

Merriwether Middle School Parent-Student Handbook 2020-2021

*Engaging*Empowering*Enriching*



**430 Murrah Road
North Augusta, SC 29860**

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Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Mindy Clark
Principal**

**Derek Wrenn
Assistant Principal**

**School Colors: Red and Black
Mascot: Mustang**

Name _____

WELCOME TO MERRIWETHER MIDDLE SCHOOL

We, the staff of Merriwether Middle School, believe that all students should be provided with opportunities for successful experiences. We strive to offer a curriculum that maximizes the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development of our emerging adolescents. This curriculum requires the dedication and cooperation of parents, students, and school personnel working together for the benefit of all students in order to meet our goals.

We understand the unique needs and concerns of young adolescents as well as the developmental challenges of this age group. Our curriculum is designed to assist our middle school students through the transitional period between elementary school and high school. We strive to offer a warm and caring environment that challenges intellectual growth and promotes positive self-esteem.

We expect students to assist us in our efforts by displaying positive attitudes and appropriate behavior. Together we can have a successful year. Please read this handbook and become familiar with the rules and procedures. We encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's education by attending special events, holding conferences with teachers, and visiting often. We invite you to become an active volunteer.

Have a wonderful 2020-2021 school year! Let us know if we can be of assistance.

Purpose:

To engage, empower, and enrich today's students for tomorrow's world.

Beliefs:

Merriwether Middle School strives to engage students in learning by enriching them with the knowledge and empowering them with the skills needed to be world class citizens in modern societies.

Student Records

The School District of Edgefield County is required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA 34CFR Part 99) to provide annual notice concerning privacy rights in the maintenance of and/or release of student records. The District has a formal policy concerning this activity available to you for inspection upon request. The following is a summary of your rights under this act. If you have questions about this, please contact the principal.

1. A student's "educational records" are those records directly related to a student and which the school district or a party acting for the school district maintains.
2. "Parent" refers to a parent, a guardian, a person acting as a parent, a surrogate appointed in accordance with policies under Programs for the Handicapped or a student who is 18 years of age or over, or a student who is attending an institution of post secondary education on a full-time basis.
3. Whenever a student is eighteen years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the rights accorded to and the consent required of the parent of the students shall thereafter only be accorded to and required of eligible students unless the school district has received notice that a court has awarded legal guardianship beyond the age of majority. The school will document such notice.
4. In maintaining student records, the school will follow applicable state and federal regulations.
5. Parents of students currently in attendance and eligible students currently in attendance in the School District of Edgefield County have a right to:
 - Inspect and review students' educational records.
 - Request the amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.
 - Consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that federal law and regulations authorize disclosure without consent.
 - File written complaints concerning alleged violations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act to:

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office
330 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20201**

- Obtain a copy of the district's policy adopted under 99.6 This policy may be requested from The Office of the Superintendent. Edgefield County Schools.
 - P. O. Box 608 Edgefield, SC 29824. (803) 275-4601.
6. Schools will treat each student's educational records as confidential and primarily for local school use. The district will not release directory information to any person or agency for commercial use. The exception to this rule is for directory information, which includes the following: student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, diploma or certificate and awards

received by the student, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student and other similar information.

7. If you object to the disclosure of directory information concerning your child's academic records, please notify the principal in writing of your objection within 15 days after receipt of this notice. This will become a part of the student's cumulative folder.
8. In compliance with FERPA, we must inform parents that when students move to another school district, we transfer their records to that district **without parental permission**.

NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

Students must validate district residence. The birth certificate, immunization record, report card and/or withdrawal form from the former school is necessary to register. The school will obtain records regarding testing, etc. from the school once you grant a release of information. Guidance handles registrations and withdrawals.

IMMUNIZATION

As students register, the nurse will verify if they have a valid S. C. Immunization Certificate. If they do, the certificate / copies will be sent to guidance with all other registration materials for the permanent records. Students without documented proof of immunization records will be sent home after **30** days until proof is furnished.

WITHDRAWALS / TRANSFERS

When withdrawing from school, the parent or guardian must come to the school and sign the withdrawal form in the Guidance office. Any student withdrawing from school is expected to leave debt free and in good standing. **All books must be returned and all fees paid before a student is cleared for withdrawal.**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

If a student moves during the year, it is imperative that the change of address and telephone number be reported to the guidance and main office. We must have each student's 911 address and emergency contacts on file. If a phone is disconnected or changed, the new number or an alternate emergency contact number **MUST** be given to the attendance clerk.

CHILD CUSTODY

The School District of Edgefield County is utilizing the following procedures concerning child custody. Any questions concerning documents need to be directed to the guidance office or principal.

1. In case one parent asks that the child not be allowed to leave the school with the other parent, a custody paper, restraining order, or some legal document should be in the child's permanent record.
2. Legal opinion states that either parent has equal rights to the child unless one of the above-mentioned legal documents has been issued
3. In the event that a parent says he/she has such a document at home, it becomes most imperative that the document or a notarized copy be brought in immediately to be included in the child's school records. The school must have documentation of custody changes before it can deny any parent access to his/her child.

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

Regular attendance at school is necessary if a student is to make satisfactory educational progress. Therefore, students are expected and encouraged to attend school regularly.

Students who are absent from school may not participate in extracurricular or school sponsored activities that day.

If a student is absent and returns to school without a physician's note, the student must bring a note from their parent/guardian stating why the student was absent from school.

LAWFUL ABSENCES

Lawful / excusable absences are those necessitated by:

1. Illness of the student to the degree that attendance in school would endanger his/her health or the health of others.
2. Death in the immediate family.
3. Participation in a school-related activity that has received prior approval by the principal.
4. Approved religious holidays.
5. Special circumstances cleared in advance by the administration in accordance with local board policies.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCES

Unlawful absence is defined to mean a student's willful absence from school without the knowledge of a parent, or a student's absence from school without acceptable cause with the knowledge of the parent.

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

A note from a parent/guardian, physician, dentist or other recognized licensed/certified medical practitioner or legal officer is required for each absence. The note shall be dated and shall include the date(s) of absence(s), the reason(s) for the absence(s), telephone number of the parent/guardian and the required signature. Students **are not allowed** to miss more than **ten (10)** days unless there is verifiable documentation for each absence above 10. Verifiable documentation must be received within **three (3) days** from the date of return to school and is defined as a written statement from an appropriate agency, physician or dentist. **The required parent notes are not considered documentation for absences above 10 days.**

Intervention for Unlawful Absences

1. **Upon a student accumulating three (3) consecutive or a total of five (5) unexcused absences, the student is considered truant. A letter will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting a meeting. Administration will meet with the parents/guardian and/or student to develop a plan to improve attendance.**
2. **Upon two or more unexcused absences, the student will then be considered a habitual truant and a *District Attendance Plan* will be implemented with the District Truancy Officer, parent/guardian and student.**
3. **Upon two or more unexcused absences, the Truancy Officer will schedule a Truancy tribunal meeting to be held at the District Office. Refusal to participate in the tribunal will result in an automatic referral to court.**

4. **Upon one or more unexcused absence, District/School Administration shall send the student (ages 12-17) to the Edgefield County School District Alternative Program for a minimum of 45 school days. Refusal to attend the Alternative Program will result in the automatic referral to court.**
5. **Once at the Alternative Program, if a student accumulates an additional unexcused absence, the Truancy Officer will refer parents/guardian and the student to court.**

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENTEES

When students are ill and out of school, it is our desire that the students concentrate on rest and recuperation to achieve a speedy return to school. However, we do expect the students to make-up work. When there is an absence, the school staff will gladly prepare and collect assignments for students at the parent's request. Contact the guidance counselor and request the assignments as soon as possible in the morning. When students are absent the day before a test, they are not required to take the test on the day they return. They will take the test the following day, unless they need more time to complete work in order to study for the test. It is up to the students to make arrangements to get all assignments and to make arrangements with the teachers to complete the assignments. Students who are suspended from school are allowed these same conditions. The student must make up the work in five or less school days after his/her return to school.

HOMEBOUND

Students, who cannot attend school because of extended illness, accident, or pregnancy, are eligible for homebound or hospitalized instruction. A physician must certify that the student is unable to attend school but may profit from instruction given in the home or the hospital. The homebound teacher is required to meet the student a minimum of one hour for each day missed. Homebound instruction does not officially begin until the form is signed by a medical doctor and turned in to the attendance clerk.

TARDINESS

When a student reports to school late, **after 7:40**, he/she must sign in at the office. A parent/guardian needs to come in with the student and explain the reason for the tardiness. If a child has a doctor's appointment, an excuse should be presented to the attendance clerk so the tardiness is excused. The same excuses used for absences are accepted for tardiness. Those students without an acceptable excuse will be credited with an unexcused tardy and will be subject to the disciplinary action described below. Students will be permitted three (3) late arrivals each semester that are unexcused. **After three, students will be assigned one day of after school detention for every tardy. Students not picked up on time (car riders) will follow the same rules as those students who are tardy to school. After three (3) late pick-ups, students will begin being assigned an after-school detention for every late pickup.**

Tardiness is a Level I Offense.

Tardiness to class interrupts learning time for the entire class. Students should organize their materials and use their time wisely before school, at lunch, and after school to keep trips to

lockers and other stops to a minimum. All students should be seated in their seats and ready for instruction at the designated time for class to begin. Students tardy to class must get a pass from the teacher with whom they were in conference. This is the only excuse acceptable. Going to the nurse, locker or restroom is not acceptable. If a student needs to go to the nurse or restroom permission must be obtained from the teacher prior to going to avoid tardiness to class. The office will not write passes except for late arrivals to school. Those without passes, who are late to class, are credited with an unexcused tardy by the teacher and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Being picked up late from school puts your child and other children at risk because there is no guarantee that an adult will be available to supervise. Middle school is a very busy place with meetings, activities, clubs, etc. taking place many days after school. If your child is not attending an organized school function after school, he/she must leave the premises in a bus or car in a timely manner.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Bus and Car students may arrive to school no earlier than 7:10am. Bus students must enter the building through the front entrance of the school and report to the gym. Car riders will enter through the canteen door at the rear entrance and report to the gym. Students may go to breakfast upon arriving to school and then report to the gym. Teachers will pick up students from the gym at 7:35. ***Car riders that arrive after 7:35 a.m. must enter through the front entrance.**

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students will not be allowed to leave school with anyone except a parent, guardian, or previously authorized person. Please make sure that you list anyone who might pick up your child on the registration card. If a parent needs for someone else to pick up a student, arrangements should be made in person or far enough in advance for school personnel to verify the request. A written note should also be sent if someone other than the ones you listed is going to pick up your child. **The responsible person must sign out all students leaving early in the front office. Written notification to ride a different bus must also be provided and approved by the administration prior to riding the bus.**

****There will be no early dismissals after 2:30 pm.**

VISITING CAMPUS

VISITORS

Parents and other members of the community are always welcome. For the security of all, as well as to avoid disturbing the learning environment of the students, we ask that all visitors enter by way of the main office, sign in, and obtain a visitor's pass before going to any other part of the building. Parents and other visitors may observe classes by obtaining permission from the administration. Observations of classrooms must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the district's

Classroom Observation Guidelines policy. For information regarding this policy, please contact administration. As part of this policy, a criminal background check is required. We do ask that you not interfere with instruction. If you have questions about what occurs in the classroom, please make an appointment to speak with the teacher and/or principal at a later time. Visitors endangering the safety or learning environment will be prohibited from further visitation. Students from other schools may not be on the school's campus without prior approval from the administration. **Chaperones must sign in and obtain a visitor pass to attend all field trips. It is strongly encouraged for all adults intending to volunteer or chaperone a field trip to submit a background check early in the school year to avoid any confusion or inconvenience. All visitors and chaperones are subject to having their bags searched.**

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed to mentor and tutor students, speak to classes on your occupation, help copy, laminate, put up displays, etc. Please let us know if you can help. All volunteers must complete an application and submit to a background check and Board approval. The forms may be picked up from the principal. **It is strongly encouraged for all adults intending to volunteer or chaperone a field trip to submit a background check early in the school year to avoid any confusion or inconvenience.**

STUDENT SERVICES

GUIDANCE SERVICES

Guidance service is available for all students. Through individual, small group, and classroom counseling services, students are helped to better understand and accept their own individuality in relating to others, both in the classroom and socially. The counselor assists students, teachers, and parents in understanding the student's potential ability and achievement levels. Both students and parents should feel free to consult with the counselor. The counselor will assist parents in arranging conferences with teachers. The student, parent, teachers, other students, or administrators may make referrals to guidance. Students are encouraged to get acquainted with the counselor.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Students with Special Health Care Needs

Many health care services can be provided for students to keep them at school where they can learn and participate with other students. Our goal is to provide information to parents and legal guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day to help students succeed in school. It is important that the necessary health care information is shared with the appropriate people – as teachers on duty during recess, bus drivers, and cafeteria employees – to make sure that the students' needs are met throughout the school day.

Individual Health Care Plans or Individual Health Plans (IHPs)

Individual health care plans are called health plans or IHPs. School nurses who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents or legal guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the day. IHPs are also written for students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self-monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse or the Director of Special Services at 275-4601.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)

Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make adjustments so that students with certain disabilities can learn and participate in settings like other students who do not have disabilities. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team decides if a student is eligible. The team should include the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's disability such as a teacher, a guidance counselor, a school nurse, or other school staff. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the student's needs will be met while at school and may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. To learn more about Section 504, contact the Director of Special Services at 275-4601.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Students, ages 3 through 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for under the IDEA. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The team develops an individualized education program (IEP) if the student meets federal and state requirements. The IEP outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team. The IEP may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. Contact the Director of Special Services at 275-4601 to learn more about the IDEA.

Medical Homebound Instruction

Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician must certify that the student has such a medical condition but may benefit from instruction, and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school district provides. The school district then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school district will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school. To learn more about medical homebound services, contact the Director of Special Services at 275-4601.

HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

A full time registered nurse is on staff. Sick students are to report to the health room **after obtaining written permission from their teacher**. The nurse will assess the situation and call the parents if needed. **Students are not to use the school telephone or cell phones to make calls or send texts from school. Students violating this policy will be disciplined according to the cell phone policy. In the event of an emergency, a school employee will make the necessary calls.** Please do not send students to school who are running a fever or who are too ill to function in class. Parents must give permission for the nurse to dispense over the counter medications such as for an upset stomach, headache, or sore throat to help keep students at school. If a student needs to take medication during the school day, the parent or guardian must give written permission on a form obtained from the nurse, stating the medication, the dosage, and the time that the medicine should be taken. The medicine must be brought to school in the original container and left in the health room with the form. **All medications should be brought to the nurse for dispensing. No student should give medicine to another student or take any medicine that is given by another student. Any student violating this procedure will be subject to disciplinary action.**

LUNCH / BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Breakfast and lunch are provided for students. Breakfast is free to all students who wish to eat. **The cost of lunch is \$2.45 for full pay and \$.40 for reduced.** Please keep your child's account in the cafeteria current. All lunch / breakfast money should be paid in the cafeteria to the cafeteria supervisor. Forms will be sent home at the beginning of the year for those interested in applying for free or reduced lunch. These forms will be available from the cafeteria manager at any time upon request. Children may bring lunch from home.

Middle School Lunch

Middle school students will be permitted to charge three (3) meals. A letter will be sent home with the students stating that he/she will not be allowed to charge any more meals before receiving the alternative meal. After three charges have occurred, the three charges must be paid in full before the student may have a regular lunch.

Alternative Meal

Students will be given a sandwich and milk. The Food Service Manager will be vigilant in observing any student who is frequently without funds to purchase lunch. Such occurrences may indicate a problem of neglect, which should be called to the attention of the Principal. Upon notification of such problems, the Principal may conduct an investigation to determine if there is cause for further action.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center is the nucleus of our school. The regular hours for use are from 7:45 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. Students must have a pass from the teacher/administrator on morning duty to enter prior 7:45. Students may come to the media center throughout the day with permission and a hall pass from their teacher, including during their lunch and canteen time. In order to use the

computers and Internet, students must have an Acceptable Use Policy signed by the parent and student on file.

LIBRARY PROCEDURES

OVERDUE FINES

A fine of ten cents per day will be charged for all overdue library materials. The maximum fine will be no greater than the replacement cost of the material. Overdue notices will be sent once a week to the homeroom or reading teacher. These fines will be used to purchase accessories for the library media center, i.e. bookmarks, posters, book fair items, etc. Students with extreme overdue materials will not be allowed to participate in afterschool functions, such as dances, sidewalk art, etc. as determined by the principal and/or library media specialist.

PAYMENT FOR LOST AND DAMAGED LIBRARY BOOKS

Replacement costs will be charged for lost books. If a book is so badly damaged that it cannot be circulated, replacement costs will be charged for the damaged book.

Students or teachers that find and return lost library materials that are in good shape may obtain a refund of the paid amount minus any overdue fine that accrued before the book was paid for. There will be a minimum fifty cents processing charge.

SETTLEMENT OF LIBRARY ACCOUNTS

Students with overdue or lost library materials will not be allowed to check out any additional library material until the fine is paid and a negotiated payment plan is in place. All fines and fees will be paid to the library media specialist. Money collected will be receipted and given to the bookkeeper to be credited to the library account.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (Revised April 2012)

Technology is a vital part of education and the curriculum in the School District of Edgefield County. In an effort to promote learning and expand educational resources for students and employees, the District has made arrangements to provide access to technology for students and staff. Technology includes calculators, any audiovisual equipment, any lab equipment, and any computer hardware or software. The technology in the District must be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner to support the mission of the School District of Edgefield County.

The Internet can provide a vast collection of educational resources for students and staff. Internet access is available to students and teachers in the School District of Edgefield County. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The Internet is a global network; because information appears, disappears, and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. Furthermore, the District makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Students will be under teacher supervision while on the Internet.

With access to online computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The School District of Edgefield County has taken precautions to block and/or filter controversial materials; however, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District.

Vandalism

Vandalism of any technology will result in cancellation of privileges and possible disciplinary action. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Hacking attempts by students or users
- Malicious damage to hardware
- Harm or destruction of software
- Interfering with the access of another user and/or alteration of another users' data
- Installation of any software not explicitly approved by the technology department to include software intended to bypass any filtering or security systems on use by the school district.

Violation of the Acceptable Use Agreement will result in cancellation of privileges and possible disciplinary action. Malicious intent immediately revokes any users' rights to technology access for the remainder of the school year and/or the remainder of his/her tenure at a school.

Administrative discretion will be used in addressing each situation that arises.

The effective use of technology requires responsible users to adhere to strict guidelines outlined in this Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology. Violation of any of these guidelines will result in termination of accounts and future access denial. Students in the School District of Edgefield County will have access to the Internet and other forms of technology available only if this Acceptable Use Agreement for Technology signed by the parent/guardian is on file at the school. As technology advances, this document will be updated to meet the needs of the providers and the users.

Specific Internet Use Rules:

- Students may use the Internet for school assignments only and will not upload or download any files, pictures, text, music, or sound not directly related to educational goals or teacher assigned projects.
- Users will verify permission to use any pictures, files, text, music, or sound taken from Internet sites related to educational goals with a hard copy. Bibliographical information must be cited. Any use of copyrighted sites where permission cannot be obtained will be in violation of the District Acceptable Use Agreement. Only approved list servers or chat rooms with educational value may be accessed with direct supervision. A staff member requiring the assignment must also be a member of the list servers or chat room.

Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops can be monitored.

- Users will not transmit any material in violation of any federal or state laws or regulations to include, but not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, material protected by trade secret, sexual harassment or other forms of discrimination.
- Users will not knowingly access pornographic, weapon/bomb making, or other inappropriate sites on the Internet.
- Users understand that there is no guarantee of “privacy” when using any school technology such as e-mail, Internet searching, etc.
- Users may not violate the statutes pertaining to students’ rights to privacy; users may not give out home addresses, telephone numbers, pictures, or credit card numbers.

Specific E-mail Use Rules:

- Students are prohibited from accessing personal e-mail accounts. Students will be issued a district e-mail account only for approved classes and assignments.
- **Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops can be monitored.**
- Users will not transmit any material in violation of any federal or state laws or regulations to include, but not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, material protected by trade secret, sexual harassment or other forms of discrimination.
- Users may not violate the statutes pertaining to students’ rights to privacy; users may not give out home addresses, telephone numbers, pictures, or credit card numbers.
- Users will not use profanity, obscenity, or other language that may be offensive to other users.
- Users will report receipt of any inappropriate e-mails or abuse of school technology to the building principal or supervisor.
- Users will adhere to e-mail etiquette and understand that all e-mails reflect the views of the school district as each e-mail carries the district’s net address.

Specific Hardware Use Rules:

- Users understand that data stored or transmitted on desktop computers and laptops can be monitored.
- Users may not change/rearrange icons, screensavers, setups, and settings.
- Users will adhere to all copyright laws when using a scanner.
- Users will not vandalize the physical property belonging to the School District of Edgefield County or to anyone else.
- Users will limit the use of video and digital cameras to only those uses that support the mission of the district.
- Repair charges will be assessed to anyone for damage or intentional misuse of any equipment to include, but not limited to, computers, scanners, LCD projectors, and digital cameras.
- Vandalism of hardware to include, but not limited to, removal of the mouse ball and/or mouse, deliberate erasing of files and/or data, placing foreign objects such as paper clips in disk/CD drives, and removing or altering keyboard key is prohibited.

Specific Software Use Rules:

- Floppy disks not owned by the school must be scanned for viruses before they are put in school owned equipment. Users may not copy commercial software and/or violate

copyright laws. Only legally purchased software with proper licensing documentation on file may be loaded on school computers.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Riding the bus is a privilege that can be taken away for unsatisfactory behavior. Certain laws and regulations govern the operation of school buses. Transportation by school buses will be provided for those students living one and one-half miles or more from the school according to the S.C. Department of Education guidelines. If you do not know what bus to ride please contact Ms. Tanja Bryan, the District Transportation supervisor in charge of bus routes, drivers and school regulations, at 275-1776. Students must ride the same regular scheduled bus to school or home. If it is necessary for a student to ride a bus other than the one he/she normally rides, a parent must write a note for the student and obtain permission from Mr. Wrenn. Every precaution will be made to ensure the safety of our students. All bus passengers are reminded that the driver is in charge of the bus at all times and passengers are to obey the instructions of the driver or face disciplinary action of school officials. Parents who interfere with the operation of a bus and its driver are subject to arrest.

Each student shall be subject to the transportation laws, rules and regulations from the time he/she steps onto the school bus until the school bus route is complete or until the students arrives at his/her appropriate or normal destination. Normal destinations shall be either home or school unless otherwise specified by a principal or the principal's designee. The school board authorizes principals to suspend or expel students from riding school buses for misconduct on the bus or for violating the instructions of the driver. Reviews of school action are to follow the established appeal procedure.

Bus drivers cannot suspend a student from riding the bus. This decision can only be made by the principal or his/her designee, of the school the student attends or by the principal of a school served by that bus.

When an authorized employee judges any student's behavior to endanger the lives of bus students, then the employee may remove that student immediately from the bus until said student has had a conference with his/her principal.

General Guidelines:

First Offense- A warning may be given to the student and a letter sent to parents advising them of the misconduct. If the offense is of a nature which in the judgment of school officials warrants a suspension from riding the school bus, up to a one (1) week suspension may be given.

Second Offense- The student may be suspended from riding the bus for a period of up to one (1) week depending upon the nature of the offense. In case a student has already been suspended once, the suspension may be for up to two (2) weeks. A letter must be sent to the parents.

Third Offense- The student may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to two (2) weeks. At the end of this period, a conference is held with the student, parent, school administrator and school officials before bus privileges may be restored.

Fourth Offense- If after a third offense, a student persists in uncontrollable conduct while riding a school bus to and from school; he/she will then be suspended from riding a school bus for the remainder of the current school year. In such cases, all circumstances will be thoroughly

reviewed by school officials before the action is taken. Once the action is taken, it is appealable only to the Board of Education. If in the judgment of the principal a first, second, or third offense so warrants, the student may be recommended for expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the current school year.

Administration discretion may be used and applied to any student who violates the behavior guidelines and to any situation as deemed necessary.

Edgefield County Transportation Policy

Parent Initial	Policy
	<p style="text-align: center;">Parental Responsibility</p> <p>It has been a longstanding policy of the Transportation Department of the Edgefield County School District to require that students in grades 4K, 5K, 1st grade, and 2nd grade only be released from the supervision of the bus drivers to a parent, adult guardian, or older siblings. If a parent, adult guardian, or older sibling is not visually present at the bus stop, the driver is required to return the student to the school and the supervision of an administrator. On the third offense the student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the semester.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Bus Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Students are to be courteous with no profane language. × Keep bus clean. × Cooperate with the driver. × No tobacco products. × Any destruction of school property/bus will be responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay for damages. × Keep hands, feet, head and head inside bus at all times. The aisle of the bus must remain free of books and other objects. × No running, crowding, shoving, or pushing around school bus. × Bus driver is authorized to assign seats. × Students removed from bus are parent's/guardian's responsibility to be picked up at home school. × The driver of a school bus is in complete charge of the passengers while they are aboard the bus and should be given the same respect as a classroom teacher. Complaints against a driver should be directed to the transportation office. × School buses operate on a very tight schedule; students should arrive at the bus stop fifteen minutes ahead of the bus. Each student should be on time – bus drivers will not wait for those who are late unless it's during inclement weather. × Students are prohibited from bringing the following items on the bus: animals, food/drinks, glass containers, weapons, balloons, oversize items including band instruments which obstruct the driver's view, block the aisle or exits, or displace a student from a seat, radios/tape players/cd players/mp 3 players/iPods, or similar devices are not permitted. If a bus driver should discover a student playing one of these devices, they are required to submit a disciplinary notice to the appropriate school official. × Students can only switch from their assigned bus with a Request for Change in Bus Transportation Form from a parent/guardian. The school principal and the transportation supervisor will evaluate each request. If parents request a drop off other than the normal stop, they must make this request by filling out a Change in Transportation Request Form. The new stop location must be within the child's assigned school zone and be on a space available basis.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Discipline Rules</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School bus driver will notify parent of rules infraction. 2. After two notifications of student infractions by the bus driver, the bus driver will give student referral to school administrator in charge of transportation. 3. After school administrator in charge of transportation has exhausted all school transportation regulations, student could be suspended off the bus for the remainder of the school year.

COMMUNICATIONS

District Web Site – www.edgefield.k12.sc.us

School Web Site- www.mms/edgefield.k12.sc.us

TELEPHONE CALLS

Students are not to use the school telephone or cell phones to make calls or send texts from school. Students violating this policy will be disciplined according to the cell phone policy. In the event of an emergency, a school employee will make the necessary calls. In case of illness, the nurse will make the necessary call. Students will not be called to answer the phone during school hours. **Emergency messages** from the parents or guardian may be left with the school secretary. **We strongly encourage that all arrangements be made in advance to avoid the necessity for phone calls.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

When inclement weather occurs prior to the school day, the district administrators will decide if school will open or remain closed. This decision will be broadcast on area radio and television stations. (92.7-*WKSX Radio*, *WJBF TV (6)*, *WRDW TV (12)*, *WGAT (26)*). We will also use social media to make necessary posts regarding school closings when necessary.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

1. All fees must be paid by the date set for an activity/field trip.
2. We gladly accept your checks. However, in the event your check is returned, you will be contacted by the school to settle the check amount plus any additional fees charged to the school by the banking system.
3. All checks should be made for the correct amount and made payable to Merriwether Middle School. (Unless specified; Ex. Picture money, t-shirt orders, etc.)
4. Parents of any student who have a financial obligation to the school/district (i.e., lost textbooks, library books, fees, fundraiser money, etc.) that is not cleared within the prescribed time will be notified. Failure to fulfill this obligation or have a plan approved by the school or district authority will result in sanctions being taken by the school/district to collect the outstanding obligation.
5. Students who owe a fine or restitution to the school must make a settlement that is satisfactory to the administration prior to a report card being issued or a transcript being mailed for that student.

INSURANCE

The option to purchase school accident insurance is offered from the beginning of school through mid-October. Information will be sent home with each student for parents to review and to make a decision. The insurance policy is an agreement between the insurance company and the parents enrolling. Parents should purchase insurance for proper coverage during school hours.

FUNDRAISING / SOLICITATION

Fundraising is strictly prohibited **unless it is a school-sponsored fundraiser and has been approved by the principal.**

POSTING OF NOTICES

All notices posted by students or others are to be cleared through the principal.

FEES

Instructional/Locker Fee - \$30.00

Lost Locks- \$6.00

Yearbook – To be announced

LOST AND FOUND

All personal belongings should be marked for identification. The lost and found area for most items is in the cafeteria. At the end of each nine weeks, all items will be donated to the needy. For lost textbooks, students should check with the teacher who issued the book. All books found will be given to the issuing teacher. **Students cannot receive an additional book until the lost book is paid for.** Electronics, including cell phones and any non-essential school items, are not to be brought to school unless prior approval from the administration has been given. The school does not accept responsibility or liability for loss or damages incurred or if an “illegal” item is stolen. This includes large sums of money.

LOCKERS

**** Due to COVID-19 and to protect the safety of our students, lockers will not be utilized for the 2020-2021 school year.**

Use of student lockers is a privilege. Teams will determine when students are permitted to use their lockers. It is the responsibility of the student to manage locker time effectively and report to class on time. Only school-owned locks may be used. If you have a problem with your locker or lock, report it promptly to the Assistant Principal. Lost locks may be replaced for \$6.00 in the office. Lockers are not to be shared and should remain locked at all times. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items left in a locker. All lockers are school property and may be searched when there is any suspicion that the locker might contain contraband.**

- **Students are to keep lockers locked at all times.**
- **Students are not to “pop” locks.**
- **Students are not to share lockers.**
- **Students are not to trade lockers.**
- **Students are to use only the assigned lock.**
- **Students are only to go to lockers during assigned times.**
- **Students are not to share their locker combination with anyone.**

Students who violate these conditions will be denied locker use.

TEXTBOOKS

All state adopted textbooks are rent free to students. Each student is responsible for returning his or her textbooks in that same condition. If the book is returned damaged or with markings not noted at issue, the student must pay a fine. If a book is lost or damaged, the *cost will be determined by the schedule provided by the State Department of Education. Periodic checks will be held throughout the year.* **Students will not be issued another book until the lost book has been paid for.** The student is responsible for his/her textbooks even if the books are stolen from a locker or book bag. Students may be denied certain privileges until books have been accounted or paid for. See the textbook coordinator for textbook concerns or if you have special needs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

It is our belief that the health and wellness of our students is of utmost importance. Consequently, most of our middle school students will take physical education classes. In addition to the classroom rules of the physical education classes, students must dress out for class. Athletic shoes must be worn. No street shoes will be allowed on the gymnasium floor. The physical education teachers will give specific guidelines as to the proper type and length of clothes. Failure to dress out will result in disciplinary action.

FLOWERS/SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

School is the place for learning and where every student is valued. All flowers and other forms of individual recognition sent to the school will be held until the end of the day. Balloons and large stuffed animals are **NOT** permitted on the school bus. **NO DELIVERIES WILL BE ACCEPTED ON VALENTINE'S DAY.**

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Each student will be assigned to a team of teachers who will instruct him/her in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies. In addition to the core academics, students will be offered exploratory and elective classes. Additional academic assistance for qualifying students is offered through our special services department and computer-assisted instruction.

GRADING

The same numerical grading system is consistently used throughout the district.

A= Excellent (90-100)

B= Above Average (80-89)

C= Average (70-79)

D= Passing but needs improvement (60-69)

F= Failing (59- and below)

English I and Algebra I

Recommended students, (Based on Math or Language Arts average, teacher judgment, and MAP scores) may take English I and/or Algebra I for high school credit in the 8th grade. Students must have an “A” or “B” average in these courses or they will have to retake the course at the high school. The state end-of-course test will be administered in Algebra 1 and will count 20% of the final grade average. The student’s grade earned will be entered on the permanent record as an 8th grade language arts grade if it is less than a “B” average. Students taking English I must read a required assigned book and a book of their choice from our English I selected list over the summer. They will take a test on the first book when they return to school in August. For the book of choice, an assessed scrapbook will need to be completed by the first day of school.

Band

Band is offered for students who are interested in taking a music course.

HOMEWORK

Homework is to be assigned regularly as an independent activity to allow students to practice and to apply what they have learned in class. It is a necessary link in the continuing process of education. Homework should not be assigned a daily grade for accuracy. At the beginning of each nine weeks, each student will be given a 100 for homework. At the middle school level, the teacher will deduct five (5) points for each assignment not turned in. At the end of the nine weeks, the grade remaining will be averaged in with other grades as one test grade. This policy does not apply to English I and Algebra I as these are high school courses and are subject to the homework policy of the high school.

Parent/Teacher Report Card and Conference Days

October 29, 2020 Parents may pick up report cards and conference with teachers from 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

October 30, 2020 Parents may pick up report cards and conference with teachers from 8:00 am- 12:00 pm.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Students are expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with instruction and maintain a mutual respect for others. Each student will receive a copy of the newly revised district Discipline Code of Conduct during registration or during the first week of school that defines acceptable standards of behavior and the consequences for noncompliance. Parents and students are expected to comply with all aspects of the discipline code. Parents and students should carefully read this code and return the necessary signed papers to the school showing that they have read and understand it.

GENERAL SCHOOL-WIDE RULES

- ❑ Read and follow all handbook regulations and the Code of Conduct for Edgefield County.
- ❑ Follow instructions of any teacher or staff member the first time given.
- ❑ Be on time and in assigned area at all times.
- ❑ Avoid disorderly conduct that could cause bodily harm or damage to property, or interruptions of instruction.
- ❑ Walk on the right side of the hallway at all times.
- ❑ Be quiet in the halls and do not disturb others.
- ❑ Keep our school and grounds clean and free of litter and graffiti.
- ❑ Personal grooming is to be done in the restroom only.
- ❑ Food and drinks may only be consumed in the cafeteria or canteen. **Leave unnecessary items at home. Students who have unnecessary items at school (electronics, toys, games, etc, will be subject to disciplinary policies as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct).** The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

All students are expected to behave as responsible citizens in the cafeteria. Specifically, students should not:

1. Break in line or change lines.
2. Play with or throw food.
3. Be excessively loud.
4. Leave the table without clearing trays and trash.
5. Display poor table manners.

Students entering the cafeteria to eat lunch should go directly to the lunch line. Students are expected to buy any food that is touched in the lunch line.

DRESS CODE

The orderly conduct of the educational process requires that the clothing and grooming of students not be distracting, disruptive, or provocative. We believe that children who have positive self-concepts tend to be better students and consequently better citizens when their formal education has been completed. Positive self-concepts are enhanced when students wear appropriate clothing to school. Any style of clothing tending toward immodesty, exposure, or excessive emphasis of body features will not be considered appropriate dress for school. Students are encouraged to take pride in their appearance with proper grooming and dress. Our main concern is that students dress so that their appearance will not distract from the learning process in the classroom.

GIRLS

- Bare shoulders must be covered with some type of sweater, jacket, or cover-up if narrow straps are the only covering for the shoulders. Straps must be at least two (2) inches wide.
- Skirts and shorts cannot exceed two **(2) inches above** the crease in the knee when viewed from the back.
- Skirts that have slits in them are not allowed unless the slit is no higher than two **(2) inches above** the top of the knee.

- Skirts must cover the leg appropriately when the young lady is sitting down also. (Skirts that comply with the dress code when a student is standing must also be deemed appropriate when the student is sitting).
- Any article of clothing deemed by the administration to be too low cut, too tight, or too exposing will not be allowed.
- Leggings, jeggings, or anything similar are not appropriate to wear to school as primary attire. They may be worn under clothing that is in compliance with the dress code (for example, under a dress or skirt that is the appropriate length).
- Holes above the knees in jeans, pants, shorts, etc. are not acceptable unless additional clothing is worn underneath so that no skin is showing.

BOYS

- Pants- Sagging pants are not permitted. All pants must be worn at the natural waistline. Students are asked to wear belts with their pants if the pants have belt loops.
- Holes above the knees in jeans, pants, shorts, etc. are not acceptable unless additional clothing is worn underneath so that no skin is showing.

ALL STUDENTS

- T-shirts that have vulgar or obscene language, vulgar or obscene pictures or gestures, alcohol or drug related logo, or politically oriented logos are not accepted. Additionally, tank tops, see-through and/or very tight blouses, and midriff – revealing blouses are unacceptable.
- No mesh (see through) or muscle shirts or top shall be worn without an appropriate undergarment. Tank tops are not an appropriate undergarment for muscle or mesh shirts.
- Any article of clothing or type of dress not covered above but causing a disruption is prohibited. The school will require the student to change any article(s) of clothing determined to be disruptive, distracting, suggestive, or inappropriate to the school setting.
- Hats are not allowed to be worn, except on hat day. Hats, stocking caps and/or bandanas are not to be worn at school. On occasion, the school will sponsor events such as hat day. Students will be notified of these events in advance.
- Sweat bands may only be worn during PE time. No bandanas may be worn.
- Flip-flops or any shoe considered unsafe for school wear are discouraged at school.
- No pajamas, nightgowns, or bedroom slippers are to be worn at school.
- No heavy chains are to be worn at school.
- No jewelry may be worn in pierced body parts other than the ears.
- No tattoos (permanent or temporary) or writing may be visible on body parts.
- Light-up clothing and/or shoes will not be permitted at school.
- **The Student Dress Code applies to school sponsored trips and after school activities (games, dances, etc.) unless students are notified otherwise.**

Every possible situation cannot be addressed in this code; therefore, the administration reserves the right to make amendments deemed necessary for the

welfare of the school. No student will be allowed to attend class improperly dressed. Students not following the dress code will be sent home to change, or parents must bring them appropriate clothes. If parents are unable to be reached or are unable to bring the student a change of clothing, the student will be placed in the ISS room for the day. Repeat offenses will result in disciplinary action taken by the administration. **The administration reserves the right to use his/her discretion in all matters of disciplinary action.**

BOOK BAGS

Students may have a mesh or solid book bag. No rolling book bags are permitted in middle school. Students are not permitted to have their book bags, duffle bags, or cinch sacks in classrooms. Small purses may be carried.

DEMONSTRATION OF AFFECTION

Students are to refrain from body contact with one another to show affection. There will be no touching, arms around each other, kissing or holding hands at school and during school related activities. Violators will be disciplined at the discretion of the principal.

POSSESSION OF CELL PHONES

Cell phones should not be visible at any time from 7:00 am- 3:45 pm. This includes any telecommunications device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays messages, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. **A discipline referral will be made for any student violating this policy. Consequences will be:**

1st Offense – Warning

2nd Offense-- After-school detention

3rd Offense – In-school suspension

4th Offense – Out-of-school suspension

(*Consequences will increase for every subsequent violation)

CHEATING

When a student becomes involved in cheating on assigned work, the student may be given a zero on that work by the teacher. Both students who receive and provide help will be considered cheating. Parents of such students will be notified in writing or by telephone of the incident by the teacher.

TRUANCY

Truancy will be dealt with according to district policy and state regulations.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment will be reported to a school administrator. Administrators will determine consequences and/or punishment for sexual harassment cases referred to them.

Dances/Field Trips/Sports

Participation in dances and sports are a privilege and a reward for students who exhibit good behavior at school. Field trips provide educational opportunities outside the normal classroom environment. Student attendance at these functions may be denied to those who choose to violate school policies. In such cases, the student will participate in an alternate assignment that would allow the student the opportunity to concentrate on the same or similar content.

All students should be picked up from after-school functions as soon as the dance, field trip, or sporting event is over. Students picked up late from these events will be unable to attend the next after-school function. If a student is left at an after-school function two or more times, the student may be prohibited from attending all after-school functions for the remainder of the year.

Missing Assignments

In addition to school policy violations, students with incomplete classroom assignments will not be allowed to attend after-school functions. ***Students who do not turn in an assignment for any reason other than a lawful or excused absence will be required to complete the assignment during lunch detention. Once the missing work is turned in, students may resume attending after-school events. Teachers will deduct points from the late assignment based on what they feel is reasonable and fair.***

Bullying

Bullying encourages absenteeism and lower academic performance of all students involved. Therefore, students participate in various Anti-Bullying Programs aimed at maximizing instructional hours and heightening student achievement. Parents are encouraged to contact the guidance office with any concerns.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Students are expected to behave in a manner that does not interfere with instruction and maintain a mutual respect for others. Each student will receive a copy of the newly revised district Discipline Code during registration or at the beginning of the school year that defines acceptable standards of behavior and the consequences for noncompliance. Parents and students are expected to comply with all aspects of the discipline code. Parents and students should carefully read this code and return the necessary signed papers to the school showing that they have read and understand it.

LEVELS OF OFFENSES

SCHOOL WIDE DISCIPLINE

Acts of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Level I - Simple Disorderly Conduct

Disorderly conduct includes any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturb the classroom or school.

Level II - Disruptive Conduct

Disruptive conduct includes those activities in which students engage that are directed against persons or property and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of themselves or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses, justifying both administrative sanctions and court proceedings.

The administration may reclassify disorderly conduct (Level I) as disruptive conduct (Level II) if the student engages in the activity three or more times.

Level III - Criminal Conduct

Criminal conduct includes those activities in which students engage that result in violence to themselves or to another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of themselves or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions that result in the immediate removal of the student from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the board.

Extenuating, mitigating or aggravating circumstances

The board may give the appropriate administrator the authority to consider extenuating, mitigating or aggravating circumstances that may exist in a particular case of misconduct. The administrator should consider such circumstances in determining the most appropriate sanction.

Discipline of disabled students

Disciplinary process

Federal and state laws and regulations require the public schools to meet the individual educational needs of disabled children to the extent that current educational expertise permits.

NOTE: *Students who are guilty of breaches of conduct may be suspended or expelled if the offense does not already carry such punishment. Though not specifically mentioned in this list of*

breaches of conduct, any act which is detrimental to the good order, best interest, and physical safety of the school may be punished according to its nature and degree at the discretion of the administration.

Level I - Simple Disorderly Conduct

Disorderly conduct includes any activity in which a student engages that tends to impede orderly classroom procedures or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or the frequency or seriousness of which disturb the classroom or school. The provisions of this regulation apply not only to within school activities, but also to student conduct on school bus transportation vehicles, and other school sponsored activities.

Acts of disorderly conduct may include, but are not limited to:

CATEGORY I OFFENSES: DISORDERLY CONDUCT

A. Disorderly conduct is defined as activities engaged in by student(s) which tend to hinder order of classroom procedures and/or instructional activities, orderly operation of the school, or that by frequency disturb the classroom or school. The provisions stated below apply to the conduct of students within the school setting, conduct on the school bus or at the bus stop, and conduct during any school-sponsored activities. Acts of disorderly conduct may include but are not limited to:

1. Not following classroom or school procedures
 - Chewing gum/eating/grooming in class
 - Failure to attempt work in class
 - Horseplay
 - Interfering with the teaching process
 - Lack of materials in class
 - Refraining from participating in instructional activities
 - Failure to obtain permission for getting out of seat during class
 - Tardiness
 - Other
2. Breaking classroom or school rules
 - Lying
 - Acting in a manner so as to impede the instructional process
 - Use of abusive language/profanity
 - Use of obscene gestures
 - Forged notes or excuses
 - Cutting class (minor)
 - Being in an unauthorized area
 - Social bullying
 - Public display of affection
 - Other disorderly acts as determined by local school authorities
3. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in dealing with disorderly conduct are:

a. In cases of those infractions named in the above Category I/A-1 Offenses (Not following classroom or school rules), the following procedure may be applied:

- 1st offense-** Verbal warning by the staff member observing the behavior.
- 2nd offense-** Staff member conference with the student
- 3rd offense-** Lunch detention, parent contact (warning that after-school detention will be next)
- 4th offense-** Assigned after-school detention; Phone call to parent (made by teacher)
- 5th offense-** Referral to administration; Student will be assigned ISS
- 6th offense-** Referral to administration; Student will be suspended from school.

b. In cases of those infractions named in the above A-2 (Breaking classroom or school rules), the following procedure may be applied:

- Lunch detention, parent conference and/or referral to guidance or administration at the teacher's discretion. Upon referral to administration, the following steps may apply:
 - 1st offense- 1 day of In-School Suspension (ISS) or any of the possible sanctions as allowed by the state regulations
 - 2nd offense – 1 day of ISS
 - 3rd offense- 2 days of ISS with guidance referral and possible Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
 - 4th offense – 1 day out-of-school suspension (OSS) and Parent Contact
 - 5th offense- 2 days OSS and Discipline Hearing Committee Meeting
- c. The infractions listed in A-2 (Breaking classroom or school rules) may be moved to Category II offenses upon the 3rd (third) occurrence at the administrator's determination.
- d. Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the staff member should take immediate action to rectify the misconduct. The staff member should apply an appropriate consequence and should maintain a record of the misconduct.
- e. If in the opinion of the staff member or if by policy the misconduct is not immediately rectifiable, the problem should be referred to the appropriate administrator for action specified by school board policy.
- f. The administrator should meet with the reporting staff member, and if necessary, the student and the parent/guardian to determine appropriate disciplinary action.
- g. If a student acquires 5 (five) office referrals, his/her record will be reviewed by the administration.
- h. Possible consequences to be applied in cases of disorderly conduct may include but are not limited to:
 - Verbal reprimand
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - Demerits
 - In-school Suspension
 - Other consequences as approved by the local school authorities.

The teacher and administration reserve the right to use discretion in all matters of disciplinary action.

II. CATEGORY II OFFENSES – DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

- A. Disruptive conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which are directed against persons or property, and the consequences of which tend to endanger the health or safety of oneself or others in the school. Some instances of disruptive conduct may overlap certain criminal offenses and may justify both administrative sanctions and court proceedings. Disorderly conduct (Category I) may be reclassified as disruptive conduct (Category II) if it occurs three or more times. The provisions of this addendum apply to conduct of within-school activities, conduct on the school bus/district activity bus, and to conduct during other school sponsored activities.
- B. Acts of disruptive conduct may include but are not limited to:
- Use of an intoxicant
 - Fighting (one-on-one) or provoking a fight
 - Vandalism (minor)
 - Stealing
 - Threats against other students
 - Trespassing
 - Abusive language to staff
 - Obscene or abusive gestures to staff
 - Refusal to obey school personnel or agents (volunteers, chaperons, teacher assistants, substitutes) whose responsibilities include supervising students
 - Possession or use of unauthorized substances, materials or devices as defined by law, local school board policy, or school policies
 - Illegally occupying or blocking school property with the intent to deprive others of its use
 - Cutting class
 - Unlawful assembly
 - Disrupting lawful assembly
 - Other acts as determined by local school authorities
- C. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in instances of disruptive conduct are:
1. Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the administrator should investigate the circumstances of the misconduct and should confer with the staff on the extent of the sanctions.
 2. The administrator should notify the parent or guardian of the student's misconduct and related proceedings. The administrator should meet with the student and, if necessary, the parent/guardian, to confer with them about the student's misconduct, and effect the appropriate disciplinary action.
 3. A complete record of the procedures should be maintained.
- D. The following sanctions may be applied to students who violate Category II offenses:
- 1st offense- 3 days In-school suspension(ISS) and Parent Conference or 1-3 days Out-Of-School Suspension (OSS)
 - 2nd offense- 3-5 days OSS with Discipline Hearing Committee Meeting

- 3rd offense- 5-10 days OSS with expulsion recommendation
- E. Possible Sanctions to be applied in cases of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to:
 - Temporary removal from class
 - Intervention Education Program
 - In-School Suspension
 - Out-of School Suspension
 - Transfer
 - Referral to outside agency
 - Expulsion
 - Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
 - Other sanctions as approved by local school authorities

The administration reserves the right to use discretion in all matters of disciplinary action.

III. Category III Offenses- Criminal Conduct

- A. Criminal conduct is defined as those activities engaged in by student(s) which result in violence to oneself or another's person or property or which pose a direct and serious threat to the safety of oneself or others in the school. These activities usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the student from the school. This applies to conduct within-school activities, conduct on school bus transportation, and to conduct during other school sponsored activities.
- B. Acts of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:
 - Assault and battery
 - Extortion
 - Bomb Threat
 - Possession, use, or transfer of dangerous weapons
 - Sexual offenses
 - Vandalism (major)
 - Theft, possession, or sale of stolen property
 - Arson
 - Furnishing or selling unauthorized substances, as defined by the local school board policy
 - Furnishing, selling, possession, or use of controlled substances, drugs, narcotics, or poisons
 - Gang or group fighting
- C. The basic enforcement procedures to be followed in instances of criminal conduct are:
 - Upon observation or notification and verification of an offense, the administrator should confer with the staff member involved, should administer the appropriate disciplinary action and, if appropriate, should meet with the student.
 - If warranted, the student should be removed immediately from the school environment. A parent or guardian should be notified as soon as possible.
 - If appropriate, school officials should contact law enforcement authorities.

- Established due process procedures shall be followed when applicable.
 - A complete record of the procedures should be maintained.
- D. Possible sanctions to be applied in cases of criminal conduct may include, but are not limited to:
- Out-Of-School Suspension
 - Assignment to district intervention program
 - Expulsion
 - Restitution of property and damages, where appropriate, should be sought by local school authorities
 - Other sanctions may be applied to students who commit a Category III offense.

The administration will contact the parent and the school resource officer or other law enforcement official and may convene a Discipline Hearing Committee and/or recommend expulsion procedures be applied immediately.

The Edgefield County School District and all schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or handicap in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs and activities. For further information, contact: Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator at (803)275-4601, Post Office Box 608, Edgefield, South Carolina 29824

**Merriwether Middle School
Parent-Student Handbook
Signature Page**



***Please sign and return to your child's homeroom teacher.**

I have received and read the Merriwether Middle School Student Handbook for the 2020-2021 school year. I understand the information contained in the handbook and the consequences for not adhering to the rules and procedures set forth by Merriwether Middle School and the School District of Edgefield County.

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____