

2023 - 2024

Missoula Online Academy
Student-Parent Handbook



Missoula County Public Schools

**Forward Thinking,
High Achieving**

[Missoula Online Academy Website](#)

Introduction

The Missoula Online Academy (MOA) is our online 9-12 school. The MOA is accessible to all registered students within the District. The MOA is an online instructional program following MCPS adopted curricula and priority standards as well as opportunities through 3rd party providers. This handbook provides general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the MOA. The MOA follows the high school District calendar.

What Does Remote Learning Look Like?

- ☐ A combination of virtual, physical, and project-based activities
- ☐ A mixture of teacher-directed and self-directed
- ☐ A time to virtually collaborate with teachers and peers

Mission, Vision

MCPS Mission:

To ensure every student achieves their full potential, regardless of circumstance and ability.

Vision Statement:

We communicate; we collaborate; we think critically; and we create. We are Missoula County Public Schools - educational leaders in a global society fostering uncompromising excellence and empowering all learners.

Missoula Online Academy

Contact Information

Staff Member	Position	Email
Cameron Johnson	Principal - High School	
Ms. Melanie Jeffs	Secretary	
Jennifer Gilbert	6-12 Special Education	
Christine Kolczak	HS Counselor/ TOSA	
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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Missoula County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, in the educational programs and activities it operates including admission and employment. The District is required by federal law, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, and Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and their regulations to not discriminate against individuals in violation of these laws. The District also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints under Title IX (sex discrimination and sexual harassment) and all other non-discrimination policies:

Trevor Laboski
909 South Ave. West
Missoula, MT 59801
(406)728-2400, Ext. 1038

Inquiries may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

Missoula Online Academy Handbook

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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Participating in the Missoula Online Academy means that the student:

- ☐ is simultaneously enrolled both in MOA and your local school in accordance to your geographic attendance boundaries. Enrollment requires evidence of a birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of residency prior to admission;
- ☐ agrees to actively participate in the Missoula Online Academy environment;
 - ☐ this includes turning on your camera, speaking into the microphone, typing into the chat when appropriate; and
- ☐ understands that integrity is essential and that plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is unacceptable.
 - ☐ Plagiarism is defined as presenting work that is not your own. This includes copying from outside sources without citation, having another student do your work, using translation services, and presenting work that is made up almost entirely of someone else's work even when cited.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of their education – to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. Students enrolled in the Missoula Online Academy are expected to attend the virtual live meeting each period each day.

Students are required to attend all assigned classes and/or other instructional activities each day school is in session, unless a valid excuse for absences is provided. Excused absences include 1) personal illness, 2) family emergency 3) medical or dental treatment 4) other activities approved by the school. Unexcused absences include failing to attend class without advanced school permission, 2) family trips/vacations for which no prior arrangement has been made with the school 3) other absences not authorized by the school or parent/guardian. If a student misses more than 5 days, and is behind on work, a warning letter with resources is sent.

Personal illness, family illness, death in the family, and religious holidays are accepted excuses for absence. Please call the attendance office (406) 329-5907 or email moaattendance@mcpsmt.org. Include your student's first name, student's last name (spell it out, please), grade level, date and time of absence, and reason for the absence in your message or email. If your student has a medical appointment, please submit a note from the doctor. The doctor's office may fax the note to (406) 329-5922. Teachers can record an absence, but not excuse absences, so you must contact the attendance office to excuse absences.

Students enrolled in the Missoula Online Academy are expected to work on school assignments each day. They will meet with the teacher for whole group lessons, small groups, and individual conferences daily. These sessions will take place using Google Meet during the period assigned. Assignments, projects, and independent reading will be completed independently or with parent/guardian support. Teachers will host office hours to answer questions and provide support. Student progress will be closely monitored and reported in Infinite Campus (IC) every two weeks.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

We believe in a positive approach to student behavior. Self-control, considerate behavior, and thoughtful decision-making are traits that are encouraged. The staff at MCPS holds students to high standards and expects students to *Be Respectful, Responsible, and Safe*.

Be Respectful

Follow directions.

Be a good listener.
Ask questions and be an active participant.
Use appropriate language online.
Respond to the messages my teacher sends me via Google Classroom and email in a timely manner.

Be Responsible

Use programs, websites, and videos provided by my teacher.
Read and respond appropriately to the teacher's comments on assignments in Google Classroom.
Revise your work.
Turn in assignments on time.
Ask questions when you are confused.
Seek feedback.
Strive to build stamina for reading, writing, and problem solving.

Be Safe.

Keep personal information private when working online, and do not post any photos or videos that identify self, peers, or school.
Ask the teacher before visiting any sites that were not previously approved.
Use equipment and supplies as they were intended.

If a student struggles to comply with expectations, they will be provided with an opportunity to meet with dean/staff. In the Missoula Online Academy, discipline is progressive. Low-level, first-time infractions will have lesser consequences than infractions that are repetitive or more serious in nature. If a serious infraction occurs, or a behavior is repeated even after reteaching, the parent/guardian will be contacted to attend a conference.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION/HAZING

Bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Bullying does not include the determination after an investigation that the student's used reasonable and necessary physical force as self-defense or the defense of another in response to a physical attack.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated.
Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry.
For additional information, please see Policy 3225.

CALENDAR

The MOA will follow the MCPS calendars for quarter end dates, tests dates, and holidays.

CHILD SAFETY GPS AND AUDIO CHILD TRACKING/MONITORING SYSTEMS

Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one- or two-way audio communication technology (i.e., technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag/backpack, on the student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without express written consent of the Superintendent. Any requests to place a recording device or other device with one- or two-way audio communication technology within a student's book bag/backpack or on a student's person shall be submitted, in writing, to the Superintendent along with an explanation of why such recording is necessary. The Superintendent or a designee shall notify the parent(s), in

writing, whether such request is denied or granted within five (5) school days. Where consent has been given by the Superintendent, the Principal must be given access by the parent to be a school guardian on the device. This will ensure any “Listen-In” feature is disabled during school hours due to privacy concerns.

COMMUNICATION

It is the goal of the Missoula Online Academy to foster a sense of connection for our families during the school year. In an effort to help families connect to their students’ learning, they will receive information about their students’ progress and important announcements via MCPS ParentLink notification system. We use a combination of voicemail, email and/or text to communicate information to families. MOA is a virtual school, email is the primary method of communication.

Students in grades 9-12 will check their Google Classroom for announcements and assignments. All teachers will host office hours to provide support and answer questions from students and parents.

COMPLAINTS BY STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply — by an email or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a Uniform Complaint Procedure policy for most complaints (Policy 1700) with the exception of complaints/concerns regarding sexual harassment and/or disability discrimination. A written copy of the Uniform Complaint Procedure can be obtained at the Superintendent’s office.

If a student or parent believes that the Board, its employees, or agents have violated their rights, he or she may file a written complaint with any District Principal or Supervisor under the applicable grievance procedure. If still unresolved, the matter generally may be referred to the Superintendent. Under some circumstances, the District provides for the complaint to be presented to the Board of Trustees in the event the matter cannot be resolved at the administrative level.

Some complaints require different procedures. Any building office or the Superintendent’s office can provide information regarding specific processes for filing complaints. Additional information can also be found in Policy 1700, available in any principal’s and Superintendent’s offices.

Students shall use the Title IX Grievance Procedure to address complaints/concerns about sexual harassment. A copy of the Title IX Grievance Procedures can be obtained on the District’s website or any District or school office or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.

Students shall use the Section 504 Grievance Procedure to address complaints/concerns about disability discrimination. A copy of the Section 504 Grievance Procedures can be obtained on the District’s website or any District or school office.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

Computer resources, including the District’s electronic networks, are an integral part of the District’s instructional program. Use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. Students have no expectation of privacy in material that is stored, transmitted, or received via the District’s electronic networks or the District’s computers. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the District’s computer resources. Students must sign the *Authorization for Electronic Access Agreement* prior to being authorized to use the District’s computer resources. For additional information, see Policy 3612, 3630.

COUNSELING

Students and parents are encouraged to talk with a school counselor, dean, or principal to learn about course offerings, the graduation requirements of various programs, and early graduation procedures. Students will be provided information on anticipated course offerings for the next year and other information that will help them make the most of academic and vocational opportunities.

Students who are interested in attending a college, university, or training school or pursuing some other type of advanced education should work closely with their counselor so that they take the high school courses that best prepare them. The counselor can also provide information about entrance examinations and deadlines for application, as well as information about automatic admission to state colleges and universities, financial aid, housing, and scholarships.

School counselors are available to assist students with a wide range of personal concerns, including such areas as social, family, or emotional issues, or substance abuse. Counselors may also make available information about community resources to address these concerns.

Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law for special education purposes.

CURRICULUM

The Missoula Online Academy is an online instructional program following MCPS adopted curriculum and priority standards. High school students will use Google Classroom and may use other programs and 3rd party providers to access courses and content. Teachers will use a variety of instructional materials including online resources and physical learning materials. Material distribution days will be held throughout the semester.

MOA students will participate in all MCPS approved tests and assessment systems.

CUSTODY ISSUES/PARENTING PLANS

It is imperative that the school is kept up to date on any changes in custody information. Please make certain copies of the court order are provided to the student's home school of record and the MOA office staff (406) 329-8989 at the beginning of each school year or as changes in custody occur. The safety of our students is of utmost importance to the school staff. Making certain the school has updated information is one way to ensure this happens. All information is kept confidential.

CYBER BULLYING

Students are expected to demonstrate digital citizenship skills while attending the online academy. Any student who engages in bullying, harassment, and intimidation shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. This includes taking screen shots, video, or photographs of anyone without their permission.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA UPDATES

Parents are required to update demographic data for each child every year. This includes telephone numbers, alternate telephone numbers, and emails to be used in the event a school or health emergency occurs. Any unlisted numbers will be kept confidential. It is very important to keep the school office and the school nurse informed of any changes in your demographic or medical information throughout the school year. In the event of an emergency, this is the information the district will use to contact you.

DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS

Students who violate District policies, rules, and directives are subject to discipline at the discretion of District administration. Discipline may include referrals, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion. Administrators have the discretion to impose, or in the case of expulsion, recommend, the level of discipline deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

Suspension

An administrator has the authority to suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days. The student is entitled to oral or written notification of the charges and is entitled to the opportunity to provide his or her version. Immediate suspension when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process may occur without notice or the opportunity to be heard provided that notice and the opportunity to be heard shall follow as soon as practicable. Written notice of the suspension containing a statement of its basis and notice of the right to a review of the suspension will be sent to the parents as soon as possible. At the request of the parents, the Superintendent will review the appropriateness of the suspension. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

An administrator has the authority to extend a suspension for an additional ten (10) school days. Prior to extending the suspension beyond the original length not to exceed ten days, the administrator must hold an informal hearing with the student and determine that the student's immediate return to the school would be detrimental to the health, welfare, or safety of others, or would be disruptive to the educational process.

Expulsion

Expulsion is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of educational services. Only the Board has the authority to expel a student after holding a hearing that provides the student with an opportunity to be heard. After an investigation into the student's conduct, the administrator must send a written notice to the parents regarding the recommendation to expel the student, the specific charges against the student and supporting evidence, a description of the rule or regulation broken, the date, time, and location of the board hearing, a copy of the Board's procedure, and a description of the student's and parents' rights at the hearing.

Students With Disabilities

Students with rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 may be suspended in the same manner as students without those rights or expelled under certain circumstances, but prior to the imposition of either penalty, the District must follow all procedural requirements of those Acts, including holding a manifestation determination meeting when necessary, as required by these Acts.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL

School Materials

All school publications are under the supervision of a teacher, sponsor, and the principal and are part of the curriculum. School officials have the discretion to edit or delete material which is inconsistent with the District's educational mission. School-sponsored groups are permitted to distribute materials directly to students upon approval of the building Principal or Superintendent.

Non-School Materials

Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, posters, or other visual or auditory materials may not contain material that is obscene, libelous, invasive of the privacy of others, substantially disruptive to the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, or which advocates conduct inconsistent with the shared values of civilized social order are not permitted. Outside groups, including governmental agencies, parent and student organizations not sponsored by the school, and community organizations are permitted to display their materials on a centrally-located bulletin board and/or table available for the displaying of these materials.

Any student who posts material without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action. Prior approval must be obtained before displaying these materials.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE/CHROMEBOOK/WI-FI LOAN

Registered Missoula Online Academy students/parents may check out a chromebook from the school district. Charges can be incurred for damaged, lost, or stolen devices.

Students in the MOA must have access to high speed internet in order to participate in daily classroom lessons and activities. If you do not have access to high speed internet, please email moaattendance@mcpsmt.org to request assistance. A limited number of Wi-Fi hotspots are available for student use.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

The MOA uses the MCPS ParentLink notification system. We use a combination of voice mail, email and/or text to communicate information to families. These numbers are taken from the information supplied at the beginning of the school year on the enrollment forms, etc.

Please call the school office if your telephone/cell phone numbers or email changes. The system will be used for cancellations, emergencies and major announcements.

If there is an emergency at home, please notify the school via email or phone.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in extracurricular activities, clubs, and organizations is a worthwhile endeavor to enhance students' development and educational experience. Specific eligibility and conduct rules may be adopted regarding participation in activities, clubs, and organizations.

Parent/guardian permission is required for a child to participate in a school club and/or extracurricular activity. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from any club or extracurricular activity.

Please note: Student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior — including consequences for misbehavior — that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA § 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by Missoula County Public Schools subject to the student's eligibility as set out in **the Student Activities Handbook**. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the principal. Parental permission must be obtained for the student to participate in the extracurricular activity.

FAMILY IN TRANSITION (FIT) PROGRAM

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act affords eligible students the rights to a free appropriate public education, immediate enrollment even without documents normally required for enrollment, continue attending their school of origin, transportation/busing, automatic enrollment in the free/reduced lunch program, automatic enrollment in Title I services (regardless if in a Title I school), all school-based services of which they qualify, participate in all programs and activities offered to students and families and challenge enrollment/school-choice decisions.

Who is Eligible for FIT Services According to the McKinney-Vento Act?

The term “homeless children and youth” refers to individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Under the law, a child may qualify as homeless if he or she is:

- ☐ Living in an emergency shelter, domestic violence shelter, or transitional housing. Examples in Missoula might include: Carole Graham, Mountain Home Montana, YWCA Gateway Program, YWCA Pathways Shelter, Family Promise, Missoula Youth Homes, etc.;
- ☐ Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- ☐ Abandoned in a hospital;
- ☐ Living in a car, park, public place, bus or train station, abandoned building, or other structure not meant for housing;
- ☐ Doubled-up with relatives or friends due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- ☐ NOT living with a parent or legal guardian and is an unaccompanied youth living in a situation that meets one of the definitions listed above or due to extreme conflict, unsafe or unsupportive living conditions.

How does the McKinney-Vento program work at MCPS?

Missoula County Public Schools employs a Families-in-Transition (FIT) liaison to advocate for families and to assist them in coordinating academic support for their students. The FIT liaison works closely with Family Resource Center or FIT coordinators at each building in the district to assure eligible families receive needed support. The FIT liaison assists families with immediate school enrollment for eligible students (regardless if missing immunization or academic records), arranges for busing or transportation assistance, and refers students for Title I services for those in grades K-8.

For more information or assistance with determining eligibility, contact the MCPS FIT Liaison:

Colleen McGuire
MCPS FIT Liaison
215 South Sixth Street West
Missoula, MT 59801
406-728-2400 ext. 1080

Family Resource Center or Families in Transition Coordinator

A Family Resource Center or Families in Transition Coordinator is available in each MCPS school. FRC/FIT coordinators are available specifically to serve families seeking help with life’s transitions, challenges and changes. The coordinators assist with accessing resources and services, to include:

- ☐ McKinney-Vento services for families and youths experiencing homelessness (as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act);
- ☐ Additional academic supports;
- ☐ Housing and employment – options and information;
- ☐ Clothing, food and toiletries – supplies and resources;
- ☐ Information, referrals and paperwork assistance;
- ☐ Connections to community supports and programs; and
- ☐ Crisis/personal support.

To learn more about the services available to families and youths experiencing transitions due to economic hardship, talk to your building FRC/FIT coordinator, secretary, teacher or principal.

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation. Promotion to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the coursework, attendance, performance based on standardized testing, or other testing administered.

Credits Earned Grade Placement

6 credits 10th grade, sophomore

12 credits 11th grade, junior

18 credits 12th grade, senior

GRADING GUIDELINES

Grades assigned by a teacher cannot be changed except by that teacher after discussions involving the student, teacher, and administrator. Grades will comply with the following:

Letter Grades--Students' grades are alphabetically designated (i.e., A, B, C, D, F). Grade point averages will be computed on a 4-point scale as follows:

- A--4.0 points
- B--3.0 points
- C--2.0 points
- D--1.0 points
- F--0.0 points "I" is used as an incomplete and the students are given a specific length of time by the teachers to complete the work in the course. Incompletes not made up are recorded as failures (F).

GRADUATION

Activities

Participation in graduation activities is reserved for those members of the senior class who have completed state and District requirements for graduation before the ceremony. Some graduating students may be invited to participate in graduation exercises according to academic class standing or class officer status. Students invited to participate in graduation exercises may decline. Students may wear traditional American Indian tribal regalia or objects of cultural significance at a graduation ceremony. Students in the MOA participate with their site schools.

Requirements for a Diploma

Missoula County Public Schools requires students earn a minimum of 24 credits to graduate in the following courses:

- 4 credits of English language arts;
- 3 credits of mathematics;
- 2.5 credits of social studies (includes one year of American History, one year of US Govt., and one semester of social science elective);
- 2 credits of science (includes one year of earth & space science and one year of biological science);
- 2 credits of health enhancement;
- 1 credit of arts (music, drama or visual arts);
- 1 credit of vocational/technical education;
- 8.5 credits of elective coursework

State of Montana Graduation Requirements

A school district can establish its own requirements for graduation. The minimum graduation requirements are established by the Montana Board of Public Education and are found in ARM 10.55.905. A student has to complete a minimum of 20 credits in order to receive a Montana high school diploma with 13 credits in the following courses:

- 4 credits of English language arts;

- 2 credits of mathematics;
- 2 credits of social studies;
- 2 credits of science;
- 1 credits of health enhancement, with ½ credit each year for two years;
- 1 credit of arts;
- 1 credit of career & technical education;

A student with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act may satisfy those competency requirements incorporated into the individualized education program (IEP). Satisfactory completion of the objectives incorporated in the IEP may serve as the basis for determining completion of a course.

Graduation requirements will not generally be waived; however, in rare and unique circumstances, a recommendation may be made to approve a minor deviation from the graduation requirements.

HEALTH SERVICES

MOA students must have health and immunization forms on file at the home school of record. Attending the MOA does not exempt students from immunization requirements.

HOMEWORK

Teachers will assign due dates for homework. In the event of illness, the student will have 2 days to make up the work for each day absent. In the event of a pre-arranged absence, the teacher must have advance notice (at least 2 weeks) to prepare assignments. We encourage students to follow the classroom feed to get assignments using Google Classroom during absences, if possible. Third party providers will have their own expectations for work completion.

ILLNESS

When a student has been absent from school due to an injury or serious medical issue, please contact the school nurse prior to having the child return to school. The school nurse should be made aware of students who are returning to school with a cast or has had a surgical procedure or a concussion.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All MOA students must have written proof from a health care provider of adequate immunization before they may attend school as per state law, unless they have a current signed medical or religious exemption or conditional form. Attending the MOA does not exempt students from the required immunizations. Please see the school secretary/school nurse for questions or details or the district website under the student services/health services tab or at <http://www.mcpsmt.org/Page/2111>. Necessary immunizations are available through your child's health care provider or the Missoula County Health Department located at 301 W. Alder, phone 258-4745. They have a sliding fee scale for children's immunizations and walk-in hours. You must have a copy of your child's immunization record to obtain immunizations from the health department.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

Missoula Online Academy teachers will post a list of school supplies to use at home for lessons and assignments. Learning materials for specific units of study will be provided periodically. Parents/guardians will be notified of dates and times for pick up and return of the materials.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RIGHTS

The District believes that the best educational result for each student occurs when all three partners are doing their best: the District staff, the student's parent, and the student. Such a partnership requires trust and much communication between home and school. To strengthen this partnership, every parent is urged to:

- Encourage his or her child to put a high priority on education and commit to making the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
- Review the information in the student handbook with his or her child and sign and return the acknowledgment form(s) and the directory information notice.
- Become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the academic programs and course of study, including special programs, offered in the District. Discuss with the counselor or principal any questions, such as concerns about placement, assignment, early graduation, methods to opt-out of programs and instruction consistent with parent/family rights, and other options available to the child.
- Monitor the child's academic progress and contact teachers as needed, including to discuss homework, attendance, and discipline. Parents have the right to review their child's education records upon request.
- Attend scheduled conferences and request additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher, counselor, or principal, please call the school office at (406) 329-8989) for an appointment. A teacher will usually arrange to return the call or meet with the parent virtually during his or her conference period or at a mutually convenient time before or after school.
- Access District policies, handbooks, Board and committee meeting agendas, and District grievance procedures to participate in the governance of the District through the Board of Trustees. Contact information for administrators and trustees is available on the District's website.
- Contact a counselor or principal to discuss rights related to student name and pronoun use consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and Policy 3600.
- Participate in campus parent organizations. Parents have the opportunity to support and be involved in various school activities, either as leaders or in supporting roles at their site schools.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Open communication is encouraged, and parents may request a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year. Parents may contact the teacher by email to arrange an appointment.

PLAGIARISM

Integrity is essential and plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is unacceptable. Plagiarism is defined as *presenting work that is not your own*. This includes copying from outside sources without citation, having another student do your work, using translation services, and presenting work that is made up almost entirely of someone else's work even when cited. The first offense will result in communication with parents and a meeting with the teacher to redo the work or accept a zero. The second offense (and any subsequent offenses) will result in a parent, student, teacher meeting, an office referral, and zero on the work.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS

Parent Rights

All fundamental parental rights are exclusively reserved to the parent of a child without obstruction or interference by a government entity in accordance with state and federal law (including without limitation to statutes and the common law) and District policy.

Surveys

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation.

Instructional Materials

Parents have the right to inspect instructional materials used as a part of their child's educational curriculum, within a reasonable time. This does not include academic tests or assessments.

Collection of Personal Information from Students for Marketing

The District will not administer or distribute to students any survey or other instrument for the purposes of collecting or compiling personal information for marketing or selling such information, with the exception of the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products/services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

Pursuant to federal law, the District will seek parental consent prior to and will not request, nor disclose, the identity of a student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the District) containing one or more of the following:

- Political affiliations.
- Mental and psychological problems
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
- Criticism of other individuals with whom the student or the student's family has a close family relationship.
- Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or the student's parent/guardian.
- Income, except when the information will be used to determine the student's eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Formal reports of student progress are provided every quarter and each semester for high school. The exact dates of each quarter, and semester are published on the MCPS Calendar. In addition to receiving a hard copy, report cards are posted to Infinite Campus for parent review.

RESPONSIBILITY

All students, parents, and school staff share the responsibility of creating a positive and productive school climate that provides all students with equal opportunities to learn. Individual student and parent responsibilities are as follows:

Students' Responsibilities

- ☐ Attend daily
- ☐ Follow school and classroom expectations.
- ☐ Be respectful and honest in your relationships with students, teachers, and staff.
- ☐ Actively participate in school and classroom work.
- ☐ Work hard and learn to the best of your abilities.
- ☐ Ask for teacher help when needed.

Parents' Responsibilities

- ☐ Establish a daily routine and daily expectations with your student(s).

- ☐ Help students to understand that their actions have positive or negative consequences and that they are accountable for their actions.
- ☐ Help students designate an area for learning at home (place to read/write, technology station).
- ☐ Help students organize their learning and assignments by using a calendar or planner.
- ☐ Help students log in and check in each day, check assignments for completion, monitor work time and independent reading, and collaborate with the teacher to ensure your student follows the schedule.
- ☐ Establish guidelines for your student's screen time outside of necessary school screen time.
- ☐ Reach out to your student's teachers or school counselors with concerns, questions, and for support.
- ☐ Be a supportive partner with your student's teacher(s).
- ☐ Encourage quality sleep hygiene.

Teacher Responsibility

- ☐ Foster a sense of community and connectedness among the students.
- ☐ Provide high quality, daily instruction.
- ☐ Solicit feedback and ideas from students and families.
- ☐ Provide a clear weekly schedule and regular communication to students and parents.
- ☐ Clearly communicate classroom norms and expectations for all online interactions and collaboration.
- ☐ Regularly post office hours to communicate availability and the preferred method of communication.
- ☐ Update scores on Student Infinite Campus biweekly

SAFETY/SECURITY

Missoula County Public Schools believes that all students should have access to technology when they act in a responsible, efficient, courteous and legal manner. If a student encounters anything inappropriate in accordance with the [District policy](#), the student should contact their teacher or principal immediately.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the District's Title IX coordinator.

Sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. Quid pro quo: An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity; or
3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), , or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

A determination of responsibility resulting from a formal complaint against a student for engaging in sexual harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense.

Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to Policies 3210 and 3225 for additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

STUDENT RECORDS

Access by Parents and Student

A student's school records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The District maintains two sets of records: a permanent record and a cumulative record.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The building principal will be responsible for maintenance, retention, or destruction of a student's permanent or cumulative records, in accordance with District procedure established by the Superintendent. The principal will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records. Access to records will be granted within 45 days of receipt of a written request. If circumstances prevent a parent or eligible student from inspecting the records, the District will either provide a copy of the requested records or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review the requested records.

Parents of a minor, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are persons who may regularly access a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employees, agents, or Trustees of the District; cooperatives of which the District is a member; or facilities with which the District contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are working with a student or otherwise performing functions the school would perform in accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student. Access will also not be granted to the parent or the student to confidential letters and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements. See Policy 3121 for more information.

Access by Other Individuals and Entities

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records without prior consent by the parents or student (over 18 years of age). Disclosure to these governmental agencies may be done under some of the following circumstances:

- The District may grant access to or release information from student records to employees or officials of the District or the Montana State Board of Education, provided a current, legitimate educational interest is shown.
- The District may grant access to or release information from student records without parental consent or notification to any person, for the purpose of research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent can be identified from the information released, and the person to whom the information is released signs an affidavit agreeing to comply with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to school student records.
- The District will grant access to or release information from any student record as specifically required by federal or state statute.
- The District may release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. The Superintendent or Principal will make this decision, taking into consideration the nature of the emergency, the seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or other persons, the need for such records to meet

the emergency, and whether the persons to whom such records are released are in a position to deal with the emergency.

- The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
- The District will comply with an *ex parte* order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to or consent of the student's parent.
- The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.
- The District may disclose student records to caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student without notification or consent of the parent.

The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records in most circumstances. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The District charges a nominal fee for copying records; however, no parent or student will be precluded from copying information because of financial hardship. An access log will also be maintained for each record which details those individuals accessing the records and their legitimate interest in the records.

Challenging Content of Records

Students over 18, and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the District refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to ask for a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course or references to expulsion and out-of-school suspensions through this process.

Directory Information

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone, including military recruiters and/or post-secondary institutions, who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. The opportunity to exercise such an objection was provided on the form signed by the parent to acknowledge receipt of this handbook. Directory information includes: a student's name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, photographs, dates of attendance, grade level, and honors and awards received in school.

Maintenance of Records

Permanent records are maintained in perpetuity for every student who has enrolled in the District. Cumulative records will be maintained for eight (8) years after the student graduates or permanently leaves the District. Cumulative records which may be of continued assistance to a student with disabilities, who graduates or permanently withdraws from the

District, may, after five (5) years, be transferred to the parents or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parents.

Privacy Matters – Photographs and Social Media

Because of the advent of cell phones and social media, it has become almost impossible to fully protect the privacy rights of any individual from having his or her picture taken and shared with others. Parents have the right to annually opt out of the District sharing their child's photograph in publications or through District media events. The District will honor any parent opt-outs and not share this information. However, the District cannot prevent others who are present from sharing photos and videos from school events open to parents and/or the public, including music performances, sporting events, open assemblies, or field trips.

TECHNOLOGY/COMPUTER USE

The Missoula Online Academy uses technology as a tool to improve and enhance student learning. With the use of technology, students are expected to use computers in a responsible manner. Students and their parents/guardians are expected to abide by the guidelines set forth in the ["Acceptable Use Agreement."](#) This agreement outlines a student's responsibility for using technology at school.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for all textbooks, trade books, classroom materials and library books issued to them. Should a textbook or library book be lost or damaged it will be the responsibility of the student to pay for the damaged or lost book. The cost of the book will be determined by the replacement cost the District must pay. In the event that the student returns to school in January any consumable materials will return with them.

VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS

The District has the right to use security and surveillance video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings from security and surveillance cameras may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. Signs will be posted at various locations to inform students, staff, and members of the public that video surveillance cameras are in use. The District will seek consent before recording students individually in the classroom. A consent form seeking permission to record during extracurricular activities for coaching or instruction is available.

WITHDRAWALS / TRANSFERS

If a family is moving out of the area, please provide the school with advance notice in order for withdrawal information to be prepared and materials to be collected.

Parents may request a transfer to a non-remote option at their home school at the end of the first semester.

If a student is withdrawing to enroll in another district, MCPS will provide student records for the other school upon written request by the new school. Official records cannot be hand carried by parents. Students will not be removed from the MCPS enrollment report until official notice has been received from the receiving school that the student has enrolled.

Missoula Online Academy Handbook Statement of Compliance 2023-24

The undersigned student and undersigned parent/guardian do hereby acknowledge that they agree to adhere to the Missoula Online Academy Handbook.

I, _____ (print student name), have read, understand, and will follow the contents of the Missoula Online Academy Handbook.

Signature of Student

Date

I, _____ (print parent/guardian name), parent/guardian of _____ (print student name), have read, understand, and support my student in following the contents of the Missoula Online Academy Handbook.

Signature of Parent

Date