks, gym shorts/sweat pants, tee-shirt and sweatshirt for outdoors are required.
- Gymnasium lockers and locks are assigned during the first physical education classes of the year. Students are to keep their lockers locked and lock combinations private. Security of personal belongings and valuable items are the student’s responsibility.
- Gym lockers are disinfected during vacation periods, and all items must be taken home at those times.

**Temporary Excuses:** A note from home is given to the physical education teacher before class **if the excuse is for one day.** Students with exemptions are required to complete an alternative assignment during their scheduled physical education class.

**Extended Excuses:** Excuses **for more than one day** must be covered by a certificate from a doctor, which is brought to the school nurse. The certificate **MUST** state what the doctor permits or limits regarding physical education activities.

**Permanent Excuses for Exemption From Physical Education:** A certificate from a doctor must be given to the school nurse at the beginning of each year for any student who is either exempt from participating in physical education, or requires limited activity.

**\*\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Students excused from or not participating in physical education class **cannot** participate in intramural sports nor any athletic activity scheduled for that day or evening.

Please refer to Livingston Board of Education Concussion Policy 2431.4

## TEXTBOOKS & SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

Backpacks are not permitted in classrooms or halls. Books, equipment and materials that are assigned or loaned to students are expected to be cared for in a responsible manner. Textbooks must be covered and returned after use with a minimum of wear. Fines, up to the replacement cost of any damaged or lost textbook or materials, will be levied.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Bicycles

Students are permitted to ride their bikes to school; however, bicycle riding is not permitted on school grounds, including any paved or sidewalk areas, during school hours. Students should walk their bicycles on the sidewalk of school grounds and lock their bikes safely in the bike rack. Local ordinance requires students to wear helmets when riding bikes. Skateboards, scooters, hover boards, etc. are not permitted on school grounds.

### Bus Passes

Only students with bus passes may ride the bus. These passes must be carried and shown when requested.

**Students may only ride on the bus to which they have been assigned and must use only their assigned bus stop. Parents may not give their student a note that they are allowed to go home with a friend on another bus or use an alternate bus stop.** Lost or destroyed passes (up to 3) will be replaced upon receipt of a note from home and \$1.00. Bus students may get a temporary pass from the office (maximum of one 1 per month). Students who lend or borrow bus passes will have their permission to ride the bus suspended.

## **Bus Rules**

The Livingston School District has established the following rules to safeguard all our students and to allow our buses to operate efficiently. All students must abide by the following rules:

1. Report to their assigned bus stop several minutes before the scheduled arrival time.
2. Bus drivers have been instructed to accept and drop off students only at assigned stops.
3. Observe the property rights of all neighbors at, to, and from the bus stop.
4. Wait on the sidewalk or the edge of the lane -- a safe distance from the bus -- until it comes to a full stop.
5. Students who must cross the roadway to reach their destination shall cross in front of the stopped bus after the driver verifies that warning lamps are operating and indicates that conditions are safe to cross.
6. Board the bus without pushing or crowding, and be seated quickly in their assigned seats.
7. Remain seated while the bus is moving, and keep their books, lunches, book bags, instruments, and hands in their seat area.
8. Students assigned to buses equipped with seatbelts are required by law to fasten them. Failure to do so can result in immediate loss of bus privileges.
9. Keep arms, hands, and other parts of their body inside the bus. Throwing any objects out of the school bus windows will be grounds for immediate suspension of bus privileges.
10. Fighting, profanity, threats, weapons, laser pointers, drugs and smoking are strictly forbidden on the bus.
11. Talk should be in conversational tones and should not become boisterous or loud.
12. No food, snacks, or chewing gum on the bus.
13. Deposit trash and waste paper in the waste container at the front of the bus. Keep your bus clean!
14. Avoid large key chains or dangling objects to allow for unimpeded boarding and departing.
15. Do not tamper with any parts of the bus or bus equipment. If any seats are damaged, the cost of repair may be charged to the student assigned to that seat.
16. Remain quietly seated and await instructions from the driver in the event of an emergency. Students may be instructed to leave the bus and wait at a safe distance. Students are to fully participate in bus evacuation drills.
17. Cooperate with the bus driver, and behave in a respectful manner at all times.

If a disciplinary problem should occur on a bus in the afternoon and the problem is such that, in the judgment of the driver, it is unsafe to proceed, the driver may return to school to seek immediate administrative assistance. Bus drivers are instructed to report any infractions to the school principal/designee. Should a student be reported to the administration for violation of the aforementioned rules, disciplinary action will be taken that may include the loss of bus privileges or other consequences appropriate to the situation.

## **VENDING MACHINES**

Vending machines are for student use during lunch or when remaining after school for activities and events. Students MAY NOT carry or eat food in the halls or classrooms.

## **VISITING STUDENTS**

Due to ongoing efforts to keep our school as safe and secure as possible, students are not permitted to bring visitors to school.

## II. MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS OF STUDY

### ACADEMIC AND SCHOOL DAY INFORMATION

#### Academic and School Achievement Recognition

**Honor Roll:** To be eligible for the Honor Roll, a student must have a 3.2 grade point average and no grade lower than a "C".

**High Honor Roll:** To be eligible for the High Honor Roll, a student must have a 3.6 grade point average and no grade lower than a "B".

As per BOE Policy 5410 Promotion and Retention, At the Middle School level, a student who does not earn a passing grade in one or more core content area(s) may be retained in that content area(s) until he/she completes one of the following, all of which must be approved by the District: a traditional summer school course, an online course, or another option as deemed appropriate. If a student earns a failing grade in all four core content areas, he/she may be retained in that grade level.

#### Academic Integrity

At Mount Pleasant Middle School, it is understood that genuine academic and personal achievements presuppose academic and personal integrity. No matter how much pressure to achieve the appearance of academic and personal achievements, one must never betray oneself or others by giving into that pressure and compromising one's integrity by cheating, plagiarizing, or stealing; nor must a student ever misrepresent the truth in order to obtain special privilege.

Cheating, plagiarism, forgery and unauthorized computer use are strictly prohibited. Please refer to the district Code of Conduct for more specific information regarding violations of academic integrity.

Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero for that work. An administrative review may be conducted to determine the authenticity of a student's work. Students involved in such an issue will not be able to make the assignment up. He or she may also receive an additional assignment to understand the potential legal and personal consequences of cheating or plagiarizing.

#### Advisory

An "effective advisory program is an important vehicle for ensuring that every student feels known, heard and understood. Students gain key academic and social competencies that they will need for success in school and in life and make meaningful connections with other students and with adults." (*Adapted from Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) 2006*)

The goal of our Character Education Program is to develop the whole child by instilling four ethical pillars – caring, respect, responsibility and trustworthiness – empowering each student to become a positive, contributing member of the school community. Students will experience Advisory through the lens of team-building activities centered on "Pillar Talks" and tasks which will be used as the vehicle to promote conversations and open dialogue about adolescent themes such as communication, problem solving, group dynamics, listening and time management.

#### Enrichment

At Mount Pleasant Middle School, an Enrichment period during Period 9 has been created to accommodate specific programs in BSI, Band, Chorus, and Orchestra, and to extend and encourage student growth in literacy. Students who do not participate in a course during the Enrichment period are expected to read for the majority of the period and will be permitted to allot a portion of the period to complete independent work. Research on literacy at this age shows that reading significantly increases student literacy and comprehension skills. Students are expected to come into Enrichment period with an independent reading book. Enrichment may also be used for students to receive extra help from teachers on an as-needed basis.

#### Teaming in Middle School

Students are part of a team with teachers who work closely with their students. Team teachers and students work together to build community and create a sense of belonging for each member of the team. Team teachers meet daily during common team planning and collaborate with the guidance counselor, administrators and exploratory/cycle teachers to build a strong network of support for their students.

Parental concerns that involve multiple disciplines or student needs that may impact across the curriculum can be addressed through the team leaders of each team. Team leaders meet with the building administration weekly. Team leaders are a valuable resource for parents to communicate with for extra help or guidance when a child is experiencing any difficulty or has a situation that can impact their academic work, behavior, or confidence.

For the 2019-2020 school year, the following teachers are the Team Leaders for Mount Pleasant Middle School:

Team 1	Mrs. Kim Brenneck
Team 2	Ms. Kay Youtz
Team 3	Ms. Katy Quillen
Team 4	Mrs. Kim Lui

## GRADING AND REPORTING

The Livingston Public School District believes that multiple components of performance must be reviewed to fully assess a child's progress and development. The District also believes that timely and specific feedback on a regular basis is a critical component for student growth. Teachers regularly assess students and provide feedback to students and parents on their academic progress throughout the school year. Teachers will provide feedback on all assessments within a timely manner. Please refer to the District's *Grading and Reporting Handbook* for specific information regarding grading and reporting.

### Assessments

All assessment materials will be returned to students after they have been graded and recorded, except for mid-term and final exams. Tests/quizzes will be returned within seven (7) school days, and projects/essays will be returned within twelve (12) school days. Assessments will be reviewed during class. Assessment grades will be posted by the close of business two days after the assessment has been returned to the students (Refer to page 4 of the *Grading and Reporting Handbook* for a more detailed description regarding assessment practices/procedures.)

Grades are earned according to the following numerical ranges (Grades of A+ are not issued):

A	93-100	C	73-76.99
A-	90-92.99	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D+	67-69.99
B	83-86.99	D	63-66.99
B-	80-82.99	D-	60-62.99
C+	77-79.99	F	59 and below

I	Incomplete due to missing work. Students are required to complete this work in a timely fashion.
N	No Grade
N/C	No Credit
P	Passing
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
WP	Withdraw Passing
WF	Withdrawn Failing
X	Medical Excuse
Z	Exempt

### Calculating Final Grades

Marking Period grades are converted from letter grades to a Grade Point Value (GPV) in Genesis. The GPV is then given a percentage weight based upon the marking period and type of course (full year or marking period) in which it was earned. The products of those calculations are then added together and the Grade Range is then used to determine the final grade for the course. The information below shows how grades are calculated for both full year and marking period courses:



## Grade Point Value and Grade Range Table

Grade	GPV	Grade Range
A	4.00	3.83 – 4.00
A-	3.66	3.50 – 3.82
B+	3.33	3.16 – 3.49
B	3.00	2.83 – 3.15
B-	2.66	2.50 – 2.82
C+	2.33	2.16 – 2.49
C	2.00	1.83 – 2.15
C-	1.66	1.50 – 1.82
D+	1.33	1.16 – 1.49
D	1.00	0.83 – 1.15
D-	0.66	0.50 – 0.82
F	0	0.00 – 0.49

### Homework/Academic Support

The District philosophy regarding the vision for or purpose of assigning homework is as follows: a) to prepare students for instruction and/or to introduce new content; b) as a form of reinforcement to deepen student understanding of concepts presented; c) to extend or expand on the learning process; and d) at times, as a form of assessment. Homework will account for up to, but no more than, 15% of a student’s marking period grade in any course. Homework must be submitted on time in order to be eligible for full credit. Homework grades will be posted on a weekly basis by the close of business on the Tuesday following the week being reflected in the grade book.

Homework plays a vital role in developing good work habits and reinforcing learning. Doing homework regularly and assuming ownership of one’s own learning are part of a student’s responsibility. Students are given an agenda/planner, which they are expected to use for recording assignments and planning long-range tests and projects. Parents can support their child’s development of responsibility and self-management skills by checking their child’s agenda often. Assignments, assessments and projects are posted on individual teachers’ Schoology pages. Parents are encouraged to check this frequently and also direct children to check and download any information that is needed.

As responsible learners, it is important for students to seek support and help from teachers if they are having difficulty in any subject. Teachers are available during Enrichment, after school from 3:25 – 3:46 PM, or in the morning before school as agreed upon between the student and teacher. The school counselor can also assist students who are having difficulty with their work and may host groups to assist students with organization and management of homework.

### Missing Assignments/Assessments

Students who have been absent for one or two days are expected to make up work/assessments **within two class days** of returning to school. If the absence is three days or longer, the missed work must be made up **within five class days** after the students return to school, unless previous arrangements have been made with the teacher due to extenuating circumstances. Missing assignments will be posted as a zero (0) until the work has been submitted or until the timeframe for completing the work has expired. If work is not made up within the designated time frame, a grade of zero (0) will be maintained.

### Report Cards and Interim/Progress Reports

Report cards are available online through the parent portal at the end of each marking period. Middle school students receive traditional letter grades for all core curriculum, cycle, elective and health/physical education courses.

Due to the implementation of parental access to student grade books, secondary schools do not automatically send interim or progress reports for all students. However, teachers will have the option to provide comments to individual students during the interim reporting period, should they choose to do so.

Marking Period	Progress Reports Posted	Marking Period Ends	Report Cards Posted
1	October 7, 2019	November 12, 2019	November 22, 2019
2	December 16, 2019	January 29, 2020	February 7, 2020
3	March 9, 2020	April 23, 2020	May 1, 2020
4	May 20, 2020	June 19, 2020	June 25, 2020

## GUIDANCE

Mt. Pleasant Middle School's guidance program includes individual and group activities designed to help students benefit from the opportunities and experiences offered in and outside school. Our primary purpose is to help students help themselves. The guidance counselor, team leader and the teacher teams are the basic units of guidance in our school. Together, they provide a network of support to guide students through the transition of their sixth-grade year. Students will have the same school counselor when they transition to Heritage Middle School for their seventh- and eighth-grade years.

The Guidance Department includes two trained counselors who assist students in working through problems, issues and concerns that center around school, career information, educational planning, and interpersonal relationships. During personal conferences, the counselor assists students in identifying their strengths and areas for improvement by discussing the student's performance in school, self-management and organization skills, and overall adjustment to middle school. The process involves guiding students through problem solving and solution finding. Students may make an appointment with their counselor by coming to the guidance office before the start of Period 1 or immediately after school. Parents may arrange a conference with a counselor by contacting the guidance department during school hours at **973-535-8000 ext. 8071**.

## LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The school Media Center will be open to students after school for browsing, research, reading and checking out materials.

During the school day, students wishing to check out a book may get a pass from their teacher. The media specialist flexibly schedules classes into the media center for instruction and research using print and non-print resources. The media center maintains its own web page, which can be accessed through the Mount Pleasant Middle School website.

Most books and magazines may be borrowed for a two-week period. A fine of five cents a day will be charged for each overdue item. Reference books may only be used in the media center.

## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

**Nurse: Mrs. Hila Gal 973-535-8000 x 8079**

**Health Forms available at <http://www.livingston.org/mpm> under the heading Health Office.**

A registered school nurse is on duty to administer first aid, conduct health screenings, administer medications, give assistance to students who are ill, and to provide information to assist students in maintaining wellness or in managing chronic and short-term illnesses. Students who need to visit the nurse must have a pass from the classroom teacher. If a student requires medication during the school day, the nurse must have written permission on file from the parent and the physician. The physician must provide written orders stating the name of the medication, the purpose of its administration to the specific student for whom it is intended, its proper timing and dosage, and the time when its use will be discontinued. Medication must be delivered to the school nurse by the student's parent or legal guardian and must be in the original container labeled by the pharmacy or physician. This regulation applies to cough syrup/drops, pain relievers/aspirin, and all over-the-counter medications. These medications must be kept in the health office and be taken under supervision of the nurse. A student is only permitted to self-administer medication for asthma or potentially life-threatening illnesses, and written permission for self-administration must be provided.

## TESTING DISTRICT-WIDE

Middle school students in Grade 6 will be administered the state-mandated Grade 6 New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) tests in the Spring of 2020. In addition, students in Grade 6 will also take the Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT). Test results are kept in the guidance office and principal's office. As part of the process for determining student placement in mathematics, students in Grade 6 are also administered nationally-normed tests of reasoning/algebraic aptitude. The results are weighted and used in a matrix, which reflects the student's aptitude, performance and habits of mind in mathematics.

Details regarding the specific testing dates for Grade 6 students at Mt. Pleasant Middle School will be communicated to students and parents through an e-blast and on the Mt. Pleasant Middle School website. Please do not schedule appointments or trips the week prior to or during testing. Students need to have the confidence that they are well prepared for these tests. This is best achieved through consistent attendance, getting the proper amount of sleep, and eating a healthy breakfast.

### III. MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The middle school is designed to provide opportunities for students to participate in a variety of activities and programs, which promote healthy living and positive interaction with peers and adults. Daily announcements, signs posted throughout the school, and the website inform students of upcoming events and activities in which they can become involved at Mount Pleasant Middle School. Activities occur before and after school, as well as in the evening.

On the middle school level, students take the initiative to begin clubs, sponsor special programs and perform community service. Parents should encourage these behaviors, but allow for the students to take the responsibility for the various activities.

Some of the programs available to students include the following:

**Intramural Recreational Sports** such as basketball, volleyball, and indoor soccer are open to all students in Grade 6 after school throughout the year. Note: MPMS does not have interscholastic sports. Students who wish to participate in any intramural activity must have all medical paperwork, including a sports physical, on file in the nurse's office. Please refer to the MPMS website for more information and to access the necessary forms.

**Co-curricular clubs and programs** are open to all students. These clubs and programs include Student Council, Yearbook, School Newspaper, Literary Magazine, and Earth Keepers. Other programs such as MATH COUNTS (math competition team), All-School Drama Productions, and select music ensembles are also available to students on a try-out basis.

**School and Community Service** projects sponsored by various clubs are available to students at Mount Pleasant Middle. These opportunities are announced throughout the school year on morning announcements and on the school website.

### IV. MOUNT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

#### Student Discipline Process and Philosophy "Students Taking Responsibility"

Every student is entitled to a quality education within an environment that promotes respect, courtesy, caring, trustworthiness, responsibility and pride. School discipline should protect and nurture the physical, social, mental, and emotional growth of its youth. As each student progresses through the middle school years, greater levels of self-control and commitment to school community are expected. Discipline policies and procedures serve to direct behavior, and yet encourage personal effort extended toward self-direction. The following democratic principles and goals guide the administration of the middle school discipline policies and procedures at all levels and in all cases:

- All students have dignity and worth.
- All students have the capacity to learn cooperation and respect for self and others.
- All students should understand the policies that affect them and be provided opportunities for individual growth and change while considering the welfare of the school community.
- Parents perform a participatory role with that of the school and its staff in preparing young adolescents for productive and fulfilling lives.

**The goals of Mount Pleasant Middle School's Student Discipline Process are:**

- To maintain a positive, safe learning environment for all students while providing support for those students who interfere with this process.
- To provide support and intervention structures for students who, for various reasons, demonstrate behaviors in conflict with the school community's expectation that all students be courteous, respectful and responsible.
- To utilize support and intervention structures designed to work *with* students and teachers in developing a caring community where mutual problem solving and interdependence are emphasized and modeled.

Mount Pleasant Middle School adheres to the disciplinary policies and guidelines stated in **The District Code of Conduct** set forth by the Livingston Public Schools. **The District Code of Conduct** is available online and parents must acknowledge electronically that they have reviewed its contents. Students in violation of this Code of Conduct will be administered disciplinary consequences. These consequences may include AM/PM detention, Saturday detention, suspension, or other consequences as deemed appropriate by the school administration. As set forth in the Code of Conduct, behavior currently viewed as just cause for disciplinary action shall include but not be limited to any one of the following violations:

- Accumulated offenses
- Academic dishonesty, to include cheating, plagiarisms, forgery, and unethical computer use
- Any threat or attempt to bomb, to burn or to destroy in any manner a school building, school property, or property of school personnel
- Assault and Battery
- Battery of a Teacher
- Bullying
- Chronic failure to be prepared for class
- Conduct dangerous to the physical wellbeing of others
- Cult, Occult, and Ritualistic Activities that are detrimental to the school environment
- Discrimination
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect and/or disobedience to teachers or any other staff members
- Extortion, harassment or intimidation
- Failure to report to assigned classes while in the school building unless excused by a school official
- Failure to report weapons
- Failure to report other violations
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Gang activity or expressions of gang membership
- Group assault
- Hazing
- Horseplay
- Improper use of cars/vehicles
- Inciting to riot or to fight
- Inappropriate student dress
- Indecent exposure
- Insubordination
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Littering
- Offenses off school grounds
- Physical or verbal assault
- Possession/control and use of communication devices
- Possession of laser pointer/devices
- Possession, display, production, or distribution of indecent materials
- Possession, distribution, or use of weapons, look-alike weapons, or other harmful objects
- Possession, distribution, use, or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or anything that resembles drugs or alcohol
- Possession and use of electronic entertainment devices
- Possession of glass/ breakable containers
- Profanity, or obscene language or conduct
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual misconduct
- Smoking or possession of tobacco products, lighters or matches on school buses, in the school building, on school property, or to and from school
- Standing by as others violate rules
- Tardiness and/or truancy
- Technology misuse
- Theft
- Threatening and/or abusive language
- Trespassing
- Unauthorized sales or distributions
- Use of profanity
- Vandalism
- Violation of fire regulations to include lighting matches, false fire report, arson, or the lighting of any flame not a part of classroom instruction
- Violation of School Board policy or school regulations
- Willful disruption of any classroom or school activity
- Radios, MP3/CD players, cameras, pagers, laser pens and pointers, video games, and other listening devices are not permitted in school. Staff will bring to administration any of these items used by a student during the school day. These items are returned to the student at the end of the day or the parents in some cases.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCESS AND PHILOSOPHY**

The expectation is that the classroom teacher will address minor disciplinary infractions. If a student demonstrates a pattern of misbehavior, the teacher should discuss that within the team setting and take advice from the team leader and other members of the team to best address the situation. If an issue needs further attention or the pattern escalates, the principal can get involved in resolving the issue. Serious discipline matters could require the intervention of the principal.

The guidance counselors frequently can give insight and direction to teachers or team leaders concerning student's behavior or attitudes. Their input is invaluable in helping develop the most appropriate response especially with serious behavioral patterns. Teachers, guidance counselors and the administration will make every effort to ensure that behavior and attitude issues are addressed promptly and effectively. Our goal is to ensure that every child has the support and strategies that are necessary to be an independent, responsible learner.

### **Classroom, Central and Extended Detentions**

If a student is assigned an after school teacher/academic detention, a one-day notice is given so that students can make transportation arrangements. It is the student's responsibility to make the teacher aware of any special problems. For frequent or excessive misbehavior, an AM central detention OR PM extended detention may be assigned by the school administration. Students who are assigned AM central detentions are to report at **8:00 am** on the day or days assigned. Students who are late to detention will **not** be given credit for that day's detention. Students assigned PM extended detention report directly to the detention from **3:30 - 4:00 pm**.

Students who do not report to an assigned detention may be assigned additional detentions or extended detention. Continued failure to report to assigned detentions will result in further disciplinary action, including Saturday detention, or possible suspension.

### **Disciplinary Appeals Process**

It is best at this age for students to make an attempt to resolve detention and disciplinary issues themselves. After a student has addressed his/her issue, and still feels that the penalty is unjust or unwarranted, then he/she should discuss it with his/her parent and decide if they feel they need to use the appeal process to resolve the situation. The following is the appropriate sequence of contact to make an appeal:

1. The teacher/staff member who originally assigned the penalty, consequence or action; or the Principal.

**Please refer to the District Code of Conduct for the appeals procedure for suspension.**

## V. LIVINGSTON SCHOOL DISTRICT RELEVANT DISTRICT POLICIES

### Livingston Board of Education Policy Reference

Acceptable Use of Computer Network	#2361
Concussions	#2431.4
Electronic Communication Between Teaching Staff Members and Students	#3283
Attendance	#5200
Immunization	#5320
Administration of Medication	#5330
Management of Life Threatening Allergies in Schools	#5331
Promotion and Retention	#5410
Reporting Pupil Progress	#5420
Harassment Intimidation and Bullying	#5512
Care of School Property	#5513
Use of Electronic Communication and Recording Devices (ECRD)	#5516
Substance Abuse	#5530
Student Smoking	#5533
Student Discipline/Code of Conduct	#5600
Suspension	#5610
Removal of Students for Firearm Offenses	#5611
Removal of Students for Assaults with Weapons	#5613
Expulsion	#5620
Sexual Harassment	#5751
Equity in Education Programs and Services	#5755
Transgender Students	#5756
Community Civility	#9131

The above policy references are related to issues that may, at times, impact middle school students. You can become familiar with these, or any district policies within the Livingston School District, by visiting our district website. Once you are on the district website, click on “*Board of Education*” then select “*Policies*” on the pull down menu.

## **BULLYING/ HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

Each school is committed to creating an environment in which students are free from bullying. Students are strongly encouraged to report incidents to the school administration. The school administrator will take appropriate steps to respond quickly and decisively to student reports of bullying. Students may use the Complaint of Bullying Form to report incidents of bullying. Copies of the Bullying Complaint Form are located in the guidance department and main office. All teachers also have copies of this form.

### **Cyber-Bullying**

Cyber-bullying is the use of electronic information and communication devices, to include but not be limited to, e-mail messages, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular telephone communications, internet blogs, internet chat rooms, internet postings, and defamatory websites, that:

1. Deliberately denigrates, threatens, harasses, and/or intimidates an individual or group of individuals; or
2. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual or damage to the individual's property; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Please refer to Livingston Board of Education Policies #2361 and #5512.

### **Sexual Discrimination and Harassment of Students**

The Board of Education prohibits acts of sexual harassment and discrimination. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment and discrimination, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment; and, since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment and discrimination. Please refer to Livingston Board of Education Policy #5750, #5751, and #5755.

All incidents of sexual harassment or discrimination should be reported to the principal immediately.

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING**

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus or off school grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L 2010, CHAPTER 122, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

- a. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in a reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property;
- b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- c. creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education d) or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

Please refer to Livingston Board of Education Policy #5512.

## **ALL SCHOOLS WILL HAVE A CULTURE WHERE BULLYING IS NOT TOLERATED**

Bullying will not be tolerated in any school, on school buses, during any school activities, on the way to or from school or at any other time that effects the operation of the school. To make this possible, the district has developed a system for reporting and responding to instances of harassment, intimidation and bullying. Below are questions and answers that will help to explain the system put in place to stop harassment, intimidation and bullying in our schools.

Note: The use of the word “bullying” will refer to all acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Q: How are harassment, intimidation and bullying defined?

A: A new anti-bullying law defines bullying as any act based on race, religion, disability or any other characteristic, which disrupts the orderly operation of the school or causes physical and/or emotional harm to the victim.

Bullying involves a difference of power between parties, usually happens repeatedly, is intentional and can happen in-person or electronically. Bullying can be in the form of taunts, insults, threats, humiliation, exclusion of a group and teasing. It can also be in the physical form of hitting/pushing, tripping or aggressively approaching another student.

**Note: Students involved in a conflict does not necessarily constitute an act of bullying.**

Q: What are the student behavioral expectations in a bullying-free environment?

A: Students are expected to:

- Tell a person who is harassing, intimidating or bullying him/her to stop.
- Respect the right of all students to be educated in an environment free of intimidation and bullying.
- Respect the property of others.
- If possible, constructively attempt to stop incidents of bullying.
- Walk away from incidents of bullying and report the incident of bullying to an adult on campus if an attempt to constructively stop an incident of bullying is not successful.
- Refrain from participating in any act that a reasonable person would perceive to believe: is intimidating of others.
- Excludes others for the purpose of humiliation.
- Is a physical activity that would intimidate another student (hitting, tripping, pushing, etc.).
- Not make any false accusations against other students of incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Q: How should a student report bullying?

A: If a student is being bullied, he or she must report the incident to any school district staff member immediately. All staff members are trained to know where to bring information regarding the incident. The student reporting the incident will be asked to fill out an incident statement, as will the staff member who either witnessed the incident or received the report from a witness or the victim.

Once the statement is given to the anti-bullying specialist in the school, all parents of the students involved will be notified of the incident. An investigation will be initiated no later than the following day and the investigation will be completed within 10 days. Parents will be notified if the district found any evidence of harassment, intimidation or bullying within 5 days of the completion of the investigation.

Q: Are there immediate actions that I can take if I am bullied?

A: Yes. These actions include:

- Tell the bully very firmly to stop.
- Keep written notes of dates, times, places, witness names and other information about any incident of bullying.
- Talk with a staff member, counselor, administrator or parent/legal guardian about the incident immediately.

Q: What should I do if the bullying continues?

A: Immediately report the incident to a school administrator or staff member. It is important to tell your parent/legal guardian that the bullying is continuing. Administrators will take disciplinary action up to and including expulsion if the student accused of bullying attempts to retaliate against the victim for reporting his/her bullying behavior.

Q: What is cyber-bullying?

A: Cyber-bullying is the use of electronic information and communication devices, to include but not be limited to, e-mail messages, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular telephone communications, internet blogs, internet chat rooms, social networking websites, internet postings, and defamatory websites, that:

- Deliberately threatens, harasses, intimidates an individual or group of individuals; or
- Places an individual in reasonable fear of personal harm or damage to the individual’s property; or



- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Q: What are the consequences for acts of intimidation, harassment or bullying?

A: Factors such as the age of a student, the degree of harm, severity of the behaviors, past history and patterns of behavior, and the relationship between parties involved will be taken into account when consequences are administered. If the findings of an investigation result in a student requiring consequences for his/her behavior, the consequences may include one or more of the following:

- Loss of privileges
- Administrative detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Reporting of the incident to law enforcement, and
- Expulsion

Q: What are ways to remediate after an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying has occurred?

A: Efforts to develop strategies to remediate behaviors that lead up to acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying must also be implemented to prevent further incidents. Remedial measures also help the victim of incidents to cope and be able to know what to do in future encounters of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Steps will also be taken to help students who are believed to have harassed, intimidated or bullied other students, so they understand appropriate social interaction and how other students feel when they are harassed, intimidated or bullied. Remedial measures may include one or more of the following:

- Counseling sessions (individual or group)
- Peer support group
- Parent conferences
- School-wide anti-bullying activities
- Evaluation for threats to others or oneself
- Restitution

Q: What are the rights of parents to appeal consequences?

A: Parents have the right to appeal the decision of the building Principal to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Further appeal may be made to the Board of Education and it shall be granted within 10 days of the request. A decision in writing by the Board will be made at the next scheduled Board of Education meeting. A final appeal can be made to the Commissioner of Education no later than 90 days after the Board of Education's decision. All appeals must be in writing.

Q: How is retaliation viewed in the harassment, intimidation and bullying law?

A: It is prohibited by law for any school district employee, student, parent or member of the Board of Education to retaliate or make false statements against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Consequences/interventions for harassing, intimidating or bullying another student or remediating an instance of harassment, intimidation or bullying may include one or more of the following:

- Alternative education programs
- Counseling
- Detention
- Expulsion
- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Mediation
- Non-participation in school sponsored activities
- Out-of-school suspension (OSS)
- Parent/legal guardian conference
- Saturday detention
- Warnings

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY #5530**

The fundamental purpose of our educational process is to foster the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of each child. In fulfilling this purpose, the Livingston Board of Education accepts responsibility to provide a safe environment, free of drugs, within our schools and to assist our students to learn how to lead drug-free lives.

Accordingly, the Board will establish and maintain a comprehensive substance abuse intervention, prevention and treatment referral program in the schools of this district. The intent of the policy is preventative and therapeutic, but the Board will take the necessary and appropriate steps to protect the school community from harm and from exposure to harmful substances.

The Board prohibits the use, possession, and/or distribution of a substance on school premises, at any event away from the school premises that is sponsored by this Board, and on any transportation vehicle provided by this Board. A pupil who uses, possesses or distributes a substance, on or off school premises, at any event away from the school premises that is sponsored by the Board, and on any transportation vehicle provided by the Board during or after school hours will be subject to discipline.

The following policy and its accompanying regulation will outline the steps the district will take in relation to:

- A comprehensive program of drug, alcohol, tobacco and steroid education;
- The identification and remediation of pupils involved with drugs, alcohol, tobacco and steroids;
- The examination and treatment of pupils suspected of being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or steroids to determine the extent of the pupil's drug or alcohol use or dependency;
- The treatment and discipline of pupils who use, possess or distribute drugs, alcohol, tobacco and steroids in violation of law or this policy through referral to an appropriate drug/alcohol abuse program as recommended by the department of health; and
- The readmission to school and treatment of pupils who have been convicted of drug, alcohol, tobacco and/or steroid offenses.

### **Definitions**

“Substance” means alcoholic beverages, controlled dangerous substances as defined at N.J.S.A. 24:21-2, anabolic steroids, any chemical or chemical compound that releases vapors or fumes causing a condition of intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction, or dulling of the brain or nervous system, including, but not limited to, glue containing a solvent having the property of releasing toxic vapors or fumes as defined at N.J.S.A. 2C:35-10.4, or over-the counter prescription medications which are improperly used to cause intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction, or dulling of the brain or nervous system.

“Substance abuse” means the consumption or use of any substance for purposes other than for the treatment of sickness or injury as prescribed or administered by a person duly authorized by law to treat sick and injured human beings.

“Evaluation” means those procedures used by a certified or licensed professional trained to assess alcohol and other drug abuse which determine a pupil’s need for an educational program or treatment that extends beyond the regular school program by virtue of the use of substances by the pupil or a member of the pupil’s family.

“Intervention and referral to treatment” means those programs and services offered to help a pupil because of the use of substances by the pupil or a member of the pupil’s family.

### **Prevention/Instruction**

In keeping with the Board’s intent to provide preventative and therapeutic assistance to all pupils, an education curriculum for grades K-12, emphasizing primary prevention of alcohol, drug, and substance abuse shall be used, providing students with information and developmental exercises regarding chemical substances. Pupils will receive education, including tobacco and anabolic steroids, appropriate for the pupil's age, maturity, and grade level.

The Board will provide intervention and treatment referral services by teaching staff members who are properly and appropriately certified and trained to render such services.

Such services include instruction, counseling and related services to a pupil who is receiving medical or therapeutic care for diagnosed substance abuse, referral to a community agency approved by the County Local Advisory Council on alcoholism or Drug Abuse or the State Department of Health; support services for pupils who are in care or returning from care for substance dependency; and/or a special class or course designed to meet the needs of pupils with problems of substance abuse.

A substance abuser who has also been identified as potentially disabled shall be evaluated by the Child Study Team to determine his/her eligibility for special education and/or related services. The Board will provide a program of outreach to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of pupils that includes information on the district's substance abuse curriculum, the identification of substance abusers and rehabilitation organizations and agencies. The Superintendent is directed to develop the program in consultation with local agencies recommended by the Commissioner and to offer the program at times and in places convenient to parent(s) legal guardian(s) on school premises or in other suitable facilities.

### **Building-Based Programs**

In keeping with the district's preventative and therapeutic efforts, building-based programs will be developed district-wide, to provide services to students whose academic careers are being adversely affected. The purpose of these programs will be to address individual learning difficulties, behavioral problems, emotional well-being and alcohol/drug dependency issues. These programs include all building-based intervention teams, such as the CORE Team or Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS). The membership of these teams shall include, but are not limited to: the building principal or designee, regular education teacher(s) and a school staff member selected from one of the following professional titles:

- school counselor
- learning disabilities teacher-consultant
- school social worker
- school nurse
- school psychologist
- speech-language specialist
- substance awareness coordinator/student assistance counselor

The function of the building-based intervention programs is to develop educational/behavioral strategies and to provide crisis intervention, assessment, and referral.

There are instances where substance abuse may be suspected by a certified staff member and reported to the CORE Team, as per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.1(b). The CORE Team may recommend a referral for a medical evaluation through one of the following resources:

- By a district approved medical facility.
- Private practitioners certified by an appropriate drug and alcohol licensing board.
- Out-of-State agencies licensed by the appropriate State regulatory agency for alcohol and other drug services; or
- Appropriate community agencies as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.1(b).

When such a recommendation is being made, the Principal or his/her designee shall consult with the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the Superintendent.

If the written report of the medical evaluation verifies that alcohol or other drugs do not interfere with the student's physical and mental ability to perform in school, the student shall remain in school. If there is a positive determination from the medical examination indicating that the student's alcohol or drug use interferes with his/her physical and mental ability to perform in school, attendance at school will not resume until a written report has been submitted to the parent, principal and Superintendent from a physician who has examined the student which states that the student's alcohol or other drug use no longer interferes with his/her physical and mental ability to perform in school.

All drug/alcohol assessment, counseling and treatment programs not provided by staff members of the district or not recommended or required under the district policy shall be at the sole cost and expense of the parent/guardian and not be paid in whole or in part by the Board of Education.

### **Substance Abuse - Identification, Evaluation, and Intervention - During School Hours and School Events**

All staff members shall be alert to signs of substance abuse by pupils in school and shall respond to those signs in accordance with administrative regulations. Any staff member to whom it appears that a pupil may be under the influence of a substance on school property, at a school function or on any transportation vehicle provided by this board shall report the matter as soon as possible to at least one of the following:

- The Principal or his/her designee
- The School Nurse
- The Substance Awareness Counselor

The Principal and/or his/her designee, in response to this report may refer the student to the School Nurse for further assessment. If testing is warranted, the Principal and/or his/her designee will:

- Notify the parent(s) or legal guardian
- Notify the Superintendent
- Arrange for an immediate examination of the pupil at a Board approved facility. "Immediate" is defined in the following way:
  - Parent shall pick up the child within two hours of being notified by the school.
  - The child shall receive a medical examination with a drug test within two hours of being picked up by the parent.
- If parent(s) or guardian(s) are not available or cannot meet the time frames established in this policy, the school shall arrange for transportation of the student to the approved testing facility or to the emergency room of the nearest hospital.
- The district reserves the right to contact the police or emergency services to transport the student. In this case, a staff member will accompany the student.
- Any expense for transporting the child will be borne by the parent or guardian.
- The parent(s) or legal guardian may request the examination be conducted by a physician other than at the school approved facility. This examination will not be at the district's expense and must meet Board approved standards for toxicity.
- A written report will be furnished by the examining physician to the parent(s) or legal guardian, principal and the Superintendent within one school day of the referral of the student for suspected alcohol or other drug use. If the parent or child refuses to be screened or fails to produce the required report within one school day, the appropriate disciplinary procedures will be implemented.
- If the written report of the medical examination is not submitted to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), principal, and Superintendent within one school-day of the referral of the student for suspected alcohol or other drug use, the student will be allowed to return to school until such time as a positive determination of substance abuse is received from the physician. If the student is not permitted to return to school, the absence shall be deemed excused.

## **Consequences**

The Superintendent, or designee, will report pupils to law enforcement authorities if the staff member has reason to believe a pupil is unlawfully under the influence, possessing or in any way is involved in the distribution of controlled dangerous substances, anabolic steroids, or drug paraphernalia, on or within 1,000 feet of the outermost boundary of school property pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.3(a). The Superintendent will not report pupils who have voluntarily sought treatment or counseling for a substance abuse problem provided the pupil is not involved or implicated in a drug distribution activity.

## **Consequences for Possession/Under the Influence of Drugs/Alcohol during school hours or at school events**

### ***1st offense***

- Notify Superintendent and Police
- Four (4) days out-of-school suspension
- Parent meeting with administration

### ***2nd offense***

- Notify Police and Superintendent
- Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension
- Parent meeting with administration

### ***3<sup>rd</sup> offense***

- Notify Police and Superintendent
- Parent meeting with administration
- Out-of-school suspension pending Superintendent review and/or hearing for expulsion with the Board of Education

## **Consequences for Distribution of Drugs/Alcohol**

### ***1st offense***

- Notify Police and Superintendent
- Parent meeting with administration
- Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension

### *2<sup>nd</sup> offense*

- Notify Police and Superintendent
- Parent meeting with administration
- Out-of-school suspension pending Superintendent review and/or hearing for expulsion with the Board of Education

### **Conditions for Re-Entry for all Offenses**

- Mandatory full evaluation from a state approved facility
- Agreement to follow the recommendations of the assessment and evidence towards meeting the treatment goals
- Agreement to be subject to continued drug screenings
- Parent meeting (re-entry conference) with administration

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish consequences for a pupil not following through on the recommendations of an evaluation for alcohol or other drug abuse and related behaviors. The sanctions, established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.4, shall be graded according to the severity of the offense, the nature of the problems and the student's individual needs.

## **WEAPONS AND OTHER PROHIBITED OBJECTS**

The Board of Education recognizes the need to provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff. Therefore, the possession and/or use of weapons, or other instruments which can be used as weapons, are prohibited from school property, at any school-related activity under the supervision of professional school staff, or while en-route to or from school or any function.

For the purposes of this document, weapons or dangerous instruments are broadly defined to include, but not limited to, those defined in N.J.S.A.2C:39-1f and N.J.S.A.2C:39-1r. A student found or observed on school property or at a school event to be in possession of a weapon or dangerous instrument, shall be reported to the principal immediately. The principal shall immediately inform law enforcement officials and the superintendent.

Disciplinary action shall be taken against students who possess, handle, transmit, or use weapons or dangerous instruments. As in all disciplinary cases, due process will be provided to the student.

Disciplinary action imposed by the school may be in addition to sanctions leveled by legal authorities.