

Shawsville Middle School

Virtual Student/Parent Handbook 2020-2021



Home of the Mustangs

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2020-2021 SMS Virtual Parent Student Handbook

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year.

My staff and I have worked over the summer to plan and prepare a challenging academic program for you. The MCPS Virtual Learning program is an avenue for parents and students to receive a high quality learning experience with the added safety from covid-19. You may have elected this program to remain safe from exposure. You may have selected this program because you were successful in an online instructional format. You may have elected this option simply to try a new format. Whatever your motivations, welcome and best of luck.

Student success is the direct result of the hardworking students, staff and teachers with the support of parents and the community. Your success will be due to the hard work and emphasis on academics that you place when completing assignments and activities. There may be bumps along the way. We are here to support you, to help you, and most importantly, celebrate you when you succeed.

I hope that you are recharged and ready for another exciting year in the classroom learn about new content. We believe that all students can learn to become prepared for life after school by incorporating the 5 C's in education - critical thinking, communication, creativity, citizenship, and collaboration within the context of English reading and writing, mathematics, science, history, physical education, career and technical education training, and the fine and performing arts.

Good luck this year and GO MUSTANGS!

Mr. Hipple

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Profile of a successful Virtual Student

-Responsible (Complete assignments on time, ask questions when you need to know something, and keep up with classwork and guidelines)

-Effective Time Manager (Wake up in the early part of the day, eat a healthy breakfast, get energized, get assignments done as early as possible, set up an organized timeline of when/how to get assignments done, and establish a daily routine for complete coursework)

-Engaged (Be aware of what is going on in your courses, work proactively, and communicate with your teachers as much as possible)

-Disciplined (Work hard and follow your routine for learning each day/week.)

-Enthusied (Be excited about learning, and work as hard as you can)

-Growth Mindset (Continuously find ways to get better as a virtual learner each day)

-Focused (Stay focused, always do your best, and follow your personal routine and structure)

ATTENDANCE

1. Set a routine: You need to establish a routine for your studies. Create a schedule that will maximize your learning time and allow for completion of assignments and activities. Your attendance will be recorded as you plan to work in your classes each day. While no teacher will take period attendance for each class, you must work towards course activity completion regularly. You can not afford to take several days or a week off from class work.

2. School Closings, Delayed Openings & Early Releases: Inclement weather or other emergencies may necessitate a delay in the opening of school. The virtual program does not have snow or inclement weather days. Assignments should be complete by the established deadlines. Regular school closings, delayed openings, and inclement weather will not affect due dates for assignments. Only the instructor for each course can change assigned due dates.

CAFETERIA

3. Breakfast and Lunch: The cafeteria is open to all students for breakfast and lunch. All students can apply for free or reduced priced menu meals. Virtual students may elect to pick up a lunch from the closest high school to your residence. You must establish contact with the school cafeteria in order to place a lunch order. Parents of virtual students must provide transportation to pick up meals. Meals will not be delivered to homes.

4. Cafeteria Prices

Breakfast - \$1.75 Reduced Breakfast - .30 Lunch - \$2.85 Reduced Lunch - .40

5. Cafeteria Accounts: To keep track of student lunch money, all SMS students have an account on the cafeteria computer system. Parents may send cash or checks to deposit money to these accounts. Students should take checks to the cafeteria when they arrive at school so it can be entered into their account. Once the money is in the account, students cannot take it out. Parents may request a summary of their child's account if they want to check on what their student is eating or spending at school.

The School Nutrition Program Office offers to parents a secure, online payment vendor, mySchoolBucks, to add to a student's lunch account from home. The training website with instructions on how to use the program is <http://educate.myschoolbucks.com>. The web address for parents to use to set up the account for their students is <https://www.myschoolbucks.com>. If they need any assistance they can call mySchoolBucks online support at 855-832-5226.

6. Free and Reduced Lunch Applications: The School Nutrition Program offers an online and paper application for Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch. Applications can be found on the MCPS website or through the school office. As household changes occur, families may become eligible during the school year. Applications are accepted throughout the school year. Applications from the previous school year are only valid for the first 10 days of the new school year.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

7. Description: At SMS, all staff members are focused on doing all that we can to ensure that every single student has every opportunity to learn. Our mission as a middle school is to offer learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate for the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social needs of early adolescent students. Because of the great diversity among children at this level, emphasis is placed upon instruction that allows each student to develop according to his/her own potential.

The SMS curriculum is designed to stimulate the academic achievement of all students, challenging each student to explore and develop his/her individual abilities and talents. In addition to the various academic disciplines, students are provided with a balanced program of enrichment experiences and service opportunities with emphasis on personal growth, development of values and responsibility, exploration of career possibilities, and opportunities to pursue special interests. Therefore, the school program is organized to include a core block of time for academic subjects as well as time for exploratory courses, fine arts, related arts, physical education, and health.

Instructional practices at the middle school level are student-centered. Teachers have adopted practices that consider the developmental nature of the children and guide students toward a desirable level of responsibility.

The virtual learning program may have elective courses that are different than the in-person option. Each core course is designed to meet the development level of middle school aged students. In addition, core courses follow the VDOE established Standards of Learning or class competencies.

8. Courses: Students must take classes in English, Social Studies, Math, Science and Health and physical Education every year. These are called “core” academic classes. The state of Virginia has set Standards of Learning Objectives (SOLs) for each of these classes.

MCPS has a unified Middle School Program of Studies. This document describes the total curricular program for middle school students, including required core academic courses and the multitude of elective options with designations which courses are available in each middle school. The Middle School Program of Studies can be found on the MCPS division webpage at the following link address:

http://www.mcps.org/departments/curriculum_pages/m_c_p_s_middle_school_program_of_studies

Students of parents, who have elected to enroll their child in a virtual education program, Students remain members of the student body, but will complete their courses in an online format. Parents should contact the school counselor for more information about the virtual education program.

9. Grading/Achievement Measurement: Students will receive a midterm grade report from each of their teachers at the 4.5 weeks point of each grade quarter. At the end of each 9 weeks, students will receive a **report card** that lists all of their classes with the grade they earned. They are taken home and the envelope is signed by the parent and returned to school. Every teacher computes grades differently. The Course Organizer for each class explains how the grade was calculated.

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Numerical</u>
A	90-100
B	80 but less than 90
C	70 but less than 80
D	60 but less than 70
F	below 60

10. Report Cards: Report cards are distributed at the end of each grading quarter. See the MCPS School Calendar for exact dates.

11. Honor Code: Shawsville Middle School students are responsible for their own learning. Students are expected to do their own work on all assignments (classwork, homework, projects, tests and quizzes), unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Academic dishonesty (cheating) is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct (Division Policy 7-3.1). In order to maintain the integrity of our coursework and evaluation procedures, SMS has an Honor Code. Students may be required to sign their name alongside the phrase, “Honor Code” when completing an assignment. By doing so, students pledge that their work is in accordance with the Honor Code of SMS.

The Honor Code is as follows: “I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this assignment.” Whether written or not, the Honor Code applies to all assignments. The Honor Code will be reviewed with students during the first week of school, and students will sign an acknowledgement of their receipt and understanding of the Honor Code.

The following examples represent violations of the SMS Honor Code:

- Academic Dishonesty/Fraud: Any deception deliberately practiced in order to secure academic gain. Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating, unauthorized work sharing, copying of another’s work, crib notes, cheat sheets, verbal and non-verbal giving or receiving answers or assistance. Additionally, copying and pasting from shared documents and representing the copied material as one’s own work is a form of academic dishonesty.
- Plagiarism: Quoting or using the ideas of another person or author without acknowledging that those were not your own. Such acknowledgement must be done through proper citation of the original source, as determined by the teacher.
- Teachers will notify students of any suspected Honor Code violations and provide them with the opportunity to address the alleged violation. For cases in which the teacher and student are unable to resolve the matter, the student will be referred to an administrator for further investigation and to ensure that due process is followed.

Honor Code violations are divided into two categories:

- Level I: These include those assignments that would be considered of an instructional classwork variety. Such assignments include, but are not limited to:
 - Homework
 - Classwork
 - In-class group coursework

Teachers have discretion in deciding what consequence will be determined for Level I violations. Violations such as these do not necessarily need to be referred to an administrator. It is up to the discretion of the teacher, and the consideration of other extenuating circumstances, that determine academic consequences or disciplinary action.

- Level II: These include those assignments that would be considered primarily evaluative in nature. Such assignments include, but are not limited to:
 - Quizzes * / Tests *
 - Research papers / Projects / Group work
 - Any other assignments that a teacher may choose to be bound under Level II.

* Any unauthorized use of electronic devices during a test/quiz is an Honor Code violation. Such Level II Honor Code violations result in a zero for the assignment and will include a referral to an administrator for academic dishonesty. If necessary, the administrator will further investigate the matter and ensure that due process is followed.

Level II Honor Code violations will be recorded on the student's discipline record, and students who continuously violate the Honor Code can be subject to further disciplinary action. All assignments will be considered under the Honor Code unless stated otherwise by the teacher.

- During the first two weeks of school staff will review the honor code with students.
- Not signing the Honor Code statement (as requested) on an assignment/test will result in the assignment remaining ungraded for credit until the Honor Code statement is signed.
- Refusal to sign the Honor Code will result in a grade of zero on the assignment.

12. SOL tests are given at the conclusion of the course. Middle school students take an SOL test in:

- ✓ English Reading in grades 6, 7, and 8 and English Writing in grade 8.
- ✓ Math in grades 6, 7, and 8 and an end of course test for Algebra I and Geometry. (Algebra I and Geometry students must pass the SOL test to receive a verified credit toward high school graduation.)
- ✓ One Social Studies test in grade 8.
- ✓ One Science test in grade 8 that covers the material from grades 6, 7, and 8.

The state uses the school test data to measure whether or not we are helping every child succeed academically. Students need a score of 400 to pass an SOL test. 70% of SMS students must pass the tests in math and science AND 75% must pass in reading and writing combined in order for our school to be accredited by Virginia's Department of Education.

13. Earning Promotion to the next grade: Teachers calculate final course grades. Whether or not a student is promoted to the next grade is the principal's decision with staff input. If students do not pass all classes, promotion decisions are made on an individual basis. The following questions are considered when making a decision:

- a. Did the student pass at least 3 of their core classes, both English and math and either science or social studies?
- b. Was the student's attendance acceptable? (Less than 7 absences for the year)
- c. Was the student's behavior acceptable? (See the section on Discipline)
- d. Did the student earn a passing score on their SOL tests?

If the answer to any of these questions is "NO," the student may be REQUIRED to attend summer school or another remediation program before being promoted.

14. Earning High School Credit: Students can earn credits toward high school graduation by completing multiple courses in middle school. For information about which courses earn high

school credit towards graduation, contact the school counselor. Students must also meet minimum eligibility requirements in order to take a high school class in middle school. The student must pass the class to earn the credit toward high school graduation. Also, in Algebra I, Geometry and Earth Science students must pass an End of Course (EOC) SOL test. If the student passes the class and the SOL test, they earn a “Verified Credit” toward high school graduation.

15. Dropping High School Credit-bearing Courses: If a high school credit class is too difficult for a student, they can drop the class by making a request to the school counselor. There is a fee for dropping a Virtual Virginia course before it is complete after a drop deadline. Ask the school counselor if a course will have a drop fee. If a student and their parent do not like the final grade in the high school class, they may expunge the class from the student’s transcript. A request must be made to the school counselor. The deadline to make this request is October 1 of the year the student enters grade 9. If a grade is expunged, the student would be required to repeat the course.

16. Final Exams for Courses: Final exams are no longer required for MCPS courses. Final exams are a part of virtual courses delivered through Virtual Virginia. Students may be required to construct a final project or complete and SOL test for these courses, if one is required.

17. Honor Roll Recognition: The goal of the honor roll system is to recognize students for academic success and to encourage them to do their best in all of their classes. SMS publishes an honor roll in the local newspapers at the end of each grading period. These are the honor rolls at SMS:

Superintendent’s Honor Roll – All “A” average

Principal’s Honor Roll – “A-B” Average

18. Student Fees:

- There are **NO** required student fees for the regular education program at SMS. There are no textbook rental or library fees. However, students are responsible for lost or damaged books and any assessed fines or replacement costs must be paid before students are allowed to participate in some extracurricular activities, including school dances.
- Yearbook purchase (\$25 if ordered before December 15, \$30 if ordered after January 1). Keep your receipt - **optional**
- Individual club fees are set by the club.
- Special student activities, such as school dances, may charge an entrance fee. These fees vary depending on the activity. These fees are nominal in nature.

19. School Supplies: All students are expected to have their chromebooks charged and ready for virtual instruction. School supplies for virtual courses vary and will be identified on the class syllabus.

20. The Library: The SMS Library contains a wealth of information for research or reference, including hundreds of fiction and nonfiction books, periodicals, reference volumes, and maps. Students are allowed to use the library during school hours with properly signed passes from the classroom teacher. The Destiny System can be accessed through the SMS Library webpage to research for a specific book.

21. Computer Devices: Each student is issued a mobile, electronic device for their personal use during the school year. Students should not share their login or password with other students. Students should follow all of the Technology Use Agreement rules in MCPS Policy 6-3.13. Failure to follow these rules will result in the loss of computer privileges. This device will be collected before the end of the school year. If a student has trouble with their assigned chromebook, they may contact the Technology Hotline for assistance at 540.381.6165 extension 1.

22. Performances: SMS makes an effort every school year to enhance the student learning experience through professional performances and presentations. Virtual students are welcome to attend school based performances as their schedule permits.

STUDENT SERVICES

23. Counseling Program: The Shawsville Middle School Guidance Department seeks to recognize students as individuals and to help them develop their potential and attain the knowledge and skills essential to successful living at work and in society. The guidance department strives to provide a developmental, sequential program based on student's educational, social-emotional, and career-vocational needs.

Objectives include:

1. To help students make a successful transition at all levels of their educational experience.
2. To help students develop self-understanding.
3. To help students develop effective communication and interpersonal skills.
4. To help students acquire decision-making, problem solving, and coping skills.
5. To help students become more responsible, independent, and self-directive.
6. To help students resolve problems that interfere with learning.
7. To help students become aware of their academic abilities and strengths and to identify their educational needs and interests.
8. To help students pursue a planned, balanced program of studies, which meets Virginia graduation requirements and is consistent with their abilities, interest, and education needs.
9. To help students become knowledgeable of the world of work and establish career goals.
10. To help students acquire information about educational and vocational opportunities in and beyond secondary school.
11. To utilize the services of various resource people in the implementation of the guidance program.

Access to Student Information:

Only teachers who need access to background information about a student should consult the student's cumulative file, which is located in the main office. Information in student files varies from intelligence and achievement scores to grades, health and home conditions, all of which can add immeasurably to the understanding of an individual's behavior in school. These files are kept locked at all times.

24. Virginia Tiered Systems of Support (VTSS): VTSS is a coordinated system of academic interventions and supports coupled with Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Student Assistance Program (SAP) and mental health supports to allow students more opportunities to become successful in the classroom.

25. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a program to identify specific characteristics and behaviors which students identify with and demonstrate. The character traits identified will help to foster kindness in their actions, empathy for others, and socially acceptable behaviors. The characteristics are: Be Respectful; Be Responsible; Be a Community. Students are presented with acceptable behaviors around these character traits in multiple areas of the school. PBIS Lessons teach these behaviors. Lessons will be taught at the beginning of the year and repeated as necessary throughout the school year.

26. Student Assistance Program: It is the goal of Montgomery County Public Schools to engage, empower, and encourage every student to succeed. Each school’s Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a team approach to helping students access necessary resources needed to be successful in both the school and community. This team is a broad-based, flexible approach to prevention services and supports. **Parent involvement, engagement and participation is crucial in this process.** The goal of the Student Assistance Program Team is to build resiliency in youth while empowering them for academic and emotional success. To make a referral or for more information, contact the School Counselor or Principal

Student Assistance Programming (SAP) Parent Notification

Our school has a Student Assistance Programming (SAP) Team that helps students who are struggling with their academics, behavior, attendance, and/or emotional wellness by working together with YOU. **You are the expert on the needs of your child** and your voice matters. If your child is referred, you will be notified and invited to participate in this ongoing process.

The SAP Team will gather, review, and document information important to your child’s learning and monitor his/her progress. The following activities **may be** completed as part of the SAP Team process:

Vision Screening	Classroom Observations	Academic Assessments
Hearing Screening	Develop/Review Intervention Plan	Work with School Counselor
Record(s) Review	Anecdotal/Written Notes	Other necessary information

If you have any questions regarding the Student Assistance Programming Team process, please contact your school’s administrator.

27. Suspected Child Abuse: All allegations of possible or suspected child abuse or neglect are reported to the principal. The principal will report such cases Virginia Child Abuse Hotline as required by law. The state determines reasonable cause and seriousness of the reported incidents. Any student needing further information or help should see our school counselor.

28. Attendance Monitoring and Truancy: Student attendance is monitored daily. It is the single, most important factor relative to student learning and academic progress. Participating in school and class is critical to teaching and learning. Students who do not participate regularly are considered truant and will be required to participate in an attendance plan meeting and/or Family Resource team meeting or be referred to Juvenile and Domestic Court services for not attending school. At the middle school level, both parents and students will be held responsible for regularly attending school.

29. New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS): NRVCS provides counseling services to students who qualify for their services at school. Counselors provide intensive behavioral therapy and teach strategies for students to become more successful in academic study. Therapeutic Day Treatment is the highest level of service offered to students at SMS. Other services include truancy management and mental health counseling. Students and parents are referred to NRVCS through the Student Assistance Program.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS and ATHLETICS

30. Participation: All students have the opportunity to participate in activities after school as long as they meet the eligibility requirements for that activity. The following is a list of activities and sports for students to choose from. Parents must make arrangements for student transportation to these activities. Students **may not** attend any after school activities if they are suspended or have been in ISS that day.

31. The Beta Club: The Beta Club is an honor society whose goal is to provide service to the school and the community. Membership is by invitation only based on academic performance.

32. Student Council Association SCA: The SCA is the student government organization that provides students with the opportunity to learn and to practice leadership skills. Students elect officers and class representatives each school year. These school leaders plan community service activities, fundraising activities, and school spirit activities for the school year.

33. Intramurals: Students at SMS may engage in age appropriate, non-competitive sports activities through participation in the intramural program. Supervised intramurals are organized for grade level/teams multiple times per year.

34. Sports Teams: Shawsville Middle School offers the following sports for 6, 7 & 8th graders.

Girls' Basketball	Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)
Boys' Basketball	Girls' Soccer
Volleyball	Cross Country (Boys & Girls)
Track and Field (Boys & Girls)	Football
Boys' Soccer	Girls' Softball

Eastern Montgomery High School allows 8th graders to participate in the following junior varsity sports, with the approval of the SMS and EMHS principals:

Basketball Baseball Tennis Volleyball Cheer

35. Eligibility for Participation on middle school and JV Teams:

- a. A student who turns 15 on or before August 1st of the current school year will not be eligible for a middle school sport.
- b. A student who turns 16 on or before August 1st of the current school year will not be eligible to play 8th and 9th grade football.
- c. 8th grade students are allowed to participate for one year only as an 8th grader on a JV team.
- d. 6 & 7th graders may not participate in JV sports.

36. Academic Eligibility for Sports: To be eligible to represent Shawsville Middle School in any school-sponsored interscholastic contest, a student shall meet the following requirements:

- a. Be currently enrolled in not fewer than seven classes.
- b. Have passed 4 core subjects during the immediate preceding semester.

37. Sport Events: Students and their families are encouraged to show their school spirit and support of student athletes by attending SMS sports events. Admission cost for all sports events is \$5.00 for adults, students, and guests. Athletic passes are available through the main office. Spectators are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and behavior that positively reflect on our school and community. Students are reminded that the Code of Conduct applies to all school-sponsored activities and that inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the sport event and school grounds. Students who plan to attend athletic and other school-sponsored events that do not begin immediately after school must leave the building and grounds and return closer to the event's start time unless they have pre-arranged to be supervised by a staff member. Students who leave the gym or stadium without permission before an event is over will not be permitted to re-enter. Parents or Guardians should pre-arrange transportation for their child to get home after the game.

38. Textbooks: When students are issued textbooks for certain courses, they assume responsibility to handle textbooks with care. Students will be responsible for returning the textbook in usable condition or being held financially responsible for replacing the textbook. Report to a teacher if the textbook is lost or damaged.

39. Student Debts: Any student who has a delinquent or outstanding debt – library fines, charges for lost/damaged books, intentional damages to a chrome book, unpaid fees for uniforms, unresolved accounts for fundraisers, etc. – may not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular event sponsored by the school for which there is a cost. Such activities may include sporting events, dances, and some field trips. Payment of these debts should be made to the school bookkeeper. Debts incurred in the preceding school year are carried over to the current year. **Students who have any unsatisfied debt from the previous school year will receive a notice of debts in a summer mailing. Debts may follow a student to another school to graduation.**

SCHOOL RULES

Overview: Please review the MCPS Code of Conduct. (By order of the MCPS School Board, all students are expected to follow the rules set forth while on school property or at a school-sponsored activity including field trips and sporting events. The policy also covers students going to and from school and waiting at bus stops.)

The following expectations also apply at Shawsville Middle School. We want students to be able to come to school safely, without fear or concern for themselves or others. When students feel safe it is easier for them to learn. If a student knows of a problem and is concerned, they should report it to their teacher, the school counselor, their parents, or the principal. If they ever need to report students who may be endangering themselves or others and are concerned about confidentiality, they should feel free to call 4-Safe-VA. This toll-free school safety hotline has been established to assist students in reporting safety concerns at school. To confidentially report a dangerous situation at school, please call 1-877-4-SAFE-VA (1-877-472-3382).

40. Tipline: Tipline is a service that allows students to anonymously report any concerns that they feel need to be shared, including bullying, suicide, and other forms of violence or potential harm to themselves or others. Students can access the Tipline through the following avenues:

- Call - **1-833-300-STOP**
- Email - **tipline@securly.com**
- Website - **www.securly.com/tip**

41. Bullying: SMS students and staff have set out to eliminate bullying from our school. Bullying can be defined in many ways. MCPS uses a 3-part definition to decide whether or not bullying is occurring. An incident is identified as bullying when a student:

- a. is exposed to the behavior repeatedly and over time,
- b. experiences Negative Actions on the part of one or more students, and
- c. perceives imbalance of power.

Behaviors associated with bullying include, but are not limited to, intimidation, taunting, name-calling, and insults. Bullying behaviors may take a variety of forms, including by electronic means such as cell phone, text message, and email. Bullying, threatening, intimidation, harassment, or any other activity characterized by targeted, intentionally hurtful behavior (verbal or nonverbal) that results in any physical, social/relational or emotional/psychological harm to another person is not tolerated in any form in any Montgomery County Public School. Parents will receive notification within 5 days if their child is involved in a bullying incident.

All SMS students are asked to take the anti-bullying pledge:

- ✓ I will not bully others.
- ✓ I will try to help others who are being bullied.
- ✓ I will make a point to include students who may feel left out.

42. Gossip is a Form of Bullying: It includes talking about other people, writing notes about others or online talk about others. It is one of the most disruptive behaviors in school because it often leads to hurt feelings and anger which sometimes results in negative interactions between students.

43. Dress Code: SMS has adopted a dress code that expects students to come to the school building in clothing that is appropriate in a school setting. Students who are in violation of these rules or whose dress is considered inappropriate will be asked to change and/or parents will be contacted. Over time, the teachers, administrators, and parents in this community have found that the following dressing regulations work best at SMS:

- a. Do not wear clothing, jewelry, or other apparel that advocates violence, alcohol, and other drug use or distribution; that represent gang activity and/or membership; that advertise obscenities; or that reflect adversely on persons due to race, gender, creed, national origin, physical, emotional, or intellectual abilities; or that are considered to be distracting or inappropriate attire. (MCPS Code of Conduct)
- b. Do not wear clothing or other apparel and do not bring personal belongings to school with the Confederate flag/Rebel flag symbols to school, during school sponsored field trips or to school sponsored events and activities.
- c. Do not wear hats, visors, scarves, bandanas or other headgear inside the buildings.
- d. Do not wear pajamas, lounge wear, or house shoes.
- e. Clothing should be comfortable. It should cover the student's body from mid-thigh to shoulders. Cleavage should not be visible.
- f. Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
- g. Shoes should be comfortable and safe for walking indoors and outdoors.



- h. Personal writing on clothing and/or bodies is not allowed.
- i. Students are not to **bring or use at school** hair paint or temporary hair color or gel.
- j. Appropriate PE clothes are required for physical education. You may purchase one from the school or provide your own as long as it meets school requirements.
- k. Sunglasses may not be worn in the building.
- l. Do not trade clothes with other students.
- m. Blankets and towels are not to be worn during the school day as wraps.

Some students and staff members are highly allergic to perfumes and colognes. To protect the wellbeing of all people who attend SMS, no one should wear heavy scents. You should never bring perfume or cologne to school. Bring deodorant for after gym. Teachers may ask students to change clothes if he or she believes what the student is wearing is inappropriate. If a student does not have something else with them, they should report to the office. To disobey or to argue with a member of the staff is disrespectful, may be disruptive to learning and may result in a discipline referral.

44. Cheating, which is giving or receiving unauthorized aid on school assignments, may result in loss of credit for the assignment. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. See Honor Code (#23)

45. Returned checks: Montgomery County Public Schools uses an outside vendor to process returned checks submitted to our schools. This includes all checks written to the school for any fees/payments. In the event of a returned check, all communication about the check will come directly from the outside vendor, not from the school. The vendor will contact the writer of a returned check by mail and by telephone in order to make arrangements to pay before an attempt is

made to collect the check electronically. Each returned check is subject to the applicable state returned check fees.

46. Disruption includes any behavior that interrupts the learning environment. Shawsville Middle School is a place for all students to learn. No student should behave in a way that interferes with the learning of others.

47. Defiance or Noncompliance: When an adult employed by Montgomery County Public Schools, gives reasonable directions to a student and the student refuses to follow those directions, the student is being defiant or noncompliant. Defiance is a serious offense all of the time.

48. Drugs and alcohol (including tobacco): State law prohibits use and/or possession of alcohol or drugs by students during regular school hours or at school-sponsored events. Tobacco products including smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes and vapor possession and use is prohibited. This policy also covers misuse of prescription and look-alike drugs. Students who violate this policy will be recommended for long term suspension/expulsion, and/or OSS (Out-of-School Suspension) and may be referred to local authorities for prosecution and to the guidance office for counseling. Further details on the Shawsville Middle School drug & alcohol policy will be found in the Montgomery County Public Schools Student Code of Conduct.

49. E-cigarettes and Vapes: Electronic cigarettes, vapes, joules, etc are considered the same as tobacco paraphernalia and will be confiscated from students and surrendered to the School Resource Officer. Students in middle school are not permitted to possess these products in school. Consequences will include an educational component to educate students about the effects of using such products as a teen.

50. False Alarms: Setting off false alarms or making bomb threats is unacceptable. We will contact law enforcement authorities for these or similar activities.

51. Group or gang activity: Any group activity that threatens, is illegal and/or violent or indicates the possible development of gang activity is inappropriate. Gang activity may include groups wearing similar clothing or colors, groups hanging out in unsupervised areas of the building, groups of students who are bullying or harassing another person.

52. Involvement of Non-Custodial Parent: As specified by the Code of Virginia and the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), non-custodial parents have the full rights as parents for access to student records and for participating in school activities, “unless otherwise ordered by the court for good cause shown.” It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide documentation of any restrictions on a non-custodial parent. Duplicate copies of report cards and other written communications mailed to a student’s home will be made available to non-custodial parents upon their request. If a person not known to school officials’ attempts to contact or pick up a child at school, a photo ID and other verification of identity/relationship to a student (including confirmation with the custodial parent) may be required before releasing the student.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

53. Physical assault: Any physical confrontation that results in no injury, minor injury, or serious injury, including but not limited to by kicking, shoving, pushing, hitting, and fighting is considered assault. Self-defense or action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect your person or some other person will be taken into consideration. However, if a student feels threatened by someone, they should immediately report the incident to a teacher, the principal or

their parents.

54. Public Displays of Affection (PDA): PDA includes any and all forms of physical contact, including but not limited to kissing, hugging, holding hands, etc. Public displays of affection are prohibited while on school property. Any unwelcome sexual advances or other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is considered harassment and is strictly prohibited by the Code of Conduct.

55. Sexual Harassment: It is prohibited for any employee or student, male or female, to harass another employee or student by making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or engaging in other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when (1) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for academic decisions affecting the student; (2) such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment; or (3) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the student's participation in school programs.

The School Board has adopted a grievance procedure for complaints by students of discrimination on the basis of sex or sexual harassment. The policy is located in the School Board Policy Manual section 7-1.1. Generally, students are encouraged to report incidents of sexual harassment to the building principal as soon as they become aware of the conduct forming the basis of the complaint. If the principal is the individual who is the subject of the complaint, the student should contact the Superintendent.

56. Student Language: All students have the right to come to school and not hear inappropriate language. Students heard by adults using inappropriate language will be referred to the administration for immediate consequences. Any use of profanity, obscene gestures, bullying, or other vulgar or abusive language that interferes with teaching and learning or that intentionally offends or threatens another is prohibited. Abusive language includes, but is not limited to, language that puts down another person's race, religion, gender, national origin, disability, intellectual ability, or other personal characteristics.

57. Substance Abuse: The possession, use and/or distribution of alcohol, tobacco and/or tobacco products and other drugs on school grounds, on school buses, or during school activities, on or off school property is prohibited. See MCPS Student Code of Conduct.

58. Threats: Communicating intent to cause harm to another person (threatening someone) verbally, in writing, electronically or through a third party is a form of harassment.

59. Vandalism is causing or attempting to cause damage to school or personal property. Please take care of the school, which has served this community for over 80 years.

60. Weapons Possession and/or use: Possession and use of weapons is a violation of the law as well as the Student Code of Conduct. See the Weapons Policy in the Montgomery County Public Schools Code of Conduct for further definitions and consequences.

61. Corrective Actions: Multiple corrective actions may be employed by teachers and administrators to correct or reduce certain student behaviors. See the MCPS Code of Conduct for details on available corrective actions.

62. Appeals Process: If a parent disagrees with the corrective action that a teacher assigns a student, the parent may appeal that consequence to the principal. Before making an appeal to the principal, the parent should discuss the matter with the teacher. Corrective action will not be delayed pending an appeal. If a parent disagrees with the corrective action that the Assistant Principal assigns a student, the parent may appeal that consequence to the principal. If a parent disagrees with the corrective action taken by a principal, the parent may appeal that action to

Superintendent or designee. Before making an appeal, parents and students should meet with the principal to discuss their concerns. Appeals must be filed in accordance with School Board policies. Different processes may apply to different types of discipline. Corrective action will not be delayed while an appeal is pending. (See Appendix 2)

Please read the MCPS Code of Conduct for further details regarding School Board Policy.

Appendix 1

Notice of Compliance

EEO/Civil Rights Statement

Montgomery County Public Schools does not discriminate in its programs and activities for reasons of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, age, or on any other basis prohibited by law. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Director of Human Resources and Assistant Superintendent for Operations 750 Imperial Street SE,
Christiansburg, VA 24073 (540) 382-5100

Appendix 2

Activities Parents Can Do to Help Your Child(ren) Succeed in School

For Students of All Ages

At Home

1. Ask about their homework—what it is, when it's due--and check to make sure they do it.
2. Provide a quiet place, with a good light and away from distractions, for them to complete homework.
3. Make sure they get a good night's sleep each night and eat a healthy, substantial breakfast each morning.
4. Talk to them about school for at least a few minutes each day to let them know you're interested and that you think school is important.
5. Teach them respect for others and responsibility for their own behavior.
6. Make sure they get regular health and dental check-ups.
7. Limit children's exposure to television and video games.
8. Be positive about school. If parents say "I wasn't good at school" or "I really didn't like school." This can turn children away from learning.
9. Check your children's school websites regularly to keep informed.

Through the School

1. Attend back-to-school nights and parent-teacher nights.
2. If you are concerned about something, contact your child's teachers promptly, before a minor issue becomes a major problem.
3. Join a parent-teacher organization (PTA or other parent group) and attend meetings.
4. Ask about after-school programs or extra-help sessions if you think your children could benefit from these.

For Middle School Students

At Home

1. Talk to your children about their specific interests related to school—subjects or teachers they like, clubs or extracurricular activities, books they are reading, projects they are working on, etc.
2. Discuss their choice of courses with them so they are well prepared for different options entering high school.
3. Begin discussing with them what they might like to do after they graduate from high school.
4. Know your children’s friends, where they live, and, if possible, their parents.
5. Continue to celebrate school successes with appropriate rewards. Even though they may seem embarrassed, your children will appreciate your enthusiasm for their good work.

At School

1. Know your child’s class schedule.
2. Find out what guidance services are available to your children
3. Serve on school committees that involve parents.

Appendix 3

Grievance Procedures

All students attending Montgomery County Public Schools may participate in education programs and activities, including but not limited to health, physical education, music and vocational and technical education, (homemaking and consumer education, trades and industrial education, business and office education, etc.), regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sex.

Grievance procedures and contacts have been established for students, their parents, and employees who feel discrimination has been shown by the school division.

Title IX (gender equity)	Section 504 (disability)	Equal Opportunity Employment and/or Sexual Harassment
Dr. Patricia Gaudreau Supervisor of Science MCPS 100 Imperial Street Christiansburg, Va. 24073 (540) 382-5100 X1053	Mr. Jason Garretson Director of Student Services MCPS 100 Imperial Street Christiansburg, Va. 24073 (540) 382-5100 X1023	Mr. Danny Knott Dir. of Human Resources MCPS 100 Imperial Street Christiansburg, Va. 24073 (540)382-5100 X1067

Appendix 4

SOL Information and Student Impact

Middle School

Virginia Department of Education regulations require students to take Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in middle school. In Montgomery County, the SOL assessments are given in the spring of each year in grades 6, 7, and 8. Students in grade 6 take Reading and Mathematics. Students in grade 7 take Reading and Mathematics. Students in grade 8 take SOL assessments in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Civics and Economics, and Science. The scores range from 0 to 600 with 400 to 499 being Pass Proficient and 500 to 600 being Pass Advanced.* Students who do not pass an SOL may be considered for remediation programs and/or summer school. Failing an SOL assessment may also be used as one of many criteria for retention. Students who fail the English Reading and/or Mathematics SOL assessments in grade 8 will have an opportunity to retake the test the following year.

Additionally, students who enroll in a high school credit-bearing course with an accompanying SOL assessment, such as Algebra I and geometry, must take the SOL assessment upon conclusion of the course. Students who do not pass one of the SOL assessments at the high school level will be considered for remediation programs and will be given the opportunity to retake the SOL assessment at each available opportunity.

*Subject to change by the Virginia State Board of Education

High School

Virginia Department of Education regulations require students to take and pass Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in order to graduate from high school with a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma. When students pass a high school course **and** pass the SOL assessment associated with that course, the student earns a *verified credit*. Verified credits can be earned in the following courses:

English: Reading/Literature/Research	World History/Geography to 1500 AD
English: Writing	World History/Geography from 1500 AD
Algebra I	World Geography
Geometry	Earth Science
Algebra II	Biology
US & Virginia History	Chemistry

No matter the diploma status, students must earn five verified credits to graduate. These verified credits are as follows:

2 in English: reading writing	1 in history/social science
1 in mathematics	1 in science

Students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) pursuing the Applied Studies Diploma must meet Literacy and Numeracy requirements. To meet the Literacy requirements students must meet the cut score on the Grade 8 or Grade 11 English Reading SOL assessment. To meet the Numeracy requirements, students must meet the cut score on either the Grade 8 Mathematics, Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II SOL assessment.

Students who do not pass one of the SOL assessments at the high-school level will be considered for remediation programs and will be given the opportunity to retake the SOL assessment at each available opportunity.

Appendix 5
FERPA NOTIFICATION

NOTICE TO ALL PARENTS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ALL STUDENTS CURRENTLY ATTENDING THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WHO HAVE REACHED THE AGE OF 18

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that governs the maintenance of student records. Under the law, parents of students, or students if they are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”), have the following rights:

The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the school division receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the relevant school principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal or appropriate school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Several exceptions exist to the rule requiring consent before release of personally identifiable information. One exception permits disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests in the information. For the purposes of this exception, a school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. A second notable exception to the consent rule relates to the disclosure of education records to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The Montgomery County Public Schools disclose such records without prior consent. A third exception to the consent rule relates to the disclosure of “directory information.” Please see the discussion below regarding Montgomery County Public Schools’ policy regarding directory information.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that Montgomery County Public Schools obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. A student's address, phone number, or email address cannot be released in response to a request or under FOIA unless the parent has consented in writing to the disclosure. Appropriately designated directory information will be disclosed if you have given MCPS permission to do so in writing.

MCPS has designated the following categories as directory information: student's name, address, email address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

Any parents or eligible students who object to the release of any or all of this information without their consent must notify, in writing, the principal of the school where the records are kept. Using the Directory Consent form and PowerSchool, the objection must state what information the parent or eligible student does not want released. If a consent form is not received, your child's information will not be shared in any of the publications listed above.

The Montgomery County School Board has adopted a written policy regarding rights of parents and students under FERPA. Copies of the policy may be found in the Superintendent's Office, in the principal's office at each school, and in your local public library.

For additional information regarding the student records policy, contact either the principal of the school your child attends or the Superintendent's Office at 382-5100.

APPENDIX 6

MCPS Student Attendance Policy (Policy 7-2.3)

Public education is a right available to all young people of school age in Montgomery County. It is provided at considerable expense to parents and other citizens of the county.

Student attendance is a cooperative effort among schools, parents, and students. To achieve optimum learning, good attendance by students K-12 is crucial. Tardies (check-ins) and early dismissals (checkouts) are disruptive to the instructional time of the entire class. Each parent or guardian is responsible for the student's regular and punctual attendance.

Regular class attendance is considered by the Montgomery County School Board to be essential to the educational process and to the satisfactory completion of the requirements of any class and subject offered. Regular school attendance also is directly related to the development of good habits, which are important in the world of work and in higher education. A ninety-five percent (95%) or better attendance rate is the goal.

School personnel shall recognize their responsibilities to motivate students to attend school and to conduct the curriculum in such a manner as to provide for the individual needs of students.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or the division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory attendance law.

Compulsory Attendance Procedures

Participation in the virtual learning program on a regular basis is vital to the completion of assignments and activities. Routine participation will be interpreted as actively attending school and meeting compulsory attendance

Adopted: April 2004

Revised: June 2004, August 2004, May 2008, June 2009, June 2010, June 2011, June 2014, August 2015, August 2017, June 2018, August 2018, October 2019

APPENDIX 7

School - Parent Communications

Communication

At SMS, we encourage communications between the school and home. Each staff member has an email address. Email addresses may be found on the SMS webpage at sms.mcps.org. SMS also utilizes *SchoolMessenger*, a notification system designed specifically for schools, to deliver personalized voice messages and emails to parents. To receive these messages, **please make certain that your phone and email contact information is up-to-date in the office records.**

For news, announcements and updates about school events, you can also follow us on TWITTER and FACEBOOK. There is an electronic school calendar of events, including athletic events, located on the SMS webpage.

SMS will utilize Remind as a message platform for classroom teachers to communicate specific classroom messages. Coaches often utilize this messaging system to communicate with players and parents. At no time should a teacher electronically communicate with an individual student without the parent's knowledge.

There are regular communication points during the school year when SMS will host parent-teacher conferences, provide interim (mid-point) grade reports and communicate student grades, attendance, and behavior. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school and individual teachers, counselors, and administrators when the need arises. Student and parent issues and concerns can be more easily resolved when communication flows both to and from the student's home and school.

There are planned events when parents can speak directly to teachers about their child(ren)'s attendance, behavior, and academic performance. Emotional or relationship issues and concerns can be discussed with the school counselor. Appointments can be made that are at convenient times for both the parent and school personnel. Parents are encouraged to have their child attend meetings and conferences in order to fully participate in the discussion or resolution.