



METROPOLITAN  
**Nashville**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## **Important Parent Information & Permissions Related to Policies**

*2009 - 2010*

**Leadership & Learning and Federal Programs  
Metro Nashville Public Schools  
2601 Bransford Ave. Nashville, TN 37204  
615-259-INFO**

*Please read carefully - response needed.*



September, 2009

Dear Parents:

I hope you and your child have had a successful beginning to this school year. I am pleased you have entrusted your child's education to our schools and we are excited about the wonderful things that are happening here in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

In this booklet, you will find some additional information that is important for you to read and understand relating to the policies of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. Our district met the requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2009 and has moved into Restructuring – Improving status. This reflects a lot of hard work by students, staff and others during the past school year and we plan to continue that progress this year.

Next, you will find a summary of policies and guidelines students and families must follow. Please read through this information with your child and help him or her understand the importance of following school rules and district policies. At the end of this booklet, we have included a signature page you must sign to show you have read and understand the information and give your permissions as required. You will also find a copy of the district's current Parent Involvement Policy followed by a survey seeking your input and any suggestions you would like the district to consider in future revisions of the Parent Involvement Policy. Once you have completed reading this booklet, please complete and **sign the Parent Consent Form and Parent Involvement Survey forms on the last two pages, tear them out and return them to your child's school.**

If you have questions or concerns related to school rules or district policies, you should first contact your school's principal. The complete text of all policies is available on our website at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org); through our Customer Service Center, 259-INFO (4636); or at your local school.

Have a great year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jesse B. Register". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jesse B. Register

# Important Information and Permissions Related to Policies

## MNPS Policies

The following summaries are for policies most frequently referenced. The current text of all policies is available in the following locations:

- The Metro Schools website at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org);
- Metro Schools Customer Service Center, 259-INFO (4636);
- Your local school.

### ADA Compliance - SBO 1.103

MNPS does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities.

### Attendance - SP 6.113

Students are required by law to attend school. Davidson County enforces a curfew during school hours to reduce truancy. Students must return to school with a legitimate excuse note to make up missed assignments.

### Anti-Bullying/Harassment/Violation of Personal Rights - SP6.110

A student will not exhibit conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another student's academic development, harms the reputation of any MNPS student, school district employee or others acting in an official capacity within the district, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or work environment.

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools also prohibits cyber-bullying, defined as harassment/intimidation through use of Internet social networking sites or other telecommunications technologies such as telephones, cell phones, text messaging and camera phones. Cyber bullying that begins off-campus can be considered school-related if it interferes with school activities, causes a disruption at school or interferes with the rights of students or the school's educational purpose.

### Child abuse and neglect - SP 6.117

The district assures the safety of each child in our care. Staff is required by law to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools will report suspected abuse to the Metropolitan Police Department and the Department of Children's Services.

### Communicable Disease - SP 6.134

Schools and school events must be safe for all students who attend. The District has the right to remove a student from school until the student has permission from a healthcare provider to return.

### Complaints - <http://www.mnps.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=32345>

Parents should contact the teacher and school principal to resolve any complaints or concerns before filing a formal complaint with the Customer Service Center 615/256-(INFO) 4636.

### Distribution of Materials - SS 3.100

Information distributed at the school through pamphlets, flyers, newsletters, etc. must first be approved by the school principal.

### Eligibility for Athletics - IM 4.108

Students must submit required documentation to the school office prior to participating in athletic programs and practices.

**Exemption from Exams - IM 4.117**

Seniors who meet specific criteria may be exempt from exams.

**Fee Waivers - SP 6.109**

The school may assess Board approved fees for laboratory and classroom materials. Fees may be waived for students who qualify for free/reduced lunch.

**Field Trips - SP 6.151**

Students must obtain permission to participate in school-related field trips.

**Grading Policy - IM 4.114**

The District uses the state-required uniform grading policy.

**Health and Wellness - IM 4.146**

The Federal government passed a law that governs health and wellness in public schools. The district has established a policy in accordance with this law that includes physical activity and food services on school property.

**Internet and Email Use Policy - IM 4.153**

Parents must sign an Internet and Email Use agreement in order for students to access the Internet at school.

**Length of School Day**

The school day is designed to offer classes and lunch during a set time period. The district requires students to spend a specific amount of time in each class and 30 minutes at lunch.

**Parent Involvement - IM 4.102**

MNPS values the partnership with parents in the educational process.

**Personal Appearance (Standard Attire) - SP 6.114**

All MNPS students are required to wear Standard School Attire during the school day. Failure to do so will result in immediate disciplinary action.

See page 19 for additional information.

**Student Cell Phones - SP 6.107**

A student may possess a cellular telephone, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours and on a school bus the cell phone remains off, not on vibrate, and is concealed.

**Student Driving Policy - SP 6.148**

The operation of a motor vehicle by an unlicensed driver is determined to be a danger to other students, MNPS staff and others as a violation of state law. Students shall apply for permission to park a particular vehicle upon MNPS property. Such application shall involve:

- 1) proof of valid, current Tennessee driver<sup>1</sup>'s license
- 2) proof of minimal Tennessee required insurance, including personal liability and property damage
- 3) proof of ownership of vehicle to be parked on school property
- 4) verification by owner of vehicle of licensed driver and sufficient insurance coverage.

Without a parking pass or valid visitor pass, a vehicle is subject to towing at owner<sup>1</sup>'s expense. Parents may claim car upon proper proof of ownership.

Cars without proper, valid parking permission are subject to impoundment and towing. All costs of towing and impoundment will be charged to the owner of the vehicle.

All visitors must park in designated visitor spaces and/or show a valid parking pass.

#### **Student ID Badges - SP 6.106**

Students in grades 5-12 must follow the ID badge guidelines.

#### **Student Records - SP 6.101**

Student records may be accessed by a student's legal guardian upon request. Students over the age of 18 may also request their own records. A fee is charged for making copies of student records.

#### **Transportation - FM 2.117**

Transportation is a service provided to students attending Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

#### **Visitors to Schools - IM 4.106**

Visitors are welcome in our schools but they must respect the learning environment and appreciate the principal's role in ensuring safety and security for all students. All visitors must present a valid ID and sign in before receiving a visitor's badge.

#### **Volunteering in Schools - IM 4.105**

Volunteers are welcome in schools. Our district policy outlines the guidelines for volunteers.

### **Permissions Related to Policies**

Certain permissions are required for students to participate in some school related activities. These permissions are outlined on the signature page (the last page of this document). Please indicate whether or not your student has permission to participate in each of the listed activities. If there is no indication for any of the listed activities, we will record the lack of reply as a NO and your student will not be allowed to participate in that particular activity.

Your child's education records and other confidential information are protected by the school and by the central office in accordance with state and federal laws. We will not release personally identifiable information without the approval of a parent, legal guardian or the student when he/she is of legal age to provide consent. If you also wish to withhold disclosure of directory information, you must indicate that on the signature page.

Students will not be permitted to use the Internet or e-mail at school unless permission is granted by the parent or legal guardian. The student must also sign in agreement to the terms of internet or email use. Please read the following sections and grant your permission using the signature page. The signature page should be completed by the parent or legal guardian and signed by both the student and the parent/legal guardian before returning the sheet to your child's school.

**Internet and Email Use** – Student's use of the Internet and e-mail at school is a privilege, not a right. If a student abuses his/her privilege, he/she may lose his/her privilege to use the Internet and/or e-mail at school.

1. Student use of the Internet and e-mail shall be for educational purposes only.
2. Students shall not access the Internet or e-mail unless such use is at the direction and under the supervision of an MNPS teacher and/or staff member.
3. Students shall not use the Internet or e-mail for commercial or for-profit purposes.
4. Students shall not use the Internet or e-mail to intentionally seek information, obtain copies, or modify files or other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the system.
5. Students understand that all communications and information accessible via the Internet or e-mail is the

- private property of the author and shall respect it as such and abide by applicable copyright laws.
6. Students shall not use the Internet or e-mail in such a way as to disrupt use by others; students shall not destroy, modify or abuse hardware or software in any way; students shall not access, process, develop, download or distribute files dangerous to the integrity of the system.
  7. Students shall not install or download copyrighted software.
  8. Students shall not use the Internet or e-mail to access, process, develop, download or distribute pornographic materials, including but not limited to text, images, or sounds.
  9. Students must receive prior written approval to subscribe to Listservs, Blogs or websites via the Internet or e-mail.
  10. Students shall not use the Internet or e-mail to access, process, develop, download or distribute hate mail, harassment, or discriminatory remarks.

Students who misuse the Internet or e-mail at school or access the Internet in a way that is not approved by school authorities will be suspended from such use for a period not less than one (1) week. Serious or repeated misuse of the Internet could result in permanent loss of Internet and e-mail privileges. If a student's misuse of the Internet or e-mail is in violation of the law, such misuse shall be reported to the appropriate authorities and could be punished as a criminal offense.

**Sharing Accomplishments** – Metro Schools often provides information or permits media coverage regarding student accomplishments. This may include a child making the honor roll, participating in a school activity, receiving an award or participating in sports. Please confirm your permission if you have no objections to the school district releasing this type of information or permitting photography.

**Military Recruiters** – Metro Schools is required by law to provide military recruiters contact information for high school students approaching eligibility age for military service – UNLESS the parent has requested that the district not share the information. Please confirm your permission to release your child's name and contact information to a military recruiter.

**Publication of Name and Photo to MNPS Website** - Web pages hosted from the MNPS web server will not display photographs, videos, and/or audio clips of any identifiable student without written permission obtained from the legal guardian of the student.

**Student Privacy/Student Directory Information** - Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is required to provide annual notice of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the rights it provides parents and students.

### **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA gives parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents of eligible students should submit to the school principal (or 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.

- (2) 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

that they believe is inaccurate, misleading, or an invasion of privacy. They should write the school principal (or appropriate official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or an invasion of privacy. 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.

(3) 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.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. 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 on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official 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/her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

(4) 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 are:

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

Student directory information is restricted, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to name, address, date of birth, telephone number, email, sports/activities, field of study, height/weight, enrollment, dates of attendance, most recent school attended and grade level. This information is considered public unless a parent or student over the age of 18 declines to have the information listed in a directory and released by the school district. Please confirm your permission to release your child's directory information.

## **Additional Information**

### **Notice of Compulsory Attendance**

Pursuant to TCA 49-6-3001, every parent, guardian, or other legal custodian residing within Davidson County, Tennessee, having control or charge of any child or children between six (6) years of age and seventeen (17) years of age, both inclusive, shall cause such child or children to attend public, home, or non-public school, and in the event of failure to do so, shall be subject to penalties. When a student, who is subject to compulsory

school attendance, is found to be unlawfully absent from school and/or habitually truant, the student may be taken into temporary custody by law enforcement personnel and delivered to the Metro Student Attendance Center.

### **Disruptive Visitors/Parents**

Persons, whose conduct disrupts the safe and orderly operations of school facilities, in the reasonable judgment of authorized school personnel, may be required to request and secure permission to be on school facilities in advance.

In some circumstances, such behavior could result in a zero tolerance action. Zero tolerance of disruptive visitors/parents means they may not be allowed on any school property or attend school activities for up to one (1) year.

No person shall remain in any school building or on the grounds thereof or on grounds owned and used by the school after being requested to leave the premises by a principal, his/her designee, person charged with the responsibility for the facility, school security officer, or a law enforcement officer. Anyone who trespasses, loiters, or fails to comply with a request to leave the premises of a school facility given by an individual authorized to make such a request shall be in violation of the rules and regulations of the Metropolitan Nashville Public School System and subject to personnel action and/or prosecution under law.

### **Anti-Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment - Violation of Personal Rights**

A student will not exhibit conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another student's academic development or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.

A student will not slander/libel (make an untruthful oral [spoken] or written statement about a person in a manner that harms the person's reputation or standing in the community) any student, teacher, administrator, school district employee or other person acting in an official capacity at the school by making false claims of harassment, including sexual harassment, or other inappropriate behavior. Additionally, students will not create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

A student will not make unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or engage in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and/or may be considered offensive, inappropriate or abusive. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: sexual advances, subtle pressure of sexual activity; touching of a sexual nature including inappropriate patting or pinching; intentional brushing against another person's body without his/her consent; demands for sexual favors; graffiti, posters, cartoons, caricatures and jokes of a sexual nature; playing sexually explicit audio/video tapes; and inappropriate sexual comments, including spreading rumors about or rating another person's sexual activity or performance.

A student will not bully or harass or attempt to bully or harass any person.

#### *Violation of Personal Rights*

It is a violation for any student, teacher, administrator or other school district employee to violate the personal rights of others. Violation of Personal Rights is any act of intimidation, harassment, physical force or threat of physical force directed against any person, or their property or advocate, motivated either in whole or in part by hostility to their real or perceived race, ethnic background, religious belief, gender (including gender identity), age, disability, or sexual orientation, with the intention of causing fear or intimidation, or to deter the free exercise or enjoyment of any rights or privileges secured by the Constitution or the laws of the State of Tennessee whether or not performed under the color of law.

## **District Parent Involvement Policy IM 4.102**

*Date Published: January, 2009*

*Revision History: May, 2006*

*Review: Annually*

The administration of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools recognizes the value and importance of meaningful, two-way parental involvement at the school and district level. Parents are key stakeholders and are invited as partners in helping all students acquire the knowledge and skills to meet or exceed No Child Left Behind proficiency standards. This policy was developed jointly with and distributed to stakeholders in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

The MNPS parental involvement policy includes input from parents, community members and school and district personnel in compliance with all pertinent mandates of state and federal regulatory standards as the following:

- All parents have access to many types and levels of involvement, with no person excluded based on race, religion, creed, gender, socio-economic status, physical impairment or age.
  - **All schools, including Title I schools will:**
    - Offer a flexible number of meetings in order to include as many parents as possible, including early mornings, evenings and/or weekends.
    - Provide multiple opportunities for parents to voice concerns and make suggestions related to the school and district improvement plan strategies. That input will be considered by the school and district for needed improvements. Opportunities that can be provided include monthly parent advisory council meetings, daily Customer Service Center hotline access, PTA/PTO meetings, school improvement committee meetings, school suggestion boxes and school newsletters.
  - **Title I Schools only will:**
    - Conduct an annual meeting with parents for the purpose of discussing the school's participation in Title I programs such as SES, Choice, Free and Reduced Lunch, Migrant Education, Distinguished Schools, etc. and the rights of parents to be involved in those programs.
    - Provide multiple opportunities for parents to provide input for developing and revising policies relating to parent involvement, including the use of school and district level Parent Involvement funds, and on policies at the school level. Parents will also be asked to share suggestions for improving target participation in student learning. Formal parent complaints concerning school plans will be submitted to the school district when the school makes the plan available publicly.
    - Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school parent involvement policy and the district parent involvement policy, including identification of barriers to greater participation by parents of diverse backgrounds. Such findings will be used to design more effective strategies for parent involvement.
- For the purpose of this document, the words parents/family represents individuals within the extended family of the student or persons with a legitimate interest in the student who are the student's legal guardians.

### **Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement**

- **All schools will:**
  - Provide parents a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of

academic assessment used to measure student progress and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

- Invite all parents to provide suggestions for removing barriers to student learning or voice concerns. Strategies to achieve this will include parent participation on each School Improvement Plan

committee, teacher-parent conferences, school newsletters, parent surveys, parent meetings, parent advisory groups, school websites, phone call-out messages, anonymous suggestion boxes and the Customer Service Parent Hotline.

• **Title I Schools only will:**

- Jointly develop, with parents, a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The following information will be included:
  - How the school provides high quality curriculum and instruction
  - How the parent will support their student's learning at home and at school with recommendations such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, TV watching, positive use of extracurricular time, volunteering, observation in the classroom and involvement in educational decisions concerning their children.
  - The importance of meaningful, two-way on-going communication between teachers and parents through meetings, phone calls, conferences, technology and progress reports

**Building Capacity for Involvement**

MNPS will build capacity for increased parental involvement using the following guidelines:

- Provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities such as the provision of speakers, translators, transportation, childcare, service hotlines, phone call-outs, parent resource centers, and Tennessee Parent Information Resource Center – currently Tennessee Voices for Children.
- Notify parent representatives regarding cluster and district parent advisory council meetings in a timely manner.
- Provide access to curriculum materials and training sessions to help parents work with their students to improve their academic achievement in reading and math, literacy training, technology use, parenting sessions which focus on middle and adolescent development, communicating effectively with educators, volunteering, accessing community resources and serving as leaders.
- Provide collaborative training sessions for staff and parents to develop mutual appreciation and a better understanding of the role all of us play in the development of our students. This training will include how to communicate with and work effectively with parents as partners and will consist of discussions “best practices” among school staff, administrators and community leaders.
- Coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with community organizations such as Head Start, Parents Are Teachers, early childhood programs and Family Resource Centers.
- Encourage parent representatives to attend cluster meetings to share their school's accomplishments and concerns/needs each month.
- Provide daily assistance to parents through the Customer Service Center ensuring that parents are given an opportunity to call an information hotline to request information, assistance, or voice a concern or complaint. Customer Service Staff will function as the parent's advocate in resolving the matter or securing the requested information in a timely manner.
- All parents will be offered the same opportunities to participate in training sessions including but not limited to: state academic and content standards, state/local assessments, monitoring students progress, literacy program opportunities, home learning activities to strengthen their child's reading and math skills, use of the internet to access information about their child's progress, parental rights under No Child Left Behind, understanding child development, effective volunteer participation, parent leadership, parent organization involvement, High School Redesign, school choice options, community services, pre-school/Head Start

programs, adult education programs and community education programs.

- Encourage and support the development and expansion of active PTA/PTO/PTSO organizations.

### **Accessibility**

- Provide opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities and parents of migratory children. Information and school reports will be provided in a language that parents can understand.
- Hold parent meetings and/or workshops at varied times and dates throughout the school year. Invitations for such opportunities will be provided in an understandable language and will be sent in a timely manner.
- Provide transportation, child care and translators for parent involvement activities where applicable and where funds permit.

### **References/Authority**

Tennessee House Bill No. 2635, Chapter No. 706

Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) §1118(a) (s)

DSOP 5125 – Student Records

ESEA Title I Law, Section §1116

MNPS Parent Survey Summary, 2008



# Parent Consent Form

2009-2010

*Please complete this page and return to your child's school*

Signature Page for \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's name)

Parent's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt/Unit \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

The signature below acknowledges I have read and understand the MNPS Student Code of Conduct and related policies. I also understand my student is subject to compulsory school attendance laws and if my student is found to be unlawfully absent from school or habitually truant, law enforcement personnel may take my student into temporary custody and deliver him/her to the Metro Attendance Center.

The signature below acknowledges that I have read and understand the Internet/Email use policy and agree to its conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

**I confirm my student's participation in the areas identified with a checkmark below:**

Permission Statements	I give permission	I do <b>NOT</b> give permission
A. My student has permission to access the Internet and email based on the conditions outlined in the MNPS Internet Use Agreement		
B. MNPS has permission to honor my student publicly, including in the media		
C. MNPS has permission to share contact information about my student with a military recruiter		
D. MNPS has permission to photograph my student for media and web publication.		
E. My student's directory information may be shared.		







To request an accommodation, please contact your building principal or department head. (Interpretors for the deaf or hard of hearing must be requested forty-eight {48} hours prior to the event.) Questions or concerns may be referred to the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Customer Service Center, 615/259-4636.

The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, color, age, and/or disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities. MNPS does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

For further information on student rights and services, you may contact the Tennessee Department of Education:

Andrew Johnson Tower  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, TN 37243  
615/741-2731

*[www.state.tn.us/education](http://www.state.tn.us/education)*