



***Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District***

# ***STUDENT HANDBOOK***

***2017-2018***

General Information

Student Activities (BP 6145/AR 6145)

Student Rights and Responsibilities (BP 5144.1)

*We prepare all students for success*

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## INTRODUCTION

This entire Handbook is subject to the laws of the United States and Alaska and policies of the local Borough School District and is subject to any School Board policy changes.

This Student Handbook is intended to be a general guide for parents and students. It does not contain the details of each school's regulations. It should be understood that no one document can contain policies to cover every single situation that can occur in a public school setting. The unit school principal or teaching principal has the responsibility to make decisions and develop each school's detailed policy implementation. Any questions that may arise as this document is read should be referred to the unit administrator for clarification and/or answers.

**NOTE:** It shall be the policy of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District to provide equal educational opportunity to all persons, to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, parenthood, age, national origin, or disability, and to promote the full realization of equal educational opportunity in each department, division, and school unit in the District.

For more information, please contact the Office of Instruction at 746-9212, your child's principal, or the School District web site: [www.matsuk12.us](http://www.matsuk12.us).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**ADVERTISING IN SCHOOLS:** Advertising that has a profit motive shall be prohibited in the Borough Schools.

**ATTENDANCE:** Alaska Law provides: *"Unless excepted by law, every child between seven and 16 years of age shall attend school at the public school in the district in which the child resides during each school term. Every parent, guardian, or other person having responsibility for or control of a child between 6 and 16 years of age shall insure that the child is not absent from attendance."* (AS 14.30.010. AS = Alaska Statute). There are limited exceptions specified in this law.

Our School District believes there is a positive correlation between class attendance and academic achievement. Students with good attendance habits generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are more easily employable after leaving school. The responsibility for regular attendance lies with the parent and the student. Absences for the following reasons will be considered acceptable:

1. Illness, doctor or dental appointment
2. School-scheduled activities
3. Pre-arranged absences for which administrative approval has been received, e.g., religious holidays, trip.

Students will not be counted absent if the bus does not run. Work missed because of an absence should be made up. Exceptional cases will be reviewed on an individual basis by the administrator. A note from the parent or guardian explaining the tardiness or absence is required. For more information, please refer to School Board policy.

**ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES:** School attendance boundaries for the various school buildings of the District shall be recommended by the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent and approved by the School Board. Boundaries may be changed for individuals or groups of students as population conditions warrant or the capacity of buildings requires adjustment of student enrollment.

Parents of students wishing to enroll their student in a school outside the area of their resident school boundaries need to submit an "Attendance Boundary Exception Application/Request" form to the principal of the receiving school. The principal makes the final decision to accept or deny the application.

A student shall attend the school of residence unless assigned to some other school by the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent or designee. The principal shall have the responsibility for assigning and scheduling students within a school unit.

**CAMPAIGNS OR ACTIVITIES FOR RAISING MONEY FOR STUDENTS:** The purpose of fund raising projects shall be explained to students and parents and shall benefit students enrolled in the school. All participation shall be voluntary. Elementary school students may not participate in school-related, door-to-door campaigns.

**CLOSED CAMPUS (BP 5112.5):** The School Board establishes a "closed campus" at district schools. The requirement to keep students on campus is part of the Board's efforts to maintain a safe school climate and to reduce afternoon absenteeism. Once students

arrive at school, they must remain on campus until the end of the school day unless they have brought written authorization from their parents/guardians and received permission from school authorities to leave for a specific purpose. Students who leave campus without such authorization shall be classified as truant and subject to disciplinary action.

The Board finds that school facilities and resources are adequate to serve the lunchtime needs of all of our students. The Board further perceives that a closed campus benefits students by encouraging them to participate in school activities, rather than following other pursuits which may not be in their best interests. The administration shall provide educational, recreational, organizational, and social opportunities for students during the lunch period. Students who have finished eating shall have a quiet place to read or study.

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:** The School Board recognizes the responsibility of the schools to sponsor an adequate, yet reasonable, program of co-curricular activities and to direct those activities along wholesome and worthwhile lines.

All new programs must follow established procedures to be approved by the School Board. The number and variety of activities will depend on available funds from the annual School District Budget.

**COLD WEATHER RECESS:** Because weather conditions vary greatly between schools, cold weather policy must originate at the individual school level.

Regular exposure to fresh air and vigorous exercise is essential to a child's physical well-being. Daily periods of outdoor activity are strongly recommended. Inclement weather is an obvious deterrent to maintenance of a daily schedule. As general criteria, the District recommends:

- Down to -10°F--regularly scheduled recesses
- Below -10°F--shortened and/or canceled recesses at the discretion of the principal or designee

As the Matanuska-Susitna Borough experiences unusual conditions regarding rain and wind, and when these conditions are prevalent, the principal or designee will carefully monitor weather conditions and limit or cancel outdoor recesses with discretion.

**CONNECT-ED:** *Connect-ED* is an automated phone message system that enables School District administrators to record, schedule, send and track personalized voice messages within minutes to thousands of families in the Mat-Su Borough School District. Prerecorded phone messages may be received by parents for three primary reasons: emergency communication (to reach parents in an emergency situation via phone), community outreach (e.g. reminders of upcoming school events, alerts regarding last-minute changes to schedules, information about school initiatives), and student attendance (notification of a child's absence from school).

**DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS:** No staff member may permit an individual student to leave the school prior to the regular time of dismissal except by permission of the building administrator.

No student shall be permitted to leave school prior to the regular time of dismissal at the request of or in the company of anyone other than a school employee, police officer, court

officials or the parent or guardian of the child, unless the permission of the parent or guardian has first been secured. Phone requests for dismissal may be checked to determine the validity of the call. If the police or court officials request the dismissal of a student during school hours, parents should be notified as quickly as possible.

Students should not be excused from school to attend private classes or special functions of any kind except by special permission of the building administrator, and only in cases where such attendance will not interfere with the work of the school.

**DRUG FREE SCHOOLS:** Students have a right to attend school in an environment conducive to learning. Since drug, alcohol and tobacco use is illegal, contagious and interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of children and adolescents, the school has a fundamental legal and ethical obligation to prevent drug use and to maintain drug-free educational environments.

In compliance with U.S.P.L. 101-226 (Drug Free Schools and Community Act, 1989), the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District will not tolerate the possession, selling, use or influence of tobacco, alcohol and other illegal and harmful drugs (illicit drugs, non-therapeutic use of prescribed drugs, misuse of solvents and other dangerous substances) in the schools, on school grounds or during school sponsored activities including athletic events, dances, field trips, etc.

While drug, alcohol and tobacco use is dangerous in all segments of American society, it poses a special risk to young people by denying the opportunity to develop physically and psychologically. To this end, the district is committed to drug-free schools and intends to send an absolute and clear message that alcohol, drug and tobacco use is illegal and will not be allowed in the Matanuska-Susitna School District or during school sponsored events and activities.

Drug Free Curriculum: Here's Looking At You 2000 is the adopted alcohol/drug preventive curriculum used in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District for grades K-9 and 11. Drug/alcohol prevention study units will be taught yearly in each academic area for grades 10 and 12.

Appropriate disciplinary sanctions for violation of the drug/alcohol policy will be determined by the building principal, consulting with staff and parents of the student(s) involved. (Please see Presumptive Sanctions in the Sanctions section of this handbook, page 24.)

**ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS:** The public schools of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough shall be free and open to all students who are residents of the District.

**Kindergarten-**A child who is five (5) years of age or who will become five (5) years of age on or before September 1, following the beginning of the school year, may enter a public school Kindergarten.

**First Grade-**A child who is six (6) years of age or who will become six (6) years of age on or before September 1, following the beginning of the school year, is a child of school age. (AS 14.03.070).

District policy regarding early entrance testing of a child is as follows:

1. The child must be five (5) years of age before October 1 of the school year in which the child is being considered for early entry to Kindergarten.
2. The child must be six (6) years of age before October 1 of the school year in which the child is being considered for early entry to first grade. For specific information contact the Office of Instruction at 745-9212.

Additionally, a person who is under the age of 20 and has not completed 12<sup>th</sup> grade is of school age. (AS 14.03.070)

**EXTRACURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (BP 6145/AR 6145):** The School Board recognizes that extracurricular and co-curricular activities enrich the educational and social development and experiences of students and shall annually adopt a plan for student participation in extra/co-curricular activities which does not compromise the integrity and purpose of the educational program. Participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities is a privilege. The students are ambassadors of our schools in these competitions therefore academic eligibility, good grades, and consistent attendance is the rule not the exception.

The District shall publish a coaches' and sponsors' (club) handbook, which contains information about responsibilities, programs, sportsmanship, insurance, fees and procedures. Individual elementary and secondary school handbooks may contain additional information.

**1. Academic Eligibility Requirements for Practice and Participation**

- a) High School student athletes will not be allowed to play or travel while academically ineligible. Students in the process of obtaining eligibility through the Alaska School Activities Association (ASAA) waiver process may tryout and practice pending the outcome of the waiver request.
- b) To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities; all second semester freshmen, sophomores, juniors as well as seniors who are not on track to graduate and/or who have not passed all parts of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE), must have passed at least five (5) semester units of credit, or the equivalent, toward graduation, during the previous semester. At the end of each semester all students must have a 2.0 grade point average and comply with all other minimum ASAA requirements. Seniors who are on track to graduate and who have passed all parts of the HSGQE must successfully have completed five courses the previous spring for early fall sports.
- c) Second semester seniors who are on track to graduate and who have passed all parts of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) when it is required, must be enrolled in a minimum of four (4) semester units of credit, or the equivalent toward graduation during the previous semester with a 2.0 GPA.
- d) All courses needed for eligibility need to specifically lead to meeting MSBSD graduation requirement. Only one Pass/Fail course of Student Aide is allowed each semester, for Juniors and Seniors in good academic standing only. Community Service credits are not acceptable.
- e) All students must have maintained at least an overall 2.0 GPA for the previous semester. The 2.0 grade point requirement shall commence at the end of the first nine-week grading period for all first year ninth graders.



- f) For the purpose of this section, academic deficiencies may be made up through successful completion of correspondence courses or summer school.
- g) The eligibility period will begin on or before the sixth working day after the end of the previous quarter (AR 5121 (a)). Each school site will determine its own specific eligibility date within that guideline. The grades must be posted on the computerized report card by that date.
- h) Students making up grades from 2<sup>nd</sup> semester during the summer must have an official record of the final grade and credit prior to the first academic contact day. If a student fails to have summer work completed, graded, recorded and confirmed by the school administrator prior to the first academic contact day, then the student will be ineligible to practice/participate in activities during the first academic quarter.
- i) Students making up a credit (to meet the requirement of BP 6145.1b) from 2<sup>nd</sup> semester during the summer must have an official record of the final grade and credit, prior to the first academic contact day. If a student fails to have summer work completed, graded, recorded and confirmed by the school administrator by the first academic contact day, the student will be ineligible to practice/participate in activities during the first academic semester.
- j) A grade of incomplete is considered as not passing until the incomplete is changed on the official school records.
- k) Correspondence study students must meet the same time frame as regular students.
- l) Athletes must adhere to the ASAA Citizenship Rule and Controlled Substance, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy (Bylaw Article 12, Section 8).
- m) An athlete must meet the above requirements to be considered eligible. All eligible athlete names must be on the master eligibility list that is sent in to ASAA by the school.

2. **Eligibility Requirements Maximum Participation:**

- a) No student enrolled in a four-year high school may participate in more than four (4) seasons in any specific interscholastic activity. No student enrolled in a three (3) year high school may participate in more than three (3) seasons in any specific interscholastic activity.
- b) Participation in a single interscholastic contest shall be considered as one (1) season of participation in that activity.
- c) Each student will have eight (8) consecutive semesters of eligibility after they begin grade nine. (No fifth year seniors will be permitted without approval from ASAA)
- d) A student who becomes nineteen (19) years of age on or before August 1 shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition.
- e) No student shall be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities after earning a high school diploma or its equivalent.

3. **Students Retained:**

- a) Loss of eligibility: A student held back in sixth, seventh or eighth grade for athletic purposes shall lose his/her fourth year of high school eligibility.
- b) Loss of third and fourth years: A student held back for two years in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade for athletic purposes shall lose both his/her third and fourth years of eligibility after entering the ninth grade.

4. **Exchange Students:** District students involved in exchange/travel programs are eligible for interscholastic sports participation upon return to their home school when a request for waiver of the Semester Credit Rule is made to the Mat-Su School District and the Alaska School Activities Association (ASAA), and waived by both the Superintendent/Chief School Administrator, or designee, and the Executive Director of ASAA. Such students must otherwise be eligible by all other rules, i.e. not graduated from a secondary school, not over age, and must have passed four subjects the last semester in attendance in their Alaska high school.
5. **Waivers of Eligibility:** A student who has been determined to be ineligible to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities under one or more of the eligibility rules may request a waiver.
  - a) Request Procedures: A request for a waiver must be directed by the student to the school's building administrator. If the building administrator upon review of the waiver request finds that the request is appropriate, the building administrator shall forward the request to the Superintendent/Chief School Administrator or designee along with a memorandum explaining their reasons why the administrator believes the waiver request should be granted. If a building administrator finds that a waiver is not appropriate the request will not be submitted to the Superintendent/Chief School Administrator's office.
  - b) Review by the Superintendent/Chief School Administrator: Upon receipt of the waiver request, the Superintendent/Chief School Administrator, or designee, shall review the waiver request to determine whether any additional information is necessary. If additional information is necessary, the Superintendent, or designee, shall request the building administrator to supply it. The Superintendent/Chief School Administrator, or designee, shall render the decision as expeditiously as possible after receiving the waiver request and any additional requested information.
  - c) Guidelines for Consideration: To assist students and schools to decide whether to request a waiver in specific circumstances, the following apply:
    - 1) Except in unusual circumstances and for good cause shown, requests for waivers of standards of eligibility involving semesters of enrollment will not be granted.
    - 2) The Superintendent/Chief School Administrator will not grant eligibility in any case in which the asserted hardship is the sole result of knowing conduct by the student or his or her parents or guardian which had the effect of causing the hardship.
    - 3) Ignorance of any standard is not sufficient reason for waiving a standard.
    - 4) Waiver requests are subject to ASAA rules, policies, and procedures. Under certain circumstances waiver requests must also be submitted to ASAA for approval.
    - 5)

Please see [BP 6183/AR 6183](#) for new policies on Homeschool Law-Alternative Education Programs.

**EMERGENCY DRILLS:** Drills will be held monthly during the year. Teachers will announce and post directions for students to follow regarding fire and earthquake drills. All alarms indicate possible fires or other emergencies, and instructions should be strictly obeyed when an alarm rings.

**FIELD TRIPS:** The building administrator must approve in advance any excursions or field trips which occur as part of class instruction. If transportation is required, written approval of the parent must be secured in advance of the trip.

**IDENTIFICATION CARDS:** Identification cards for students increase the ability of school staff to identify individuals who do not belong in the school building and make the facility safer for all who use it. (District Issued Student Identification, [BP 5142.1](#))

During normal school hours while on school property and when attending school or district activities, middle and high school students are required to be in possession their official Matanuska Susitna Borough School District identification card. The identification card is the property of the District. The student identification card must be relinquished to any staff member or bus driver upon request. If a student withdraws from the District, the identification card is to be returned to his or her school principal's office.

One (1) identification card will be issued to each person. Due to material costs, all staff and student will be charged \$5.00 for each replacement card. This charge will be used to defray the expenses for materials and creating a second card. This charge is to be paid to the school office. If a card is lost, stolen, or broken, a temporary identification form will be issued by the student's school. The temporary identification form is valid until a replacement is issued. Failure to carry a permanent or temporary identification card may result in student discipline.

**IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH EXAMINATION OF STUDENTS:** Current immunizations are required by Alaska State Regulations (4 AAC 06.055) in order for students to be enrolled in school. A child shall be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, measles, mumps, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and rubella, except rubella is not required in children 12 years of age or older. Varicella is required for students up through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Preschool students also require HIB. An exemption may be obtained under two specific circumstances.

Medical Exemption: The regulations allow a statement signed by an Alaska licensed physician, osteopath, physician assistant, or advanced nurse practitioner stating that immunizations would, in that individual's professional opinion, be injurious to the health of the child or members of the child's family or household.

Religious Exemption: A parent or guardian must sign a form affirming that immunization conflicts with tenets and practices of the church or religious denomination of which the student is a member. The form, with additional information regarding exemption requirements, is available in the State of Alaska Child Care & School Immunization Requirements Packet ([www.epi.alaska.gov/immunize](http://www.epi.alaska.gov/immunize)). Note: This form must be notarized and submitted annually.

Any child who lacks proof of immunization or a valid exemption will be excluded from school. Children who have begun the required series and are in the "waiting period" before additional doses can be given will be allowed to remain in attendance until the next dose is due.

In excusing students from attending school or from any curricular activity because of illness or physical disability, school authorities shall recognize only a medical doctor licensed in the State of Alaska, a school nurse, a representative of the Alaska Department of Health or the local Health Office, or a chiropractor licensed in the State of Alaska.

**i-PARENT:** i-Parent offers parents/guardians web based access to student information including attendance, scheduling, discipline, and grades. If you would like to have access to i-Parent via the Internet, please email the District's Technology Helpdesk at [iparent@matsuk12.us](mailto:iparent@matsuk12.us). If you encounter problems using i-Parent, please email this same address for assistance.

**LOCKERS:** A locker or other container provided by the school or the District may be searched and examined with the permission of the principal to determine compliance with school and District regulations, and local, state, and federal laws. (AS 14.03.105)

**LOST AND FOUND:** All schools maintain a lost and found service. You may inquire about these items through the office at each school. Items not claimed will be donated to appropriate agencies.

**LUNCH CHARGES:** The District provides a hot lunch program in almost all schools. Information concerning the cost of student lunches and availability of free or reduced-price lunches for those who qualify may be obtained from the school office or Nutrition Services Supervisor at 861-5100. Elementary students are allowed one lunch charge. No more than one charge may accumulate at any time. Students who have inadvertently forgotten their lunch or lunch money will be provided lunch consisting of selected foods from the regular menu.

**NON-CORPORAL PUNISHMENT:** The use of corporal punishment is prohibited. Employees who engage in such discipline will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. The Chief School Administrator shall develop by regulation alternative discipline procedures for use in the schools.

Corporal punishment means the application of physical force to the body of a student for disciplinary purposes. It does not include the use of reasonable and necessary physical restraint of a student to protect the student, or others, from physical injury, to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects from a student, or to protect property from serious damage or destruction.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION (B.P. 5145.3):** District programs and activities shall be free from discrimination with respect to gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnic group, marital or parental status, and physical or mental disability. The School Board shall ensure equal opportunities for all students in admission and access to academic courses, guidance and counseling programs, athletic programs, testing procedures, vocational education and other activities. Separate arrangements may be made for students according to gender during human sexuality programs and physical education activities involving bodily contact. (AS 14.18.050) School staff and volunteers must be especially careful to guard against unconscious sex discrimination and stereotyping in instruction, guidance and supervision.

**NON-HARASSMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION REGULATIONS (B.P. 5145.7):** It is the intent of the District to provide an environment for students which is free of harassment and discrimination whether based on gender, age, marital status, race, religion, color, national origin, handicap, pregnancy or parenthood. While it is not possible to describe all forms of harassment or discriminatory conduct, such conduct shall include jokes, slurs, innuendo, epithets, threats, unwelcome advances, unwelcome touching,

request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct such as sexually or racially-related comments. The denial or withholding of any educational benefit on the basis of any individual's gender, age, marital status, race, religion, color, national origin, handicap, pregnancy or parenthood is strictly prohibited. The conditioning of any educational benefit on any individual's acceding to a request for sexual favors is likewise prohibited. Finally, harassment, whether ethnic, racial or sexual in nature, which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile, offensive or abusive educational environment is illegal and is prohibited.

Students and/or staff who engage in such harassment will be subject to disciplinary sanctions as appropriate. Non-employees who engage in harassment may be subject to other sanctions as appropriate. Students who believe they have been subjected to harassment or discrimination prohibited by this policy should contact the Chief School Administrator or the Chief School Administrator's designee. In cases where the person or persons to whom a victim of harassment would normally report is the alleged source of the harassment, or where other good reason exists not to report to the person or persons designated under this policy to receive reports, the victim should contact a Board Member.

The District will conduct student orientation at the beginning of each year. The District's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer is responsible for implementing this policy. Students may file a signed and dated written complaint under this procedure. Regardless of the outcome of any complaint or investigation conducted under this section, no student, parent, applicant or employee shall be disciplined or otherwise affected for making any complaint under this section or otherwise bringing any complaint to the attention of the District. It is the responsibility of every student, parent, applicant and employee of the District to adhere to and carry out this policy.

Complaints concerning harassment or discriminatory conduct will be processed as rapidly as possible. Time limits are provided and shall be followed at each step of the complaint procedure. The number of days indicated are to be considered as a maximum, and every effort should be made to expedite the process. The time limits indicated may be waived or extended only by mutual agreement in writing or for good cause.

1. The complainant is encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level. The complainant may be accompanied by a representative of his/her own choosing throughout this process, upon request. Failure to take this step shall not invalidate the complaint.
  - a. Directly confront the person(s) alleged to have engaged in the harassing or discriminatory behavior.
  - b. If not resolved, then discuss the complaint with the immediate supervisor of the person(s) alleged to have engaged in the harassing or discriminatory behavior.
  - c. If not resolved, then contact the EEO Officer with formal written complaint as outlined in these procedures.
2. A complainant with a concern regarding conduct prohibited under this section shall bring that complaint to the attention of the EEO Officer within twenty (20) working days of the event or conduct. The complaint shall be in writing and shall state the name of the person or persons alleged to have engaged in harassing or discriminatory conduct and a description of the conduct.

3. The EEO Officer shall promptly and impartially investigate the matter set out in a timely complaint. The EEO Officer shall first meet with the individual or individuals bringing the complaint and shall obtain and analyze the other relevant information and determine if the allegations, if true, would constitute conduct prohibited under this policy. If the EEO Officer determines that the allegations, if proven true, would constitute conduct prohibited under this section, the EEO Officer shall meet with the person or persons alleged to have engaged in the prohibited conduct. The EEO Officer shall advise such person or persons of the name of the individual(s) bringing the complaint and the nature of the conduct complained of. The person(s) against whom the complaint is brought shall then have the opportunity to respond orally or in writing to the allegations contained in the complaint within the timelines set forth for the investigation. The EEO Officer shall complete this investigation and report within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the written complaint.
4. The EEO Officer shall forward the report in writing to the Chief School Administrator along with a copy of the complaint and the response (if any) by the person(s) alleged to have engaged in the discriminatory or harassing conduct. The report shall include the name(s) of the individual(s) bringing the complaint and against whom the complaint is made, as well as a description of the nature of the conduct complained of, a description of the investigation conducted, along with findings of fact based upon such investigation. The EEO Officer's report shall also contain recommendations for resolution of the complaint.
5. Within ten (10) working days the Chief School Administrator may accept, modify, or reject the recommendations of the EEO Officer. The Chief School Administrator's decision shall be in writing, and shall be provided to the individual(s) making the complaint and against whom the complaint is made.
6. Any individual making a complaint under this section or against who a complaint is brought who is dissatisfied by the decision of the Chief School Administrator may submit the complaint in writing to the School Board within five (5) working days following such decision. Following a timely submittal, the Board shall hear the complaint at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The only issue shall be whether the decision of the Chief School Administrator should be upheld, modified, or abated.
7. Although any student, parent, applicant or employee is encouraged to attempt to resolve the issue through utilization of these procedures, nothing in this policy shall prohibit any student, parent, applicant or employee from filing a complaint directly with the Alaska Human Rights Commission, Equal Opportunity Commission, Office of Civil Rights, or filing a timely grievance through an applicable collective bargaining agreement. After exhausting these procedures, an aggrieved person may also file a complaint with the Commissioner of Education on a form provided by the State Board of Education.

**NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS' TUITION:** The tuition rate of non-resident students shall be fixed by the Board on the basis of a school year.

**PETS/ANIMALS:** Pets and animals are not allowed in the school building unless prior approval is obtained from the building administrator.

**PUBLIC COMPLAINTS:** Although no member of the community shall be denied the right to petition the School Board for redress of a grievance, the complaints will be referred back through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action

by the Board. Exceptions are complaints that concern Board actions or Board operations only.

The School Board advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

1. Teacher
2. Principal
3. Assistant Superintendent
4. Chief School Administrator/Superintendent
5. School Board

**REPORT CARDS:** A report card is a formal notice of student progress which is sent to parents via the student every nine-week period. This notice informs parents and students of the student's progress and may contain teacher comments. Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers regarding student progress. The end-of-the-year report card may be mailed to the parent at the prerogative of the school administrator.

**SAFETY PATROLS:** Authority for the establishment of school safety patrols is provided by law (AS 14.33.010). The selection of students for safety patrol shall be the responsibility of the building administrator. Each child serving on school safety patrols must have the permission of the parent or guardian.

**SCHOLASTIC NOTICES:** These notices are sent to parents via the student in the middle of every nine week period or as needed. This notice is to inform the parent and student of the student's progress.

**SCHOOL PROPERTY:** Students are expected to take good care of school property, which includes textbooks, desks, lockers and the building in general. Textbooks are furnished by the District, and students must assume full responsibility for their care. Desk storage and student lockers, where available, are the property of the School District and remain so throughout the life of the item. Individual desks may be searched when it is reasonable to believe that potentially dangerous objects, contraband, or illegal substances exist.

**SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS (BP 5143):** It is the policy of the Matanuska Susitna Borough School District to create and maintain a safe school and work environment. Security cameras (close circuit television systems, CCTV) may be installed in Matanuska Susitna Borough School District schools to monitor school property, to assist school administrators in detecting and deterring unacceptable behavior or activities, and to provide an historical record to assist in investigation. Security cameras are used to accomplish three important goals in the Matanuska Susitna Borough School District:

1. Deterrence: prevention of crime and student misconduct;
2. Apprehension of those not deterred from the conduct noted immediately prior;
3. To assist in the identification of intruders and of persons endangering the health, well-being or safety of school community members.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT (B.P. 5145.7):** The School Board recognizes that sexual harassment can cause embarrassment, feelings of powerlessness, loss of self-confidence, reduced ability to perform schoolwork, and increased absenteeism or tardiness. To promote an environment free of sexual harassment, the principal or designee shall take appropriate actions such as removing vulgar or offending graffiti, establishing site rules,

and providing staff in-service or student instruction and counseling. Teachers shall discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and shall assure them that they need not endure any form of sexual harassment.

The Board shall not tolerate the sexual harassment of any student by any other student or any District employee. Any student or employee who is found guilty of sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action. The Board encourages students and staff to immediately report incidence of sexual harassment to the principal or designee. The Chief School Administrator or designee shall promptly investigate each complaint of sexual harassment in a way that ensures the privacy of all parties concerned. In no case shall the student be required to resolve the complaint directly with the offending person.

**STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION:** Directory information refers to a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, years of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Any parent or eligible student objecting to the public release of any or all of such information must file a signed, written objection with the principal of the student's school within ten school days after the start or within ten school days after the student enters school, whichever is later. Such objection will prevent release of the information to the public. A signed, written objection may be filed at any time thereafter, and it will be effective within five school days after it has been filed.

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) military recruiters are given the same access to secondary school students as provided to postsecondary institutions or to prospective employers. School districts are also generally required to provide students' names, addresses, and telephone listings to military recruiters, when requested. Each LEA that receives funds under ESEA must comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for secondary students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, unless a parent has "opted out" of providing such information.

A form may be completed at the school specifically allowing a parent of a high school junior or senior, to object to release of phone numbers and directory information to military recruiters. If you do not want the District to disclose directory information from your student's education records during the 2007-2008 school year, you must notify the District, in writing, by Friday, August 31, 2007 and renewed annually. If you have no objections to the release of directory information, you do not need to take any action.

**STUDENT INJURIES/ILLNESS:** In the event a student becomes seriously injured or ill during the school day, efforts will be made to contact the parent or guardian to determine appropriate action.

**STUDENT INSURANCE:** The School District **DOES NOT** provide accident insurance for students attending school. Parents are encouraged to carry health and accident insurance on students. Parents may choose to purchase the group rate student insurance that is available from a commercial insurance company.



**STUDENT INTERVIEWS:** Any person who seeks to confer with a student during school hours or to leave a message for a student shall provide positive identification to the building administrator. Interviews of a student normally will not be granted unless the building administrator deems it essential to the welfare of the child. When interviews are conducted by police officers or other state officials, the principal, teaching principal, or designee must be present. However, if the Office of Children's Services of D.H.S.S./the Law Enforcement Agency have determined that the presence of the school official will interfere with the investigation, then a school official will not be present. The school district form entitled "Certification of Necessity for Interview" must first be completed and signed by the school administrator and the agent of one of the above noted agencies.

**STUDENT RECORDS:** Schools collect and maintain student records to provide for the growth and development of individual students, to provide information to the parents and authorized staff, and to provide a basis for the evaluation and improvement of school programs. A parent or guardian of a student, who is (1) under the age of 18 years, and (2) currently enrolled in the District, or (3) records of whom are otherwise maintained by the District, has the right to inspect and review such student's record or any part thereof. The contents of a student's record may be furnished to any other person with the written consent of one of the student's parents or guardians.

**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL:** The administrative staff of Borough Schools may suspend a student from school. Only the School Board may expel a student from school. (4 AAC 06.060.) Please note specific procedures for the handling of special needs students as per the Exceptional Child Services Procedures Manual. The School Board has adopted policy outlining Student Rights and Responsibilities. Please thoroughly review this section in the handbook. (Page 51)

**VENDING MACHINES and OTHER FOOD SALES:** The Superintendent/Chief School Administrator may permit food sales by student or adult entities or organizations provided that these sales comply with state and federal regulations, do not impair the food service's ability to be financially sound, and observe appropriate sanitation and safety procedures. No foods of minimal nutritional value shall be sold in food service areas during breakfast/lunch periods. Any snack sold outside of the federal meal programs during school hours must:

1. have no more than 35 percent of its calories from fat,
2. have no more than 10 percent of its calories from saturated fat, and
3. have no more than 35 percent weight by sugar.

Any beverage sold outside the federal meal programs must be limited to milk, water, juice that is at least 50 percent fruit juice with no added sweeteners, or sport drinks with less than 42 grams of sugar per 20-ounce bottle.

**VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT:** Violence and harassment is prohibited between students, between staff members, between staff members and students, and from members of the public directed at students or staff on school property or at school sponsored events. Some examples of violence and harassment may include, but are not limited to: threats, insults, or assaults; unwelcome patting, pinching, or physical contact; obscene gesturing or language; or slurs of an ethnic, racial or sexual orientation nature.

If a student or staff member feels that his/her emotional well-being, his/her sense of safety and security or sense of self-worth is being affected by such conduct, a complaint

should be filed by contacting his/her school principal or the District's EEO officer. All incidents of such conduct will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Office of Children's Services, if appropriate.

**VISITORS:** All persons are welcome on District property when there for legitimate purposes. Individuals not enrolled in a school must report to the main office upon entering the school grounds or building. Individuals are discouraged from attending classes in a role other than as a parent, volunteer, or presenter.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the school. Individuals must report to office immediately upon entering the school grounds or the building. A visitor's pass is issued to all visitors and must be worn at all times while on school property. This precaution is taken to protect all students and visitors in the event of an emergency.

Visits to classrooms must be scheduled with the respective teacher and principal. This will allow the teacher to introduce the parent or observer, review expectations of visitors, and minimize any impact on the classroom climate to which the students are accustomed. Persons who do not have a valid reason for their presence, or who do not comply with school rules, may be denied access to District property. Individuals who proceed onto District property without proper authorization shall be treated as trespassers and shall be subject to prosecution under relevant state statutes and/or municipal ordinances.

**VOLUNTARY APPRAISAL PROCEDURE:** The School District has a procedure which enables citizens to comment in writing about school personnel. Parents or other interested parties are encouraged to inquire at their local schools to obtain the correct forms and information regarding this process.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL:** A written request from the parents or guardian must be presented to the student's school office if a student is to withdraw from school. Further instructions as to procedure for withdrawal will be given at that time. No less than three (3) days advance notice of withdrawal is requested. When notification is less than three (3) days, it may result in a delay in preparing the student records for withdrawal.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES MISSION STATEMENT:** The primary purpose of the Student Activities program is to meet those school-related interests and needs of students that are not provided for by the curricular program of the school.

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES PHILOSOPHY:** An extra-curricular program should contribute to sound educational objectives when properly organized and conducted and should be an integral part of the schools' programs. The better the extra-curricular programs are organized and conducted, the greater their contribution will be to the educational goals of the District and to the personal needs of the students. The fact that the programs are well organized does not necessarily mean an over-emphasis on activities, but rather an assurance that they are being efficiently administered with maximum benefits to students.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District shall promote strong health, physical education and intramural programs that encompass opportunities for both boys and girls. Through such programs, the needs of most of the students are met. However, there are still a large number of students who have the talent and desire to go far beyond the daily instructional and intramural programs. These students, as well as other students who are less physically gifted, can obtain added benefits and fulfill additional needs by participating in a well-designed extra-curricular program.

Although winning is a major objective and a tremendous motivating force, it is not considered to be the goal of participation. More important than winning are the changes that take place in the participant, in the nature of becoming a more useful and loyal citizen and worker; in the desire to achieve excellence; in living a more healthful and purposeful life; in the respect or the dignity of others; in the willingness to make a personal sacrifice for the benefit of the group or team; and in living by a high code of conduct. These, then, become the more lasting benefits of participation for the individual.

**STUDENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:** The general objectives for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District activities program mirror and hopefully complement the same objectives as the regular curricular program (AR 6145(b)). In furtherance of these objectives, the activities program seeks to also accomplish some of the following:

1. Help students learn to use their leisure time.
2. Help students increase and constructively use their unique talents and skills.
3. Help students develop new vocational and recreational interests and skills.
4. Help students develop more positive attitudes toward the value of vocational and recreational activities.
5. Help students increase their knowledge of and skill in functioning as leaders and/or as members of a group.
6. Help students develop a more realistic and positive attitude towards themselves and others.
7. Help students develop a more positive attitude toward school as a result of participation in the student activities program.

**CLUBS:** Clubs may be established to allow students with similar interests and ideas a chance to become involved in those areas. Clubs established in Mat-Su schools shall be classified as one of the following:

1. Stipend Club (has a contracted sponsor)
2. Student Organized (Limited Open Forum, a type of organization covered under Administrative Regulation 6145.5)

Principals determine club eligibility using the following standards:

1. Students may organize clubs provided the formation and activities are student initiated and voluntary.
2. Membership is open to all students.
3. A signed parental permission document will be required for student participation in all school club and sport activities.
4. School staff shall not promote or participate in the meetings of student organized clubs, but each student-organized club must have a staff volunteer to supervise meetings for the purpose of maintaining order and protecting student safety.
5. Non-school persons (i.e. persons who are neither students nor employees of the Mat-Su School District) shall not direct, control, conduct or regularly attend the meetings or activities of student-organized clubs.
6. The activities of a student-organized club shall take place only during non-instructional time.
7. The school shall not expend public funds to the student-organized club beyond the incidental cost of providing the space for meetings.
8. Student-organized clubs are expressly prohibited from the following: Interfering with the orderly conduct of the educational purpose and activities of the school; promoting, encouraging, or sanctioning activities that are unlawful; abridging the constitutional rights of any person; or, compelling others' attendance at a meeting that is contrary to the beliefs of that agent or employee. The school principal retains the right to prohibit activities and meetings and to disband clubs, which engage in the above-listed conduct.
9. Student-organized clubs must have a club purpose statement and constitution that is approved by the school principal prior to initiation of club activities. School administration will provide a standard format, requirements and advice on production of the purpose statement and constitution. The statements of purpose and constitution may not exclude students from membership based on race, religion, nationality, gender, or disability.
10. A student-organized extracurricular club may not raise and expend funds for purposes not endorsed in the club statement of purpose and constitution.
11. The School District does not endorse or sponsor the meeting or activities of student-initiated clubs. Student clubs exist as an expression of individual rights and are the sole responsibility of the membership.

**DANCE GUIDELINES AND RULES FOR HIGH SCHOOL:** In order to promote a healthy, safe, enjoyable evening for all students, to encourage venues to continue renting their facilities to our school and to have faculty chaperones, the following procedures will be in place for all dances.

1. Guests must be under 20 and middle school students may not attend. One guest per host high school student. Guests must arrive with their host student. Change of guests must be done by Thursday before dance.

2. All students and guests may be checked for illegal or controlled substances prior to entry to the dance area. Security and/or chaperones may conduct bag/purse searches. No beverages of any kind are allowed. Any student who refuses to comply will be denied entry without refund. Students suspected of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol after entering will be subject to evaluation.
3. Dancing Guidelines (applies on and off the dance floor):  
Lewd dancing such as "freaking" will result in student and/or couple being asked to leave the dance floor for a 10-minute break and after the second infraction being asked to leave the event and he/she will be ineligible to attend the next dance. Parents/Guardians will be notified.
  - No straddling legs
  - No bending over
  - No grinding
  - No inappropriate touching
  - No "making out" (no overt and/or prolonged public displays of affection)
  - Hands on waists or shoulders only
  - If too many couples are dancing inappropriately, the lights will be turned on and/or music changed as a collective warning for everyone. A verbal warning will be made on the microphone.
4. Dress Code for Formal (Winter Ball and Prom) and Semi-Formal (Homecoming) Dances:
  - Ladies:
    - Strapless/spaghetti straps are allowed
    - Dress/skirts must be at least mid-thigh in length
    - Slits no higher than mid-thigh in length
    - Backless to waist is permitted – below waist is not permitted
    - No garters or other exposed lingerie/undergarments
    - No sheer/see-through dresses and no see-through sides or bare sides
    - No excessively low cut dresses or tops, or short skirts
    - No bare midriffs
  - Gentlemen:
    - Collared shirt (semi & formal) and tie (formal)
    - Shirts must have sleeves (semi & formal)
    - Shirts must remain on (all dances)
    - Dress pants or slacks, no jeans (formal)
    - No caps/beanies (semi & formal), bandanas, chains or canes (all dances)

The dress code will remain the same for non-formal dances excluding the formal attire requirement. If you are unsure if your attire meets these dress standards, please check with Activities Director or Assistant Principal prior to the day of the event. Students not meeting these standards will not be allowed into event until they comply. If they refuse, parents/guardians will be notified. Once students are admitted into the dance, if they alter their attire in such a way as to make it violate the specified dress code standards, they will be removed from the dance without refund, parents/guardians notified, and they will not be permitted to attend the next dance.
5. Students are not allowed to leave the dance and return.
6. Students must have an ID to purchase tickets. Two (2) ticket limit.
7. A coat check area will be available for personal belongings.
8. All dances must be approved at least one month in advance.

9. All wall and ceiling decorations must be removed at the end of the dance by the sponsor and student group.
10. All students and guests must leave dance location within 20 minutes of end of function. No loitering in parking lots.

**GENERAL FUND RAISING GUIDELINES:** Clubs, students, and athletic organizations may be allowed to raise funds to accomplish their objectives. All school sponsored fund raising projects must be approved by the building principal or his/her designee before the activity begins. Funds raised through gate receipts, activity fees, and concession sales at school-sponsored events shall be deposited in the school's activity account. Money raised from these sources of revenue shall be used to support that specific program or sport.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT:** Each secondary school may have a student government or council that is established and organized through its respective constitution and by-laws. The delegation of authority and responsibility for each school's government may vary between schools. Each student government may have representatives to the Alaska Association of Student Governments (A.A.S.G.), which has an annual conference and workshop. A.A.S.G. makes recommendations to the State Board of Education and other agencies. Student body officers must meet eligibility requirements for the Alaska School Activities Association and the Mat-Su Borough School District.

Officers and representatives are elected annually to provide leadership to each respective school. Each student government must have a sponsor, whose responsibility is to advise and assure the organization operates efficiently, effectively and within the established guidelines and policies. Some of the responsibilities of a Student Government may include:

1. Homecoming
2. Student Dances
3. Assemblies
4. Special Projects Funding
5. Elections
6. Leadership Training Sessions
7. Recommendations to administration, staff, and students
8. Community Projects
9. Representatives to the Student Advisory Board

**YEARBOOK/NEWSPAPER:** The sponsors of these activities will meet each year with the principal, or designee, to discuss the advertising prices and procedures to be followed. Advertising in good taste is permitted in senior high school newspapers and yearbooks. Advertising of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, nightclubs, and other goods and services not considered suitable for high school publications is prohibited. The yearbook advisor must approve all advertising sales.

**ASSEMBLIES:** All assemblies must be approved by school administration. Approval will be granted based on the following criteria.

1. Approved calendar date.
2. Facilities and equipment availability.
3. Approved agenda and purpose.
4. Plan for support services.
5. Communication to students and staff.

**WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR TRAVEL:** The principal or his/her designee is the responsible party for weather confirmation and for cancellation of any trip or travel. The Transportation Department will also assist schools in assessing and determining the feasibility of travel when requested. The District administration reserves the right to cancel any extra-curricular activity if circumstances or conditions mandate.

**Activities—Local (Mat-Su Valley, Anchorage)**

1. All activities will be canceled whenever the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Schools are closed due to weather, road hazards, or outside environmental conditions.
2. When the outside temperature is -25° F or below, all outside activities will be canceled.
3. Activities scheduled in the Mat-Su or Anchorage area, or to the Anchorage airport, will be canceled whenever Mat-Su or Anchorage schools are closed due to weather, road hazards, or outside environmental conditions.

**Activities—Long Distance (Outside Mat-Su Valley, Anchorage Area)**

1. Activities scheduled outside of the Mat-Su/Anchorage area will be canceled whenever the schools in the destination's area are closed due to weather, road hazards, or outside environmental conditions.
2. Activities will be canceled whenever the raw temperature is below -45°F in the destination areas for any extended area (20 miles or more) along the route of travel.

*\*\*All students must carry appropriate cold weather gear when traveling on long distance trips. It is recommended that schools provide cellular phones for the coach or sponsor of the event.\*\**

**Travel Phone Numbers**

National Weather Service .....	266-5105
Road & Weather Conditions .....	936-2525
.....	936-2626
.....	936-2727
AK. Dept. of Transportation .....	(800) 478-7675
Fairbanks .....	456-7623
WX Weather .....	452-3553
Kenai/Soldotna .....	262-9228
Valdez .....	835-4242
Thompson Pass .....	835-4545

**ACTIVITY FEES:** In accordance with [BP 3260](#), the Board has adopted the activity fee schedule listed below. All schools must adhere to this fee schedule. Fees are due in full when the paperwork to participate in an activity is submitted. If the fee is not paid a student may not participate. Material/activities fees may not be charged for required courses.

High School Sports	\$200 Per Activity
High School Clubs	\$15 Per course/per semester
Middle School Sports	\$100 Per Activity
Elementary activities	\$30 Per Activity

The maximum total amount of fees charged for High School sports is \$500 per student, per year. The maximum total amount of fees charged for Middle School is \$250 per student, per year. Other fees are charged according to the schedule.

**CO-CURRICULAR:** An activity is defined as a club or sport, which has a stipend coach or sponsor. The following guidelines apply to this fee:

1. Those activities that “pay to play” include all ASAA competitive programs with the exception of Honors Music, Solo Ensemble, Drama, Debate, and Forensics, and Foreign Language Declamation. These competitions will be assessed a club fee for participation. Also included are those clubs and activities that have a sponsor who is issued a District extra-curricular stipend.
2. All fees are to be collected as part of the eligibility process. Final date for payment of fees will be within ten school days of the first organized practice or meeting. Students who have not paid their fees or made arrangements for the fees to be waived within this ten day time limit will be removed from the club or team.
3. Any student who is not selected for the team will have the fee returned. The final team determination will be made and announced to students within the first five days of the season. No student is allowed to try out for the team without paying the fee or obtaining an approved activity fee waiver.
4. Fees are collected according to standard district accounting procedures.
5. In the event of injury, removal from the team for disciplinary reasons, school transfer or withdrawal, no refunds would be available after the first five days of the season.

**ELIGIBILITY:** In order to participate in a game:

1. A physician’s clearance to play must be on file at the school. This clearance is good for one year but must not expire during the season of the sport in which the student is participating.
2. A parent’s/guardian’s consent for emergency treatment must be signed and on file, and participation guidelines must be acknowledged.
3. The parent/legal guardian must sign and file a release of the District and assumption of the financial responsibility in the event of injury.
4. All records must be in order and forms must be on file in the Activity Office before the student is eligible to participate in any athletic programs.
5. Practice Rule—Athletic participants must have ten (10) days of practice before they are eligible to compete in a game.
6. Fees must be paid or a waiver must be on file.  
See Page 7 for [BP 6145](#) EXTRACURRICULAR AND CO-CORRICULAR ACTIVITIES.



## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

**REGULATIONS GOVERNING PUPILS RIDING SCHOOL BUSES:** Alaska statutes do not mandate pupil transportation. School bus transportation is provided as a courtesy and is a privilege, not a right. If a student's conduct is such that the health, safety, comfort, or the well-being of others is jeopardized, on or off the bus, a school district official may deny the privilege of riding the bus. The school bus driver is in charge of the bus and its passengers and has total authority and responsibility. Only designated school officials are authorized to suspend transportation privileges.

### General Policies:

1. Students are required to ride the bus assigned to them and to board and disembark at their assigned stop. Students may be transported to an unassigned bus stop or on a different bus on an occasional basis or for periods of time less than 30 days upon approval by the school office. Parents should contact the school office with their request. Requests for students to be transported to unassigned bus stops or on different buses for more than 30 days must be directed to the Transportation Office. The student must give the driver a Bus Pass issued by the school office authorizing this transportation.
2. Parents may not remove a student from a bus after the student has boarded without a Bus Pass or approval by a school representative.
3. Students will be issued School Bus Conduct Reports for infractions of the rules by the bus driver. The school bus driver and the school principal are responsible for handling behavioral problems occurring on the school bus, but only the school principal, or his/her designee, has the authority to suspend a student's bus riding privileges.

### At All Times:

1. Students must obey the school bus driver. His/her primary concern is student safety.
2. Students should exercise good manners, caution and consideration for other people.
3. Elementary students will be assigned seats by the driver. High school and middle school students may also be assigned seats at the discretion of the driver.
4. Students may not have anything in their possession that may cause injury to others.
5. Hanging onto any portion of the school bus from outside the school bus, whether the bus is moving or not, is illegal and DANGEROUS.
6. Items that can be held in the student's lap or under the student's seat in the bus may be transported on the bus. Some large musical instruments, which are not larger than 43" x 14" x 10" may be transported on the bus. These instruments must be placed in the seat with the student next to the window. Tubas, drums, and some bass guitars or other instruments larger than specified above may not be transported. Radios or stereos, (cassette tapes, etc.), may not be transported on the bus. MP3 players may be transported only on buses servicing schools which allow MP3 players on campus. Any items not permitted at school may not be transported on the bus.
7. Parents are responsible for damages to the school bus due to the misconduct of their children.
8. No animals, large or small, of any kind, are allowed on the bus at any time.

9. Ice skates must have protective guards on the blades or be placed in an appropriate box. Paper bags are not adequate blade protection. Hockey bags may be transported either under the seat or on the seat with the student next to the window.
10. Skis, ski poles and other such sharp edged objects will not be permitted unless previously coordinated with the Unit Principal and Transportation Department. Sleds and plastic toboggans may not be transported.

#### Waiting for the Bus:

1. Walk on the left hand side of the road facing traffic.
2. Stay a safe distance from the roadway.
3. Be at your stop five (5) minutes ahead of time. Your school bus driver has a schedule to keep and cannot wait for you. Be on time for your bus.
4. Line up at the place designated by the bus driver when the school bus approaches.
5. Stay clear of the wheels until the school bus has come to a complete stop--don't play or push others.
6. Students must cross the roadway approximately (15) feet in front of the bus and only when the driver motions for pupils to cross. Stop immediately if the bus driver sounds the horn!

#### Boarding and Off-Loading the School Bus:

1. Students boarding from the right must also wait for the driver's hand signal to board.
2. Let the smaller children board first.
3. Always use the handrail and go up and down the steps one at a time.
4. Don't push, crowd or disturb others.
5. When boarding, go directly to your seat and be seated.
6. After you leave the bus, go directly home or to the assigned place.

#### Conduct on the School Bus:

In general, classroom conduct will be observed. The school bus is not a playground. Save horseplay and wrestling for another place and time.

1. Place books and other gear in your lap.
2. Avoid loud talking, confusion, or anything else that might distract the driver.
3. Do not sit in the driver's seat or interfere with him/her in any manner at any time.
4. Keep quiet near railroad tracks so that the driver can listen for trains.
5. Keep head, arms and body inside the bus.
6. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
7. Do not chew or spit tobacco, smoke, eat, drink, or make use of, or have in possession, alcohol, drugs or controlled substances on the bus.
8. Remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and get off only at your assigned bus stop.
9. Do not open windows without permission; maximum two (2) notches.
10. Do not damage the bus and always assist in keeping it clean.
11. Keep feet on the floor in front of the seat, not in the aisle.
12. Fighting with other students and/or attacking other students or the driver is prohibited.
13. Use of abusive, vulgar language, or directing such language toward other students or adults, is prohibited.

14. Keep the aisle and the exits clear.
15. The emergency door and exit controls may be used only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.

Misconduct Policy and Procedures: Drivers are responsible for maintaining order on the buses. Administering sanctions for misconduct on the school bus is the responsibility of the principal at the school where the student is enrolled. Again, only the principal or designee has the authority to suspend a student's bus riding privileges. It is the responsibility of the principal to inform parents when a student has been suspended.

In the event of misbehavior on the part of the student riding the bus, the bus driver may issue the student a "School Bus Conduct Report" for minor and/or major infractions. The driver will complete the School Bus Conduct Report. Three (3) copies will be forwarded to the Unit Principal and one (1) copy will be retained by the Transportation Department. The Principal will forward one (1) copy to the parents and return one (1) copy to the Transportation Department indicating any disciplinary action taken. The following courses of action are considered as minimum:

1. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the first conduct report may result in a warning, or other disciplinary action, up to and including temporary or permanent suspension of bus privileges by the principal.
2. The second conduct report will result in the imposition of "PROBATIONARY" status. This process will include counseling with the student and official notification to the parents of the probationary action. Bus riding privileges may be denied the student for additional violations.
3. The third conduct report may result in suspension of bus privileges for a minimum of three (3) days, depending on the severity of the incident, and may not be reinstated until after a conference with the student and school personnel.
4. The fourth conduct report will result in suspension of bus privileges. In either case, privileges will not be reinstated until such time a conference has been held with the student, the parents, principal and the Transportation Department.

This procedure will not preclude the right and responsibility of school officials to take other immediate action, as may be necessary in their judgment, for the preservation of good order and specifically for the safety and well-being of other persons who ride the bus.

For Safety's Sake: The bus driver has full responsibility and authority for the safety of students while they are being transported on a Mat-Su School District bus.

Students must be responsible for their own conduct on the bus and not risk their own safety or the safety of others. Habitual misconduct may result in permanent suspension from the privilege of bus transportation. Suspension from bus transportation does not excuse the student from school attendance. Parents should discuss safety and good behavior on the bus with their children. Parent support of the bus driver and the school will ensure safe rides to and from school.

Remember: Riding on the school bus is a privilege and not a right.

1. If a pupil's conduct is such that the health, safety, comfort, or well-being of others is jeopardized, on or off the bus, the privilege of riding the bus may be denied by a school district official.
2. Have a safe, pleasant, and enjoyable trip.
3. For information please call the District Transportation Office at 373-2287.

## SCHOOL AND ROAD CLOSURE INFORMATION

**A MESSAGE OF SAFETY:** Each school day, thousands of children are transported to and from Mat-Su schools. Our highest priority in pupil transportation is the safety of our students. Occasionally our normal schedule is disrupted by weather conditions, which may make road conditions hazardous and generally unsafe for travel. In that event, bus routes may be delayed or cancelled, and schools may be closed. The following information is provided to answer questions regarding the School District's policies and procedures for school closure, road closure and suspension of school bus transportation. For more information, please contact MSBSD's Pupil Transportation Department at 373-2287, or visit the district's Web site at [www.matsuk12.us](http://www.matsuk12.us).

**Q: How will the School District notify parents when schools will be closed or buses will be delayed?**

*A: In the case of school closures, the district will make every attempt to contact families by phone using its ConnectED messaging system. In addition, we encourage students and parents to listen to **KMBQ 99.7 FM** for the latest school bus status reports. Announcements will begin as early as 5 a.m. and will be repeated periodically in the morning hours. If there are no announcements, school buses will run regular routes as scheduled. Announcements may also be heard on the following radio stations: **KNBA 90.3 FM; KMBQ 99.7 FM; KSKA 91.1 FM; KENAI 550 AM; KHAR 590 AM; KYMG 98.9 FM; KYAK 650 AM; KFQD 750 AM; KWHL 106.5 FM; KGOT 101.3 FM***

**Q: What type of weather and road conditions will preclude school bus service and possibly require schools to be closed?**

*A: School bus service will be suspended and schools may be closed when the Glenn Highway, Parks Highway, Palmer/Wasilla Highway and other arterial roads and highways cannot be traveled safely by a school bus. Hazardous conditions may include excessive snow, ice, or unusually cold weather.*

**Q: If school bus service has not been canceled, may parents assume buses will travel the regular routes, picking up and discharging students at all regular bus stops?**

*A: Yes. Buses will travel all regular bus routes, stopping at regular bus stops, wherever road conditions permit.*

**Q: If a bus driver finds a portion of the regular route impassable either to or from school, how will the School District advise parents that students on this portion of the route cannot be picked up or discharged at their regular stop?**

*A: Parents will be advised of the designated pick up or discharge point through announcements on **KMBQ 99.7 FM** radio during the morning and afternoon run, and via ConnectEd or by phone call from the bus contractor. In the afternoon, middle school and high school students will be discharged at the designated point even though parents may not be at the designated point to pick them up.*

*Elementary students and students riding special buses will not be discharged from the bus unless the parent, or someone acting on behalf of the parent, is there to receive the student. Students whose parents cannot be reached will be transported back to their respective schools until parents pick them up.*

**Q: If school bus service is not provided due to inclement weather and parents are unable to transport their children, will their absence from school be excused?**

**A:** *Yes. Absences will be excused for students living in areas where bus service was not provided. Parents are discouraged from taking risks when attempting to transport children to school or to meet the bus at another location.*

**Q: Do road closure policies apply to special education bus transportation also?**

**A:** *Yes.*

**Q: In the event the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent announces a closure, what happens to all school sponsored activities?**

**A:** *All school sponsored activities will be canceled for that day including co-curricular activities and community school activities. No travel to activities outside of the District will be allowed. If road and weather conditions improve following a Friday closure, then activities may be held on Saturday and Sunday. For those students already on an activity outside the District, transportation will be provided back into our District to the previously designated drop off area.*

**Q: Who may parents call when they have questions regarding school bus transportation?**

**A:** *Parents may call the Mat-Su School District Pupil Transportation Office - 373-2287, First Student, Regular and Special Needs Transportation - 357-6327, Bunker & Bunker - 495-6311, and Glacier View Transportation - 745-0948.*

## **NOTICE OF AHERA COMPLIANCE**

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, in order to maintain a safe educational environment in our school facilities, has completed the school inspection and planning requirements as established by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Our school buildings have been thoroughly inspected for the presence of asbestos containing materials. Although we have identified asbestos materials in our facilities, these materials are not "friable" (crushable by hand pressure to release fibers) and do not present a hazard to any of our students or our faculty and staff.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District has developed an asbestos Management Plan for all buildings found to contain asbestos-containing building materials. Interested persons can review the Inspection Report and Management Plan by contacting the Principal's office of the school in which they are interested, or by contacting the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District AHERA designee, John Phillips at 376-0806.

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**SECTION REFERENCE**

- A. Introduction**
- B. Student Bill of Rights**
- C. Conduct Requirements**
- D. Sanctions**
- E. Search and Seizure**
- F. Disciplinary Hearings**
- G. Definitions**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

In order to maintain a conducive environment for quality education, there must be a spirit of mutual respect and involvement among the members of the school community. One goal of public schools is to provide students with opportunities to exercise their human rights as citizens and to participate meaningfully in school affairs. Only in this manner can a true understanding be conveyed of the fundamental principles to which this nation is dedicated.

This policy and the procedures instituted hereunder are intended to encourage the active involvement of students in their education, and to foster the spirit of free inquiry and expression within the framework of orderly and responsible behavior. It is the intent of the School District to afford vigilant protection of the constitutional rights of all members of the school community and, equally, to prescribe and control conduct within the schools, consistent with the safeguards of the Constitution.

1. School Personnel. It is the responsibility of all School District personnel to enforce and comply with this policy and the procedures instituted hereunder. The Board of Education and the administration support all personnel acting within the framework of this policy.

With proper recognition and provision for student and teacher involvement, the school principal is charged with the responsibility of maintaining order and decorum in his or her school. When conditions warrant, it is to be understood that the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent of Schools, school principal, or other authorized school official shall enforce those standards of conduct necessary for order in the schools and shall request the assistance of local and state law enforcement authorities in fulfilling their responsibilities to maintain order whenever, in the judgment of school officials, such assistance is necessary.

Authority for decision-making at the building level rests with the principal or designated representative in accordance with established School District policies and procedures and interpretation thereof by the principal or other appropriate school official. This does not preclude the opportunity for appeal to the next level of authority for review of problems and decisions.

Educational decisions rest with professionally trained staff after students have had an opportunity for involvement. This occurs by virtue of the professional competencies of the staff, their age and maturity, and particularly considering the legal and moral responsibilities incumbent upon (and understood to be duties, responsibilities, and obligations of) such positions as required by the Board of Education, the State of Alaska, and the community at large.

2. Parents. Parents are expected to cooperate with school authorities and to participate in conferences regarding the behavior of their children. Parents may be held responsible for the willful misbehavior of their children, if such behavior results in damage to school property.

3. Students. While on school grounds, facilities, or at school-sponsored activities, students shall comply with District policies and regulations pertaining to student conduct.

Students shall have the right to participate, as suitable to their age and maturity, in decision-making processes, student government, and student organizations. They shall have the constitutional rights to freedom of assembly and expression, and the right to possess and distribute literature, as set forth in Board policies pertaining to student organizations and publications.

In addition, an individual student or group of students shall have the means by which they may discuss problems, make complaints, seek information, make recommendations, seek redress of grievances, or otherwise act individually or as a group with regard to school problems, curriculum matters, and school activities.

If the situation warrants it, such student involvement may be accomplished through the student government or through a subcommittee or special group as determined by the student government and approved by the building principal.

All policies and regulations pertaining to student conduct, discipline, rights, and responsibilities — whether adopted by the Board or issued by the administration — shall be made known to students, who shall in turn be held accountable for complying with them.

## **B. STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

### **1. Right to Education**

- a. The school-age person in this state has the right to receive a public education, and deprivation of that right may occur only for just cause and in accordance with due process of law.
- b. No student may be prohibited from nor inhibited in participation in any School District activity or program with respect to gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or marital or parental status. Separate arrangements may be made for student participation according to gender in human sexuality programs, in interscholastic sports, and in physical education or sport activities



involving bodily contact. No student may be prohibited from nor inhibited in participation in any School District activity or program because of physical or mental disability, except to the extent that such disability actually precludes effective participation in the activity or program.

**2. Freedom of Expression**

- a. Students are entitled to express verbally their personal opinions in a manner that does not interfere with the educational process, that does not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, and that does not interfere with the ability of others to enjoy their rights, including rights of privacy and of preservation of reputation.
- b. Students are entitled to express in writing their personal opinions but are expected to exercise responsibility and good judgment in doing so. The distribution of such materials may not materially and substantially interfere with or disrupt the educational process.
- c. Students have the right to do necessary research for articles, including public opinion polls, if all proper procedures are followed.
- d. Students have the right to distribute leaflets and handbills at times and at places determined by the principal or the Principal's designee. The students who edit, publish or distribute such leaflets and handbills among their fellow students assume the responsibility for the content of such publications. The Principal or designee shall be entitled to pre-distribution examination of materials to ascertain whether these materials would disrupt the orderly educational process. Such decisions should be communicated to the student within a reasonably prompt period of time.
- e. A student's style of dress and grooming will not be regulated by the School District, except to the extent reasonably necessary to promote the educational environment.
- f. Students may wear or display buttons, armbands, flags, decals and other items of symbolic expression, unless the manner of expression is obscene, vulgar, defamatory, promotes or advertises alcohol or drugs, or substantially interferes with the educational process or with the rights of others.
- g. A student may abstain from the pledge of allegiance or salute to the flag.

**3. Freedom of Association, Assembly, and Petition**

- a. Students have the freedom to associate as they see fit, so long as their associations do not substantially interfere with the educational mission of the School District.
- b. Students have the freedom to assemble peacefully. There is an appropriate time and place for such assemblies. Meetings of school-

sponsored organizations on school property shall be conducted at times and at places approved by the Principal or by the Principal's designee.

- c. Students have the right to petition the school, the School District Administration, and the School Board for changes in activities, programs, and school rules and for redress of all grievances.

**4. Student Records**

A student's record is open to inspection by the student or by the student's parents or guardian upon appointment during regular school hours.

**C. CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS**

Certain student conduct is prohibited because it diminishes the learning abilities of that student or other students in the educational community. Students who fail to conform to the required conduct may be subject to appropriate corrective action. Such action may range from simple discipline to expulsion depending on the nature of the conduct and the potential or actual harm caused by the conduct. Illegal as well as other wrongful behaviors are subject to disciplinary action by the school district. The following list is not all inclusive.

**1. Academic Honesty**

The School Board believes that personal integrity is basic to all solid achievement. Students will reach their full potential only by being honest with themselves and with others. Cheating, plagiarizing (stealing and using the ideas, work, or writing of another as one's own), and other types of dishonest behavior is unacceptable and prohibited.

**2. Attendance**

Studies have shown that student attendance at school is directly related to student success. Additionally, student attendance is one of the factors used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress under NCLB. Parents, students, and schools need to work together to promote attendance and success. In order to effectuate positive results and good communication, an automated telephone call will be made to the parents when a student is absent; a written notice will be mailed to the parents after five days of absence. After nine days of absenteeism, the student's absences will be considered habitual and another written notice will be mailed to the parents. In cases of habitually truant students, a referral may be made to the Office of Children's Services. After ten cumulative absences in a semester an administrative, parent, and student conference is required. Schools are encouraged to have positive incentive programs to reward good attendance by students and staff. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in student attendance and to alert the school when their child is to be absent. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements to keep up with school work when the he or she is absent from school.

Students in grades K-5 who attend a minimum of 3.5 hours, regardless of the time of the day, are present for a full day. Students who attend less than 3.5 hours, regardless of the time of the day, are present for a half day.

A student is considered tardy 5 minutes after the start of elementary school and after the bell rings for each class in middle and high school.

High school and middle school absences are to be recorded each class period on School Max by the teacher.

The principal shall have the final authority and discretion on matters related to such discipline for truancy.

**3. Banned Substances**

No student may possess, ingest, deliver, or sell alcoholic beverages, near beer, products containing alcohol, or other non-alcoholic beers and cocktails, illegal drugs (controlled substances), synthetic/herbal drugs, any other intoxicants, or substances purported to be alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.

No student may possess over the counter medications (e.g, No-Doz, aspirin, vitamins, herbal supplements, liquid cough and cold medications, etc.) Possession shall include lockers, backpacks, and vehicles.

**4. BB, Paint Ball, Water Guns, and Pellet Guns**

Students may not possess BB guns, paint ball guns, water guns, pellet guns, or any similar device which discharges a projectile through the use of compressed air, water, elasticity, springs, or gas on school property or while participating in a school sponsored event at any time or under any circumstances.

**5. Cell Phones, Pagers, Electronic Games or Music, and personal digital devices**

Students may possess and use cellular phones, pagers, beepers, and other personal electronic signaling devices on school grounds, except that:

- 1) Such devices must be turned off during instructional time and at any other time directed by a school official, and
- 2) Such devices shall not disrupt any instructional program or school activity

A student whose physician has determined that she or he must possess a personal electronic signaling device for a health-related purpose may provide documentation of that health-related necessity to the school administrator.

The District is not responsible for personal electronic signaling devices that are lost or stolen on school grounds.

**6. Cooperation with School Personnel**

Students must obey the lawful instructions of all School District personnel. District personnel can be identified by personal ID badge.

**7. Criminal Acts**

The commission of or participation in any criminal activity is prohibited. The school may take disciplinary action regardless of whether or not criminal charges are brought by the authorities or the result of prosecution.

**8. Demonstrations**

Conducting demonstrations or meetings, which materially and substantially interfere with the educational process or the lawful activities of others, is prohibited.

**9. Disruptive Behavior**

Disruptive behavior is student conduct which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process or with school-sponsored activities, and is not permitted. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, moving around the classroom without permission, profanity, digital/media devices, vulgarity, uncomplimentary gestures or speech, threats, non-compliance with school or class rules, refusing to acknowledge or to obey a school employee's directions, and behavior which jeopardizes the welfare or safety of other students and staff.

**10. Dress and Appearance**

Student dress and general appearance is a shared responsibility among students, parents/guardians, and the school. The Board of Education requires students to attend school in appropriate dress that meets health and safety standards and does not interfere with the learning process. Certain classes may require students to wear appropriate protective gear. Attire bearing expression or insignia which is obscene, libelous, or which advocates racial, religious, or other prejudice is prohibited. Attire which advertises illegal substances for school age students is prohibited, as are items which suggest sex, alcohol, or tobacco products. Clothing which does not cover undergarments is prohibited. Students wearing prohibited attire will be asked to cover it, change it, or go home until proper attire is worn.

The following minimum standards will be enforced:

- a. Prohibited clothing includes revealing clothing that is transparent or extremely low cut (i.e. shows cleavage); visible undergarments including attire with holes above the knee; shirts or tops that do not cover the waistband of pants, shorts, or skirts, e.g., no portion of the midriff is to be visible; and shorts, dresses, and skirts higher than three inches above the knee. At each principal's discretion, students may wear approved team uniforms for spirit days or other events.
- b. Clothing and accessories, e.g., notebooks, patches, tattoos, and jewelry must not display racial or ethnic slurs or symbols, gang affiliations, vulgar, subversive, sexually suggestive, or otherwise inappropriate language or images; promotion of products that

students may not legally buy such as alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs; or anything that promotes harm to another or to one's self.

- c. Prohibited items include studded jewelry or chains, sunglasses unless medically required, sleepwear or clothing resembling sleepwear.

**11. Drug Paraphernalia**

No student may use, possess, exchange, or sell drug paraphernalia.

**12. Fighting and Assault**

Fighting, assault, and other aggressive acts are uncivilized and have no place in an institution of learning and are accordingly prohibited. All fighting will be deemed to be mutual assault, unless a participant in the fight clearly shows that his or her conduct was justified self-defense in the absence of a reasonable opportunity to retreat from the fight. The principal may exercise discretion in determining appropriate sanctions.

**13. Harassment/Bullying/Discrimination**

Harassment, bullying, and discrimination are prohibited. Abusive language, sexual harassment, cyber-bullying, inappropriate physical contact, racial or ethnic slurs, hazing, and other similar provocative actions are included in these categories of prohibited conduct. Harassment is behavior which is intended to trouble or annoy someone. It is the exertion of power by one person over another; it may be based on misunderstanding or a deliberate act and often contains a subjective perspective. Discrimination and harassment may be based on culture, ability, physical appearance, size, sexuality, or religion, among other things. Bullying is defined as an aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination can take many forms such as hitting, tripping, kicking, punching, unwanted touching, name-calling, swearing, threatening, spreading rumors, ignoring, staring, gesturing, "standing over," preventing someone from joining in an activity, hiding, sending mean notes or e-mails, or damaging someone else's property.

**14. Hazing**

Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off the school grounds, (i.e. trips) to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. The principal will take appropriate disciplinary action against groups or individuals found to have violated this policy.

**15. Housekeeping Rules**

The housekeeping rules of each school, which govern the conduct of students, shall be assembled in written form and distributed to each student in the school. Students shall obey these rules.

**16. Illegal Substances**

No student may be under the influence or in possession of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or any other intoxicants. Under the influence is

presumed from consumption and the standard is set at zero tolerance. Refusal to take a drug test is considered failure to comply with a reasonable request and the presumptive sentence is set at a full semester suspension in support of a drug free school.

Possession shall include lockers, backpacks, and vehicles.

Parents frequently request that their child be given medications during the school day. Parents should be encouraged to ask their physician to establish a medication schedule so that medication can be administered at home before and after school whenever possible. In order to prevent unnecessary school absence, if a student is deemed not to be contagious, parents may arrange for medication to be administered by the school nurse by completing a Medical Authorization Form.

Medication prescribed by a licensed health care provider may be given by the school nurse during the school day if the following criteria are met:

- i. The Medication Authorization Form must be completed and on file in the student's health record for any prescribed medication.
- ii. A signed note from the parents requesting the medication be administered at school must state the hours it is to be administered at school as well as a schedule of when it will be given at home. The directions on the label are to be followed.
- iii. Over-the-counter medication can be dispensed at the discretion of the school nurse if a completed Non-prescription Request Form is on file and the medication is on the list of approved over the counter medications for the Mat-Su Borough School District.
- iv. Prescribed medications must be in the appropriately labeled pharmacy container stating the physician's name, child's name, name of medication and dosage, and specific directions for use.

## **17. Initiations**

Participation in activities such as initiations, hazing, intimidation, or other activities designed to create group affiliation, which may present the danger of physical, mental, or emotional harm are prohibited.

## **18. Internet User/Misuse**

District computers and networks must be in support of education, research, and the educational goals and objectives of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. Students are personally responsible for this provision at all times when using District computers.

Misuse is defined as any malicious attempt to physically deface, disable, or destroy computers, peripherals, or other network hardware, to harm or destroy data of another user or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the system, to gain access or attempt to gain access to unauthorized systems or to access inappropriate materials from school computers. Attempt to bypass the District's internet filtering software is prohibited. Streaming non-educational music or video is not allowed. Any

misuse will result in loss of computer privileges, disciplinary action, or possible legal referral.

**19. Off-Campus Events**

At school sponsored off-campus events and on school buses, students shall be governed by School District rules and shall be subject to the authority of School District personnel. Additionally, students are subject to all rules and regulations of their home school and those of the host school or organization.

**20. Parking Permits**

Although the School District provides bus transportation for students, with certain exceptions, it recognizes the necessity for some students to drive automobiles to school. All students who drive their own or their family's car to school are to register the car and obtain the necessary parking permit. As a condition to obtaining a permit, the student shall be required to consent to potential search of the automobile by school authorities with reasonable suspicion that the vehicle may contain drugs, alcohol, weapons, or evidence of any activity which is illegal or in violation of school policies or procedures. Notification shall be provided at each school that vehicles, which do not display parking permits, are subject to removal from the school property at the owner's expense. In the interest of safety, improper student driving practices may subject the offending student to forfeiture of the vehicle's parking permit, as well as to other forms of discipline. The District may charge a parking fee. The District may restrict banners, bumper stickers or any offensive objectionable materials visible on or in the car.

**21. Publications**

School sponsored student publications shall be subject to the editorial discretion of the school principal or designee. These publications shall conform to the objectives of the school curriculum. The school principal or designee shall review and approve these student publications before printing or distribution.

- a. Generally, the restrictions and regulations governing responsible journalism, as defined by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, should be applied to student publications. The following material and language is prohibited from publications distributed on school property:
  - i. obscenity;
  - ii. libel;
  - iii. incitement and calls for violence;
  - iv. matter which violates the rights of privacy of another;
  - v. profane or vulgar language which would not be used by local newspapers; and
  - vi. advertisements for tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs and paraphernalia, or any other product or substance the sale of which is prohibited to or by any school-age student as defined by state statutes.
- b. Publications being distributed on school property may be seized by the principal or designee who has reasonable cause to believe that such

publications contain any material forbidden above. Seized publications may be made available to the parents or guardian.

- c. Commercial solicitation is not to be allowed on school property. Non-school newspapers may be distributed only at times and at places and in a manner determined by the principal or designee.
- d. Students who wish to administer a survey to classmates or school mates shall first have the survey approved by the teacher, principal, and, if necessary, obtain permission of all parents of students taking the survey. A questionnaire or survey, whether anonymous or not, that inquires into personal or private family affairs of the student not a matter of public record or subject to public observation may not be administered or permitted in a school unless written permission is obtained from the student's parent or legal guardian. (For purposes of this section a "questionnaire or survey" means a list of questions to, or information collected from, a class or group of students.) For an anonymous questionnaire or survey, written permission may be obtained annually and is valid until the commencement of the subsequent school year or until the parent or legal guardian who gave permission submits a written withdrawal of permission to the school principal. The school shall provide each student's parent or legal guardian at least two weeks' notice before administering a questionnaire or survey.

If a school administers to a student a questionnaire or survey that is not anonymous, the school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent or legal guardian at least two weeks before the questionnaire or survey is administered. (AK Statute 14.03.110)

**22. Self Identification**

All students must, upon request, identify themselves to authorized School District personnel who properly identify themselves as being in a position of authority.

**23. Sexting**

Sexting is defined as the act of sending sexually explicit materials electronically and is strictly prohibited.

**24. Sexual Misconduct**

Mat Su School District is committed to creating an academic environment that is safe and secure for all students. Sexual misconduct is contradictory to the School District's core values and will not be tolerated. The District aims to eliminate sexual misconduct through education by encouraging staff and students to route concerns or complaints through the proper channels. Sexual acts of any type, at school, off campus events, during sponsored activities, or on a school bus are prohibited. Such acts include, but are not limited to, fondling, oral sex, or intercourse. Any of these acts could lead to a semester suspension or possible expulsion with loss of credit.



Sexual misconduct includes a wide range of unacceptable behavior, including but not limited to, rape, sexual assault, which includes all nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, stalking and any other conduct of a sexual nature, undertaken without mutual consent or which has the purpose or effect of threatening or intimidating a person. Although sexual misconduct often includes unwanted or nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual contact is not necessary for an act to be considered sexual misconduct.

Consent to sexual activity is defined as knowing and voluntary agreement between the participants to engage in sexual activity. Consent cannot be given by a person who is asleep or physical or cognitively/mentally impaired by any alcohol, drug or other intoxicant. Consent cannot be compelled by force, threat of force, or deception, and cannot be given by a person who is unaware that the sexual act is being committed, who is mentally impaired or who lacks the physical ability to resist or consent to the sexual activity. Consent cannot be given if it is coerced by supervisory or disciplinary authority. Per state law, agreement given under any of the above-described conditions does not constitute consent.

When there is not mutual consent to sexual activity or contact, a student will be sanctioned and the incident reported to the police. It may become necessary that the perpetrator move to another school. Student(s) found in violation of sexual misconduct may be suspended for a semester or expelled from school.

Consensual sexual relationships should never exist among student and staff and will be vigorously pursued. Any behavior will be reported to law enforcement and the Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC).

**25. Social Media Networking**

Students are free to express their opinions online. However, all students are responsible for the content of their social networking. This can include any form of cyber-bullying of anyone. See definition of cyber-bullying. Inappropriate material may be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

**26. Tobacco**

Students shall not smoke any substance or otherwise use nor possess tobacco, lighters, matches, or non FDA approved nicotine delivery device products anywhere on school property or at activities under school jurisdiction.

**27. Vandalism**

Vandalism is the willful or malicious destruction of public or private property. Acts of vandalism deprive students of the use and enjoyment of valuable educational resources. Vandalism adds to the costs the community must bear in providing educational opportunities to all students. Vandalism in all forms is prohibited.

**28. Weapons**

Students may not possess firearms, ammunition, or explosive devices on school property or while participating in school-sponsored events. Students may not possess other types of weapons or replicas of any types of weapons on school property or while participating in a school-sponsored event, unless permission to do so is obtained from an administrator or from a teacher authorized to give that permission. Any item used with the intent to do harm or cause fear of harm may be deemed a weapon.

**D. SANCTIONS**

**1. Disciplinary Authority**

- a. The School Board creates general and specific policies, which control student behavior and discipline. It also considers appeals of significant disciplinary decisions by Principals or by the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent. Only the School Board has the authority to expel a student.
- b. The Chief School Administrator/Superintendent at his or her discretion may implement additional rules and procedures, consistent with the policies established by the School Board, to regulate student conduct. Each Principal shall implement written school rules and procedures, consistent with the policies of the School Board and with the rules and procedures issued by the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent, to regulate student conduct. The School Board, Chief School Administrator/Superintendent, Principal, or their respective designees, are authorized to suspend or otherwise to discipline students for cause and to recommend expulsion.
- c. Each teacher has the authority to control student behavior in the teacher's class and during activities committed during the teacher's supervision. Each teacher has the authority to discipline students in a manner consistent with School Board policies and administrative guidelines.

**2. Types of Discipline**

When breaches of school disciplinary rules and regulations occur, it is the responsibility of involved teachers and administrators to work with the student, the student's parents, and other support personnel to help the student correct the behavior.

All disciplinary actions should be directed toward protecting the welfare of the school community as well as helping the student develop self-discipline. When determining the response for a specific breach of discipline, school personnel must consider the nature of the act, the student's previous history, age and maturation, any mitigating circumstances, and the effect of the student's actions on the welfare of the school community.

Disciplinary responses may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Counseling;
- ii. Peer mediation;
- iii. Saturday detention;
- iv. Warning;
- v. Immediate correction (may include loss of grade on exam or project in cases of academic dishonesty);
- vi. Suspension of bus privileges (for bus misconduct);
- vii. Request for parent conference;
- viii. Loss of co-curricular privileges;
- ix. Detention before or after school;
- x. Denial of privileges;
- xi. Restriction;
- xii. Probation;
- xiii. Temporary removal from class or activity (24 hours or less);
- xiv. Referral to outside agency including Juvenile Court;
- xv. Compensatory or commensurate services equal to the infraction, such as restoring property;
- xvi. Suspension; and/or
- xvii. Expulsion

- a. **Simple Discipline:** Simple discipline includes any disciplinary action against a student other than long-term suspension or expulsion. Simple disciplinary action will not be taken in such a manner as to prevent a student from accomplishing specific academic, grade level, or graduation requirements.
- b. **Suspension:** A suspension is a denial of the right of school attendance, either from a single class or up to and including any full schedule of classes for a limited period of time.

- b. Short-Term Suspension: A short-term suspension is a suspension ordered by the administration which will not exceed ten school days in duration. A short-term suspension may only be appealed to the school principal or to a peer review.

- c. Interim Suspension: An interim suspension is to be used for students whose presence pose an immediate or continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process. Immediate removal from school may occur. In such cases, the required hearing and/or investigation shall follow as soon as is practical.

- d. Long-Term Suspension: Long-term suspension is any suspension which is ordered to last for more than ten school days. A long-term suspension shall not exceed a semester, but if a long-term suspension is ordered at the end of a semester requiring a loss of credit, it may be served either retroactively or during the upcoming semester as directed by the unit administrator. Students may lose academic credit during a long-term suspension. Students may enroll in correspondence schools, home schools, or participate in an

assigned alternative placement during a long-term suspension.

\*NOTE: A principal may refer a student who has been given a long term suspension for a) alcohol use, b) drug use, c) aggressive behavior, or d) self-harming behavior to the Mat-Su Day School for an Educational Conference. The length of the suspension may be mitigated by the principal if the student complies with the recommendations of the Educational Conference.

- c. **Expulsion:** Expulsion is the permanent denial of the privilege of school attendance within the School District by the School Board. The School Board may consider readmission of a student after one year. Students may not enroll in any other school in the district including correspondence, home school, charter schools, or alternative schools during an expulsion.

### 3. Limitations on Suspensions and Expulsions

- a. A student may be suspended or expelled from school for any of the following causes:
  - (1) Continued willful disobedience or open and persistent defiance of reasonable school authority;
  - (2) Behavior which is contrary to the welfare, safety, or morals of other pupils, of employees of the School District, of volunteers assisting the School District, or of any other members of the educational community;
  - (3) Conviction of a felony or other crime that the School District determines will cause the attendance of the child to be contrary to the welfare or education of other students. Felony convictions, no matter where the criminal conduct occurred, that may cause the suspension or expulsion of a student, include but are not limited to the following:
    - i. **AIDING AND ABETTING:** Assisting in the commission of any of the felonies below, with the result of being legally accountable for crimes of another. AS 11.16. 100-130.
    - ii. **ARSON:** Willful and malicious setting of fire, or attempt to set fire. AS 11.46.400-410, 11.31.100 (a).
    - iii. **ATTEMPTING OR SOLICITATION:** Attempting to commit any of the foregoing felonies or soliciting another to do so. AS 11.31.100-110.
    - iv. **BURGLARY:** Unlawful entry with intent to commit a crime. AS 11.46.300-310.
    - v. **CRIMINAL POSSESSION OF EXPLOSIVES:** AS 11.61.240-250.
    - vi. **EXTORTION OR BLACKMAIL:** Obtaining money, property, or actions by violence or threat of violence or untrue accusations or public ridicule. AS 11.46.520-530.

- vii. FELONIOUS ASSAULT: Physical threat directed at a person or an act of violence upon a person. AS 11.41.200-220, 11.41.410-438.
- viii. LARCENY: Theft without force or violence against another person. AS 11.46.100-130.
- ix. MALICIOUS MISCHIEF: Willful property damage or interference with property rights. AS 11.46.480, 482, 484.
- x. MURDER: Intentionally causing the death of another. AS 11.41.100-120
- xi. ROBBERY: Stealing from the person of another by force or threat of force. AS 11.41.500-510
- xii. SALE, USE OF, POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS: AS 11.71.010-040, AS 11.73.010.

- (4) Possession of a firearm, explosive device, or deadly weapon; and
- (5) Other causes, including medical reasons, as set out in AS14.30.045.

- b. A student may be readmitted to school when it reasonably appears that the requirements of the unit administrator have been fully met.

#### 4. **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

- a. **Introduction:** These procedures define local administrative policies which are intended to maintain the District's compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IV Chapter 52 Alaska Administrative Code, and the Alaska Special Education Handbook. The following narrative is a summary of general requirements necessary for providing a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) to children who possess disabilities.

The IDEA Amendments require districts to address student behavior issues in a proactive manner. The IEP team is required to consider, when appropriate, positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address students' behavior that may impede their learning or present safety issues. School personnel may discipline a student with disabilities in the same manner as nondisabled students, which might include short-term removals of up to and including 10 school days, consecutively or cumulatively, during one school year. If a school proposes to remove a disabled student for more than the accumulated 10 days, an IEP meeting must be scheduled immediately to determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. Additionally, the IEP team must conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan, which becomes part of the IEP document.

- b. **School Sanctions:** Suspensions that count toward the accumulated 10 days for disabled students include:

- (1) In-school suspensions (unless the student's behavioral intervention plan stipulates that this is an appropriate intervention and IEP and regular instructional services are continued);
- (2) Suspension from bus transportation, if this results in the student's discontinuation of regular school attendance;
- (3) Interim suspensions;
- (4) Out of school suspensions; and,
- (5) Expulsions.

A disciplinary sanction that will result in the disabled student being precluded from school attendance for more than the accumulation of 10 days during the school year may only be proposed until the IEP team can convene and consider taking action described in this section.

- c. **Manifestation Determination:** A disabled student whose behavior is a manifestation of his/her disability may not receive a school sanction for more than the accumulation of ten days as described above. Rather, the misconduct will be addressed through the behavioral intervention plan. If, however, the IEP team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability after a review of all relevant information, including the IEP and placement, suspension may be imposed. Suspensions accumulating to more than 10 school days may be imposed if the IEP team answers no to each of the following questions:

- (1) The conduct in question was not caused by, or did not have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability, and
- (2) The conduct in question was not the direct result of the District's failure to implement the student's IEP / 504 plan (including any behavior intervention plan)

If the IEP team answers no to both of these questions, the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, and the school may take disciplinary action in the same manner as it would for nondisabled students, except the student must continue to receive special education and related services under the student's IEP/504 plan in an alternative educational setting as determined by the student's IEP/504 team. When parents disagree with the manifestation determination, they have the right to request an expedited due process hearing in the manner provided in AS 14.30.193. Under these conditions, the student will remain in the current school placement until a hearing officer's decision is rendered, unless the disciplinary action is for behavior involving weapons or drugs, or serious bodily injury.

When parents disagree with the school's proposed disciplinary action, but agree with the IEP team's manifestation determination, they may request a hearing under the procedures for Disciplinary Hearings applicable to appeals from suspensions exceeding 10 days and expulsions. The District must then ensure that all special education and disciplinary records are provided to the administrative hearing officer.

d. **Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavioral Intervention:** For special education students, one of the primary themes of the IDEA is the remediation of behavioral problems, which must be clearly articulated on the IEP. Under certain circumstances, the District is required to develop a functional analysis of chronic misbehavior as well as an individually tailored behavioral intervention plan. If the disabled student possesses such a plan as part of his/her IEP, this must be reviewed prior to making a manifestation determination. When the IEP team concludes that the behavioral interventions were not adequately implemented or somehow inappropriate, the determination must be that the student's disability led to the misconduct. Under these conditions, the student may not be suspended beyond 10 days (consecutively or cumulatively).

e. **Weapon and Drug-related Misconduct:** The District may change a disabled student's placement by moving him/her to an interim alternative setting for 45 days if:

- (1) The student carries a weapon to school or to a school function;
- (2) The student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells/solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school functions, or
- (3) The student inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a function under the jurisdiction of the school district.

An interim alternative educational setting must allow the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum (regular instruction), although in a different setting. Also, the alternative placement must allow the student to continue to receive IEP services, including modifications designed to address the child's behavior. The IEP team is responsible for determining the specific setting. If parents disagree with the decision and request a due process hearing, the interim alternative setting becomes the "stay put" placement for 45 calendar days.

f. **Dangerous Misconduct:** A Due Process Hearing Officer may move a student to an interim alternative educational setting if the student would be substantially likely to cause injury to himself/herself or others in his/her current school placement. The District must demonstrate that school personnel have made reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the current placement. The interim alternative placement must meet all of the requirements described above.

g. **Students Not Eligible for Special Education:** If the District had knowledge that the student possessed a disability prior to the misconduct which resulted in disciplinary action, but a decision on eligibility had not yet been completed, that student may be entitled to the due process described above. If the District did not have knowledge that the student possessed a disability before the misconduct occurred, the school's regular disciplinary procedures will apply. If the student's parents request an evaluation

following the incident, the school is required to expedite the evaluation process.

During the evaluation period, the student remains in the placement determined by the school.

**5. Presumptive Sanctions**

The District shall refer all criminal acts to the appropriate authorities. In addition, in the absence of clear evidence showing that the application of the sanction would be inappropriate or unjust under the circumstances of a particular case, the following sanctions are presumed to be appropriate for the offenses listed below:

a. **Illegal Substances Sanctions/Banned Substances or Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug (TAD):** The following presumptive disciplinary actions will be applied to students shown to be guilty of selling or attempting to sell, delivery or attempting to deliver, possessing or attempting to possess, or being under the influence of illegal substances while under School District jurisdiction. Prescription and over-the-counter substances are subject to this provision if the school nurse does not inventory the substance and permission by the nurse is not granted for possession. Consequences for discipline should not accumulate between elementary and middle and middle and high. Consequences for TAD offenses should start over in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and again in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

(1) Under the Influence, which includes consumption or possession (owning or having control of the substance)

(a) High School, Junior High, and Middle School Students:

- i. First offense:  
Any sanction appropriate under the circumstances with a minimum 5 day suspension up to and including a semester suspension. The length of the suspension may be mitigated if the student complies with the requirements of an education conference.
- ii. Second offense: 30 day up to a semester suspension from attendance. The student may enroll in the district's correspondence study school, or participate in an assigned alternative program.
- iii. Third offense: A semester suspension from attendance. The student may enroll in the district's correspondence study school or participate in an assigned alternative program.

(b) Elementary School Students

- i. First offense: Any sanction appropriate under the circumstances up to and including a 10 day suspension.
- ii. Second offense: Any sanction appropriate under the circumstances up to and including a ten day suspension.



iii. Third offense: Semester suspension.

(2) Delivery or Sale (Trading, Transferring, or Giving the Substance to Another)

(a) High School, Junior High, and Middle School Students  
Expulsion and referral to law enforcement authorities

(b) Elementary School Students  
Expulsion and referral to law enforcement authorities.

b. **Weapons:** The following minimum sanctions will be applied to students who violate the prohibition against possession of the following weapons, unless the Board rules otherwise for good cause shown. More severe sanctions may be assessed if warranted.

(1) Possession of a firearm, explosive device that may cause death or serious injury, or any deadly weapon, will result in expulsion and referral to the proper law enforcement agency

(2) Possession without permission of:

- i. a weapon, which is not a firearm, explosive device, or a deadly weapon;
- ii. a BB gun, paint ball gun, pellet gun, or any similar device which discharges a projectile through the use of compressed air or gas;
- iii. any electric shocking device;
- iv. knives of any length including box cutters.

Suspension up to thirty (30) days and referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Factors considered in weighing the severity of a sanction for the items noted in "i", "ii", "iii," and "iv" above include the intent of the person in possession or planned use of the item, the potential degree of danger or hazard the item may present, and the threat to student and school safety if the item accidentally left the control of the individual who brought it on campus.

c. **Tobacco:** Students who smoke, use, or possess any tobacco products or paraphernalia (i.e. lighters) anywhere on school property or at activities under school district jurisdiction will be subject to the following minimum sanctions:

- i. First Offense: Three (3) day suspension
- ii. Second Offense: Five (5) day suspension
- iii. Third and later Offenses: Ten (10) day suspension

All athletes are subject to TAD (Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Free) guidelines and penalties as outlined in ASAA (Alaska School Activities Association) handbook.

As an alternative to suspension, a tobacco information or cessation course, or in-school suspension, may be offered in lieu of the three, five or ten day suspension when district or grant funding permits.

- d. **Conspiring to commit offenses:** Whenever two or more students conspire or otherwise work in concert to commit an offense sanctioned under this policy, the School Board has determined that the seriousness of the offense is compounded by the concerted activity, which, in itself, is behavior that is contrary to the welfare, safety, and morals of the school community. A suspension of at least five (5) school days will be applied to any concerted offense. Suspensions of greater duration, up to and including a semester, and expulsion may be applied in the appropriate cases.
- e. **Vandalism:** In addition to any other discipline imposed upon a student who has committed an act of vandalism, the School District will demand reimbursement for the cost of remedying the damage or destruction resulting from the vandalism. In group vandalism incidents, all parties may be held fully financially responsible for the damages.
- f. **Direct and Willful Insubordination:** Direct and willful insubordination is the failure to follow a staff member's reasonable request. Any student found to be insubordinate shall be suspended up to and including a long-term suspension with loss of credit.
- g. **Threats of Serious Harm or Death:** Statements that threaten serious harm or death are not tolerated in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. All such statements are taken seriously. Disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, may be taken.
- h. **Suspensions and Expulsions from other School Districts:** The Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District will uphold suspensions and expulsions of students entering from other districts.

#### **E. SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The following rules shall apply to the search of students, their property, and of school property assigned to them (e.g., lockers), and to the seizure of student possessions.

- 1. Principals or their designees may search a student or student's property for specific items if he/she has reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the School District or of the school.
- 2. Principals or their designees may search vehicles parked on school property if he/she has reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will turn up

evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the School District or of the school.

3. The school administration retains control over lockers and desk space assigned to students. As a condition to obtaining a locker, each student shall be required to consent in writing to the search of the locker by school authorities.
4. Force should not be used in conducting a search, unless it is based on a reasonable belief that it is necessary to prevent a serious and immediate threat to the safety of anyone present within School District jurisdiction. Any student who refuses a legitimate search demand by proper school authorities will be subject to discipline.
5. Materials discovered in a search may be used in school disciplinary proceedings and may also be turned over to law enforcement officials.
6. Firearms, weapons, illegal substances, other items determined to be a threat to the safety, welfare, or security of others, and any item used to disrupt or to interfere with the educational process may be seized by school authorities. All illegal items will be delivered to law enforcement authorities. Physical evidence of a crime will also be delivered to law enforcement authorities. All legal items not given to law enforcement authorities shall, upon request, be made available to the student's parents or guardian.

## **F. DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS**

### **1. Suspensions of Ten days or Less**

- a. Level One Meeting: Before a student may be placed on a short-term suspension, the assistant principal or principal shall give the student:
  - 1) Oral or written notice of the charges supporting the suspension;
  - 2) Oral or written description of the evidence known to support the charges;
  - 3) An opportunity to present an oral explanation of his/her side of the case.

If the decision is made to place the student on short-term suspension at the conclusion of the Level One Meeting, the assistant principal or principal shall give the student, upon request, written notice of the suspension, the charges supporting the suspension, a summary of the evidence known to support the charges, and an informal post suspension meeting. Notice of available appeal procedures shall be sent to the student's parents or guardian, or to the student if emancipated, within one school day of the imposition of the suspension. A principal may deny any student the opportunity in all school events until the appeal is resolved.

- b. Level Two Meeting: In addition to the informal hearing, the student or the student's parents or guardian may, within three school days of the initial imposition of the suspension, request a meeting with the principal.
- 1) A meeting with the principal or with the principal's designee is to occur within two school days of receipt of the request. It is not expected that this meeting will resemble a formal hearing; rather, it should provide the parents, the guardian, or the student the opportunity to discuss the disciplinary problem with the principal or designee and to explore any changes to the discipline initially imposed. The principal or designee need not allow anyone other than the student and the student's parents or guardian to attend this meeting;
  - 2) If the student, parent or guardian requests a change or termination of the suspension at the post-suspension meeting, the principal or the principal's designee must issue a decision within one school day of the meeting. A written notice of the decision must be sent to the student and parents or guardian and an attempt to communicate the decision to them orally must be made within this time period.
- c. Level Three Meeting: Short-term suspension and simple discipline shall not be appealed to the Chief School Administrator/ Superintendent or the School Board. However, in the case of an elementary school that does not have both an assistant principal and principal for an appeal; the unit administrator may contact another school principal to serve as a peer review of his/her decision for an informal appeal by the parent and student.

## **2. Suspensions of More Than Ten Days and Expulsions**

### **a. Notice of Disciplinary Action**

- (1) Written notice of a principal's recommendation to suspend a student for more than 10 school days or to recommend expulsion shall be sent by certified mail or delivered in person to the student and to the student's parents or guardian. This notice shall contain the following:
  - i. The specific charges against the student and a summary of the facts known to support these charges;
  - ii. The recommended sanctions against the student; and
- (2) Pending implementation of the recommended suspension, the student may be placed on an interim suspension. Prior to the enactment of any interim suspension, the student shall be given the opportunity to participate in an informal hearing as described in Board Policy 5144.1. Whether or not an interim suspension is imposed, the student and parents or guardian may have a meeting

with the Principal as described in Board Policy 5144.1. Those days missed from school due to an interim suspension will be subsumed within the ultimate disciplinary sanction.

b. Hearing Request

8. If the student, parents, or guardian wish to contest the recommended disciplinary action, a written request for a hearing must be sent to the principal and to the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent within five school days of receipt of the written notice of disciplinary action. The request for hearing should state:

- i. Whether a hearing is requested on the charges, on the recommended sanction, or on both;
- ii. A summary of the reasons why the intended disciplinary action is considered to be inappropriate;
- iii. Whether the hearing should be open or closed to the public;
- iv. Whether a hearing on any emergency suspension is requested; and
- v. Whether an attorney will represent the student.

9. A hearing on the merits of the charges or the propriety of the recommended sanction shall be held within five school days of receipt of the request.

c. Hearing Officer

a. The hearing authority shall be the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent or designee.

d. Formal Hearing

The following procedural guidelines shall govern the hearing on the merits of the charges and on the propriety of the recommended sanction:

- (1) Parents/guardian may be present at the hearing.
- (2) The student, parents/guardian, and School District may be represented by legal counsel or other spokesperson.
- (3) The student or the student's representative shall be permitted reasonable opportunity to inspect, in advance of the hearing, all affidavits or exhibits which school authorities intend to submit at the hearing. Upon request, the student shall disclose to the hearing officer all documentary evidence which he/she intends to submit at the hearing.
- (4) The order of the hearing will be as follows:

- a) Presentation by the school of:
    - i. the offense(s) with which the student is charged;
    - ii. sanction recommended and the reasons for the recommendation; and,
    - iii. the facts in support of the charges and of the recommended sanction.
  - b) Presentation by the student or representative.
  - c) Rebuttal by the school.
- (5) The presentations by both parties may include oral or written argument, affidavits, exhibits and such witnesses as desired.
  - (6) All relevant, not unduly repetitious, evidence shall be accepted. However, written statements solicited for the purposes of the hearing must be in the form of a sworn or affirmed affidavit.
  - (7) The student shall be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him/her. In addition, the student shall be allowed to question any witness present at the hearing.
  - (8) The hearing officer shall make his/her determination solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing.
  - (9) Either a tape-recorded or verbatim record shall be made of the hearing by the School District.
  - (10) Within five school days of the hearing, the hearing officer shall render his or her decision upholding, modifying in any manner, or repudiating the recommended disciplinary action. This initial decision should be communicated to the student or to the student's parents or guardian orally, if possible, and must be sent by mail within this time period. The student and the student's parent/guardian will be mailed or otherwise provided with a complete written decision, including supporting findings of fact, within five school days of the hearing (with a copy to the school principal).
  - (11) If the decision to suspend the student is upheld, the sanction shall take effect immediately. If a recommended expulsion is approved, the matter will be referred to the School Board for final action.

e. Appeal to the School Board

- (1) The student, the parents, or the guardian shall have five school days after receipt of the hearing officer's complete written decision to appeal the decision to the School Board by delivering a written appeal request to the Chief School

Administrator/Superintendent. The appeal request should state the relief requested from the School Board and a summary of the reasons why the School Board should act as requested.

- (2) If an appeal is requested, the imposition of the sanction may be stayed by the hearing officer or by the School Board until the appeal is decided. If the student is on interim suspension, the suspension may continue until a final determination is rendered. However, the student may request that the hearing officer or the School Board relieve him or her of interim suspension pending a decision on the appeal.
- (3) The following procedural guidelines shall govern an appeal to the School Board.
  - a) The School Board will schedule and hold a meeting to review the appeal at the next school Board meeting that is more than 10 days from the time of the receipt of the appeal request. All materials considered by the hearing officer and the written decision from the hearing officer will be provided to the Board prior to the hearing.
  - b) At that time, the student, the student's parents/guardian and his/her attorney or other spokesperson, and the district's representative shall have the right to present oral and/or written argument and any new, relevant evidence not available at the time of the original hearing. If substantive new facts are brought forward that were unavailable at the time of the original hearing, the Board may direct the parents and student back to the school principal for further review prior to any hearing by the Board.
  - c) The school principal shall have a right to respond to/refute any new oral/written arguments.
  - d) The basis of the Board's decision shall be the following:
    - i. Did the student get to tell his/her side of the story after being presented with the basis of the allegation?
    - ii. Was the school's understanding of the facts correct?
    - iii. Was the disciplinary sanction within the scope of what is set forth in Board policy?
  - e) Prior to adjournment, the School Board shall make its decision known or agree to:
    - i. study the hearing record or other materials and report its decision within five school days; or

- ii. schedule and hold a special meeting to hear further evidence or arguments on that case and report its findings and decisions within ten school days; or
- iii. Return the case to the school principal for further review.

**3. Time Deadlines, Waiver:**

If the student, parents, or guardian fail to make a timely and appropriate request for any hearing, meeting, or appeal, it shall be deemed they have waived their right to any further review of the sanction. However, discretionary review, under Board Policy 5144.1, shall always be available. Furthermore, the parties may agree to modify any time period required by these procedures.

**4. Discretionary Review:**

Under no circumstances shall either a suspension or an expulsion prevent a student from making an application for readmission prior to the termination of imposed sanctions. Applications for readmission shall be given to the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent. Such applications must outline all the facts, which support the conclusion that the cause for the disciplinary action has been adequately remedied, or that there exists some other compelling reason to suspend the effect of the disciplinary action. Applications for readmission after an expulsion may be decided by the School Board without a formal hearing. Applications for readmission after a suspension may be decided by the Chief School Administrator/Superintendent in consultation with the school principal.

i)G. DEFINITIONS:

The underlined words or phrases below are employed in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy with the following meanings.

1. Assault: Assault is unjustified intentional conduct by a student toward another person which causes offensive bodily contact, physical harm, or physical restraint or which, together with the apparent means of accomplishing it, threatens physical harm.
2. Cyber-Bullying: includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by use of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including, but not limited to, blogs, Facebook posts, MySpace posts, Twitter posts) which have the effect of:



1. Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student or staff member, or;
  2. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm;
  3. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property;
  4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or
  5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.
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3. Delivery: When used in connection with the phrase "illegal substance", the term "delivery" means giving an illegal substance to another person; however, the term does not include surrender of an illegal substance to law enforcement or school officials or to others in positions of authority.
  4. Illegal Substances: The term "illegal substances" includes all alcoholic beverages and all drugs and other controlled substances by AS 11.71.010-070 and AS 11.73.010.
  5. Libel: Libel is a false statement which is, or may be, injurious to a person's reputation and which is communicated to another person in writing or by some other form of publication.
  6. Obscenity: is matter which (1) taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest of an average person, applying contemporary community standards, and/or (2) portrays sexual conduct, excretory functions, or sexual organs in a patently offensive way, and (3) lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.
  7. Principal: The term "principal" is used to mean the chief administrative official of a school.
  8. Publications: Publications include any written, printed, painted, drawn, or photographic matter.
  9. School Board/Board of Education: Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board.
  10. School Days: For purposes of time periods stated in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy, the phrase "school days" includes all days on which school is actually in session for students and all weekdays during the students' summer vacation, excepting state and federal holidays.
  11. School District: Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District.
  12. School District Jurisdiction: The term "school district jurisdiction" means the extent, in terms of time, space, and subject matter, of the School District's authority to control the behavior of students. Students are subject to the rules and regulations of the School District whenever they are present:

- a. on school grounds;
  - a. in a school building;
  - b. on school buses traveling to and from school;
  - c. on any form of transportation provided at School District expense;
  - d. at school sponsored on-campus events;
  - e. at school sponsored off-campus events; or
  - f. at activities sponsored by the Alaska School Activities Association.
13. Chief School Administrator/Superintendent:  
Chief School Administrator/Superintendent of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District.
14. Vandalism: Vandalism includes intentional, willful, knowing, and reckless damage to or destruction of property owned, held, or used by the School District. Graffiti is a form of vandalism. Acts of vandalism deprive students of the use and enjoyment of valuable educational resources. Vandalism adds to the costs the community must bear in providing educational opportunities to all students. Vandalism also includes taking School District property without permission, whether or not its return is intended, and it includes negligent damage to, or destruction of, property so taken. Vandalism in all forms is prohibited.\_
15. Weapon: The term “weapon” includes two types of weapons: deadly weapons and defensive weapons. The phrase “deadly weapon” means any firearm, or any other thing designed for and capable of causing death or serious physical injury, including a knife, an ax, a club, metal knuckles, or an explosive, pressurized, or spring loaded device. This definition applies to the use of other objects to cause death or serious physical injury. The phrase “defensive weapon” means any electric stun gun, or a device to dispense mace or a similar chemical agent, that is not designed to cause death or serious physical injury. For purposes of this prohibition, pocketknives and other sharp tools may be deemed to be weapons.

**MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Adoption Date: 08/07/95**  
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