



MUSTANGS

2021-2022 Handbook



THE ROMINE GROUP

MERRITT ACADEMY
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New Haven, MI 48048

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www.merritt-academy.org

www.merrittathletics.com

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

merrittstrong.merritt-academy.org

You can also check on the progress of your individual student by visiting [**powerschool.merritt-academy.org/public/home.html**](http://powerschool.merritt-academy.org/public/home.html)

Enter in your ID and password!

Academy School Hours 7:45am-3:15pm

Academy School Office Hours

Mon-Fri 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Merritt Academy Founder

John Romine

Merritt Academy Board of Directors

President- Amy White-Jones

Vice President- Karen Boska

Secretary- Jean Dery

Treasurer- Daniel VanDeKerkhover

Member at Large- Karen Bochatyn

Administration

Nathan Seiferlein, Principal

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Mark Witkowski Counselor

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Amy Schluckbier, Office Manager

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Educational Service Provider

The Romine Group

7877 Stead

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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

OVERVIEW

The regular school day begins at 7:45 and ends at 3:15. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 7:25am-7:40am. Students will be permitted in the school for breakfast at 7:25 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. **STUDENTS WILL BE DISMISSED FROM CAFETERIA AT 7:40.**

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

K-2 Lunch: 11:15-11:45am

3-5 grade Lunch: 11:50-12:20pm

MS Lunch: 12:20-12:49pm

HS Lunch: 12:54-1:23pm

*****MERRITT ACADEMY IS A CLOSED CAMPUS. This means you are required to stay at Merritt Academy during lunchtime. You may not sign out and come back no matter if you have parent permission or not. If you sign out you may not return the rest of the school day unless you bring back a doctor or dentist note to prove your whereabouts. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in a behavior consequence or revoking of driving privileges.**

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 there will be a designated reenrollment form. 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

Parents of all students may drop off their children in the designated school parking lot. Please make sure to follow the drop off protocol. All buildings open at 7:35.

Students arriving to school before 7:35 will be required to wait outside the buildings until the bell rings.

Prompt arrival into the classroom is essential. All students arriving tardy to school will sign in tardy in their first hour classroom up to 7:55. After 7:55 a parent needs to accompany the student to the main office to sign them in. Students 16 and older may sign themselves into the main office.

AM & PM FACILITY SAFETY PROCEDURES

Parents are not to park or stand in undesignated spots or in front of the high school building. It is for quick drop off only. Please stop by the office for parking lot map & details. Students and parents are only to use the main entrance doors for entering & exiting the building between 7:45 am and 3:15pm. 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.

STUDENT DRIVERS

Parking on school property is a courtesy extended to students and others by Merritt Academy. Merritt Academy assumes no responsibility for damage to cars or for theft of vehicles or articles from vehicles. Any student who wishes to drive to school must have a "Permit to Drive" form on file in the office, before permission to drive is granted. The cost of this permit is \$20. Permission to park on school property may be removed by the administration for any person who does not observe the regulations or who drives unsafely.

- Students must park in their designated parking spot only.
- Students in violation of these rules or the conditions outlined on the "Permit to Drive" form will face disciplinary action and possible loss of the driving privilege.
- The parking lot is school property and subject to searches, including canine searches, at any time.

LUNCH

Students are expected to follow the Lunch Room Behavior Code and respect all adults that are Merritt staff or parent volunteers when enforcing this Code.

- Students are expected to 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 Behavior Code will be referred to RTC or the Administration. Continual problems will result in loss of cafeteria privileges and 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.

Students are NOT allowed to order food to be delivered to the school. Parents are allowed to send food to be delivered to the school in their child's name. NOTE: NO PAYMENT CAN BE MADE AT SCHOOL and students will not be allowed to leave class to "pay for food" or sign for it. Food must be prepaid by the parent.

DISMISSAL

At no time will the Academy permit a student to be dismissed without a parent/guardian. During the school day students are not permitted to walk home or leave with a friend without prior 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 will remain with their teachers and will be called out to the parking lot as their ride arrives in the parent pickup line. Students in grades 6-12 are dismissed from their classroom at 3:15pm. Parents are required to follow the parking lot instructions for dismissal.

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 main 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. After approval from the main office, the student's educator will send the student to meet the parent in the main office. 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.
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.

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.

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.

MERRITT ACADEMY VISITORS

We 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 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 and our Merritt Academy Facebook page. 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. Failure to provide proper care or replacement fees may result in a loss of different school wide rewards/incentives.

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 absent for 3 or more days should be made in the morning by 9am. This will allow time for the educator to organize the materials. 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.

*See “grading policies” for procedures regarding due dates of requested absent work.

COMMUNICATION

Parents can now access up to date information on their student’s progress via the web. Just visit powerschool.therominegroup.com/public, enter in your ID and password, and you will have access to grades and attendance, information on individual assignments, you can sign up for e-mail notification, and view teacher comments. This is a great way to stay on top of what is happening with your student!

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.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The telephones in the main office are for the Academy business and emergencies only. Students will be permitted to use the telephones for emergency purposes only. Students should take care of business with parents prior to coming to school.

Students that are taking pictures and videos without approval that are not approved will be confiscated and if necessary pictures deleted prior to release of camera to parent/guardian. (Electronics are allowed for high school students during their lunch period, inside the cafeteria only) Failure to follow policy will result in the disciplinary action below. Merritt will not accept responsibility for the personal items of students that are lost, stolen, or confiscated. No headphones are allowed unless being used for academic purposes.

- First offense the item will be returned to the student after speaking with administration
- Second offense the item will be returned to student and parent will be notified
- Third offense the item will need to be turned into the office at the beginning of the school day and picked up at the end of the school day
- Refusing to surrender a cell phone will result in further disciplinary action.

* Occasionally teachers will have students use their cell phones for classroom activities, per teacher discretion. No headphones or music during hallway passing time for any reason. No headphones are to be worn in class without prior teacher permission.

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 area located outside of the gym in the High School or by the front entrance in the elementary building. Each Friday, 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.

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 & PROCEDURES

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Parents are asked to call the Academy before 7:35 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.
6. If a student misses more than 30 minutes of any class, it is considered an absence for said class.

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 in advance concerning how your child will complete missed assignments.
2. Time given for the completion of makeup work will be one (1) day for every day absent.
3. The time allowed for completion of absent work begins when teacher submits the absent work to the student, parent, or office.

III. ATTENDANCE PROCESS /TRUANCY:

1. A letter from the administration will be sent to the student's parent/guardian on the fifth & ninth absence per semester.
2. A mandatory conference (either on phone or in person) will be held between administration and the student's parent/guardian upon the eighth absence per semester.
3. If the student reaches an excessive amount of absences during the school year, they may be retained in the current grade level due to lack of formal instruction and/or they may be permanently removed from the Academy due to lack of attendance. They may also be reported 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 arriving in the learning environment after 7:45 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 in first hour.
3. A mandatory conference will be held between administration and the student's parent/guardian upon the eighth tardy per trimester in first hour.

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.

DRESS CODE

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 – 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 an opportunity to fix the dress code violation. If they cannot or will not, fix dress code violation, they will be issued a detention or strike by their classroom teacher. If a student is repeatedly asked to fix a dress code violation, they may lose the opportunity to fix it, and receive a detention or strike upon the violation. Parents may be contacted and will be responsible for bringing proper clothing that same day. In elementary the teacher will be in contact with the parent to address any dress code issue that comes up.

Permitted uniform attire:

1. Polo style shirts in solid navy, burgundy, light blue, gray, white, or black with the Merritt Academy logo.
2. Solid crew neck sweaters or sweatshirts in the approved uniform shirt colors and non-hooded Merritt Academy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform shirt. (Polo collar of uniform must be visible)

Solid sweaters, hooded sweatshirts, and fleeces that are open in the front may be worn over the uniform shirt provided that they are in the approved uniform shirt colors.

3. Shoes must be black, brown, or navy and with closed toes and closed heels. Maximum heel or platform height is 1 inch. Markings on shoes are allowed in the colors of black, grey, white, navy, or brown.
4. Long sleeved t-shirts may be worn under the student's uniform shirt in the approved uniform colors only.
5. Bottoms will be navy blue, khaki, or black pants, shorts, skorts, and skirts. (Shorts, skorts, and skirts must be fingertip length)
6. 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.

Uniform 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. Athletic wear, sweatpants, yoga pants, leggings, or jeggings. (Leggings are allowed when worn under a uniform length skirt.)
4. Clothing that is ripped, torn, or faded to a different color.
5. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarves on the head.
6. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.
7. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Casual Day guidelines:

Fridays or the last school day of the week are Merritt Casual Days and cost students \$1.00. Students may wear appropriate casual clothes to school. Participation in Casual Day is a privilege that can be revoked to any student by school administration for any length of time deemed necessary.

1. Clothing may not contain inappropriate graphics, inappropriate language, or suggestive messages.
2. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length.
3. Sleeveless shirts are permitted as long as the strap is a minimum of 2 inches in width.
4. Open-toed shoes and sandals are not permitted at any time.
5. "Uniform attire that is NOT permitted" items #4-#7 (above) still apply. NO RIPPED JEANS or RIPPED CLOTHING ON CASUAL FRIDAY that exposes skin. Leggings or another fabric must be worn under these kind of garments.

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 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 or will not, fix dress code violation, they will be issued a detention or strike by their classroom teacher. If a student is repeatedly asked to fix a dress code violation, they may lose the opportunity to fix it, and receive a detention or strike upon the violation. Parents may be contacted and will be responsible for bringing proper clothing that same day.

Permitted uniform attire:

1. Polo style shirts in solid navy, burgundy, light blue, gray, white, or black with the Merritt Academy logo.
2. Solid crew neck sweaters or sweatshirts in the approved uniform shirt colors and non-hooded Merritt Academy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform shirt. (Polo collar of uniform must be visible). Solid sweaters, hooded sweatshirts, and fleeces that are open in the front may be worn over the uniform shirt provided that they are in the approved uniform shirt colors.

3. Shoes must be black, brown, or navy and with closed toes and closed heels. Maximum heel or platform height is 1 inch. Markings on shoes are allowed in the colors of black, grey, white, navy, or brown.
4. Long sleeved t-shirts may be worn under the student's uniform shirt in the approved uniform colors only.
5. Bottoms will be navy blue, khaki, or black pants, shorts, skorts, and skirts. (Shorts, skorts, and skirts must be fingertip length)
6. 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.

Uniform 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. Athletic wear, sweatpants, yoga pants, leggings, or jeggings. (Leggings are allowed when worn under a uniform length skirt.)
4. Clothing that is ripped, torn, or faded to a different color.
5. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarfs on the head.
6. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.
7. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Casual Day guidelines:

Fridays or the last school day of the week are Merritt Casual Days and cost students \$1.00. Students may wear appropriate casual clothes to school. Participation in Casual Day is a privilege that can be revoked to any student by school administration for any length of time deemed necessary.

1. Clothing may not contain inappropriate graphics, inappropriate language, or suggestive messages.
2. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length.
3. Sleeveless shirts are permitted as long as the strap is a minimum of 2 inches in width.
4. Open-toed shoes and sandals are not permitted at any time.
5. "Uniform attire that is NOT permitted" items #4-#7 (above) still apply. NO RIPPED JEANS or RIPPED CLOTHING ON CASUAL FRIDAY that exposes skin. Leggings or another fabric must be worn under these kind of garments.

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.**

Game Day Dress Code Expectations for Sports Teams:

For the 2021-2022 school year athletes can wear their jersey and wear dress clothes on game days. For home games jerseys and team gear will be worn. For away games the student athlete can dress up. For both away and home games please follow the guidelines below:

Home Games

- You may wear your jersey to school
- You must follow Merritt Dress Code in all other respects except for games that fall on Fridays.

Away Games

- You must be in DRESS CLOTHES
- Boys wear dress pants ; dress shoes; dress shirt and tie or nice polo shirt
- 3. Girls wear dress pants, skirts, or a dress (skirts and dresses MUST be finger tip length) and dress shoes

You may not wear yoga pants or any type of spandex pant

Tights and leggings may be worn under dresses or skirts ONLY

You must follow Merritt Dress Code in all respects regardless of the day of the week.

***IF A GAME IS ON A FRIDAY YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PAY FOR DRESS DOWN PROVIDED YOU ARE WEARING WHAT THE TEAM WAS ASSIGNED TO WEAR.**

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 be given an opportunity to fix the dress by their classroom teacher. If a student is repeatedly asked to fix a dress code violation, they may lose the opportunity to fix it, and receive a detention or strike upon the violation. 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, black, or royal blue with the Merritt Academy High School logo. Plain long sleeve shirts or turtlenecks are allowed to be worn under uniform shirts.
2. Solid crew neck sweaters or sweatshirts in the approved uniform shirt colors and non-hooded Merritt Academy sweatshirts may be worn over the uniform shirt. (Polo collar of uniform must be visible)

Solid sweaters, hooded sweatshirts, and fleeces that are open in the front may be worn over the uniform shirt provided that they are in the approved uniform shirt colors.

3. Bottoms will be navy blue, khaki, or black pants, shorts, skorts, and skirts. (Shorts, skorts, and skirts must be fingertip length)
4. Shoes must be black, brown, or navy and with closed toes and closed heels. Maximum heel or platform height is 1 inch. (White and grey markings on soles and logos are permitted)
5. Nose piercings are acceptable but must be a stud.

Attire that is NOT permitted as part of Merritt Academy uniform:

1. Shirts worn knotted at the back or at the side or otherwise altered in appearance.
2. Any decoration on clothing other than the approved Merritt Academy logo.
3. Athletic wear, sweatpants, yoga pants, leggings, or jeggings. (Leggings are allowed when worn under a uniform length skirt.)
4. Ripped or torn clothing.
5. Distracting or dangerous jewelry or accessories.
6. Hats or visors inside the building. Bandanas or other scarfs on the head.
7. Jackets or other outerwear in the classroom.
8. Any clothing that exposes a part of the body between the neck and knees.

Casual Day guidelines:

Fridays or the last school day of the week are Merritt Casual Days and cost students \$1.00. Students may wear appropriate casual clothes to school. Participation in Casual Day is a privilege that can be revoked to any student by school administration for any length of time deemed necessary.

1. Clothing may not contain inappropriate graphics, inappropriate language, or suggestive messages.
3. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length.
4. Sleeveless shirts are permitted as long as the strap is a minimum of 2 inches in width.
5. Open-toed shoes and sandals are not permitted at any time.
6. "Uniform attire that is NOT permitted" items #4-#8 (above) still apply.
7. NO RIPPED JEANS or RIPPED CLOTHING ON CASUAL FRIDAY that exposes skin. Leggings or another fabric must be worn under these kind of garments.

Students who are in violation of the dress code because of sloppiness or 'stretching' the rules will be corrected and a detention/strike 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.**

Merritt Mondays (High School Students ONLY):

On Mondays only (or the first day of school of the week), High school students are allowed to wear any Merritt Academy apparel or spirit wear SHIRT free of charge. Acceptable items could include NHS t-shirts, class shirts, sports spirit wear, spirit wear purchased through the school, or anything else that has the words "Merritt Academy" on it. Hooded sweatshirts are acceptable. We invite all high school students to participate in this, so if you don't have any spirit wear yet, buy some or get involved! The rest of the student's uniform remains the same. (pants, shoes, proper sweatshirt colors etc).

* This is a privilege for the high school students. If these rules and procedures are not followed it will be taken away.

Game Day Dress Code Expectations for Sports Teams:

For the 2021-2022 school year athletes can wear their jersey and wear dress clothes on game days. For home games jerseys and team gear will be worn. For away games the student athlete will dress up. For both away and home games please follow the guidelines below:

Home Games

- You may wear your jersey to school
- You must follow Merritt Dress Code in all other respects except for games that fall on Fridays.

Away Games

- You must be in DRESS CLOTHES
- Boys wear dress pants ; dress shoes; dress shirt and tie or nice polo shirt
- 3. Girls wear dress pants, skirts, or a dress (skirts and dresses MUST be finger- tip length) and dress shoes

You may not wear yoga pants or any type of spandex pant

Tights and leggings may be worn under dresses or skirts ONLY

You must follow Merritt Dress Code in all respects regardless of the day of the week.

***IF A GAME IS ON A FRIDAY YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PAY FOR DRESS DOWN PROVIDED YOU ARE WEARING WHAT THE TEAM WAS ASSIGNED TO WEAR.**

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 may be in attendance at 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. For a student to be eligible for a 504 plan, the student must meet all three of the following criteria. It must be because of this disability that the student is unable to gain equal access and benefit from school programs and services.

The publication, *A Parent Guide to Section 504 Of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, is a resource available to parents through their school.

- 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 Mr. Witkowski (school counselor) 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

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 valuables, expensive electronics, 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. Students will assume ownership and therefore responsibility for items found in their locker, backpack, or in their possession. Administration approval must be given in order for a student to switch lockers.

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 appropriate documentation.

INJURIES AND ILLNESS

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 at the expense of the parent. The school office will also notify the child's parent/guardian.

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 and over-the-counter throat lozenges are allowed in the student's possession at any time. We recommend advising your child's educator if they are carrying an inhaler. At no time should a student be sent to school with medication that does not follow these guidelines. Student's are not to self medicate while at school nor are they to possess medications to offer opportunity for other students to ingest and possibly overdose.

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 Macomb 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.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Effective April 1, 1996, Public Act 160 created the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, commonly referred to as dual enrollment. This law directs school districts to assist students in paying tuition and fees for courses at Michigan public or private colleges or universities, if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Students are in grade 11 or grade 12.
2. Students can qualify for dual enrollment if they are in good standing with credits earned.

If a student meets the criteria and wishes to participate in the dual enrollment program, a parent or guardian should contact the Counseling Department for details, deadlines and updates.

If a student fails a class with less than a 59% or lower they will be required to repay the school for the cost of the class.

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, including e cigarettes, or the 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.

COLLEGE VISITS

NOTE: THE MERRITT ACADEMY COUNSELING OFFICE STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS VISITING A COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ON ANY ONE DAY.

The procedure is as follows:

- The student is expected to contact the counseling office of the college/university to be visited and schedule an appointment with a college guidance counselor. Merritt Academy counselors are available to assist in making this contact.
- While at the college, the student must ask the counselor/staff person for a letter confirming the visit and the date. This letter must be on college/university LETTERHEAD and SIGNED by a STAFF PERSON. This letter MUST be turned in to the Merritt Academy Counseling Office WITHIN TWO SCHOOL DAYS AFTER THE VISIT IN ORDER FOR IT TO BE CONSIDERED AN EXCUSED SCHOOL BUSINESS DAY. No other documentation for the visit will be accepted.

NINTH HOUR

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. A semester ninth hour schedule will be provided for students in grades 6-12, as well as posted on the school website. It is the responsibility of the student to begin attending ninth hour. Staff will not be responsible to make sure students are attending ninth hour.

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.

K-12th GRADING SCALE

100-93	A	76-73	C
92-90	A-	72-70	C-
89-87	B+	69-67	D+
86-83	B	66-63	D
82-80	B-	62-60	D-
79-77	C+	59-0	E

Teachers will hand out specific policies that outline homework and grading policies.

GRADUATION STATUS OF STUDENTS

Students will NOT move on with their graduating class if they are behind in credits. NO student will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises, nor will he/she receive a diploma, until all requirements listed below have been achieved. IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MONITOR HIS/HER CREDIT STATUS.

GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

The State Board of Education introduced the new requirements, called the Michigan Merit Curriculum, in December 2005. When the state legislature enacted the requirements as law in March 2006, they became the driving force behind high school reform in Michigan and are among the most rigorous in the nation. In satisfying these requirements, graduates will meet and often surpass the most stringent entry requirements for all colleges and universities in the state, and will provide the academic and applied learning skills business and industry leaders say they need in their work force.

MATHEMATICS - 4 Years (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, one additional year. All four credits must be earned in grades 9-12)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - 4 Years (ELA 9, 10, 11, & 12)
SCIENCE - 4 Years (, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, one additional year)
SOCIAL STUDIES - 4 Years (US History, Civics, Economics, World Geography/History, one additional year)
PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH - 1 Year (must include 1 semester of health)
VISUAL, PERFORMING AND APPLIED ARTS - 2 Years
ELECTIVE CLASSES- 4 Years
ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE- equivalent to one year
LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH - 1 Year (incoming class of 2023 will be required 2 years of this)

**Merritt Academy DOES NOT offer summer school. Students who fail core classes are responsible for making up the credits through an on-line program or night school. Please contact Mr. Witkowski for options.*

COMMUNITY SERVICE HOUR REQUIREMENT

**STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO EARN 15 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR EACH HIGH SCHOOL YEAR SPENT AT MERRITT ACADEMY. These hours must be documented and turned into the main office. No student will be allowed to graduate without the required hours of service.*

SENIOR SCHOLAR RECOGNITIONS

- Valedictorian: Highest Cumulative G.P.A *
- Salutatorian: Second Highest Cumulative G.P.A*

*Must attend Merritt for a least one full academic year to be eligible for Senior Scholar Recognitions.

*In the event of a tie, SAT test results will be used to break the tie

*In the event of multiple category ties, administration may add more than one on Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

*Behavior and Character issues will be taken into consideration when awarding these positions.

SENIORS NOT GRADUATING

Seniors who do not graduate with their class and who desire to return to Merritt Academy High School for an additional year can do so only with the permission of the school leader.

CRITERIA FOR MARCHING IN GRADUATION

No Senior will be allowed to receive a diploma if he/she does not have the credit minimum and has not met course or community service requirements at the time of the graduation ceremony! All required courses must be passed and all dues and fines paid prior to the ceremony. Disciplinary problems may also result in being prohibited to participate in the graduation ceremony. Merritt Academy reserves the right to determine the seniors who are allowed to be a part of graduation.

MERRITT ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL RETENTION POLICY

RETENTION for grades 6-8

In an effort to maintain high standards and ensure that students are advancing to the next grade level with demonstrated knowledge of their current grade level, middle school students are required to pass all core subjects (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science) each school year with a 60% or better.

If the student's average grade, using the percentage earned for each of the semesters, is below 60% in two or more core subjects, he/she will be retained and required to repeat the grade level.

If a student who receives special education accommodations earns an average of below a 60% in 2 or more core subjects in a given school year, he/she will be reviewed on a case by case basis by administration, classroom teachers, and special education teachers and staff to determine if retention is the appropriate outcome.

If a student is not enrolled at Merritt Academy for the full school year, the percentages earned during the semesters completed while in attendance will be used to determine the average.

REPORT CARDS – CONFERENCES

Academic reports for students in grades K-12 are distributed at the end of each quarter. Parent-Educator Conferences are scheduled twice a year. Parent/guardian or students of age 18 are required to attend the conference to receive their child's progress report. Please understand that if you need to schedule with the school administration it may be well after the initial conferences are scheduled. In this event, it is still encouraged that you meet additionally with your child's educator because they know best the progress of your student. *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.

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 and 11.
- NWEA to grades K-11
- KRA for Kindergarten
- PSAT: to grades 9 and 10 to determine eligible for college scholarships.
- SAT Grade 11

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) consecutive 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 is **not** permitted.

Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection between students including 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.

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 Center
 - 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 area to work on the portion of the plan that remain in negotiation. This continues until plan is accepted.

* If a student gets sent to RTC for a 2nd time in a day they will automatically spend the rest of the day in in-school suspension.

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**. Students facing an expulsion will have to go before a discipline committee for a hearing. The committee will be made up of staff members that are not current teachers of the student. After the hearing the committee will deliberate and reach a decision regarding the discipline action to be taken. 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 in 6th grade or above 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. The authorities will be notified, a 10-day suspension, and a referral for immediate expulsion. Notification to Child Protective Services if appropriate.

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 abide.

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

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

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.

Students showing a pattern of behavior for flagrant disregard to rules, policies, and staff will be subject to restorative practices. Teachers will make contact home for each of these events in the pattern of behavior and document it in the running record. If the pattern of behavior does not change, a parent meeting will be held and future disciplinary actions will be discussed.

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.

In-School Suspension: Students assigned to ISS will be seated in the Dean of Students office and given work to complete for the day. Students must follow all other policies and procedures. Students are not allowed to sleep or leave the office except for 2 bathroom break during the day.

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. 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. They will receive an unexcused absence for any time served.

Expulsion from the Academy(Expulsion Committee): 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.

POOR BEHAVIOR FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHER

Behavioral situations that occur when a substitute teacher is in the classroom will be evaluated by administration on an individual basis and consequences given as appropriate including but not limited to RTC, detention, suspension, etc.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

In order for Merritt Academy to maintain its reputation for high academic standards students need to demonstrate their OWN understanding of academic content.

What constitutes academic dishonesty/cheating?

1. Talking during a quiz or test
2. Cheating on a quiz/test (looking at another students quiz/test, looking at any material that is not approved by teacher)

If you are caught cheating on a quiz/test EVERYONE INVOLVED will automatically:

1. Receive a zero on the assignment
2. Serve a suspension
3. Parents will be notified by the teacher

HOMEWORK/CLASSROK ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Copying another student's assignment

1. Changing words but copying the sentence structure of ideas
2. Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

If you are caught cheating on homework or a class assignment you will automatically receive the following consequences:

1. Receive a zero on the assignment
2. Teachers will notify the parent and inform administration
3. Receive a detention (after first offense consequences will escalate, including possible suspension)

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. If work is collected by student/parent ahead of or during their suspension, the student is responsible for having this work completed upon return to the Academy or risk grade reductions.

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, that parent may bring the matter to the attention of the grade level administrator. If, after consultation and discussion with the grade level administrator, 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.

Any student leaving Merritt will have an exit interview scheduled with the principal to determine the reason for leaving. The principal will make every effort to extend counseling to the student and family, define goals for the student in a written plan, provide information of a local G.E.D. program and assure the student of the timely return of all school-owned supplies and equipment they may still possess.

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.

OFFENSE/DEFINITION	CONSEQUENCE RANGE
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 even 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.
WEAPONS USAGE -An instrument of attack and being used to cause serious harm to students, staff, or any person on school grounds.	Contact Authorities—10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion. Notification to Child Protective Services if appropriate.
ARSON -The willful act of setting something on fire.	Contact Authorities—10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion. Notification to Child Protective Services if appropriate.
CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT -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.	Contact Authorities—10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion. Notification to Child Protective Services if appropriate.
Roughhousing/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 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.	Up to 10 day out of school suspension and recommendation for expulsion.
Insubordination: Deliberate refusal to follow a reasonable request or order by an Academy personnel, documented by the Academy personnel and submitted administration.	Removal from class to dismissal from Academy for continued violation.
Disrespect Towards Authority: To use inappropriate voice tone, voice level, language, insinuations, mockery, gestures, threats, intimidation, etc.	1 day suspension to dismissal from Merritt; with 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. <i>*Please refer to the section on bullying for additional information</i>	1 day suspension to expulsion based on the severity of the offense. Notification to authorities, if appropriate.
Destruction of School Property or Teacher Property	1 day suspension to expulsion from Merritt Academy, authorities will be called if excessive damage is done.
Serious Threats: Written or verbal threats toward self, another person’s life or well being, or the school.	Minimum 3 day suspension – not to return to school until psychological evaluation determined not a threat to self or others. Expulsion may occur based on the severity of the offense. 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 or acts, that make another person feel uncomfortable.	1 day suspension to expulsion based on the severity of the offense. Notification to authorities and/or Child Protective Services, if appropriate.
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.	Consequence is at the discretion of the school staff/administration. Notification of authorities, if appropriate.
Profanity or Obscenities: The use of abusive, vulgar, irreverent, lewd, or indecent conduct, including gestures, pictures, stories, or language.	A student receives a verbal warning for their first offence. After this initial, documented warning all other incidents will result in suspension.
Harassment or Bullying: any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – ie: internet, cell	Meeting with students involved to fix behavior along with parent contacts to dismissal from Merritt; notification to authorities, if appropriate/necessary.

<p>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></p>	<p>All parents of students involved in the incident will receive notification of the investigation as well.</p>
<p>Weapons Possession: An instrument of attack used to cause serious harm to another.</p>	<p>Notification to authorities. 10 day out of school suspension up to dismissal from Merritt. Notification to Child Protective Services if appropriate/necessary.</p>
<p>Stealing: To take (the property of another or others) without permission or right, especially secret or by force.</p>	<p>1 day out of school suspension up to recommendation for expulsion AND return of items or cost of missing items. Items stolen worth over \$100 must be reported to local authorities.</p>
<p>Alcohol: Possession, consumption (or under the influence), or distribution of an intoxicating liquid containing some form of alcohol.</p>	<p>5 day out of school suspension up to dismissal from Merritt. Notification to authorities and/or Child Protective Services if appropriate.</p>
<p>Drugs/paraphernalia: Possession or distribution of a chemical substance, illegal or otherwise, that affects the central nervous system causing changes in any behavior and often addiction or possession of any equipment used in making, using, or concealing such a substance.</p>	<p>10 day suspension and referral for immediate expulsion from Merritt Academy. Notification to authorities and/or Child Protective Services, if appropriate.</p>
<p>Trespassing/Loitering: Students and parents being on school grounds fifteen (15) minutes after dismissal or after a school related function, even in a vehicle.</p>	<p>Verbal warning; reported to local authorities; after 3 incidents child protective services will be notified; Dismissal from Merritt.</p>
<p>Tobacco Possession: and/or use of tobacco containing product including cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or other. Merritt Academy is a drug free school zone.</p>	<p>Out of school suspension Up to 10 days and/or recommendation for dismissal from Merritt</p>
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receive a zero on the assignment • serve a suspension • parents will be notified
<p>Leaving school without proper authorization: Leaving the premises of the school without following check-out protocols.</p>	<p>In school suspension to three days out of school suspension</p>
<p>Skipping Class/Loitering: Being out of class during instructional time without a pass, arriving 5 or minutes late to class without a pass, or not attending class without proper authorization; being present in authorized areas in the building or school grounds.</p>	<p>In school suspension to two days out of school suspension.</p>
<p>Fire type materials: Possession of Fireworks, stink bombs, lighters, matches, smoke bombs, etc.</p>	<p>3 day suspension to expulsion</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Up to 5 day out of school suspension and dismissal from Merritt</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Out of school suspension to expulsion. Notification to authorities and/or Child Protective Services, if appropriate. Dismissal from Merritt.</p>

<p>Cell Phone: Possessing or using a cell phone for any purpose during school hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First offense the item will be returned to the student after speaking with administration • Second offense is a parent contact • Third offense the item will need to be turned in at the beginning of the school day and picked up at the end of the school day
<p>Peddling – To engage in the unlawful sale of goods or services; carrying goods from place to place for resale without a permit or license.</p>	<p>Up to 3 day out of school suspension</p>
<p>Dress Code Violation – Out of compliance with proper Merritt uniform defined in the Student Code of Conduct</p>	<p>Please refer to the Merritt Academy Dress Code Policy.</p>