



2015 – 2016 School Year

K – 5th Grade Handbook



Merritt Academy

59900 Havenridge Rd.

New Haven, MI 48048

586.749.6000

WELCOME to the Home of the Mustangs!

Welcome to Merritt Academy! Our staff is looking forward to providing your child with every educational opportunity for maximum growth in the academic and social-emotional areas. Our goal is to provide meaningful instruction, positive for you and your child.

Merritt Academy Mission Statement

The mission of Merritt Academy is to instill in its students academic excellence, character development, a love for lifelong learning and service to others.



We're on the web!

www.merritt-academy.org

You can also check on the progress of your individual student by visiting powerschool.merritt-academy.org/public/home.html

Enter in your ID and password!

Academy School Hours

Grades K-5 7:45 AM – 3:15 PM

Grades 6-12 7:45 AM – 3:15 PM

Academy School Office Hours

Mon-Fri 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Merritt Academy Founder

John Romine

Merritt Academy Board of Directors

Karen Bochatyn, President

Amy White-Jones, Vice President

Kenneth Raulston, Treasurer

Karen Boska, Secretary

Lisa Bonett, Board Member

Administration

Nathan Seiferlein, Principal

nseiferlein@merritt-academy.org

Tracy Cohrs, Vice Principal

tcohrs@merritt-academy.org

Robert Girvin, Dean of Students/Athletic Director

rgirvin@merritt-academy.org

Mark Witkowski Counselor

mwitkowski@merritt-academy.org

Angela Paddock, Pupil Accounting

apaddock@merritt-academy.org

Amy Schluckbier, Office Manager

aschluckbier@merritt-academy.org

Rosie Scianimanico, Office Manager

rscianimanico@merritt-academy.org

Educational Service Provider

The Romine Group

7877 Stead

Suite 100

Utica, MI 48317

www.therominegroup.com

Public School Academy Authorizer

Saginaw Valley State University

Charter Schools Office

7400 Bay Road

University Center, MI 48710

www.svsu.edu

DATE	EVENT	TIME
September 8	First day of school	7:45-3:15
September 25	Homecoming Game	5:00 pm
October 15-16	Conferences (progress reports handed out)	3:30-6:30 pm
November 25-29	Thanksgiving Break	NO SCHOOL
December 10	Report cards mailed home	
December 23-January 3	Christmas Break	NO SCHOOL
January 28-29	Conferences (progress reports handed out)	3:30-6:30
February 5 & 8	Mid-Winter Break	NO SCHOOL
March 17	Report cards mailed home	
March 25	Good Friday	NO SCHOOL
April 2-10	Spring Break	NO SCHOOL
April 29	Progress reports sent home	
May 30	Memorial Day	NO SCHOOL
June 2	Academic Night	6:00 pm
June 3	Graduation	6:00 pm
June 14	Last Day of School	7:45-3:15

INDEX

- (p. 6)**
OVERVIEW OF GENERAL INFORMATION
- Daily Schedule & Procedures
 - Parent Involvement
 - Lunch
 - School Closings
 - Student Records
- (p. 13) SCHOOL-WIDE POLICIES**
- Electronic Devices
 - Internet Use
- (p. 17) ATTENDANCE POLICIES**
- General Information
 - Family Vacations
 - Truancy
 - Late Arrivals
 - Credits Earned
- (p. 20) DRESS CODE**
- Overview
 - Consequences
 - Details of Uniform Compliance
- (p. 23) STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**
- Special Services
 - Special Education
 - Section 504
 - Homeless Students
- (p. 27) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
- Medical Issues
 - Dual Enrollment
 - Field Trips
 - After School Activities
- (p. 32) GRADING POLICIES**
- HS Grading/Credits
 - Graduation Requirements
 - Standardized Tests
- (p. 3966) DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW**
- General Purpose
 - Academy-Wide Rules
 - Definitions
- (p. 46) DISCIPLINE ACTIONS & PENALTIES**
- General Descriptions
 - Parent Grievances



OVERVIEW OF GENERAL INFORMATION



www.merritt-academy.org

OVERVIEW

The regular school day begins at 7:45 and ends at 3:15. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 7:20am-7:40 am. Students will be permitted in the school for breakfast at 7:00 and are to report directly to the cafeteria if they want to participate. Breakfast is a pre-order system and families qualify for free/reduced status according to the same guidelines followed for lunch. **BREAKFAST IS OVER AT 7:40.**

Regular Daily Schedule (K-5th Grades)

7:00	Doors Open (must report to cafeteria)
7:30	Students may go to other buildings
7:45	Bell rings for class to begin
7:45-3:15	Student proceeds through school day with homeroom teacher

Each student will have a minimum of twenty minutes to complete his or her lunch. There are 4 lunch periods for grades k-12:

- 1st Lunch - 11:20-11:50
- 2nd Lunch - 12:00-12:25
- 3rd Lunch – 12:30-12:50
- 4th Lunch – 12:57-1:17

ADMISSION INTO ACADEMY

During the school year, parents wishing to enroll their child into Merritt are required to complete an application and provide all necessary documentation including proof of Michigan residency. If space is available, the parent will receive an acceptance letter for their child. If space is not available, the child will be placed on the waiting list and called in the order they signed in (based on date and time of submitted application).

During public enrollment for the proceeding school year, parents must also complete the application and provide all necessary documentation including proof of Michigan residency. However, if space is not available, children will be admitted on the basis of the lottery system according to the Board of Directors policy. Before Open Enrollment current parents are provided a form that must be returned to hold their child's spot for the upcoming school year. All parents will be required to complete a form to reserve their child's placement for the following school year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMITMENT

By enrolling your child at Merritt Academy, you have chosen to participate in a unique educational experience that actively involves both you and your child. We ask that you demonstrate your commitment to Merritt Academy by...

- Ensuring your child will attend school on a regular basis. He/she should attend school unless he/she is unable to function at school due to illness. We also ask that you schedule vacation in conjunction with school breaks and holidays.
- Ensuring your child will be on time to school each day. Being on time is critical to minimizing interruptions to instruction and learning time for all children in a class. One child being 5 minutes late each day means a loss of two full school days in a school year for the entire class. Consider the loss over

time when there are multiple tardies. Respect the need to have your child at school on time.

- Provide your child with the necessary materials and time to complete assignments requiring library references, computer access and other research materials.
- See that your child is dressed properly in adherence to the dress code policy.
- Attend conferences and communicate with your child's teachers to monitor progress and to address questions and concerns as they occur.
- Read and return, on time, as requested, all informational materials sent home by the school and classroom teacher in order to ensure good communication.
- Adhering to policies and procedures within this handbook and at the school including behavior in the parking lot and on school grounds.
- Responding respectfully and appropriately to all staff, students, parents, and guests within the Merritt community and at the school.

Complaint Procedure: If you have a disagreement with a teacher or the administration, you should make every attempt to settle the problem with that person, without involving others. Should it not be settled, the two should go to the next line of authority to arbitrate the difficulty (Teacher → Vice Principal → Principal → Superintendent → Board of Directors). It is the goal of Merritt Academy to respond to complaints and problems as soon as possible.

DAILY PROCEDURES—ARRIVAL

Students should arrive at school between 7:30 am and 7:35 am, however students will not be permitted to enter the building until 7:30am. **Students arriving before 7:30 must report to the main hallway in the high school.** Students need to enter the building in an orderly fashion, they may not run, shout, or otherwise act in a disorderly manner. All students wearing hats need to remove them upon entering the building.

Prompt arrival into the classroom is essential. Classroom entry doors open at 7:30 am and all students arriving tardy to school will be directed through the main office to their classrooms. Students may go directly to their homeroom until 7:55 am. At 7:55 am, parents must sign students in and the student may proceed to their classroom. Once class has begun, it is distracting to the other students to have their classmates entering the room late so please make every effort to have your child to school on time.

Parents of K-5th grade students may drop off their children at their designated entry doors. Upon arriving to school, all students are expected to remain outside of the school facility until 7:30 am unless registered for Latch Key or accompanied by an adult.

AM & PM FACILITY SAFETY PROCEDURES

Parents are to follow the mapped out drop off and pick up procedures. They are not to park in undesignated spots. Students and parents are only to use the main entrance doors for entering & exiting the building between 8:00 am and 3:15pm. **Parents are expected to exit the classrooms by 7:45 in order for the school day to progress.** All visitors during this time MUST report to the main office and sign in. No visitors will be permitted into the classroom corridors without prior approval. This is for the protection of all students and staff in the building.

LUNCH

Each student will have a minimum of twenty minutes to complete his or her lunch. Students are expected to follow the Lunch Room Code of Conduct and respect all adults that are Merritt staff or parent volunteers when enforcing this Code.

- Students are expected to stay in the lunchroom and ask permission before leaving the lunchroom.
- Students are to use quiet voices when conversing with other students, yelling across the table or room is not acceptable.
- Students are expected to use good table manners while at lunch and to clean up their area after eating.

Any student that does not follow the Code of Conduct will be referred to RTC or the Administration. Continual problems will result in loss of cafeteria privileges and the student will be required to eat in the school office or other assigned area with their parent/guardian if necessary.

A daily hot lunch program is offered to all students at Merritt from an outside food service. Menus are distributed to parents monthly. Payment for lunches must be made in advance according to the lunch schedule. No lunches can be purchased the same day.

There are no refrigerators or microwaves for student use. All lunches brought in need to be prepared ahead of time. Drink boxes, for example can be frozen the night before and packed in the student's lunch to keep items cool.

Furthermore, at no time are caffeinated beverages, energy drinks, or other similar products permitted for students.

RECESS

For grades K-5, students have recess for approximately twenty minutes. Recess is held in the playground or blacktop area behind the school. Students are required to stay in the designated recess area and follow all school policies. All students are required to participate in the recess time. Please make sure they are dressed appropriately for the weather. Students will go outside for recess when the wind chill is 15 degrees or above.

In the event of rain or wind chill is below 15 degrees, recess will be held in the student's classroom.

DISMISSAL

At no time will the Academy permit a student to be dismissed without a parent/guardian. Students are not permitted to walk home or leave with a friend without written parent/guardian permission and approval in the main office. Repeated offenses will be turned over to the principal and school social worker for review and follow-up.

Students in grades K-5 are dismissed from the classroom at 3:15pm. Parents are required to follow the parking lot instructions for dismissal. All students not picked up by 3:25pm will be sent to Latch Key. If the student's are not registered for Latch Key they will be sent to the office. If students are left here for long periods of time or on repeated occasions, the authorities will be called to pick up the student. Students will not be permitted to walk home without administrative approval. Administrative approval requires signed written permission from a parent/guardian for consideration.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT DISMISSAL

Students will be dismissed from their classroom to a parent/guardian or emergency contact until the age of 18. Students will not be dismissed to any other adult or peer unless prior written arrangements are made with the Academy office. This procedure will guarantee the safety and well being of all students. Parent/Guardian is required to go to the office to pick up their child from the Academy at times other than normal arrival and dismissal. The Parent/Guardian is not to go directly to the classroom but report to the office where they will be required to sign students out of the Academy. After approval from the main office, parents will be allowed to go to the classroom to pick up their child. Parents should not go to the classroom to pick up the student. This causes disruption to the learning environment.

Students Signing Out

When a parent or guardian gives permission for their student to leave school for emergency or medical appointments, the following must be adhered to for dismissal:

1. If parent/guardian is picking the student up, the parent/guardian needs to come into the main office (ID will be required) and sign the student out.
2. If the student has a vehicle at school the parent/guardian can call the main office and speak to the office staff. The office staff will then call the student out of class and sign them out. The student must bring in a written note from the parent the next day and the office staff will call parent to verify note.
3. Parents can write a note stating the date, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal, and phone number where the parent can be reached. The student must bring the note to the office in the MORNING. The office staff will call and confirm with the parent to ensure safety of our students. If we are unable to reach a parent to confirm the note, the student WILL NOT BE RELEASED.

TELEPHONE

A telephone is available in the school office for EMERGENCY phone use by students. During the school day, permission to use the telephone must come from the office personnel. It is also school policy for students to work out any concerns with staff when adult intervention is needed, not with parents by phone. Please see policy for prohibited electronic devices for additional procedure of handling student in possession of cell phone.

THE ACADEMY VISITORS

Adult visitors are always welcome. However, we are interested in knowing who is in the building and require all visitors to register in the office and wear a visitor's badge. Students or parents from other schools or Academies wishing to visit must make prior arrangements with the principal and a fifteen-minute observation will be scheduled with an educator. Any visitors that will be spending more than four hours in a week at the Academy will be required to meet all criminal/background screening at the cost of the visitor. This is to ensure the safety of all Merritt students and staff.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

The Educational Service Provider recognizes that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge or skills that will be helpful to members of the professional staff responsible for the conduct of those programs and activities.

The Principal in cooperation with the Educational Service Provider shall be responsible for recruiting volunteers, reviewing their capabilities, and making appropriate placements. S/He shall not be obligated to make use of volunteers whose abilities are not in accord with school needs. The Administration shall conduct

appropriate background checks on all volunteers in the same manner as required for other professional staff for any volunteer that is assigned to the school for more than four hours per week.

The Administration is to inform each volunteer that s/he:

- Shall agree to abide by all Board policies and school guidelines while on duty as a volunteer including signing, if appropriate, the School's Network and Internet Access Agreement Forms;
- Will be covered under the School's liability policy but the School cannot provide any type of health insurance to cover illness or accident incurred while serving as a volunteer, nor is the person eligible for workers compensation;
- Will be asked to sign a form releasing the School of any obligation should the volunteer become ill or receive an injury as a result of his/her volunteer services.
- To attend the appropriate training for the assigned tasks prior to volunteer services at the school.

The Administration shall also ensure that each volunteer is properly informed of the School's appreciation for his/her time efforts in assisting the operation of the School

THE ACADEMY EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event of the Academy closing due to weather or other emergencies, please check Channel 7/ABC, Channel 4/WDIV, and Channel 2/FOX News. In the event of a school emergency, you will be contacted by Academy personnel so it is important that you keep your information updated at the front office.

Parents will also receive a phone call from the IRIS system informing them of any school closing information or emergency.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books and supplies issued each year through the Academy. Students who lose books or damage the Academy property will be assessed a replacement fee or repair cost to offset the replacement or repair cost. All costs are to be paid prior to receiving all report cards or the transfer of student records.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a very necessary and integral part of a child's education. The purpose of homework is to reinforce those skills and concepts taught in the learning environment. Homework also includes work not finished during class time. Parental support and cooperation are very important in this area. Helping students with their homework shows you are interested in their education. Each educator is responsible for the classroom homework policy. This is to ensure age-appropriate requirements. Please note that homework can come in many forms and while the Academy recognizes that age appropriate learning also consists of social and family activities at home, we request your support and cooperation while we try to find the best ways to reinforce learning at home. When traditional forms of homework are not necessary, the educators may have alternative projects and such instead. Please direct all homework questions to your student's educator.

REQUEST FOR HOMEWORK

A request for homework for a child that is ill should be made in the morning. This will allow time for the educator to organize the materials. Homework may be picked up in the office at the end of the day. Our educators will make every effort to have homework ready to be picked up in the office at the end of the day. Please remember that much of the learning at Merritt Academy is done in a hands-on and experiential way and many times cannot be sent home to be completed. That is why it is vital that all students are at school as much as possible.

If homework is requested in advance for an extended period of time the classroom teacher needs at least one weeks notice. All work that is provided should be turned in when the child returns to school. Only one or two additional days will be granted to turn in work received ahead of time.

COMMUNICATION

Parents can now access up to date information on their student's progress via the web. A letter will be sent home at the beginning of the school year for each student providing a user name and password. Additional copies can be requested in the office. Just visit powerschool.merritt-academy.org/public, enter in your ID and password, and you will have access to grades and attendance, information on individual assignments. This is a great way to stay on top of what is happening with your student!

Check the school website, www.merritt-academy.org for updated information on the Academy and student activities.

STUDENT RECORD "RIGHTS"

The Federal "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974" provides parents or guardians of students under the age of 18 the right to examine official records, files, and data relating to the student. If you wish to review your child's record, please contact the office.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Board of Directors for Merritt Academy believes that all student records shall be treated as confidential and exist primarily for local Academy use or as otherwise stipulated. To request a review of your students records a parent/guardian must contact the main office to schedule an appointment. To request a hardcopy of your student's records a parent/guardian must submit the request in writing to the main office. The Office Manager will then contact the parent/guardian to notify of when the request can be reasonably fulfilled, not to exceed 15 days.

In situations where the parents of a student are divorced or separated, each parent custodial and/or non-custodial has equal rights to their child's records unless a court order specifies otherwise. The Academy's personnel shall not recognize private agreements between the student's parents.

Parents shall have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of their child's school records to ensure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of students; to provide an opportunity for the correction or deletion of any such inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate data contained therein; and to insert into such records the parent's written explanation of the content of such records.

Any eligible parent/guardian or student may inspect the records of the student during regular Academy office hours with a scheduled appointment. The district reserves the right to interpret selected records to students and/or parent/guardians at the time of the inspection.

If circumstances prevent a parent/guardian from exercising their right to come to the Academy to review a student's education records, the Academy will provide a copy of the requested records to the requesting party following the procedure above. The Academy will not destroy any educational records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review a student's records.

Whenever a student attains 18 years of age, the consent required of and the rights accorded to the parents of the student shall thereafter only be accorded to the student. Parents/guardians are responsible for updating the academy when an emergency phone number and address information has been changed.

MOVING?

We want to know:

- New address and phone number
- Date of the move
- Name of the new school
- Students are expected to:
 - o Return all library and textbooks*
 - o Settle all outstanding debts*
 - o Collect all personal items*

In the event that the above is not returned the student's records will not be transferred and the last report card will not be mailed to the parent/guardian.



SCHOOL-WIDE POLICIES



www.merritt-academy.org

CELLULAR PHONES, MP3 Players, IPODs, and Other ELECTRONIC DEVICES

At no time are students permitted to bring pagers, cellular phones, video games, musical electronic listening devices or any other electronic devices into the classroom. They are to be kept turned off and in lockers. Failure to follow policy will result in disciplinary action and forfeit of device to the academy. Merritt will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students lost, stolen, or confiscated.

- First offense the item will be taken and returned to student after a meeting with administration.
- Second offense the item will be returned to parent or guardian
- Third offense-the item must be turned in at the office for the school day.
- Refusing to surrender a cell phone will result in further disciplinary action.

STUDENT CAMERAS

For the safety and well being of all of our students, student cameras are not permitted at school. We recognize the importance of school day memories and will designate specific dates and events which cameras will be permitted for. This will require teacher supervision of the photographs being taken as well as administrative approval. Please understand that we want to ensure the safety and well being of every student at Merritt and that circumstances such as the internet and other predators are at large and we want to protect and ensure you are aware of exposure of your child.

Students in possession of cameras that are not approved by administration will be confiscated and if necessary pictures deleted prior to release of camera to parent/guardian.

INTERNET USE POLICY

Merritt Academy adheres to the federal requirements and guidelines stipulated under Title XVII— Children's Internet Protection Act.

A. Educational Purpose

Merritt Academy Internet system has a limited educational purpose. Activities that are acceptable include classroom activities, career development, and high-quality personal research. Merritt Academy has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material you access or post through the system. You are expected to follow the rules set forth in the Merritt Academy disciplinary code and the law in your use of the network. *Students who use laptops for personal (non-academic) purposes during the school day will be prohibited from bringing their laptop to school or using an Academy laptop during the school day.*

B. Internet Management

Embracing the Internet as a critical and essential component in today's world is essential if our students are to become functional members of society. The benefits attained by the advancement of technology bring with it associated costs and a wide range of risks, in particular, the exposure of student to inappropriate material and people. As part of our commitment to Internet security, we offer a firewall (a web-blocker application program). This has the ability to block objectionable material and captures the window when questionable material is accessed.

C. Unacceptable Uses

The following uses are considered unacceptable:

1. Personal Safety and Personal Privacy

Students will not post personal contact information. This includes students' address, school address, telephone number, and name on the Internet. This includes other people as well as the student. Students will promptly disclose to the teacher any message or website that is inappropriate or makes students feel uncomfortable.

2. Illegal Activities

Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to Merritt Academy Network or to any other system through the network beyond authorized access. Students will not attempt to deliberately disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. Students will not use the network to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for illegal activities or threatening the safety of other people.

3. System Security

No software is to be downloaded on the computers at any time without explicit consent of the system administrator.

4. Inappropriate Language

Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages. Students will not use obscene, profane, vulgar, rude, threatening or disrespectful language. Students will not post information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption. Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks. Students will not harass another person. Students will not knowingly post false or defamatory information about another person or organization.

5. Respecting Resources

Using the computer systems and Internet is a privilege. Students need to respect the computer by using it appropriately.

6. Plagiarism

Students will not plagiarize works that they find on the Internet or any other print source. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were your own.

7. Copyright

Students will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, students should follow the expressed requirements. If students are unsure or have questions, they should ask a teacher.

8. Inappropriate Access to Material

Students will not access material that is designated for adult use only or is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal or dangerous acts, or discrimination towards other people. If students mistakenly access inappropriate information, they should immediately tell the teacher. This will protect students against a claim that they have intentionally violated the rules.

D. Disciplinary Actions

Students should only expect limited privacy in the contents of personal files or records of Web research. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the network may lead to discovery that you have violated the Policy, the school disciplinary code or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this Policy, the Merritt Academy disciplinary code or the law.

Merritt Academy will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the school.

E. Limitation of Liability

Merritt Academy makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school Network system will be error free or without defect. Merritt will not be responsible for any damage that may be suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. Parents or guardians will be responsible for any harm to the system as a result of intentional misuse.

LOST AND FOUND

Found articles of clothing or miscellaneous articles will be placed in the lost and found areas located outside the gym in the high school or by each entrance in the middle and back buildings. The last Friday of the month all the lost and found items will be removed and donated to a local charity organization. To help alleviate the problem of lost articles, PLEASE PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON ALL CLOTHING.

STUDENT SOLICITATION

Students may solicit only for the Academy-sponsored activities. All the Academy activities at the elementary level discourage door-to-door solicitation in the community. There will be no exchange of money among students for any purpose unless authorized by the office.

THE ACADEMY CELEBRATIONS

All celebrations are at the discretion of each educator and the academy administration. If you choose to have your child not participate in an activity, please speak with your child's educator. If the activity is due to religious or other beliefs an opt-out activity will be provided for your student. At Merritt Academy, we try to recognize celebrations and traditions of many different cultures. Understanding cultural diversity is an integral part of society. If you have other suggestions for educators or the school in regards to celebrations and traditions of different cultures please let us know and we will be happy to consider the additions.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES



www.merritt-academy.org

ATTENDANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

All students are expected to attend the Academy for the entire academic year. Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their students out of the Academy for family vacations.

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Parents are asked to call the Academy before 7:50 am when their child is going to be absent. This does not constitute an excused absence.
2. Whenever students are absent from the Academy, notes or medical excuses are required explaining the absence. The note should also have day, time, and phone number where the parent can be reached.
3. Parents may arrange, in advance, for absences. Prearranged absences are not automatically excused (guidelines apply for excused/unexcused absences).
4. Medical and funeral excuses only are exempt from the attendance count.
5. Students absent more than a half day from school the day of a scheduled after-school or evening sponsored activity/event will NOT be allowed to participate in that activity/event.

II. FAMILY VACATIONS:

1. We would like to encourage you to schedule family vacations at times other than when the Academy is in session. When you must schedule a family trip during Academy time, contact the educator at least one-week prior concerning how your child will complete missed assignments.
2. Work received in advance should be turned in upon return to school. One-two days additional will be granted.

III. ATTENDANCE PROCESS /TRUANCY:

1. A letter from the administration will be sent to the student's parent/guardian on the fifth absence for the year.
2. A mandatory conference will be held between administration and the student's parent/guardian upon the eighth absence for the year.
3. If the student reaches eleven absences throughout the year, they may be retained in the current grade level due to lack of formal instruction. The student maybe referred to the MISD truancy officer.

IV. THE PROCEDURES FOR APPEALS:

1. Students, who exceed the number of absences with justifiable cause, may petition the appeals board for a hearing. The appeals process is only presenting proof of justifiable absences. It is not intended for any other use.
2. Students who wish to use the appeals process must present a completed form to the Principal's office clearly giving reasons for their absences. Excuses such as getting up late, car problems, or missing a ride will not be accepted.
3. Each case will be heard and judged on its individual merits.
4. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the necessary materials on his/her behalf.
5. The appeals board will be comprised of two (2) educators and one Administrator.
6. The decision of the board will be final.

V. TARDY/LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DISMISSAL:

1. Classes begin at 7:45 a.m. Students can be dropped off as early as 7:30 a.m. Students arriving in the learning environment after 7:55 a.m. will be considered tardy. Due to state guidelines, all attendance must be documented and reported to Macomb County ISD including late arrivals.

2. A letter from administration will be sent to the student's parent/guardian on the fifth tardy per trimester.
3. A mandatory conference will be held between administration and the student's parent/guardian upon the eighth tardy per trimester.
4. If the student reaches eleven tardies per trimester, they may be retained in the current grade level due to lack of formal instruction. The student maybe referred to the MISD truancy officer.

PROCEDURE FOR LATE ARRIVAL

1. Parents are asked to call the Academy when their child is going to be late. Upon arrival, student must report to the office, and be signed in by parent/ guardian to enter class.
2. A student will be considered absent for the morning if he/she arrives after 10:30 a.m. and for the afternoon if he/she leaves before 1:30 p.m.
3. All documentation will be maintained in the student record.

ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

A student who has *MISSED 11 DAYS OF CLASS* within a given trimester *MAY BE RETAINED IN THEIR CURRENT GRADE*. ***The Principal will issue final decision on retention at the end of the school year.**

ATTENDANCE FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Merritt Academy will cooperate with parents who wish to provide religious instruction for their child but also recognizes its responsibility to enforce the attendance requirements of the State. Upon the signed request by the student's parent, the Board will allow exceptions to the student's continuous attendance at school:

1. For religious instruction outside the school building for no more than two (2) class hours per week
2. For attendance at confirmation classes provided is twelve (12) or thirteen (13) years of age and the instructional period is no longer than five (5) months in either of those years.

The student must be properly registered and a copy of such registration must be filed with the principal, which will be maintained in the student file. The time release for religious instruction or education shall be arranged by the Principal in keeping with the regulations of the State Board of Education. The student will also assure the appropriate continuance of the instructional program at Merritt during such release times. No solicitation for attendance at religious instruction shall be permitted on school premises. No member of the staff shall encourage nor discourage participation in any religious instruction program.

Merritt Academy Attendance Policy

Elementary students will be allowed 24 undocumented absences per year. Once they reach that number they will be considered truant. For middle and high school students will be allowed 8 undocumented absences per trimester. Once they reach that number, they will be required to pass their exam with an 80% in said class to receive credit.

Attendance will be recorded as documented or undocumented. There is no limit to documented absences.

Documented absences will be anything where documentation can be provided such as a doctor's note, court documents, funeral etc...

Undocumented are any other excused or unexcused absence.



DRESS CODE



www.merritt-academy.org

DRESS CODE OVERVIEW

Take pride in how you look at all times. Uniforms can help keep you safe and prevent you from being judged by others for not looking a certain way. They also create a serious, distinguished look that tells the world YOU are about business. Always be mindful of your personal appearance – it speaks volumes about your character.

DRESS CODE

Our basic standards regarding student dress are based on cleanliness, neatness, modesty, safety and minimizing learning distraction. Uniforms are to be worn at the Academy by all students in grades 6-12 except on announced “Dress Down” or “Casual” days.

Fridays are Merritt Casual Days. Students may wear appropriate casual clothes to school. Clothing should not contain inappropriate graphics such as skulls or weapons. Clothing may not contain inappropriate language or suggestive messages. Casual clothes must be in good taste and appropriate in length. Open-toed shoes and sandals are not permitted at any time. Participation in Casual Day is a privilege that can be revoked to any student by school administration for any length of time deemed necessary.

DRESS CODE – Grades 6-8

The Merritt Academy dress code must be strictly followed. Uniform checks will be performed. If students come to school wearing inappropriate attire, they will be given an opportunity to fix the dress code violation. If they cannot fix the violation, a detention will be issued. Parents may be contacted and will be responsible for bringing proper clothing that same day.

Permitted attire:

1. Polo style shirts in solid navy, burgundy, light blue, gray, or white with the Merritt Academy logo.
2. Plain sweaters, plain crew neck sweatshirts, and non-hooded Merritt Academy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform shirt and must be in the approved uniform shirt colors only.
3. Long sleeved t-shirts may be worn under the student’s uniform shirt in the approved uniform colors of solid navy, burgundy, light blue, gray, or white only. Under shirts should not be hanging out from under the uniform shirt for any reason.
4. Dress pants will be navy blue or black worn at the waist.* Knee length navy blue or black shorts, in dress pant material, are permitted until October 15th and after April 15th. Exceptions may be made in the event of unseasonably warm weather.
5. Girls may wear dress pants, skorts, skirts, or jumpers in navy blue or black. Capri style pants may be worn, but must be dress pants material, no knit or casual fabric.
6. Shoes must be solid black, brown, or navy, with **no color or markings**, and with closed toes and closed heels. Maximum heel or platform height is 1 inch. Socks are required.

7. Jewelry may be worn providing it is not distracting and does not present a safety hazard. Any design on jewelry must be in good taste.

* Belts will be required if students receive repeated warnings about sagging pants.

Attire that is NOT permitted:

1. Shirts worn knotted at the back or at the side or otherwise altered in appearance. Any shirt worn wrapped around the waist.
2. Any decoration on clothing other than the approved Merritt Academy logo.
3. Pants made of nylon, leather, sweat pant material, mesh, denim, or cotton knit. Jeans of any type or color. Yoga pants.
4. Ripped or torn clothing.
5. Hooded sweatshirts.
6. Clogs or open-toed shoes (sandals, flips-flops, etc.).
7. Distracting or dangerous jewelry or accessories. Eyebrow or lip piercings.
8. Sculptured/carved hairstyle (letters, signs, etc.). Mohawks. Any unnatural hair color (green, purple, etc.), including streaks or extensions.
9. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarfs on the head.
10. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.
11. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Students who are in violation of the dress code because of sloppiness or ‘stretching’ the rules will be corrected and a detention may be issued. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as a foot injury, that may require your child to wear special shoes, please call the school office and let us know. Of course, we make exceptions in these cases.

**** Administrative discretion may be used at any time in regards to dress code issues.**

DRESS CODE – Grades 9-12

The Merritt Academy dress code must be strictly followed. Uniform checks will be performed. If students come to school wearing inappropriate attire, they will have the opportunity to correct the violation. If they cannot or will not, they will be sent to the office and will be dealt with by an administrator. Parents may be contacted and will be responsible for bringing proper clothing that same day.

Permitted attire:

1. Polo style shirts in solid pink, red, navy, hunter green, or royal blue with the Merritt Academy High School logo.

Plain long sleeve shirts or turtlenecks in the approved uniform shirt colors or white are allowed under uniform shirts but must be tucked in.

2. Plain sweaters and crew neck sweatshirts may be worn over the polo shirt and must be in the approved uniform shirt colors.
3. Dress pants will be khaki or black, worn at the waist.* Knee length khaki or black shorts, in dress pant material, are permitted until October 15th and after April 15th. Exceptions may be made in the event of unseasonably warm weather.
4. Girls may wear dress pants, skorts, skirts, or Capri length pants in khaki or black color only.
5. Shoes must be solid black, brown, or navy, with **no color or markings**, and with closed toes and closed heels. Maximum heel or platform height is 1 inch. Socks are required.
6. Girls may wear light make-up as long as it is good taste and not distracting.
7. Jewelry may be worn providing it is not a distraction and does not present a safety hazard. Any design on jewelry must be in good taste.
8. Tattoos are discouraged. If present, they must be covered by clothing.
9. Ear and nose piercings are acceptable, but must not be visually distracting.

* Belts will be required if students receive repeated warnings about sagging pants.

Attire that is NOT permitted:

1. Shirts worn knotted at the back or at the side or otherwise altered in appearance. Any shirt worn wrapped around the waist.
2. Any decoration on clothing other than the approved Merritt Academy logo.
3. Pants made of nylon, leather, sweat pant material, mesh, denim, or cotton knit. Jeans of any type or color. Yoga pants.
4. Ripped or torn clothing.
5. Hooded sweatshirts.
6. Clogs or open-toed shoes (sandals, flips-flops, etc.).
7. Distracting or dangerous jewelry or accessories. Glitter makeup.
8. Eyebrow or lip piercings.
9. Sculptured/carved hairstyle (letters, signs, etc.). Mohawks. Any unnatural hair color (green, purple, etc.), including streaks or extensions.
10. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarfs on the head.
11. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.

12. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Students who are in violation of the dress code because of sloppiness or 'stretching' the rules will be corrected and a detention may be issued. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as a foot injury, that may require your child to wear special shoes, please call the school office and let us know. Of course, we make exceptions in these cases.

**** *Administrative discretion maybe used at any time in regards to dress code issues.**

DRESS CODE OVERVIEW

Take pride in how you look at all times. Uniforms can help keep you safe and prevent you from being judged by others for not looking a certain way. They also create a serious, distinguished look that tells the world YOU are about business. Always be mindful of your personal appearance – it speaks volumes about your character.

DRESS CODE

Our basic standards regarding student dress are based on cleanliness, neatness, modesty, safety and minimizing learning distraction. Uniforms are to be worn at the Academy by all students in grades K-12 except on announced “Dress Down” “Casual” days.

Fridays are Merritt Casual Days. Students may wear appropriate casual clothes to school. Clothing should not contain inappropriate graphics such as skulls or weapons. Clothing may not contain inappropriate language or suggestive messages. Casual clothes must be in good taste and appropriate in length. Open-toed shoes and sandals are not permitted at any time. Participation in Casual Day is a privilege that can be revoked to any student by school administration for any length of time deemed necessary.

Dress code policy will be enforced for all students.

DRESS CODE – Grades K-5

The Merritt Academy dress code must be strictly followed. Uniform checks will be performed. If students come to school wearing inappropriate attire, they will be given a dress code violation form that will be sent home to the parents.

Permitted attire:

1. Polo style shirts in solid navy, burgundy, light blue, or white with the Merritt Academy logo.
2. Plain sweaters, plain crew neck sweatshirts, and non-hooded Merritt Academy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform shirt and must be in the approved uniform shirt colors only.
3. Dress pants will be navy blue or black worn at the waist. Knee length navy blue or black shorts, in dress pant material, are permitted until October 15th and after April 15th. Exceptions may be made in the event of unseasonably warm weather.
4. Girls may wear dress pants, skorts, skirts, or jumpers in navy blue or black. Capri style pants may be worn, but must be dress pants material, no knit or casual fabric.
5. Socks or tights must be worn at all times.
6. Shoes must be solid black, brown, or navy, with **no color or markings**, and with closed toes and closed heels.
7. Jewelry may be worn providing it is not distracting and does not present a safety hazard.

Attire that is NOT permitted (K-5):

1. Shirts worn knotted at the back or at the side or otherwise altered in appearance. Any shirt worn wrapped around the waist.

2. Any decoration on clothing other than the approved Merritt Academy logo.
3. Pants made of nylon, leather, sweat pant material, mesh, denim, or cotton knit. Jeans of any type or color. Yoga pants or wearing of just leggings.
4. Ripped or torn clothing.
5. Hooded sweatshirts.
6. Clogs or open-toed shoes (sandals, flips-flops, etc.).
7. Distracting or dangerous jewelry or accessories. Body piercings (ears are acceptable).
8. Sculptured/carved hairstyle (letters, signs, etc.). Mohawks. Any unnatural hair color (green, purple, etc.), including streaks or extensions.
9. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarves on the head.
10. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.
11. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Students who are in violation of the dress code because of sloppiness or 'stretching' the rules will be corrected and a detention violation may be issued. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as a foot injury, that may require your child to wear special shoes, please call the school office and let us know. Of course, we make exceptions in these cases.

*****Administrative discretion maybe used at any time in regards to dress code issues.**



IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Students with special needs



www.merritt-academy.org

SPECIAL SERVICES

The services of a speech and language therapist, psychologist, social worker, and Special Education Educator, and Occupational therapist are available on a referral basis. If you would like more information, please contact your child's educator. The following special services are available to all students who qualify under state guidelines.

- Occupational Therapist: Provides services to students who need fine motor therapy.
- School Psychologist: Provides services to students who need evaluation for special education needs.
- School Social Worker: Provides services to students who are experiencing personal or social adjustment problems in the Academy or at home.
- Speech Therapist: Works with students who are impaired by speech and language difficulties.
- Special Education Teacher: Services are provided for students with special needs in a resource room or on a consultant basis.
- Vision and Hearing: The Macomb County Health Department provides tests annually for designated grade levels.

SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY

The board of Directors of Merritt Academy wants each child to fulfill their ultimate learning potential. To the extent that an educator or parent feels that child may demonstrate some learning disabilities, the following board policy to evaluate a child's academic progress shall be followed:

- After either a parent or educator expressed a concern about a child's school performance, Response To Intervention, RTI, plan will begin in which an educator is making documented attempts to develop strategies that increase success of student. If the RTI process is not successful after all options have been exhausted, a child study meeting will be held to determine if formal testing is needed. The student's educator, special education educator, learning specialist, school social worker or counselor and principal will attend the child study meeting.
- If it is determined that formal testing is needed, within ten days parents must be notified and request made for their written authorization for testing.
- Once the parents provides consent for formal testing of their child, the Academy has thirty days to complete the evaluation process and hold an Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) meeting in which determines if special educational services are needed.
- For a child to qualify for special education services there must be proof that the child's academic progress is impacted by a discrepancy in achievement or other tested data.
- After a decision is made on the student's eligibility for special education services, the IEPT meeting is held with general education educator, special education educator, principal and parent in attendance.
- It will be determined at the IEPT meeting how many hours per week and what services the child will receive special education services.
- Once a child is in special education the child's IEP goals will be reassessed annually.
- Every three years the child must be reevaluated to determine continued eligibility for special education services. It is the ultimate goal for each child eligible for special education services that the achievement gap will be closed and that the special education intervention strategies have worked to no longer require services.

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability in any program or activity receiving federal money. This statute obligates public schools to provide equal access and equal opportunity to otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. It must be because of this disability that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from school programs and services.

Two guidelines that a student may qualify for a 504 plan are listed below.

- A physical or mental impairment (has a history of having a physical or mental impairment)
- That **substantially** limits one or more major life activities

If you believe that a student may be eligible for Section 504 support, please contact Ms. Cohrs (Vice Principal) for additional information.

HOMELESS STUDENTS: MCKINNEY VENTO ACT

Educational Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: *If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness, please notify the school so we can help. This is not something to be ashamed of and there are many resources to assist families in this situation. Merritt Academy is committed to keeping all information strictly confidential.*

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there. Students who are homeless must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- Continue in the school they attended before becoming homeless or the school last attended if that is their choice and feasible. The school district's local liaison for homeless education must assist you, if needed, and offer you the right to appeal a decision regarding your choice of school if it goes against your wishes.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before they became homeless or the school last attended, if a request is made for such transportation and transportation is feasible.
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with students who are not homeless. Students cannot be separated from the regular school program due to the fact that they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without providing a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of their choice even while the school and student who is homeless seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other students served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.

These rights are established under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This act is the primary piece of federal legislation dealing with the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness in U.S. public schools. It was reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act in January 2002. To qualify for these rights, children and youth must be considered homeless according to the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness.

How does the McKinney-Vento Act define homelessness?

According to U.S. Department of Education (USDE) guidance, people living in the following situations are considered homeless under McKinney-Vento: doubled-up with family or friends due to economic hardship; in motels or hotels due to lack of other suitable housing; in homes for unwed or expectant mothers because they have nowhere else to go; in homeless and/or domestic violence shelters; in transitional housing programs; on the streets; in abandoned buildings; in public places not meant for housing; in cars, trailers, and campgrounds; or awaiting foster care. Runaway and/or "throwaway" children and youth are also considered homeless under McKinney-Vento.

The description above refers to people living "doubled-up". What does that mean?

"Doubled-up" refers to people who are living with friends and relatives due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. However, families who have chosen to move into adequate housing situations with friends or relatives for reasons of cultural preference or convenience are not covered by McKinney-Vento.

Are migrant students considered homeless under McKinney-Vento?

Migrant students are considered homeless if they meet one or more of the definitions of homelessness under McKinney-Vento. However, migrant students should not be considered homeless simply because they are migrant.

Are children in foster care considered homeless?

No. The McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness includes children who are awaiting foster care placement only. Once children have been placed in foster care, they are no longer considered homeless.

If you would like additional information on the rights of homeless students or you would like to notify us of a situation involving a homeless student, please contact the following Merritt Academy Homeless liaisons:

Ms. Tracy Cohrs Vice Principal tcohrs@merritt-academy.org (586) 749-6000



**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION**



www.merritt-academy.org

BOOK BAG/LOCKER CHECK

Random book bag and locker checks are to help prevent any illegal substances or weapons from being housed in the student possession. It is the responsibility of the school administration to check bags and lockers. The school administration may be assisted by the police and canine unit from time to time when conducting locker or personal bag checks. Merritt Academy is not responsible for items that are stolen out of book bags or lockers. Students should never bring valuable expensive coats, jackets, jewelry, shoes, supplies etc. to school. Students are not allowed to share a book bag or house another student's belongings in their bag.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

State Law and the Macomb County Immunization Code require all students entering the Academy to provide evidence of having received the required immunizations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Peruses, Polio, Measles, Rubella, and Mumps, HIB shot, Hepatitis B, and Chicken Pox or a signed statement that a child has not been immunized because of religious or other reasons. State Law and Macomb County Immunization Code prohibit the Academy from admitting children without the required immunizations or documentation.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

A student may be excused from physical education and recess for one day with a note from parent/guardian. Extended excuses will be honored upon receipt of a physician's note. In the event of an extended excuse a physician's note may be required to return to physical education, recess, and after school activities.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Any student evidencing a rash, sores, or other physical problems with possibility of being contagious, the student will be sent to the office to be sent home. When a child is absent with a contagious disease or illness, the parent/guardian should notify the Academy office. In order for your child to be admitted back into the Academy, parents must comply with the Macomb County Health guidelines. Please contact the Academy office for further information.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

In accordance with Merritt Academy's policy, no medication is to be in the student's possession at any time. Should children be required to take medication during the school hours, a form must be filled out by the physician indicating the name of the drug, the dosage to be taken and any other instructions that are necessary. The medication must be brought from the home by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult. The medication container must have the dispensing instructions noted on it. At school, the medication will be kept under lock and key and only the office staff will administer the medication. A record is kept of the medication that is administered to each child. A log will be kept indicating when each dose is administered to each child and signed by administrating staff and when possible a witness. It is the responsibility of the High School student to come to the office to take the medication. If it needs to be distributed at a specific time during class, the parent must provide a physician's note to that specific classroom teacher.

NOTE: Prescription inhalers, EpiPens, and over-the-counter throat lozenges will kept in the classroom by the teacher. Inhalers and EpiPens will travel throughout the day with the student.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

Children should report all illnesses and injuries occurring in the Academy to their educator or supervisory personnel. Only immediate and temporary care will be given in the Academy. Parents will be notified by phone when a child needs additional care. If injury or illness is of an urgent nature, the local emergency services will be contacted. Any cost is the responsibility of the parent. The school office will also notify the child's parent/guardian.

If a child must go home because of an injury or illness, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up the child at school. The emergency phone number becomes crucial since it is the first number the office attempts to contact.

POLICY FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

In a perfect world, all children are loved, well cared for, safe, and treated with respect. Because our world isn't perfect, this is not true for some children. As educators and other Academy staff members, we not only have the privilege of teaching, learning from and getting to know our students, but we must take on the responsibility of listening to and helping them when they need us to. When there is reasonable cause to suspect child neglect or abuse the following policy will be followed.

MAKE AN ORAL REPORT

In accordance with the law, any Merritt Academy employee who suspects child abuse or neglect will report it to Child Protective Services immediately. Suspicion can be based on many factors such as observations, bruises or marks, student report, and so on. The abuse does not have to be confirmed. After an internal investigation, the Wayne County Department of Social Services will determine the correct course of action. The Department caseworkers will interview the student as soon as possible. Any Academy employee having knowledge of the incidents or concerns about the child on question should be prepared to share any such information with the child protection services caseworker or with any law enforcement personnel.

FIELD TRIPS

The purpose of a field trip is to give students a better understanding of their culture and acquaint them with real life experiences. Students are expected to follow all the Academy rules and policies and pay for any cost incurred. For those who cannot afford such trips, some funding and/or fundraising options may be available. Please notify the office in such cases. If a Field Trip Permission Form is not submitted by a parent/guardian in the proper time frame, if the student is not in proper uniform, or a student has had behavior which may jeopardize the safety of self, others, or the school, the child may not attend the trip. Students not attending will still be expected to attend school and will be provided parallel learning activities.

Student safety is the main priority on field trips. Sponsoring and chaperoning adults are expected to adhere to Academy policies and procedures on the field trip as well as sign a chaperone agreement provided by the classroom teacher specifying specific expected chaperone behavior. Sponsors and chaperones should acquaint themselves in advance with those students who have medical conditions, which may need emergency care. The classroom teacher must accompany the group and adequate male/female supervision should be provided.

Responsibilities of Parents Chaperoning Field Trips: Parents play an important role in making a field trip successful. Field trips are planned to supplement the content through a “hands-on” experience. In preparing for a field trip, the following points need to be understood by parent chaperones.

1. The classroom teacher is the final authority for all field trip preparations including: volunteers, schedules, student discipline, and learning objectives.
2. Chaperones are required to remain with their assigned group for the duration of the field trip. Chaperones are never to leave any student in their care unsupervised.
3. Situations involving student discipline should be reported immediately to the classroom teacher. Chaperones should rely on positive reinforcement redirection until the classroom teacher can be contacted. Chaperones should never touch a student in a physically aggressive way or speak to them disrespectfully.
4. Chaperones may not participate in smoking of tobacco products or consumption of alcoholic beverages during the entire duration of the field trip. If this cannot be adhered to then please do not volunteer we will not tolerate this type of participation.
5. Since the field trip is viewed as an extension of the regular classroom, all Merritt Academy discipline codes apply.
6. Parents who offer to supervise on a school field trip must understand that their full attention is needed to ensure the students’ safety. Therefore, siblings are not permitted on school field trips.
7. We also only permit a certain number of chaperones and do not permit additional parents and family members to meet us at fieldtrip locations. A group that is too large makes it difficult for us to ensure safety and appropriate learning experiences for our students.

ATHLETICS AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Athletics and other school clubs formed by staff members will be posted and available to all students to register. Some criteria may be required such as, specific age, prior game knowledge, etc. Some fees may apply. See bulletin boards in the hallway for more details on Merritt’s athletic program and after school clubs.

TUTORING

Tutoring and offering academic support after regular school hours is very important to Merritt Academy. Merritt staff will continue to offer tutoring support to all grade levels during scheduled times. Parent permission is required for students to participate in this activity.

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Board of Directors recognizes the value of student social events in enhancing and enriching the educational experience for the children at Merritt. The Board of Directors along with the administrative staff will make school facilities available and provide appropriate staff to conduct the student social event after approval by the principal.

School social events, which take place outside school facilities, must be approved by administration. As voluntary participants in school social events, students are held responsible for compliance with the rules set forth for their conduct, and infractions of those rules will be subject to the same disciplinary measures applicable during the regular school day.

Participation at school events is not a right, it is a privilege and as such will be denied to any student who has demonstrated disregard for the rules of the school, including students on suspension and academic probation.



GRADING POLICIES



www.merritt-academy.org

GRADING

Kindergarten through fifth grade will utilize the school Academic Key:

A	93-100	A-	92-90		
B+	89-87	B	86-83	B	82-80
C+	79-77	C	76-73	C	72-70
D+	69-67	D	66-63	D	62-60
E	59 and below				

HONOR AWARDS

At the end of each trimester, special recognition is given to those students who have achieved excellence in their academic progress as well as social development. Students are given awards based on their individual accomplishments during the previous trimester.

Honor Roll: Letter grades of all A's or B's (3-12th only)

At the end of the year special recognition is given to those that have achieved excellence in their academic progress as well as social development.

At the end of the year special recognition is given to those that have:

Honor Roll: Have been on honor roll all three trimesters

Attendance: Have had perfect attendance

Spirit: Recognized by a staff member for demonstrating outstanding citizenship during the year.

BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

A student may be placed on behavioral probation if they are consistently and repeatedly sent to RTC. A student may also be placed on behavior probation because of involvement in serious incidents at school including but not limited to fighting, insubordination, bullying, etc. Students on behavioral probation may not attend social field trips or others where safety and the reputation of the school is a concern, participate in after school activities, or receive other student privileges until their behavior corrects consistently and proves otherwise.

REPORT CARDS – CONFERENCES

Academic reports for students in grades K-5 are distributed in December, March, and June. Parent-Educator Conferences are scheduled in approximately October, and January of each school year. Parent/guardian or students of age 18 are required to attend the conference to receive their child's report card. In the event the parent is unable to attend the conference one will be

rescheduled. *It is understood that educators shall, if necessary, arrange additional periodic conferences with parents. Conferences with educators must be scheduled during non-instructional time.*

APPOINTMENTS WITH EDUCATORS

If you would like an appointment to meet with your child's educator, you may make an appointment by note or call the Academy and leave a message. Phone calls to educators during school hours are reserved for emergencies only. Meetings with educators are best when an appointment is made in advance.

RETENTION

The Academy recognizes that the personal, social, physical, and educational growth of children will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

It is the policy of the Board of Directors that each student is moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with his/her own development.

A student will be promoted to the succeeding grade level when he/she has received a C average. The student must also have demonstrated the degree of social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade. The student must also have attended school with less than 20 absences.

Students who are failing (below C average or below 3 averages) may not be promoted to the next grade and will receive additional assistance the following school year. Written notification of concern will be provided to the parent/guardian. A retention meeting will be held with the student's educator, parent, administrative representative and any other staff members that have worked with the student throughout the school year. At the retention meeting, the reasons for not promoting the student will be given to the parent as well as a plan for the following school year to academically develop the student.

In addition, the following factors are considered when making a decision for retention by the student's educator, parents, principal, Title 1 Coordinator, school social worker and other involved staff in the student's academic and social livelihood:

- Student performance based on report cards, portfolio, academic records, assessments
- Discipline record
- Attendance record
- Maturity and social level
- Age of the student
- Reading level

The school principal, however, reserves the right to retain a student in the same grade when in his/her judgment, despite the objection of a parent, and in combination of the above-listed factors strongly suggests that a student needs to have another year of growth in order to be successful at the next grade level.

Any student in 2nd, 5th, or 8th scoring below the 25th percentile on the Reading or Math Performance Series will be retained.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

The Academy gives the following standardized tests every year. Parents can receive results and are encouraged to review the findings. Call for an appointment.

- MStep: Administered to grades 3-8.
- Performance Series (Scantron): Administered 2-12. The assessments will measure their academic growth throughout the Academy year.
- Monthly benchmark assessments: Administered to grades 2-5
- Dibels Next: Administered K-1 three times a year to track reading progress



DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW



www.merritt-academy.org

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student has the responsibility to:

- Respect the inherent human dignity and worth of every individual.
- Be informed of and adhere to all rules and regulations established by Merritt Academy and implemented by school administrators, teachers, and support staff for the welfare and safety of all students.
- Study diligently and strive to reach the highest possible level of academic achievement.
- Be punctual to school and classes.
- Refrain from slanderous remarks and obscenity in verbal and written expression.
- Dress and present oneself in a manner that meets the standards of health, cleanliness, safety, and the Merritt Academy Dress Code.
- Help maintain and improve Merritt Academy's school environment, preserve school property and exercise the utmost care while using school equipment and facilities.
- Conduct oneself in an appropriate manner while in attendance at all school sponsored and/or related events.
- Continue to be, or strive to become, more actively involved in one's education and personal growth.

DISCIPLINE & SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

School officials may suspend a disabled student (as identified by IDEIA 2004) for up to ten (10) consecutive days without implementing procedural safeguards. However, a suspension in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days constitutes a "change in placement" for which procedural safeguards must be implemented.

Before implementing a suspension for a disabled student for more than ten (10) school days, the school district must provide due process protection given non-disabled students, and must take the following steps:

1. Notify the student's parent or guardian in writing of proposed change in placement; and
2. Convene an MDR/IEPT to determine:
 - a. Did the disability cause, or have a direct and substantial relationship to the act of the misconduct?
 - b. Did the District's failure to implement the IEP cause the misconduct?
3. If the answer to both questions is NO, a suspension of more than ten (10) days must be imposed. However, the school district is still responsible for providing special education services during the course of the long-term suspension and an IEPT must be convened to determine what the special education services will be.

At any stage, the parent always has the right to appeal a decision made as part of the IEPT process. In the event of an appeal, the school district must operate under the "stay put" policy allowing the student to remain in the present program. *Merritt Academy will follow IDEIA 2004 mandates.*

ACADEMY WIDE RULES:

The Academy's ultimate goal is to produce students that are respectful, responsible, and resourceful.

Respectful students are polite and use manners. They use appropriate language and appropriate voice levels when talking in the building and to others. They listen to and follow the direction of authority figures. They walk in the building. They keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves. They keep a comfortable distance away from other peoples personal space. They allow the teacher to teach and minimize disruptions to the learning environment. They use safe measures and decision making when dealing with themselves, other students, staff, parents, and the school. They utilize good communication skills when dealing with others including listening and responding appropriately to concerns.

Responsible students make decisions to follow rules appropriately. They behave in a safe way for themselves and others. They care about the cleanliness of their school environment and take pride in helping to keep it clean. They make sure they are in proper uniform when they leave for school in the morning and remain in proper uniform throughout the school day. They make sure they have all they need for the day including finished homework, signed papers, and a lunch and are prepared to learn. When a choice or decision has the potential for negative consequences, responsible students admit wrong doing and are accountable for their actions.

Resourceful students are able to problem solve. They utilize people, places, and things to find answers to problems that they are having. They seek the appropriate help when they need it including adults that are on staff and the closest to get to. They help others when they can by getting an appropriate adult, or informing an appropriate adult if another student or person needs help. They try to use conflict resolution strategies to solve student to student issues appropriately and when that doesn't work they seek help of an appropriate adult. If they are in immediate danger they use good decisions to get out of it as soon as possible and then inform the nearest appropriate adult.

Specific School Rules:**1) Be prepared to learn:**

Including: be on time, bring all necessary school materials (including completed homework), do not disrupt the learning environment, take care of other business outside of the classroom.

2) Follow the direction of the teacher or staff members in charge:

Including: teacher directives include classroom and school rules, requests to sit down or in a specific seat, requests to take notes, read, or any academic tasks or behavioral tasks, etc.

3) Be respectful:

Including: use your manners, clean up after yourself, be nice and cooperative to the teacher, other staff, other students, guests, and self. Use appropriate language at all times throughout the school. Talk in an appropriate tone and level when speaking with authority, students, guests and within the building and classrooms. Keep hands, feet, and objects to self. Keep an appropriate distance from the personal space of others. Take appropriate care of the school facility, furniture, grounds, and materials.

4) Be safe:

Including: walk at all times both in the school and outside, upon dismissal and at arrival. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself and do not spit or bite others. Keep an appropriate distance from others. Keep toy weapons at home – (guns, knives, handcuffs, etc. are NOT PERMITTED)

5) NOTE: Gum Chewing and Caffeinated beverages or energy drinks are not permitted. Clear Water is allowed in the classrooms.

Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection between students including holding, kissing, inappropriate touching, etc, are not permitted.

CLASSROOM RULES:

Each educator has the opportunity to add or enhance the Academy Rules within the confines of their classroom. This is in order to make the learning environment age appropriate to promote growth and success.

Responsibility Room Mission Statement:

Help students learn how to think and act responsibility by offering a safe and orderly place to reflect, plan, discuss, and find resources to achieve success in school.

Responsible Thinking Center (RTC)

at Merritt Academy

Grades 3-12

We believe that all students are responsible for their own actions and must be taught to respect the rights of others. This means they learn by how to think of ways to get what they want while, at the same time, respecting the rights of others. We believe that teachers have the right to teach and the students have the right to learn in a safe and orderly setting. No student has the right to disrupt in school, regardless of where they are, especially if they are preventing other students from learning or are threatening the safety and rights of others.

If a student is disruptive to the school environment, they are asked to think about what they are doing and compare their action to the rules or procedures of wherever they are. If they persist in breaking rules, they have lost their right to be where they are and are then assigned to the Responsible Thinking Center (RTC), where they stay until they indicate to the RTC Supervisor that they are willing to follow the rules from wherever they came. They are then guided by the RTC Supervisor how to work out a plan. They will use the plan to negotiate their return with the person who was in charge of wherever they were disrupting. Students are usually permitted to go to all other classes and other areas where they have been responsible.

Parents should expect to be contacted only when their child has developed a pattern of disruptions. If the patterns of disruptions continues, teachers or other staff will notify the school counselor and RTC Supervisor who will coordinate an intervention meeting that the parent must attend.

Major violations of school rules will continue to be processed according to regular disciplinary procedures.

RTC Procedures at Merritt Academy

I. Student Referrals

- a. Student disruption must be specific on form
- b. Teachers must follow the scripted question process
- c. Teacher name must appear on form
- d. List time on form when student was sent to RTC

II. Responsible Thinking Classroom

- a. Student completes first draft of improvement plan
- b. Student reviews plan with administrator
- c. Administrator reviews classroom re-entry rules with student
- d. Student is sent back to class with completed form

III. Student Re-entry Rules

- a. Student has not earned their way back into class at this point, so they sit silently until teacher initiates the negotiation process (any further disruption will result in restart of the referral process and is grounds for automatic call home from administration)
- b. Student negotiates freely with teacher
- c. If plan is accepted by teacher students re-enters classroom
- d. If teacher student does not accept plan returns to negotiation chair to work on the portion of the plan that remain in negotiation. This continues until plan is accepted.

SAFE ACADEMY'S STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Merritt Academy and Merritt Academy's Board of Directors, endeavors to ensure that Merritt Academy is a safe place for teaching, learning and working. In order to achieve this goal we have instituted a **Zero Tolerance Discipline Policy**. Regardless of circumstances these policy guidelines will be followed. Merritt Academy will notify the police and take swift and appropriate disciplinary action for the following infractions:

Physical Assaults Against Academy Personnel:

Physical assault is defined as intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

Any student who commits a physical assault against an Academy employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor for the Academy on Academy property, on an Academy bus or other Academy related vehicles, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event will be suspended and may be permanently expelled for a period of not less than one hundred eighty (180) days or one full academic school year.

Physical Assaults against Students:

Physical assault is defined as intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

The Academy board or designee of the Academy board shall **expel** any student from Merritt Academy if at Academy a student:

- Possesses a dangerous weapon
- Commits arson
- Commits criminal sexual conduct.

Any student may be suspended or expelled for the following:

- Physical assault against another student
- Physical assault against an Academy Staff or Official (expel)
- Verbal assault, as defined by Academy board policy, against an Academy Official or Staff member
- Bomb threat or similar threat
- Other serious in nature offense which significantly jeopardizes the student, other students, staff, guests, or the Academy.

Verbal Assaults:

Verbal Assault means a threat of an immediate harmful or offensive touching, coupled with apparent immediate ability to commit same, and which puts a person in a reasonable apprehension of such touching, or, the use of offensive language directed at a person, where such language is likely to provoke a reasonable person to physical violence, a bomb threat (or similar threat) directed at an Academy building, other Academy property, or an Academy related event. For purposes of this policy, the definition of assault also includes written threats.

Any student in grade 6 or above who commits a verbal assault on Academy property, on an Academy bus or other Academy related vehicle, or at an Academy sponsored activity or event against an Academy employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor for the Academy shall be suspended or expelled, depending upon circumstances, for up to one hundred eighty (180) days or one full academic school year.

Criminal Sexual Conduct:

Criminal sexual conduct means sexual penetration or touching of a person’s intimate parts. Intimate parts are defined as the breast, buttock, inner thigh, and groin or genital area.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

For the purpose of this Policy, “sexual harassment” shall mean ANY unwelcome advance of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, and/or **verbal or physical conduct** or communication of a sexual nature.

Sexual Harassment: Discriminatory harassment on the basis of sex is hereby prohibited.

Compliant Procedure: Report. A person who believes that this Policy has been violated should promptly report the alleged violation to the school administrator/principal. All alleged violations should be reported no later than sixty days from the date the person first becomes aware of the alleged incident. However, the school reserves the right to investigate and act upon reports submitted beyond the sixty day period.

School Action: The school administrator/principal and a representative from the educational service provider (ESP), shall assist in the complainant to pursue effective resolution of the complaint. This may be handled through an informal or formal process, depending on the severity of the situation. In the event that the administrator or representative from the ESP or among the persons complained of, their positions shall be filled by a member of the Board of Directors, as determined by the Board.

Informal Process: The complaint shall be handled by an informal process unless the situation complained of is deemed so severe by the investigating team or the Board of Directors as to require a formal process, or the complainant demands a formal process, or the action complained of would constitute a criminal act if proven true. The informal process shall involve the investigating team meeting with the alleged offender and all other persons or parties as it deems appropriate, this includes meeting with the student without a parent/guardian present. The alleged offender(s) shall be informed of the complaint and the complainant has requested resolution. If the complaint is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, no further action will be taken unless required by law or if deemed appropriate by the investigating team. If all parties are not satisfied with the action taken, a formal complaint can then be made by any of the parties.

Formal Complaint: A formal complaint must be signed and clearly state the nature of the alleged offense, the name of the alleged defender and the specifics (including time, date and location of the incident(s)). The formal complaint must be filed with the investigating team. If the investigating team deems that the circumstances require action, the complaint will be investigated in a timely and thorough manner to protect the rights of both the complainant and the alleged harasser(s). In the course of the investigation, the following process will be followed:

- a. The investigating team will attempt to convene as soon as is reasonably possible after the filing of the formal complaint.
- b. The investigating team will attempt to gather all appropriate facts in as timely a manner as is reasonably possible.
- c. The investigating team will report to the board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting, or if the investigating team and the Board President deem appropriate, at a special meeting of the board.
- d. The board shall determine appropriate action to be taken.

Sanctions: The person(s) who is found to have violated this Policy may be subject to sanctions which may include, but need not be limited to, suspension, removal from school environments/activities/events, expulsion from the school, banishment from the campus, and/or dismissal from service at the school. Violators may also be subject to civil action or criminal prosecution.

Confidentiality: Discretion will be exercised. However, there can be no guarantee of confidentiality or anonymity since any investigation will involve discussions with other parties. Information about the complainant giving rise to the complaint will be reviewed only as investigatory and disciplinary processes require, or as otherwise required by law or courts having competent jurisdiction. Confidentiality will be observed to the extent permitted by law and to the extent consistent with protecting the welfare of the School Community and the interest of the school. However, the investigating team, the Board and/or the school administrator/principal may report the incident to appropriate authorities as they deem necessary or appropriate.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Child abuse or neglect means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a parent, or legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare, or by an educator or educator's abode.

Suspected child abuse and or neglect must be reported to FIA. (See Merritt Academy's Child Abuse and Neglect policy)

EDUCATOR EMPOWERMENT TO SUSPEND

Pursuant to MCL 380.1309(2), the type of conduct of which educators may unilaterally suspend students in grades 6 and above from a class subject or activity for up to one day, is expressly limited to misconduct involving a physical assault committed against another student or other Academy personnel. Physical assault is defined as intentional causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence. Following an educator initiated suspension; the educator shall send the student to the Principal's office, immediately report the suspension and reason for the same to the Principal. The educator shall schedule as soon as possible a conference with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Principal to discuss the suspension. The educator and administrator(s) shall be in attendance at the conference. Any student suspended pursuant to this policy shall not be allowed to return to the class from which he or she was suspended from until the passage of one full Academy day from the time of the student's infraction unless otherwise permitted to return by the educator who ordered the suspension and the Academy Principal's concurrence. Further, suspended students under this section shall not be permitted, during the term of the suspension to attend other classes in the Academy building or extracurricular activities, unless the Principal or designee permits the student to continue the Academy day under appropriate supervision. This policy does not negate the Principal's discretion to impose a multiple day suspension or expulsion beyond the educator's statutorily limited suspension period when the student's conduct warrants more severe disciplinary action in the Principal's sole discretion.

Application to Students with Disabilities

This policy shall be applied in a manner consistent with the rights secured under federal and state law to students who are determined to be eligible for special education programs and services.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations of the Student Code of Conduct. The Academy will uphold the code and will exercise proper discretion as it pertains to each incident. For further information on expulsion and due process, see the main office.

Self-discipline is our goal for all of the students of Merritt Academy. To encourage the development of this virtue, positive reinforcement will be used. Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations of Merritt Academy. The Academy will uphold the code and will exercise proper discretion as it pertains to each in student.

DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

Conference with student: Conferences are held for all disciplinary problems. Usually it is also a first step for minor violations resulting in a warning being issued. All behaviors and resolutions will be documented.

Parent Conferences: A parent conference can be personal or by phone. This can be used as a second disciplinary action or can be required for other violations. All conferences and resolutions will be documented.

Swearing: First offense students receive a warning and informed if they are caught swearing again they will receive an automatic in-school suspension. Additional offenses may result in out of school suspension.

Detention: May be served during recess, lunch, classroom celebrations, and before or after-school for unacceptable behavior.

In-School Suspension: For chronic irresolvable or major discipline problems, a student will remain in the office for the entire duration. They will work classroom work given to them by the administrator without talking. They are to ask permission to leave for any reason and will be required to eat their lunch in the office. Work completed during In-House Suspension may earn full credit.

Rules for In-House Suspension

1. Students will sit in their assigned seats given to them by the office staff.
2. Students will be in the in-house room by the first hour bell.
3. While in the in-house room there will be no talking, note writing or any other type of communication.
4. Students are responsible for keeping their area clean. Any waste can be kept on their desk top until their break time or end of the school day.
5. Students are not allowed to leave their seat unless they have permission to do so.
6. Restroom and drinking fountain breaks are allowed two times a day. If abuse of this privilege occurs they can lose the remainder of their privileges.
7. There is no food allowed in the in-house room except for the designated lunch period.
8. If a student refuses to follow the in-house rules they will be given an out of school suspension.
9. If a student is absent the scheduled day of in-house or misses any part of the day, they will make

up any absent time the next day in attendance.

Suspension: For chronic, irresolvable or severe discipline problems. A student who is suspended out of school will be required to remain in the office until picked up by a parent or guardian. While in the office they will follow the same routine as an In-School suspension. Once serving their out of school suspension they are not to be on school grounds during or after school or attend any after school activities. They are to make up all missed assignments and have the same number of days to complete it as they are absent. Work completed during Out of School Suspension may earn up to half credit.

Expulsion from the Academy: In extreme cases expulsion from the Academy may be necessary. A student who is expelled may not return to the school for a time period equivalent to one full academic school year. After the expulsion is completed it is up to the Academy to permit re-enrollment into the Academy.



DISCIPLINE ACTIONS & MINIMUM PENALTIES



www.merritt-academy.org

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND MINIMUM PENALTIES:

Every student has the innate right to an education free from being threatened in any fashion. In addition, every teacher has the right to teach just as every student has the right to learn. Any disruption to this process will not be tolerated. The following is a list of some unacceptable student behaviors and the suggested minimum starting penalties. Should a violation not be listed, administrative discretion will be exercised and proper penalty imposed for the violation.

Violations may have different circumstances and therefore administrative discretion may be imposed to apply appropriate consequences and penalties to each individual situation to ensure fairness.

If a student misses class for an in school or out of school suspension, they are responsible for speaking with their teacher and making up the work from the class period(s) they missed.

Offense	Definition	K-2 Minimum Penalty	3-5 Minimum Penalty
Dress Code Violation	Out of compliance with proper Merritt uniform defined in the Student Code of Conduct.	Please refer to handbook section Dress Code.	Please refer to handbook section Dress Code.
Rough-housing / Verbal Confrontation	Exhibiting physically aggressive or unsafe behavior including acting carelessly and putting others in danger; instigating or engaging in verbal confrontations where abusive, vulgar, irreverent, lewd, or indecent conduct, including gestures, pictures, stories, or language is used.	Removal from class for designated period of time. Parent contact Parent conference if necessary	Removal from class for a designated time period to 5 day out of school suspension.
Fighting	An extreme act of physical aggression that is designed to seriously harm or injure another person	1 day suspension. Referral to counselor/social worker. Days may increase with the number of violations	Out of school Suspension 1 day to expulsion depending on severity of the situation. Days will increase with multiple violations.. After 10 days an automatic referral for expulsion.
Insubordination	Deliberate refusal to obey a reasonable request or order by an Academy personnel, documented by the Academy personnel and submitted to the office	Removal from class for a designated period of time. Parent contact Parent conference if necessary	Removal from class. An appropriate form of suspension Continued violation warrants dismissal from Academy.
Disrespect towards Authority	To use inappropriate voice tone, voice level, language, insinuations, mockery, gestures, threats, intimidation, etc.	In-House suspension to Out of School suspension. Referral to counselor/social worker. Days may increase with the number of violations	Referral to counselor/social worker. 1 day out of school suspension to dismissal from academy and will add an additional day for each additional occurrence up to 10 with referral for expulsion.
Harassment	To disturb persistently; torment, as with troubles or cares; bother continually; pester; persecute. *Please refer to the section on bullying for additional information.	Removal from class for a designated period of time. Parent Conference. Referral to counselor/social worker.	Out of school suspension 1 day to expulsion. Notification to authorities if appropriate. Referral to counselor/social worker if appropriate.
Serious Threats	Written or verbal threats toward self, another person’s life or well being, or the school.	Removal from class for a designated period of time. Investigation by Administrative staff and when necessary contact to local authorities and child protective services. Parent contact. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	Immediate removal from class. Investigation by Administrative staff. Minimum 3 day suspension – not to return to school until psychological evaluation determined not a threat to self or others. Required to make up all missed assignments if eligible to return to school. Notification to authorities and/or child protective services if appropriate.

Sexual Harassment	The making of offensive sexual advances, touching of personal areas, or of sexually offensive remarks, gestures or acts, that make another person feel uncomfortable.	Parent Notification. Removal from class. Referral to counselor/social worker. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	Out of school suspension 1 day to expulsion. Notification to authorities if appropriate. Referral to counselor/social worker.
Forgery	Falsely making or altering a writing by which the legal rights or obligations of another person are apparently affected; simulated signing of another person's name to any such writing whether or not it is also the forger's name.	Parent Notification. Dependent upon what and how forgery occurred, loss of some form of school privilege to suspension.	Adm. Determined appropriate form of suspension for situation. Parent notification. Notification of authorities if appropriate.
Profanity or Obscenities	The use of abusive, vulgar, irreverent, lewd, or indecent conduct, including gestures, pictures, stories, or language.	Contact of Parents Time out of class to In-House suspension	Out of school suspension 1 day to expulsion.
Cell Phone	Possessing or using a cell phone for any purpose during school hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First offense the item will be taken and released only to a parent or legal guardian. • Second offense the item will be kept until the last day of school and released only to a parent or legal guardian. • Third offense phone must be turned into the office at the start of each school day. <p>** Failure to turn over a form will result in consequences for insubordination</p>	
Bullying	Harassment or Bullying: is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), or wireless hand held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. This also includes ANY behavior that could be perceived as being aimed at intimidating, threatening, or coercing another person. <u>Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle. Merritt Academy Adheres to a ZERO TOLERANCE BULLYING POLICY.</u>	Contact of Parents Removal from class for a designated period of time to suspension and in extreme cases expulsion. R Referral to counselor/social worker.	Out of school suspension 3 days to expulsion. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.
Stealing	To take (the property of another or others) without permission or right, esp. secretly or by force.	Return of items or cost of missing items Contact of Parents Time out of class. Loss of some type of school privilege. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	Return of items or cost of missing items In-House suspension to Out of school suspension Days may increase with the number of violations. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.
Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty	To copy or present someone else's work as your own OR to not be able to distinguish your work from a group of students you are working with.	Student may receive a zero on assignment	

Skipping Class / Loitering	Being out of class during instructional time without a pass, arriving 5 or more minutes late to class without a pass, or not attending class without proper authorization; being present in unauthorized areas in the building or school grounds.	Notify Parents to removal from class.	1 st – Notify Parents 2 nd – In school suspension to two days out of school suspension
Tobacco	Possession and/or use of tobacco containing product including cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or other.	Contact child protective services Appropriate disciplinary Action and/or out of school suspension to expulsion	1st -3 day suspension 2nd – 5 day suspension and notification to authorities 3rd – 10 day suspension and notification to authorities and dismissal from Academy.
Gambling / Gambling paraphernalia	Being found in possession of gaming paraphernalia such as dice, chips, etc.; exhorting and/or collecting money under betting or unwarranted circumstances.	Notify Child Protective Services/Parents	Up to 5 day out of school suspension and dismissal from Merritt
Vandalism	Deliberate defacing or destruction of school or individual student, staff, or guest property	Student to remove or parent to pay for removal or replacement of damaged property. Form of time out of class.	Student to remove or parent to pay for removal or replacement of damaged property. 1 day suspension to expulsion. Notification to the authorities.
Trespassing /Loitering:	Students and parents being on school grounds fifteen (15) minutes after dismissal or after a school related function, even in a vehicle.	Verbal warning; reported to local authorities; after 3 incidents child protective services will be notified; Dismissal from Merritt.	
Leaving school without proper authorization	Leaving the premises of the school without following check-out protocols.	In school suspension to three days out of school suspension	
False Fire Alarm	Deliberately pulling or setting off the fire alarms.	Parents will be fined by local fire department. 1 day suspension	Parents will be fined by local fire department. 3 day suspension to expulsion
Possession/ Usage of Weapon	Any instrument of attack used to cause serious harm to another.	Contact authorities - 10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion Notification to Child Protective Services. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	Contact authorities -10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion. Notification to authorities and Child Protective Services. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.
Alcohol	Possession of an intoxicating liquid containing some form of alcohol.	Contact Child Protective Services Appropriate disciplinary Action and/ or out of school suspension to expulsion Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	5 day suspension up to expulsion Notification to authorities and Child Protective Services

Drugs /paraphernalia	Possession of a chemical substance, illegal or otherwise, that affects the central nervous system causing changes in behavior and often addiction or possession of any equipment used in making, using, or concealing such a substance.	Contact the authorities and Child Protective Services Appropriate disciplinary Action and/or out of school suspension to expulsion. Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate	Contact authorities -10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion Notification to Child Protective Services Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate
Fire type materials	Possession of Fireworks, stink bombs, lighters, matches, smoke bombs, etc.	Situation Subjective, Contact parents,1 day suspension, Contact Child Protective Services, Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.	3 day suspension to expulsion Recommendation for counseling evaluation if appropriate.
Compromise of public safety (teachers, staff, and students):	Exhibiting physically aggressive or unsafe behavior including acting carelessly and putting others in danger; disregard for directives and/or authoritative figure	Out of school suspension to expulsion. Notification to authorities and/or child protective Services if appropriate. Dismissal from Merritt.	
WEAPONS USAGE, ARSON, CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT-	If a student possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon free school zone (on school property and/or a vehicle used by a school to transport students to or from school property), or commits arson or criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school grounds, the student must be expelled from school permanently, subject to possible reinstatement provided for in the law.	Any student who commits a physical assault against an Academy employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor for the Academy on Academy property, on an Academy bus or other Academy related vehicles, or at an Academy-sponsored activity or event will be suspended and may be permanently expelled for a period of not less than one hundred eighty (180) days or one full academic school year.	

PARENT GRIEVANCES

Any and all parent concerns and grievances should be brought to the attention of the teacher. If, after consultation and discussion with the teacher, the parent feels the matter has not been satisfactorily settled, the parent may bring the matter to the attention of the Vice-Principal. If, after consultation and discussion with the Vice Principal, the parent feels the matter has still not been satisfactorily settled, the parent may make a written appeal to the Principal. The Principal will respond in writing informing the parent if and when the hearing of the grievance will take place. If appropriate the grievance will be relayed to the Merritt Superintendent and/or the Merritt Board of Directors. Please be aware that the Merritt Academy Principal, Superintendent, and Board members are in their official capacity to respond to the grievance when and only when they are meeting formally regarding it. Individually (in the hallways, at games, on the telephone, etc) they are not to discuss official business of this nature as it would be considered inappropriate.

EARLY AGE PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Michigan law requires attendance of each student until sixteen (16) years of age, it is in the best interests of both students and the community that they complete the educational program that will equip them with skills and increase their chances for a successful and fulfilling life beyond Merritt.

No student under the age of eighteen (18) is permitted to withdraw without the written consent of a parent or the approval from the principal.

For all other Academy policies approved by the Board of Directors, feel free to request a time to review the Board Policy Manual with the Board of Directors Recording Secretary or the Academy Principal.