



The Maryland School for the Blind

Parent & Student Handbook

August 2026



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Parent And Student Handbook

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we do each year, we are updating the annual Parent and Student Handbook to reflect changes to policies and procedures that have been made throughout the past year. Once the updates are complete, we will add the handbook to our www.marylandschoolfortheblind.org website in the "[Parents and Students](#)" and the "[2026-2027 Registration and School Forms](#)" sections for your convenience.

For those of you who have provided email addresses, we will email a copy of the handbook to you and the handbook will be available on our website. Each new student will receive a hard copy. We will also provide a hard copy to anyone who requests one.

The handbook is an excellent source of information about our programs and services, policies, Health Center services, and more. I hope that each of you will review the handbook at the beginning of the school year and refer to it throughout the year.

Sincerely,



W. Robert Hair
Superintendent

Guiding Principles

Mission

The mission of The Maryland School for the Blind is to serve students with blindness and low vision of all abilities from birth through 21 throughout their educational journey.

A 501 (c)3 non-profit private school, MSB currently serves approximately 1,200 students identified as blind or visually impaired throughout all twenty-four Maryland jurisdictions.

To achieve its multiple responsibilities, the School is committed to safety, wellness, fairness, respect, personal responsibility, ethical standards and continuous improvement of program quality, professionalism, customer service, and stewardship of funds.

The Maryland School for the Blind, serving as an integral part of Maryland's special education continuum, will exceed student-achievement expectations by setting high standards and providing best-practice programs in state-of-the-art facilities.

We Believe...

- All students can learn.
- Family and community partnerships are crucial for student success.
- Effective education is measured by the student's ability to apply learning in daily life.
- The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is essential for students with low vision or blindness.
- Diverse viewpoints contribute to better decision-making.
- Data, analysis, and evidence-based practices lead to student success which drives decision-making, resource allocation, and MSB's priorities.
- Students should be educated in an environment that keeps them engaged with their families and community as much as possible.
- The dignity of risk-taking is necessary to grow and learn.
- Interdependence is an evolution from independence.
- We believe in access for all.



Education Opportunities At The Maryland School For The Blind

The Maryland School for the Blind strives to provide each student with developmental opportunities in the areas of intellectual growth, positive mental health, and functional living skills. Through collaborative effort and partnerships among students, staff, families, and the community, the Educational Program serves to give students the skills to transition back to their local community. A strong emphasis is placed on the use of state-of-the-art technology, the development of students' compensatory skills, and the use of age-appropriate activities that foster positive interpersonal relationships. Braille, print, and auditory materials are used as appropriate to access Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Careful attention is given to providing students with the most inclusive instructional setting possible, and opportunities for interaction with age-appropriate peers.

In order to comply with Maryland State testing guidelines, all students participate in the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP), including the Alternate Assessments as appropriate. All students are assigned to a grade level by chronological age as part of the requirements for this program. Students are tested in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10. Students are assigned to a classroom in one of the following buildings in order to prepare them for successful return to their communities. Classroom placement is based on data-driven decisions as to the best placement to meet each student's unique learning needs. All program models follow the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

Early Learning

The Early Learning Program provides instruction for children who are blind or have low vision, ages birth to five years, within two distinct programs: Infants & Toddlers for children ages birth to three and their families, and the center-based programs—Preschool, Pre-K, and Kindergarten. The Preschool, Pre-K, and Kindergarten programs serve children ages three to five years of age. The purpose of the program is to promote readiness for school-age programs in the most integrative setting possible. Typically, students without disabilities are included as an integral part of the daily program. Activities and outcomes supporting the Maryland Early Learning Standards Birth to 8 Years are adapted for all students. The program is licensed through the Office of Child Care.

Newcomer Hall, Case Hall And Welsh

Some students whose classrooms are in Newcomer Hall, Case Hall or Welsh are on an academic diploma track. Students also receive direct instruction in compensatory academic skills as well as in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum for students who are blind or have low vision. The instruction is designed to address the specific skill needs of students, address learning issues, and facilitate a successful return to their local educational agency or college and career. The classrooms in these areas follow an academic curriculum based on the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards or Alternate Achievement Standards as

determined by the IEP team.

Other students in Newcomer Hall, Case Hall, and Welsh are provided with a full complement of programming to meet the educational and social needs of our students, ages 5 to 21, who are blind or have low vision and are seeking vocational training and a certificate of program completion. All students participate in the MSB Career Education Program.

Hoover

The program in the Hoover Building is for students who are blind or have low vision with severe and profound multiple disabilities, with emphasis on functional life skills and a strong multi-sensory approach to learning. Most students in these classes are completing the requirements for a Certificate of Program Completion based on the determination of the IEP team.

Students also receive instruction in content areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum for blind and low vision learners. This program includes students with dual sensory impairments of hearing and vision.

Welsh Building – Intensive Needs Classes

MSB's Intensive Program supports students whose complex and intersecting instructional and behavioral needs impact their engagement in the educational environment. The program continuously assesses and addresses social, adaptive, learning readiness, and behavioral repertoires to create a foundation for meaningful progress. By carefully considering each student's unique strengths, interests, and needs, the program delivers highly individualized instructional and behavioral supports.

The Intensive Program team—consisting of Educational Case Managers, Behavior Analysts and Specialists, Registered Behavior Technicians and paraprofessionals, Related Service providers, and residential staff—works collaboratively and systematically toward the ultimate goal of meaningful inclusion in school and community settings.

Adaptive Physical Education (APE)

All students receive APE, which is specially designed instruction to meet the students' individual needs and abilities in a physical activity setting. We are a direct service under the education program that is provided to all students who attend MSB. Our program emphasizes small group instruction with modifications that meet the students' individual needs to promote student independence. APE instruction includes, but is not limited to: gross motor skills, team sports/games, fitness, swimming, etc. Collaboration with classroom staff, therapists, and Related Services is an integral part of assuring student success in our APE program. Our goal is to help the students become physically active throughout their lifetime.

Graduation

The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) serves students from all local educational agencies (LEA) throughout Maryland and students from Washington, D.C. and surrounding states. Students who attend any portion of high school while enrolled at MSB may come with credits from their LEA, earn credits in classes offered at MSB, and may also earn credits from a local school with whom MSB has a long-standing cooperative program.

Those students who fulfill the requirements for graduation while at MSB will graduate with a Maryland State High School Diploma issued by The Maryland School for the Blind.

THE MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS **Maryland Diploma and Certificate Requirements per COMAR 13A.03.02.09:**

- A. The types of diplomas and certificates specified in §§B-D of this regulation shall be awarded to any student who meets the requirements for award.
- B. Maryland High School Diploma. Except as provided in Regulation .12 of this chapter, and in §C of this regulation, to be awarded a Maryland high school diploma, a student shall:
 - (1) Complete the enrollment, credit, and service requirements as specified in this chapter;
 - (2) Complete local school system requirements; and
 - (3) Meet the graduation assessment requirements in the following ways:
 - (a) Achieve a passing score on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessments for Algebra I, science, government, and English 10;
 - (b) Achieve a combined score(s) as established by the Department on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessments;
 - (c) Achieve a passing score on an approved alternative assessment as established by the Department, such as Maryland Comprehensive Assessment for Algebra II, Advanced Placement examinations, SAT, ACT, or International Baccalaureate examinations; or
 - (d) Except for students described in Regulation .06F of this chapter, if a student is unable to meet the requirements in §B(3)(a)-(c) of this regulation, then the student shall satisfactorily complete the requirements of the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation as set forth in Regulation .06D of this chapter.
- C. Exception to Passing Score Requirement.
 - (1) For the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, students taking the Algebra I, English 10, science, and government Maryland Comprehensive Assessment will meet the graduation assessment requirement for Algebra I, English 10, science, and government.
 - (2) Students who pass the Algebra I, English 10, science, and government courses are exempt



from completing a Bridge Project, as set forth in Regulation .06 of this chapter.

- (3) For all students taking the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment in the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 school years, taking the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment will meet the graduation assessment requirement for science.

D. Maryland High School Diploma by Examination.

- (1) General Educational Development Testing Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for satisfactory performance on approved general educational development tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in Labor and Employment Article, §11-808, Annotated Code of Maryland, and COMAR 09.37.01.04.
- (2) Maryland Adult External High School Diploma Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for demonstrating competencies in general life skills and individual skills on applied performance tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in COMAR 09.37.01.20.

E. Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.

- (1) This certificate shall be awarded only to students with disabilities who cannot meet the requirements for a diploma but who meet the following standards:
 - (a) The student is enrolled in an education program for at least four years beyond grade 8 or its age equivalent, and is determined by an IEP team, with the agreement of the student and the parents of the student, to have developed appropriate skills for the individual to enter the world of work, act responsibly as a citizen, and enjoy a fulfilling life, with the world of work including but not limited to:
 - (i) Gainful employment;
 - (ii) Post-secondary education and training;
 - (iii) Supported employment; and
 - (iv) Other services that are integrated in the community; or
 - (b) The student has been enrolled in an education program for four years beyond grade 8 or its age equivalent and will have reached age 21 by the end of the student's current school year.
- (2) The Maryland Summary of Performance that describes the student's skills shall accompany the Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.
- (3) The final decision to award a student with disabilities a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion will not be made until after the beginning of the student's last year in high school.
- (4) A student with significant cognitive disability may not meet high school graduation requirements, in accordance with §B of this regulation, if a student:
 - (a) Participates in an Alternative Assessment based on Alternative Academic Achievement



Standards (AA-AAAS); and

- (b) Continues to receive instruction based on Alternative Academic Achievement Standards through high school.
- (5) If a student participates in a graduation ceremony prior to the completion of the student's education program, at the ceremony the school system shall issue to the student a Certificate of Achievement or other similarly titled certificate in place of a diploma.
- (6) Certificate Endorsement.
 - (a) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, students completing a Certificate may earn one or more endorsements.
 - (b) The endorsements include a Post-Secondary Education endorsement, a Work-Ready/Employment/Career endorsement, and a Community/Citizenship endorsement.
 - (c) Requirements for the endorsements will be identified by the Department.
- F. Local Endorsements. Consistent with procedures established by the Department, each local school system may add endorsements to the diploma as incentives for students to meet locally established requirements and outcomes in instruction beyond the minimums specified by the State.
- G. At least yearly, through the end of the implementation, the State Board will review and assess updated information on the graduation assessment requirements and scores.
- H. Maryland High School Diploma. Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, at the latest, except as provided in Regulation .12 of this chapter, and in §C of this regulation, to be awarded a Maryland high school diploma, a student shall:
 - (1) Complete the enrollment, credit, assessment and service requirements as specified in this chapter; and
 - (2) Complete local school system requirements.
- I. State Endorsements.
 - (1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, students graduating may earn a College Ready State endorsement, a Career and Technical Education (CTE) State endorsement, or both.
 - (2) The Department will establish the requirements for the endorsements.



The Maryland School For The Blind Course Credit Requirements

Content Area	Credits Required	Additional Information
English	4	
Social Studies	3.5	1 American Government credit, 1 World History credit, 1 United States History credit, and at least .5 Economics credit are required.
Mathematics	4	1 credit must be Algebra, 1 credit must be Geometry, and two additional math courses. Students must be enrolled in a math course each year of high school. Students should consult the principal or math instructor about their mathematics sequence.
Science	3	High school courses including one credit in physical science, one credit in Earth/space science or a course with the topics of Earth/space science integrated, and one credit in Life Science. Must be an NGSS aligned course to count towards graduation requirements. Students should consult science instructors about their science sequence.
Physical Education	.5	
Health	1	
Technology Education	1	
Fine Arts	1	

Students Must Complete One Of The Following Sequences:

Specified Sequence of Courses in an approved Career & Technology Program	4 credits
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Specified Sequence of Courses in an approved Career & Technology Program	2 credits
Any Elective	2 credits
or	
World Language (both credits in the same language)	2 credits
Any academic elective	2 credits
Total Required Credits	22 credits
Students must also complete 75 hours of pre-approved Student Service-Learning.	

Learning in Functional Environments (LiFE Program; formerly referred to as Residential Program)

LiFE program services at The Maryland School for the Blind are offered for two purposes: (1) To address expanded core curriculum educational needs that cannot be addressed otherwise, and (2) To provide housing for students whose distance from school prevents them from traveling to and from MSB each day. In all cases, the need for after school services is determined and reviewed at least annually by the student's IEP team.

Descriptions of each program follows:

ELECCT (Extended Learning in Expanded Core Curriculum Topics)

ELECCT, an after school instructional program at The Maryland School for the Blind, is designed for students whose educational needs cannot be addressed during the regular school day. Students whose IEP team determines such needs may participate in the ELECCT Program. The ELECCT Program provides concentrated instruction in the following areas: Food Management, Hygiene, Clothing Management, and Home Management while also reinforcing communication and interpersonal skills. Students participating in the ELECCT Program will have home assignments to complete and learned skills are expected to be carried over into the home. Frequent communication with parents or caregivers is a critical component of this program as students must be provided practice opportunities at home. Home visits or video conferencing are also a part of this program and may be necessary at various points in the instructional process.

Overnight Services

On-campus housing is reserved for those students who live too far from The Maryland School for the Blind to travel to and from school each day and for those students who have educational needs—as determined by the IEP team—that cannot be addressed during the school day or

through the ELECCT program.

Students whose needs cannot be addressed during school program or through ELECCT
The student's specific schedule will be determined based on their IEP-team—identified educational needs. The goal is to create a schedule that allows them to work on the skills they need while also allowing them to be in their home community for as much of the school week as possible. As such, many students whose needs cannot be addressed through ELECCT may remain overnight for a portion of the week.

Students who must remain overnight due to distance and those whose educational needs cannot be addressed through ELECCT (as defined above)

Students are assigned to a cottage based upon age, developmental needs, and specific educational focus. Additionally, two student houses on campus have the flexibility to function as instructional group homes or independent living spaces, depending upon the needs of the students in a given year.

Parents, caregivers, and families play an integral role in the success of the students' educational experience. Opportunities for involvement exist in the areas of program planning, carry-over between school and home, and participation in field trips and other community outings. Regular communication is fostered through weekly contact with families through the use of logs, email, and/or phone conversation. Additionally, caregivers are encouraged to visit the program and students are encouraged to call family and friends throughout the week.

Out of respect for all students and their daily routines, visitors are encouraged to make visit arrangements through LiFe Supervisors.

It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure the student has the supplies and materials needed for their after-school experience. This includes clothing, toiletries, personal care items, and money for field trips and community-based activities. A sufficient supply of toiletries and personal care items are to be sent at the start of each school year. Staff working with the students will inform parents when supplies are running low so they can be replenished periodically throughout the year.

All linens are provided by the school; however, should parents desire to provide their own bed linens they must be new and sent to school in the original store packaging. Should parents desire for the linens to be sent home at the end of the school year, the same linens may not be returned to school.

In most cases staff will be responsible for managing students' money; that is, keeping records of expenses and maintaining cash in a secure area. In situations where students are learning money management skills parents or caregivers will be required to provide a locked method

for securing the money, and the student will maintain responsibility for it. Consultation with staff regarding which method works best for a particular living area is encouraged. Should any of these expectations create a hardship for families, support for such items may be available by contacting the school's Social Work Department.

Students are not permitted to be dropped off at school between 8 p.m. and 7:30 a.m., and if they are returning from an illness, they must be cleared through the Health Center before returning to the Dormitories or Cottages (please see the procedures for picking up and returning students to school).

Parents/caregivers of students in any LiFE Program (ELECCT or Overnight Services) are asked to notify the LiFE Program Coordinator at 410.444.5000, ext 1414 by 11 a.m. should there be a need for their student to be absent from the LiFE Program.

The staff in the LiFE and Overnight Programs is committed to providing all students with the skills needed for increased independence. As such, students who become ill during the course of the week and are unable to participate in afterschool services must be picked up by parents, caregivers, or another responsible adult for whom MSB has parent-issued permission and *returned to school when they are able to resume full participation. **Once parents have been made aware that their child is ill, the expectation is that they arrive no later than travel time plus 1 hour to pick up their child.**

*Please note: Students are not permitted to be dropped off at school between 8 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.; and if they are returning from an illness, they must be cleared through the Health Center before returning to the residence. **Please see the Procedure for Picking Up and Returning Students to School.**

Related Services

Related services are developmental, corrective, and other supportive services that may be required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education (COMAR, 13A.05.01.03). Specifically, related services are transportation, therapy, nursing, and other support services required for a student to access and benefit from their educational program. Determinations regarding which, if any, related services are required are made and reviewed at least annually by the IEP team.

Services may be provided in a direct or consultative manner, based on IEP team-determined needs. Direct service refers to services provided directly to the students, whereas consultative service refers to the therapists' expertise being shared with the students' team for carry-over and implementation of service recommendations throughout the student's educational program.

Related services include the following:

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology (AT) develops, coordinates, and expands assistive technology programs and services for students. AT specialists assess the student's assistive technology needs, monitor student progress, and provide corresponding professional development to staff and families.

Audiology

Educational Audiology Services include evaluation and monitoring of personal and classroom amplification systems, identification and evaluation of access to educational content, collaboration with other related service professionals, training and support of educators and paraeducators, and provision of age-appropriate screening services as required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Career Education

Career Education provides work opportunities on and off campus in order to prepare students for "The World of Work." The program focuses on work skills and behaviors that are needed for successful employment and/or participation in adult programs.

Health Services

Health Center services, policies, and parent responsibilities are defined in the Health Center section of this handbook.

Music Therapy

Music Therapy provides assessment, consultation, and treatment through the use of clinical



and evidence-based music interventions. Music is used as a tool in order to accomplish individualized, nonmusical goals in the following areas: communication, social skills, motor skills, behavior, emotional awareness, activities of daily living, cognitive skills, academic skills, and leisure skills.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy (OT) addresses, among other skills, visual perception, organizational strategies, activities of daily living, fine motor coordination, feeding, handwriting, adaptive equipment needs, and coordination.

Orientation and Mobility

Orientation and mobility (O&M) services are provided by qualified personnel to students who are blind or have low vision to enable those students to attain systematic orientation, to and safe movement within, their environments in school, home, and community (COMAR, 13A.05.01.03.)

At MSB, O&M is offered as a part of the curriculum and as an IEP service. Lessons are scheduled during the day or evening hours, depending on the instructional needs of the student. O&M training consists of sensory awareness, spatial and environmental concepts, orientation skills, sighted guide travel techniques, functional use of vision, public transportation, and long cane travel. O&M skills are taught through a sequence of lessons on a one-to-one basis or in groups, by a trained O&M specialist, with extra support and practice provided at school by MSB staff, and at home by parents and/or caregivers.

Physical Therapy

Physical Therapists (PT) provide assessments, consultation, training, and treatment in the areas of gross motor development, postural control, transfers, gait/mobility training, wheelchair skills, therapeutic exercise, fitness training, range of motion, assistive devices, and positioning equipment. [See Attachment G for specific information regarding equipment management.](#)

Psychology

Psychology service at MSB provides psychological assessments in the areas of intellectual, executive, and social/emotional functioning; obtains, integrates and interprets information about student behavior and conditions related to learning, and assists in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies. The Psychology service also develops behavior plans to decrease interfering behaviors, and monitors behavior in students who have been prescribed medication. The Psychology service at MSB consists of Psychologists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA).

Social Work

Social Work (SW) provides individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, social skills training for students, and family support in situations where problems in a student's living situation are affecting their adjustment and participation in school. The Social Work Service also connects

families to community resources, serves as a link between MSB, families, and various social agencies, and assists in the development of positive behavioral intervention strategies.

Speech/Language Therapy

Speech/Language Pathologists (SLP) provide assessments, treatment, and consultation for students with a variety of communication disorders. Receptive and expressive language impairments, augmentative and alternative communication systems, and oral motor and feeding impairments are some of the many areas addressed. [See Attachment H for Feeding Policy.](#)

Therapeutic Recreation

Therapeutic Recreation (TR) provides recreational activities in the areas of art, drama, music, dance, game play skills, social skills, aquatic activities, outdoor activities, and leisure education. Transition services and community integration experiences are also offered with the intent of transferring leisure skills and hobbies learned at MSB to the students' home community.

Transition

Transition Services assists parents and students with identifying needs and locating resources related to employment, continued education and/or training, adult day care options, financial resources, medical care, respite and in-home supports, supported living, and recreation.

Additional Adult Support

Some students at MSB require additional adult support to access their education. This could be for specific classes or activities or for the entire school day and evening, if appropriate. Students may require additional adult support for health reasons, behavior, or to aid in accessing educational materials. This is an important and necessary service for some of our students and MSB will follow the decision of the IEP team to determine appropriateness. Additional adult support is a service and we will ensure that students are provided with a competent and trained individual to work with a student.

It is also important that students learn to work with a variety of staff and that staff learn to work with a variety of students. For this reason, we cannot guarantee that the student will have the same adult support every day or for every event. We will do our best to provide consistency and ensure the students are safe and supported.

[Transportation](#)

Communication

Open communication between parents and staff is important to the success of the students' school program. Contact your child's Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, therapist, or childcare staff directly to discuss any aspect of your student's program.

School to Parent

Communication between school and home is essential to student success. There are several structures within the school to facilitate this communication.

School Website - www.marylandschoolfortheblind.org

The MSB website is filled with a wealth of information about the school. Parents are encouraged to check the site regularly for the latest information on school activities and events, especially the "[Parents and Students](#)" section.

- **MSB Social Media Channels** – Parents and students are encouraged to follow MSB on our social media channels: Facebook (search The Maryland School for the Blind or @MSB1853), X (@MSB1853), Instagram (@marylandschoolfortheblind) and YouTube (Maryland School for the Blind).
- **School Calendar** – The official school calendar is part of the packet sent home to parents before the start of each school year. It is also accessible online to parents at the beginning of each school year. The calendar includes school vacations, holidays, and special events. Adjustments to the calendar will be made as necessary throughout the school year.
- **WINDOW Newsletter** – The Window contains articles on student activities, staff highlights, special events, and a message from the Superintendent. The Window is the primary source of communication for stakeholders throughout Maryland and the United States and is published three times per year (Spring/Summer/Fall).
- **MSB Annual Report** – The MSB Annual Report is a visual and colorful retrospective of each year, including student, staff, and school highlights of the year, the graduating class, the Board of Directors, and financial information.
- **Phones** – MSB has phone lines set up in the front office to handle several incoming calls at the same time. The voice mail system is set up so that each staff member has a mailbox. You may leave a voice mail message for staff at any time. Personal messages for students should only be phoned into the school in case of an emergency. Likewise, students are able to use the school's phones to call home in the case of an emergency only.
- **Cell Phone** – Students' use of cell phones is generally not permitted during the school day. For the complete Cell Phone Use policy, please see the Technology section in this handbook.



- **Email** – Emailing has become the most often used means of communication. Please review the Technology section in this handbook for our recommended emailing protocols.

Teacher to Parent

In addition to working directly with their students, the staff spends a substantial portion of their day planning and preparing for the students. Parents can help by limiting impromptu conferences in the hallways and classrooms before, during, and after school. Lengthy discussions should be set up by appointment. Please do not phone teachers at home. These rules are by no means an attempt to curtail communication, but instead a recognition that the more time a teacher has to plan strategic instruction, the more effective the teacher will be with all of the students.

- **Marble Notebooks** – Students in grades 1-6 are issued a marble notebook at the beginning of the school year for the purposes of recording homework and for communicating regularly with parents. Teachers instruct students on how to record daily, weekly, monthly and yearly assignments in the book. If a student is having difficulty keeping up with assignments, parents may be asked to sign the assignment book on a daily basis in order to monitor the student's homework. Notes or other communications by teachers or parents in this book are the student's responsibility to deliver to the appropriate person.
- **Interim Reports** – For grades 3-12 of some of the classes in Newcomer and Case Halls, interims are issued at the midpoint of each marking period so that students and parents can be apprised of progress. See the School Calendar for dates.
- **Progress Reports** – IEP progress is reported at the end of each quarter. See the School Calendar for dates.
- **Report Cards** – Are sent to parents/guardians electronically at the end of each quarter according to the schedule on the School Calendar. See the School Calendar for dates.
- **Parent Conferences** – While the Case Manager will be able to handle most questions and concerns, if there are specific questions for a staff member, parents should make appropriate arrangements in advance. Other parent conferences may be scheduled as needed at the request of a parent, staff, or administrator at any time during the school year.

Grievance Process

When students have concerns or conflicts, they are instructed and encouraged to first seek resolution through direct and informal methods. Accordingly, students are encouraged to express their concerns in a prompt, effective, and orderly fashion directly to the person closest to the concern. If the concern is not resolved at the informal level, the following procedure is to be followed:

First step: The student will meet to express their concern with the teacher (if the concern is during the day) or the Residential LiFE Supervisor (if the concern is in the evening). The teacher or the Residential LiFE Supervisor will investigate, as necessary, issues related to the concern.

The findings of the investigation will be discussed personally with the students and a written note reflecting the concern will also be prepared.

Second step: If the student is dissatisfied with the findings/decisions of either the teacher or the Residential Supervisor, the student is encouraged to take their concern to the Principal (day) or Director of Residential Services (evening). An investigation, as necessary, will be completed and findings shared with the student personally. An addendum to the original note reflecting the concern and the findings will be prepared.

Third step: If the student is still dissatisfied, they have the right to take his/her concern to the Director of Education where a similar process will be followed. The decision of the Director of Education is final.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Maryland School for the Blind does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person(s) have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

The Director of Education serves as the Title IX Coordinator for complaints of sexual harassment related to students. Students, parents, and community members may report allegations of harassment to:

Joshua Irzyk, Ed.D.

Director of Education
The Maryland School for the Blind
3501 Taylor Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21236
410.444.5000 x1410
joshuai@mdschblind.org

The Director of Human Resources is the Title IX Coordinator for complaints of sexual harassment related to employees. Employees may report allegations of harassment to:

April Tucker

Director of Human Resources
The Maryland School for the Blind
3501 Taylor Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21236
410-444-5000 x 1469
aprilt@mdschblind.org

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit the [Office of Civil Rights Complaint Assessment System](#) for the address and phone number of the office that serves

your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Attendance

One of the most significant factors contributing to success in school is attendance. Regular attendance is a responsibility to be shared by the parents, the student, and the school. Excused absences must be documented by a written statement from the parent or guardian. Parents/guardians are also asked to contact the teacher or front office to report a student absence. This documentation should be provided to the teacher at the time of the student's return to school. Students are permitted to make up work if an absence is excused.

Excused absences may include:

- Personal illness or doctor's appointment.
- Serious illness or death within the student's immediate family.
- Special religious holidays.
- Emergency or hazardous weather conditions and/or state of emergency.
- Lack of authorized transportation.
- Suspension.
- Other emergencies or circumstances that, in the judgment of the Director of Education or their designee, constitute a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

Unexcused absences are all those that do not fall within the previously described definition of excuses. When unexcused absences become excessive, the School will communicate with parents to determine if additional support may be needed. Attendance will be reported on quarterly progress reports.

Truancy

The parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the Education Office when their child is going to be absent from school.

- The Education Office collects attendance daily. Student absences and reason codes are documented in MSB's attendance monitoring system.
- If the Education Office does not receive notification from a parent/guardian as to why a student is absent, the teacher will attempt to contact the parent/guardian for a reason.
- On the **third day** of absence, the student's Case Manager and Social Worker are notified and contact the parent/guardian.
- On the **fifth day** of absence, the Principal and Director of Education are notified by the Case Manager and Social Worker. Continued solutions to the issue will be pursued.

Picking Up and Returning Students to School

Arriving Late/Departing Early During the School Day

School day program hours are from 8:15 a.m. through 3:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:15 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. on Friday. The Early Learning program dismisses ten minutes earlier.

To ensure the safety of all students, parents/guardians must adhere to the following procedures when picking up or returning a student prior to 3:15 p.m. or 12:30 p.m.

Please notify the Education Office at ext. 1218, in advance, if you are planning to pick your child up early from school. If your child is scheduled to participate in the Afterschool Program (ELECCT or Overnight), please also contact the Coordinator of Afterschool Services at 410.444.5000, ext 1414 to communicate your child's absence from that afternoon's instruction.

If your child arrives after the start of the school day, 8:15 a.m., or departs from school before 3:15 p.m. you must sign your child in/out at the appropriate location as follows:

- **Students in the Newcomer, Case, or Campbell buildings** must be signed in and out at the reception area in Newcomer Hall.
- **Students in the Welsh Building** must be signed in and out at the reception area on the lower level of the Welsh Building (Room 004).
- **Early Learning Program** students must be signed in and out at the front office in the Early Learning Building.
- **Students in the Hoover Building** must be signed in and out at the Blanton Health Center entrance.
- Any student who is ill as determined by our Health Center staff **MUST BE** picked up and signed out through the Blanton Health Center in a timely manner.
- **After 3:15 p.m. ALL** students must be signed in and out through the Blanton Health Center.
- The parent/guardian will be issued a pass indicating that the student has been properly signed in/out.
- The pass must be taken to the staff member responsible for the student at that time. Only after the pass has been collected by staff will the student be released.

Arriving Late/Departing Early After School Hours

Residential students arriving to school or being picked up from school between the hours of **3:15 – 8:00 p.m.** must sign in/out at the Blanton Health Center.

As staff ratios decrease at night, **no student will be admitted after 8:00 p.m. on any night of**

the week. This is essential as the care and safety of all the students during hours of limited staff availability is of primary concern. The Parent/Guardian will be issued a pass indicating that the student has been properly signed in/out. The pass must be taken to the staff member responsible for the student at that time. Only after the pass has been collected by staff will the student be released.

IMPORTANT: If someone other than a custodial parent or guardian is picking a student up, written permission from the custodial parent/guardian prior to the end of the school day must be provided before the student will be released. Picture identification will also be required.

Inclement Weather

The Maryland School for the Blind follows the guidance from the National Weather Service concerning student outdoor travel and time spent outdoors during a student's stay on campus. MSB follows these guidelines for extreme temperatures and weather conditions.

The heat index and air quality are monitored during the summer months, while temperature and wind chill are monitored in the winter months. Due to a large number of trees on campus, wind advisories are monitored year-round to help ensure safe travel.

When a heat or wind chill advisory is issued by the National Weather Service, all outdoor activities will be canceled. When air quality is ORANGE, outdoor activities are canceled for students with respiratory issues. All outdoor activities for all students will be canceled when the air quality is RED.

In our effort to improve communication The Maryland School for the Blind has implemented a telephone broadcast system that enables school administrators to notify all parents and emergency contacts by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissals and/or school closings.

The Maryland School for the Blind will continue to report school closings due to inclement weather on WBAL television, telephone, text, email, Facebook (search The Maryland School for the Blind or @MSB1853), and X (@MSB1853).

Our Infinite Campus message system will call phone numbers in our selected parent contact lists and will deliver a recorded message from a school administrator. The system will deliver the message to answered calls and voicemail messaging services. When there is no answer and when a phone is busy, the service will automatically retry twice in 15-minute intervals after the initial call. The message will also be sent via text message and email.

Parents and legal guardians' home phone numbers and cell phone numbers will automatically be entered into this system. Upon request, parents and guardians can add additional phone

numbers, including those of additional relatives, caregivers, and neighbors. All information and phone numbers are strictly confidential and are only used for the purposes described above. If you have any questions pertaining to the Infinite Campus message system, please contact the Director of Education, 410-444-5000, extension 1410.

School is open if MSB is not specifically announced as being closed by WBAL-TV 11, or by the school's telephone broadcast system.

DAY STUDENTS: If the county or city you live in announces that their public schools are closed due to inclement weather, they will not transport students to MSB. In the event that inclement weather develops during the day, MSB follows the early closing announcements for the respective counties; however, the weather conditions in counties they travel through will also be considered.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM: When school systems open one hour late, students who attend the morning program will be picked up one hour late. If schools open two hours late, the morning program will be canceled. If inclement weather develops during the school day, your district may decide to close schools early. If your county/city announces that they are closing three hours early, the morning students will be transported home by the same bus that transported them to school in the morning. However, this means that they will remain at school for an additional hour, or until their morning bus arrives. Children scheduled in the three-year-old afternoon class do not attend when local county/city schools close two or three hours early.

OVERNIGHT STUDENTS: Inclement weather may delay school bus transportation to school by a day or more. Inclement weather predicted toward the end of the week may cause students to return home a day or so early.

If residential students need to be transported home before the end of the school week, MSB will send an Infinite Campus message to parents and guardians. For this reason, it is critical that the Education Office be informed of any changes in home, cell, office, and/or emergency contact telephone numbers.

Parents and guardians are welcome to transport their children to and from school during inclement weather when we are open. However, you must notify the Education Office at 410-444-5000, ext. 1218 if you plan to transport your child to/from school in these circumstances so that we can plan for adequate staffing.

PLEASE NOTE: Students will only be released to individuals listed on the student information sheet that parents/guardians complete at the beginning of each school year.

NATIONAL OR REGIONAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of National or Regional emergencies, MSB will institute measures to ensure the

safety of the students in our care. MSB will follow the directives of the authorities in the surrounding area. Typical responses could include, but are not limited to:

- Building lock downs.
- Community field trip cancellations.
- Temporary suspension of independent student travel privileges.

Classroom Visitation Guidelines

Visitation by parents/guardians to observe the programs at MSB is encouraged. If, as part of your visit to observe your child's program, you would like to consult with staff, please call ahead and schedule an appointment. All visitors are required to be checked in through a school office and obtain a visitor's pass at their child's respective building. All visitors must present a valid state or government issued ID.

- Preschool and Early Learning: the front office entrance at the Preschool Early Learning Outreach Center building.
- Students in the Hoover Building: the Blanton Health Center entrance at the Hoover Building.
- Students in the Welsh Building: the front office entrance of the Welsh Building.
- Students in Newcomer, Case or Campbell Hall: the front office in Newcomer Hall.

In order to minimize disruption to the classroom the following guidelines for visitation are in place:

1. Prospective parents may observe in the classrooms while accompanied by the Assistant Principal/Principal or appropriate Outreach staff.
2. Current parents may observe in their child's classroom. The observation must be prearranged with the teacher and/or the Assistant Principal/Principal. While observation is always encouraged, the date, length, and time of the observation will be considered by MSB.
3. While visiting in the classroom, observers are encouraged to place their cell phones on vibrate and avoid engaging in personal discussions with the staff or other parents. Computers are strictly for school use and may not be used by visitors for the purpose of retrieving email or accessing the internet.
4. Current parents are welcome as volunteers in the libraries and classrooms, chaperones for field trips, and hosts for special celebrations.

Dress Code

Students may choose styles of dress according to their individual preference and chosen cultural values. With that choice is the responsibility to maintain a personal appearance that

is safe, healthy, and non-offensive to others. The student dress code is intended to create a positive climate for teaching and learning. Accordingly, students are prohibited from wearing clothing, headwear, jewelry, book bags, or other articles of personal attire that:

- Depict profanity, obscenity, disrespect, the use of weapons, or violence.
- Contains rude, disrespectful, or discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior.
- Promote the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
- Contain sexually suggestive messages.
- Causes or is likely to cause a substantial or material disruption to school activities or the orderly and safe operation of the school or at school-sponsored activities. Hats and visors are permitted at the discretion of the Assistant Principal/Principal and may be worn due to visual condition.
- When wearing sandals to school, the student should bring closed toe, rubber-soled shoes for APE classes.

Guidelines for Parental Concerns

If parents/guardians have concerns, the following steps are encouraged. With parent/guardian concerns the understanding is that proceeding from one step to the next is based upon an unsatisfactory resolution at the prior level.

Step 1: Make every effort to resolve the concern directly with the individual staff member.

Step 2: Present the continued concern and the solutions discussed with the staff member to the appropriate Supervisor.

Step 3: Present the continued concern and the solutions discussed with the Supervisor to the Director of Education or the Director of Residential & Related Services as appropriate.

Privacy and Student Rights

Under federal law, parents and eligible students have the right to inspect, amend, and give consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in a student's educational records except as the law or regulations authorize disclosure without consent.

Parents and eligible students have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's educational records.
- Request amendment of the records to ensure that they are accurate and not misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.

- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the records, unless the law and regulations authorize disclosure without consent.
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if the school fails to comply with the law or regulations.
- Obtain a copy of the school's policy on student records from a school Director.

Copies of The Maryland School for the Blind's policy on student records are located in the office of the Director of Education and the office of the Superintendent.

Wellness Program

The Maryland School for the Blind is committed to providing an educational environment that enhances the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. As a residential facility, we recognize that our school is in a unique position to make a significant impact on students' health and well-being by supporting a healthy environment where children who are blind, have low vision, or multiple disabilities learn and participate in positive nutritional and lifelong wellness practices. It is our belief that improved health optimizes student performance potential and that the development of healthy habits will continue to benefit our students as they make lifestyle choices as adults.

All foods served on campus will follow USDA Nutrition Guidelines and Smart Snack standards. These guidelines require the use of products that are high in fiber, low in added fats, sugar, and sodium, and are served in appropriate portion sizes. MSB will strive to engage students, staff, and parents, through surveys, in selecting foods offered through the school meal programs in order to identify new healthful and appealing food choices.

Due to nutrition guidelines and the risk of reactions or food sensitivities by other students, outside food for parties or celebrations in the classrooms or dorms is not permitted. Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss other options with their child's teacher or LiFE (residential) program supervisor.

Students may not receive food deliveries to the school. This includes services such as DoorDash and UberEats. Under no circumstances may a student meet a food delivery person and staff are not to accept food deliveries from an outside establishment for a student.

Physical education and physical activity are an important part of the development of the whole child and are an important element in each school's total education program.

- MSB will provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, to maintain physical fitness, and to participate regularly in physical activity.
- Students will be given the opportunity for physical activity during adapted physical



education, residential/therapeutic recreation programs, athletic teams, and gross motor support services (i.e., physical therapy, orientation and mobility).

- Daily gross motor activity will also include full use of campus travel, worksite activity, open gyms, and MSB physical facilities.

MSB will create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active. Wellness will be promoted in all areas to assist students in adopting a lifelong wellness lifestyle.

Nutrition Services

School Meals:

MSB participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) and provides meals that meet the nutritional standards within each. Breakfast and lunch are provided for all students, regardless of their arrival time to school. Additionally, dinner and an evening snack are provided for overnight students. Meals are available to students whenever school or extended school year programs are in session.

MSB does not participate in the Summer Food Service Program. Students may, however, receive breakfast and lunch meals through participating schools in their local school district throughout the Summer Food Service Program months. Participating summer food distribution locations can be found on the USDA website: www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program.

Water:

MSB encourages students to drink water throughout the day. Students may bring and carry water bottles filled with only water before, during and after the school day across the school campus. If students do not bring water with them, it will be available to them as per below.

MSB requires that:

- Free, safe, and unflavored drinking water is available to students during the school day, during after school activities, and in the evening and overnight for LiFE (residential) students.
- Water cups or bottles are available in dining areas across campus.
- All water sources and containers (drinking fountains, water coolers) are maintained regularly to ensure adherence to health and safety standards.

Nutrition Service Civil Rights Complaint Procedure

A civil rights violation is any act of omission that allegedly infringes upon an individual's or group's civil rights, as defined by applicable laws and regulations.

This procedure is designed to provide a clear and accessible process for participants to file complaints alleging violations of their civil rights as they pertain to any aspect of the Nutrition



Service Program at The Maryland School for the Blind (also referred to as the School). The School is committed to upholding and protecting civil rights in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Any person or group who believes their civil rights have been violated may file a complaint. Complaints should be filed within 180 days of the date of the alleged violation. Complaints may be submitted by students, parents, or staff in writing, verbally, or anonymously as below:

- In-Person: Complaints may be submitted in person to the School's Human Resource Director, Morrison Hall, 3501 Taylor Avenue; Baltimore, Maryland 21236
- Mail: Complaints may be sent via certified mail to The Maryland School for the Blind; 3501 Taylor Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21236, ATTENTION: Human Resource Director
- Phone: Complaints may be initiated by contacting 410.444.5000, ext 1469

Verbal complaints will be transcribed and put in writing by the School's Director of Human Resources.

The School accepts anonymous complaints through any of the methods identified above. While not required, providing contact information may aid in the investigation.

The Maryland School for the Blind will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five business days and will submit all complaints based on race, age, color, national origin, sex—including gender identity and sexual orientation—and/or disability to the Maryland State Department of Education, the School's Superintendent, and the USDA Office of Civil Rights within the same five day period.

A civil rights complaint log will be maintained by the School and the Maryland State Department of Education. The Maryland School for the Blind will not attempt to resolve the complaint but rather report the complaint to MSDE and the USDA Office of Civil Rights for resolution.

The Maryland School for the Blind is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of the person making the complaint, the person or group about whom the complaint is made, as well as the investigation and documentation regarding the same.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866.632.9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: 202.690.7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Athletics

MSB proudly participates in the Eastern Athletic Association for the Blind (EAAB). The EAAB provides opportunities for students who are blind or low vision and 13 years of age or older to train and compete with their peers. These opportunities serve to improve the athletic ability of the students and to strengthen their self-esteem. Students work as part of a team and learn skills that can be used throughout their lives. Social and emotional growth is emphasized, as well as physical well-being.

The athletic program helps students build enthusiasm for fitness and teamwork. MSB encourages students to have a healthy view of competition and the teamwork it takes to enjoy competition through successes and failures. All students, of all ability, are encouraged to participate in our program. MSB currently has athletic programs in the following sports:

- ~~Swimming – From mid-September through early November.~~ (Not currently offered)
- Wrestling/Cheerleading – from mid-November through the end of January.
- Goalball – from early February through March.
- Track and field – from the end of March through mid-May.
- 5-A-Side Soccer/Football – club fall and spring sport.

Coaches are aware of the wide range of MSB's students' athletic skills.

There will be students playing a sport for the first time, and there will be students who have been exposed to a particular sport in previous seasons or from being a member of a club team. All athletes, from the novice to the experienced, are challenged to give their maximum effort

to the team.

Students who participate in athletics at MSB are expected to make a sincere commitment to the team. MSB encourages students to be involved and to develop and understand the responsibility of commitment to a team, including positive attitude and attendance at all practices and games. Emphasis is placed on skill building and application of those skills in game situations.

Practices will be held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 3:15-5:15 p.m. Practice days and the tentative game schedules are included with the registration materials prior to the season. Students are expected to be at all required practices except on the rare occasion that they have a conflict. The athlete should notify the coach in advance if they are going to be late or absent from practice. The scheduling of games, cancellation of games, transportation arrangements, and dismissal/pickup times are arranged through the Athletic Director.

Students are required to be in good academic standing to participate in a sports team. Those students who are not will be given the opportunity to improve their grades while staying on the team through the development of an Academic Improvement Plan. The plan is developed by the student, the teacher, and a coach or the Athletic Director.

Each student is issued a uniform at the beginning of the season. It is the athlete's responsibility to take care of the uniform and bring it to all games/meets. Uniforms must be returned in good condition at the end of the season in a timely manner. Parents will be billed for any unreturned items.

Students must wear a pair of goggles for competitive team swimming activities. Goggles are encouraged, but not required, for therapeutic and recreational swimming.

Athletic Code of Conduct

At MSB, we use athletics not only as a vehicle for teaching athletes how to play their best, both as an individual and as part of a team, but also as a means for internalizing in our students a true sense of sportsmanship. All athletes and spectators should keep in mind that they represent The Maryland School for the Blind. Therefore, they are expected to abide by the following code of conduct.

Participants' Code of Conduct

As a player I will:

- Play the game for the game's sake;
- Be generous when I win;
- Be graceful when I lose;
- Be fair always, no matter what the cost;

- Obey the laws of the game;
- Work for the good of my team;
- Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace;
- Believe in the honesty of my opponents;
- Conduct myself with honor and dignity.

Parents' Code of Conduct

As a parent I will:

- Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials;
- Place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win;
- Provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive experience for all.

Expected Behavior and Discipline

Maryland School for the Blind is a community, and we all play a significant role in its success. The behavior standards at The Maryland School for the Blind are designed to help meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of every student while assisting them in acquiring the necessary skills for life. Students are provided with specific instruction in social skills development and positive behavior.

MSB is committed to maintaining a positive and safe learning environment. Using the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) approach, MSB promotes positive behaviors in our students and staff by communicating clear and consistent expectations, employing positive approaches, providing direct instruction in specific skills, recognizing behavior positively, and creating a responsive system. These practices help achieve important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior that may interfere with student learning.

The behavior standards at MSB are based on three principles: "Bee Safe", "Bee Respectful," and "Bee Responsible." These apply to all members of the school community during school and at any related school activity or program on or off campus.

Within each principle, specific behavior expectations have been defined. Through these expectations children will learn to act responsibly and cooperatively and will behave in a manner that ensures the safety and well-being of all.

We recognize that children learn through mistakes, and that errors in judgment provide opportunities for growth and change. Discipline facilitates that growth and change and is



viewed as an opportunity to teach children to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, to explore ethical questions, and to help them learn better ways of working with others. This happens in an environment where standards and expectations are clearly articulated and where the consequences for transgressing such standards are defined, interpreted, and applied in a fair and consistent manner. Close communication with parents is essential in order to maintain the standards.

Through the PBIS process, teachers use many proactive strategies to communicate the expectations. Logical consequences are used when the expectations are not met. Under no circumstances is corporal punishment permitted. The behavior expectations, prevention strategies, and logical consequences listed below are applied in an age-appropriate manner. The proactive strategies and logical consequences outline a wide array of methods and choices, which are appropriately tailored to the situation, dependent on the age of the child and on a case-by-case basis.

Behavior Standards: Students are expected to:

BEE Safe

Personal Safety

- Remain on campus after being dropped off until released to a parent or guardian or transported home by bus.
- Remain in class or under supervision of a teacher unless given permission to do otherwise.
- Follow safety rules in all areas, both indoors and outdoors.
- Report unsafe situations to an adult.
- Handle privileges appropriately.
- Use de-bugging strategies to help deal with conflicts:
 - Ignore.
 - Talk friendly.
 - Talk firmly.
 - Walk away.
 - Tell an adult.

Protective Glasses in School: Students who have vision in only one eye, have vision in one eye that is better than the other, or reduced or constricted visual fields are strongly encouraged to wear glasses with polycarbonate safety lenses at all times.

Personal Health:

- Wash hands.
- Wipe mouth/face after eating.
- Cover mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Use personal hygiene products.
- Get enough sleep.
- Choose healthy foods and snacks.

BEE Respectful

Caring

- Be kind to others (no verbal, physical, or indirect/emotional teasing, intimidating, threatening, or bullying).

Citizenship

- Keep hands and feet to self.
- Have respectful conversation with students and adults.
- Use respectful body language (no demeaning gestures).
- Look in the direction of the person you are speaking with.
- Listen while others are speaking (no interrupting or talking while others are talking).
- Show good sportsmanship.

Hallways

- Defer to younger students; let them pass first.
- Walk on the right.
- Remain quiet when classes are in session.

Lunchroom

- Use indoor voices.
- Use good table manners.
- Remain seated unless obtaining more food and drink; do not get up to throw trash away until dismissed.
- Get permission before leaving the lunchroom.

- Clean up after yourself and help others to clean up tables and floors (leave the area better than you found it).
- Exit in an orderly fashion.

School Property

- Treat school property respectfully (no drawing, defacing, or tampering with walls, ceilings, lockers, desks, laptops, computers, etc.).
- Maintain neat and clean campus facilities; leave an area better than you found it.
- Report malfunctioning equipment to an adult.

Classroom Materials

- Care for library books and return them promptly.
- Use materials in the right way.
- Use materials wisely (do not be wasteful).
- Clean up after yourself and help others clean up.
- Put materials away properly in classroom, desks, cubbies, lockers, and dorms.

Others' Personal Property

- Treat the property of others respectfully (no drawing or defacing belongings of others, posters, artwork, etc.).
- Ask permission before touching other people's things.

BEE Responsible

Integrity

- Be truthful (no lying or forging signatures).
- Do your own work (no copying someone's homework, quizzes, tests, and no plagiarism).

Self-Regulation

- Wait your turn to speak (no calling out).
- Use appropriate oral language (no cursing or demeaning words).
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Use appropriate body language (no smirking, eye-rolling, desk drumming, burping, or humming).



- Stay on task.
- Honor the personal space of others.
- Leave distracting items at home (i.e., toys and electronic games/devices).
- Keep cell phones turned off and in backpacks unless given use permission by staff.

Class Preparation

- Have books and materials for class.
- Keep binders organized.
- Complete homework.

Time Management

- Be on time for school.
- Be on time for class.
- Finish work in allotted time.

In helping students develop appropriate behaviors, the staff is expected to use proactive strategies and develop logical consequences.

Proactive strategies include:

Teach the Concept

- Define the desired behavior.
- Explain rationale for rules and expectations.
- Discuss the impact of inappropriate behavior on self and others.
- Discuss possible consequences for inappropriate choices.

Logical consequences for inappropriate behavior are implemented which include:

Restitution

- Apology/make things right.
- Repair or replace the item.
- Repayment of time.
- Compensation.
- School services (i.e., clean up mess).



Instructional

- Practice appropriate behavior (i.e., rehearsal, role-play).
- Research topic.
- Written assignment (i.e., paragraph, report, letters of apology).
- Complete a problem/solution worksheet.

Required interaction:

- Student to student.
- Student to teacher.
- Parents:
 - Parent contact (i.e., phone, e-mail, or letter).
 - Parent conference.
 - Parent to accompany student during school.
- School staff.
- Assistant Principal/Principal when:
 - Behavior is a major disruption to the teaching/learning process (i.e., cheating on homework, quizzes, and tests).
 - Behavior threatens the safety of the students or staff.
 - Behavior is illegal.
 - Police are involved.

Loss or Delay of Privileges:

- Interaction with other students (i.e., time out).

Use of objects or equipment (i.e., any use of a cell phone on campus during the school day without staff permission will result in the immediate confiscation of the cell phone. The student's parent must retrieve the cell phone from the Assistant Principal/Principal.)
- Activity (i.e., field trip, assembly, guest speaker).
- The School does not use loss of recess as a consequence.

The School's behavior expectations are fundamental principles of acceptable conduct. The expectations are required in the behavior of students at school and during any school-related activity, on or off campus (i.e., field trips, school bus, residential program, sports activities, dances, parties, etc.). The School has the right to take whatever action it deems necessary, regardless of prior communication, and will address any serious infraction of school expectations on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of serious infractions include:

- Repeated infractions of school rules.
- Any action that seriously endangers the safety of others (i.e., fighting/physical assault).
- Bullying.
- Causing a major school disruption.
- Threatening to harm others.
- Verbal abuse including racial, religious, or sexual slurs, use of vulgar language/cursing.
- Inappropriate sexual activity.
- Possession of weapons or look-alike weapons on school grounds or at school activities.
- Use or possession of illegal controlled substances, intoxicants (including alcohol), or tobacco at school or school-sponsored functions.
- Theft.
- Technology use policy violations.
- Actions which bring discredit to the school.
- Leaving school grounds (eloping).

Possible disciplinary actions could include:

- The temporary removal of an object, an activity, or privilege.
- Schedule modification.
- Restriction to the classroom, bedroom, or dormitory.
- Detention.
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension.
- Referral back to Local Educational Agency (LEA).

Smoking and Use of Electric Cigarettes

All students have the right to receive an education in a smoke-free environment that encourages the development of good health habits. Smoking or vaping by students, employees, volunteers, and visitors is not permitted:

- Within the boundaries and perimeters of the MSB property; this includes buildings,

grounds, school vehicles, and sidewalks.

- Within any privately owned, commercial, or school vehicle while on campus.
- When staff have supervisory responsibility for students while off-campus on approved school activities.

In addition, smoking near any entrances or exits of the campus, including the perimeter campus sidewalks along Taylor Avenue, as well as within 50 feet of the campus perimeter, is **not allowed at any time**. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action. School guests who violate this policy after they have been informed of the requirements will lose campus use and visiting privileges.

Alcohol/Drugs/Weapons

Students are prohibited from the use, possession, sale, distribution, or involvement with any drug or alcohol, including paraphernalia incidental to the use of a drug, on the school grounds or during any school sponsored activity. Violations will result in disciplinary action.

Schools are afforded greater flexibility in the discipline of all students when the offense involves drugs or weapons. A weapon can include any firearm or explosive (e.g., firecrackers, knives, and other dangerous objects or look-alikes). School personnel may immediately remove a student from MSB and refer that student to the Local Educational Agency for an interim alternative educational setting for 45 calendar days.

Immediate disciplinary removals may occur whenever a student:

- Possesses weapons.
- Knowingly possesses controlled substances.
- Sells controlled substances.
- Solicits the sale of controlled substances.

Actionable offenses may occur anywhere on school property or at a school-sponsored function (e.g., dances, field trips, etc.). Please refer to the [Maryland Procedural Safeguards Notice](#) for more information.

Search and Seizure

Students' rights to privacy and personal property are respected and protected. However, if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses an item that violates the laws of Maryland or the policies of MSB, the student, the student's room, and/or the student's storage area may be searched by a supervisor or their designee in the presence of a third party.



Bullying and Harassment

A person is bullied when they are exposed to intentional negative actions on the part of one or more students, and when the ability to participate in, or benefit from, the school's educational programs or activities is adversely affected. Bullying often occurs repeatedly and over time.

A person is harassed when they perceive or experience discomfort with identity issues regarding race, color, national origin, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other identifying characteristics, and when the ability to participate in, or benefit from, the school's educational programs or activities is adversely affected.

A person is intimidated when they are subjected to intentional action that seriously threatens and induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority, and when the ability to participate in, or benefit from, the school's educational programs or activities is adversely affected.

Bullying Policy

Our anti-bullying policy is based on the belief that every member of the school community is equal in dignity and worth. Everyone must be allowed to learn and work in an environment that is free from bullying and harassment. Each person at The Maryland School for the Blind not only has the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect but also bears the responsibility to ensure the respectful treatment of others. Bystanders must not allow bullying to persist, and students who witness or experience bullying are expected to report bullying. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation is strictly prohibited by federal law and will not be tolerated at The Maryland School for the Blind.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behavior directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying and harassment have many similarities. There are many ways to bully, but in all cases, students who bully other students want to hurt or upset them, usually repeatedly. It is not an accident. Bullying can happen between two people or in groups while bystanders watch. Bullying behavior will not be tolerated at The Maryland School for the Blind.

Types and Examples of Bullying :

Physical Bullying

- Hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, spitting at, or beating others up.
- Damaging or stealing someone's property.



Electronic Bullying

- Posting on public electronic forums, websites, blogs, social networks, or sending an email, text message or pictures that threaten or hurt others' feelings, singling out or embarrassing someone, or spreading rumors or revealing secrets about someone.

Verbal Bullying

- Name-calling, hurtful teasing.
- Insulting, humiliating, or threatening someone.

Social Bullying

- Excluding others from "the group" or from an activity.
- Setting others up to look foolish.
- Gossiping or spreading rumors about others.
- Making sure others do not associate with someone.

Racial/Ethnic Bullying

- Treating others differently or badly because of their culture, racial or ethnic background, or the color of their skin.
- Saying negative things about someone's race, culture, ethnic background, or skin color.
- Calling someone by a racially or ethnically derogatory term.
- Telling racist jokes.

Sexual Bullying

- Touching, pinching, or grabbing someone without consent.
- Making crude comments or spreading rumors about someone's sexual behavior.
- Using derogatory language regarding someone's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
- Making sexual gestures at someone.
- Sharing nude or sexually explicit pictures or photos.

Religion-Based Bullying

- Treating others differently or badly because of their religion.
- Saying negative things about someone's religion.

Procedures for Safe Reporting of Bullying



- Students are expected to report bullying to a trusted adult or student. Confidential Anti-Bullying Report forms are available at the front office or at the office of the Director of Education.
- Remember the facts: date, place, and time.
- Follow the reporting protocol.
- The School's goal is to listen, investigate, and act so that all students feel safe and supported.

Incremental Consequences for Bullying Behavior

- Meeting with the Assistant Principal/Principal.
- Empathy awareness.
- Restorative justice.
- Loss of privilege.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

Students who believe that they are victims of bullying, harassment, or intimidation should report any such incidences promptly and may employ the [Title IX grievance procedure](#). Students may report bullying, harassment, or intimidation without fear of harmful consequences. Students, parents/guardians, close adult relatives, and/or teachers may complete a Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form. This form may be obtained from a school principal or a principal's designee. Completed forms should be given to a Principal of the school or a Principal's designee.

Religious Exercises

As a nondenominational private school, MSB does not require the reading of religious materials or the saying of prayers as devotional exercises of any student. However, no attempt will be made to prevent voluntary private prayers, the reading of religious materials, or meditation by any student when and where appropriate.

Patriotism

MSB will provide for the display of the flag of the United States of America on the school grounds. While MSB may provide for appropriate patriotic exercises, students have the right not to participate in these exercises. However, students choosing not to participate have the responsibility not to interfere with the participation of other students in such exercises.



Cell Phone Usage

The purpose of the Cell Phone Policy is to ensure that students' day and evening educational programming is not interrupted or disrupted by the receipt of or making of cell phone calls. Students may not make or receive calls, send texts, email, or access social media during the instructional day unless given staff permission.

Student cell phones must be turned off and stowed in their backpacks during school hours. During the evening hours, students will have access to their cell phones at times that do not interfere with their program. Specific times will be determined based on student age and instructional schedule as determined by the Child and Youth Care Specialists. Contact the LiFE Supervisor of the cottage where your student resides for more information.

Student Parties

MSB holds monthly birthday parties for overnight students in the residences, rather than holding multiple parties on a student-by-student basis. For example, in January each program holds one party for all of the students celebrating birthdays that month. The parties are held in the residence to avoid disruption during the instructional day. Day students, similar to non-MSB students, celebrate at home with their families.

Technology Policy

Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):

Telecommunications extend the classroom beyond the school building by providing access to information resources on local, state, national, and international electronic networks, such as the internet. For students, telecommunications use at MSB is for educational purposes, such as accessing curriculum-related information, sharing resources, and promoting innovation in learning.

Anyone who violates this policy, or uses MSB telecommunications for improper purposes, shall be subject to loss of access to MSB telecommunications and be subject to the MSB disciplinary policy.

All MSB-provided telecommunications systems, including all hardware and software components, belong to MSB. There is no right of privacy with respect to MSB's hardware, software, or internet access. Students shall be held responsible for appropriate behavior as specified in the terms and conditions below. Signing of the Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy Form verifies that students understand and will abide by the policy.

Precautions will be taken to attempt to ensure that the internet is a safe learning environment. Students will be supervised while using the internet and will be instructed in the appropriate and safe use, selection, and evaluation of information. Also, software which attempts to block access to objectionable material will be accessible on computer networks used by students as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act.

DISCLAIMER: The accuracy and quality of the information cannot be guaranteed. No warranties for telecommunications access are expressed or implied; MSB will not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties.

Terms and Conditions

Students shall:

- Communicate with others in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Maintain the privacy of an individual's personal information such as address, phone number, password(s), and respect the same privacy of others.
- Use only telecommunication accounts and passwords provided by MSB or under the guidance of a teacher at MSB (i.e., email accounts not provided by MSB, but obtained while a student here).
- Report any incident of harassment to the supervising employee.
- Comply with copyright laws and intellectual property rights of others.
- Agree to the review of communications, data, and files by MSB.
- Report violations of this Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy Statement to the supervising employee.
- Follow guidelines for the care and safety of MSB telecommunication devices.

Students shall not:

- Knowingly enter unauthorized computer networks or software to tamper with or destroy data.
- Bypass the school system's filtering server.
- Access or distribute abusive, harassing, bullying, libelous, obscene, offensive, profane, pornographic, threatening, sexually explicit, or illegal material.
- Install unauthorized software on computers.
- Use telecommunications for commercial, purchasing, or illegal purposes.
- Use telecommunications in any other manner that would violate MSB's

disciplinary policies.

- Use telecommunications devices during the school day to play games not associated with educational activities.
- Use hotspots or other forms of mobile access to bypass MSB's filters and firewalls.

Bring Your Own Device

Introduction:

Under our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) guidelines, students may bring and use their own personal electronic devices at school provided that such use is subject to these guidelines. Electronic devices include, but may not be limited to, tablets (such as the iPad), laptops, or Chromebooks. With teacher approval, students may use their devices in the classroom to access and save information from the internet and to collaborate with other students. We believe and encourage the use of personal electronic devices as it will enhance the educational experience. However, the use by students of their personal electronic devices is a privilege, not a right. A student's use is subject to teacher approval and must conform to these guidelines and the School's Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy.

Purpose:

The BYOD guidelines are designed to help students become responsible digital citizens. The use of personal electronic devices will enhance not only what MSB does in the classroom but will also give our students authentic experience to prepare them for college and career.

A student's use of personal devices is not intended to circumvent any assistive technology requirements listed in the student's IEP.

Students who do not have their own personal devices will be provided with appropriate equipment for instructional use.

Students may bring a supported personal electronic device to school and may use the device for educational purposes with teacher approval. While at school, students are required to connect to MSB's filtered Wi-Fi connection to ensure access to the most appropriate online resources. The use of personal hotspots is prohibited.

Responsibility for Devices: The personal electronic devices of the students are their sole responsibility.

- The Maryland School for the Blind assumes no responsibility for personal devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen. Personal devices may be subject to investigation in accordance with MSB policy outlined in the Parent & Student Handbook.

- Students are expected to exhibit digital responsibility and follow the MSB Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy while using technology.
- MSB will provide limited technical support only when it relates to the assistive technology aspects of the device.

Appropriate Use of Personal Devices:

- Students are required to connect to the filtered MSB Wi-Fi while on campus and are not to bypass or attempt to bypass any security.
- Use strong passwords.
- Do not share passwords.
- Keep addresses, phone numbers, and other personal information private.
- Do not connect with people you do not know personally.
- Students are expected to keep their devices secure at all times and not loan to others.
- Report any suspicious information to an MSB staff member.
- Photos and videos may be taken only when directed and authorized by the classroom teacher.
- Devices must be on silent unless otherwise directed.
- Any time any student is on campus, the use of their BYOD device is for educational purposes. Streaming of any media (videos, games, etc.) is prohibited.

Prohibited Uses: Students must comply with the MSB Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at all times.

Examples of AUP violations:

- Attempting to access or having pornographic, sexually explicit, or illegal content.
- Using or posting threatening, abusive, harassing, insulting language to another individual, or posting threats to anyone (blog, wiki, chat, email).
- Accessing or attempting to access inappropriate websites.
- Using proxy sites to circumvent the school's firewall.
- Violating fair use and copyright laws.
- Sharing of network username and password.
- Forwarding bulk emails (i.e., jokes, etc.) to other students and staff.
- Listening to non-educational music, viewing streaming video, or personal digital photos.



- Posting false information on wiki's, blogs, or social media.

Additionally:

- Devices may not be used to disrupt the educational environment, to harass, or invade the privacy of others, to violate the rights of others, or otherwise violate school rules of conduct.
- Devices may not be used to cheat or violate school conduct rules.
- Devices may not be used to take, transfer, or share any audio, video, or photographs that reveal parts of the body (ordinarily covered by clothing).

The Maryland School for the Blind Bring Your Own Device Program Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What is "Bring Your Own Device"?

A: BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) is just as it sounds. Students can bring their own portable devices such as a smartphone, tablet, laptop, or netbook. Such an approach can allow students to use their own devices and encourage a student-centered approach to learning.

Q: Will access to a personal computing device make my child a better student?

A: Portable computing programs are very effective at engaging students in the learning process. Access to a personal device gives students access to "anywhere, anytime" learning and collaborative platforms such as Google Docs.

Q: Does my child really need to bring a device to school? Is not a home computer adequate?

A: A desktop computer at home can certainly be an asset for any student. However, instruction that supports technology tools focuses on the benefits students receive from having a personal information access tool that enables anytime, anywhere learning. It is not just about having access to a computer; it is about having a computer available whenever needed to assist learning. Portable computing program parents frequently report that, even in situations where there is a desktop computer at home, students use their laptop more and in different ways than they use the desktop computer.

Q: I am concerned that my child will abuse the internet and/or be targeted by a predator.

A: While connected to the internet from school, your student must pass through MSB's firewall, which includes internet filtering, monitoring, and site blocking. Although it is not 100% foolproof, it does an excellent job of keeping the internet safe for the majority of students. MSB cannot monitor, filter, or block internet sites when the computer is

A: connected to the internet at home. MSB cannot monitor and review each student's activity, nor can it block every loophole that a creative and tech-savvy student might be able to find.

If you are concerned about your child's activity on the Internet at home and/or at school, you can purchase software such as Bark, which sends a daily email of your child's activity on the internet, including time spent at each site, email, instant messaging, words typed, sites visited, and more. Common Sense Media—www.commonsensemedia.org—is a free online resource with educational parent videos that can help open a dialog between parent and student regarding internet safety, privacy, and ethical use.

Q: How can my child's computing device connect to the internet?

A: MSB provides a wireless network to which students may connect while using their devices in the building.

Q: Are there any specifications for the type of laptop or tablet my child may bring to school?

A: Buying a computer is a personal choice. Ultimately, each person will need to choose the device that works best for their child. Generally speaking, as long as the device is able to connect to the wireless network and access the World Wide Web, it should suffice.

Q: Will the MSB instructional technology staff or IT department provide support for the devices that my student brings?

A: The school staff will work with the student to resolve minor setting problems, battery issues, or other simple solutions. If it is an internal hardware problem, or an issue due to the maker's customization of Windows or other conflicts, you will need to diagnose the problem yourself or take it back to your retailer where they will perform the service for a fee. The MSB site techs are not authorized to reload your software or repair any hardware problems.

Whose Responsibility Is It?

Q: Who pays for the technology brought to school?

A: These devices will be purchased by, and remain the property of, the family.

Q: Who is responsible for any repairs or updating to personal computing devices?

A: Students and/or their families are responsible for their personal computing devices at all times. MSB does not have the technology support staff to repair or update personal computing devices.

Q: Who is responsible for damage, loss, or theft of devices your child brings to school?

A: Families must stress the responsibilities their children have when bringing their own computing devices to school. Any devices students bring to school are their sole responsibility. MSB takes no responsibility to search for lost or stolen devices, nor is there any assumption of financial responsibility by MSB for damaged, lost, or stolen personal computing devices

Q: Will the family need to have internet access at home?

A: No. It would be helpful, however, to have some form of internet access (wired or wireless) in order for a child to make full use of school resources from home, as well as the multitude of resources available on the World Wide Web, but it is not required in order for a child to use a personal computing device at school.

Miscellaneous Information:

Q: How will a child's education differ if the family does not have an internet-connected device to bring to school?

A: No child's learning experience or academic performance will be affected because he or she does not have an Internet-connected device to bring to school. MSB is committed to reducing technology inequity so that every child has access to technology-supported learning.

Q: Will my child need to have a signed Acceptable Use Policy on file?

A: Yes. In order for The Maryland School for the Blind to supervise student use of the computer network and the internet, the Student Acceptable Use Policy must be signed by all students who want to have access to educational resources. Parents/guardians of students are also required to read and sign the agreement. Signing the document indicates that the student and parent/guardian have read and understand the expectations of the MSB. Please see **ATTACHMENT C**.

Q: When can my child use the electronic device at school?

A: Students may use their electronic devices in class as instructed by the teacher. Students may use their electronic devices during classroom instruction, lunch period, when in the Media Center, or when otherwise authorized by school personnel, provided that the devices are being used for academic purposes only.

Q: Will students be able to print documents from their personal computing devices?

A: Students will not be able to access printers at MSB from their personal computing devices. We will provide alternatives as follows: (1) printing capabilities from school computers, and/or (2) electronic delivery of documents through email or other online methods.

Health Center

Members of the Health Services staff work collaboratively with the student, family, community healthcare provider, and other team members to meet the students' health care needs as they relate to participation in school. Our goal is to provide health care that will allow students to participate safely in all of their educational activities. The Health Center is not equipped to provide primary care and does not replace your child's primary care physician.

The Health Center staff places high value on communication with families. We encourage you to call us if there are any concerns you wish to discuss.

The Health Center is staffed 24 hours a day, five days a week by nurses who are experienced in pediatrics. Nursing coverage begins when students arrive on campus on Monday morning and ends on Friday afternoon. At least one registered nurse is at MSB at all times while the students are on campus during the school week. Please note that a nurse may not be on campus for weekend events.

Nurses are frequently in contact with families to discuss health-related issues. This communication may be a phone call, an email, or a note sent home. Some notes ask that a parent/guardian return information. The Health Center appreciates a timely reply to any requested information, and the completion and return of any needed forms.

MSB's Medical Director is a member of the Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital Physician group.

Admission to School - Health Services Requests

[Health Services forms are available on the MSB website.](#)

Parents are responsible for providing the Health Center staff with current health insurance information. This information is requested when a student starts school and updates are requested annually when annual essential paperwork is completed.

An annual physical examination or wellness examination is strongly recommended for all new and returning students to make sure their health care is coordinated and monitored. We do require an annual physical form for students participating in sports and students who reside on



campus.

New Student:

- Physical, including physical activity permission.
- Immunization records including results of Hepatitis B screening or vaccination.
- Known allergies.
- Medication orders (on Maryland State School Medication Administration Authorization Forms) and medications in pharmacy labeled bottles or containers.
- Ophthalmology report.
- Diet order.
- Gastronomy feeding orders (if applicable).
- Swallow study reports (if applicable).
- Emergency 911 Transport Form.
- Current health insurance information.
- Lead Screening Form (children ages 3-5 years).
- Over-the-counter medications that are specific or as needed for a student must have a doctor's order and the label must match the order for the student.
- Clinic Permission Form.

Returning Student:

- Physical, if student is an overnight student or plans to participate in a sports team or live on campus.
- Allergies.
- Medication orders (on the Maryland State School Medication Administration Authorization Form) and medications in appropriate pharmacy labeled bottles or containers.
- Speciality clinic permission (if applicable).
- Up-to-date immunizations.
- Diet order.
- Gastronomy feeding orders (if applicable).
- Swallow study reports (if applicable and have been updated).
- Physical activity permission.

- Current health insurance information/911 emergency transportation information.
- Over-the-counter permission form.
- Medical information update as needed.

Annually, health information packets are sent to parents to assure that the Health Center has the most up-to-date health information. The Health Center asks that this information be returned as soon as possible with all appropriate forms completed entirely. Please call the Health Center with any questions or concerns. It is recommended to make a copy of these forms before sending them to school. Failure to return completed information packet may result in a delayed start to your child's school year.

Services

There are three Health Center locations that are open and staffed depending on the time of day. The main Health Center is the Blanton Health Center, located on the lower level of the Hoover Building on the Taylor Avenue side of the building and open 24 hours a day, five days a week. There are two smaller health suites open and staffed for a few hours daily. One is located in the Welsh Building and another is in the Preschool Early Learning Outreach Center Building.

Visits

The Health Center is open to students 24 hours a day for routine to emergency care. Students are self-referred or referred by parents, teachers, residential, or other staff. Nurse will see the student, take history, make an assessment, and provide assistance, therapeutic interventions, and/or comfort measures.

Staff nurses will contact parents by phone, by email, or in writing to discuss the management of their child's health concerns. They also often consult with other staff members. Nurses frequently talk to and coordinate care with the student's outside health care providers.

Specialty Clinics

Specialists in the fields of Neurology, Ophthalmology, and Nutrition are contracted by MSB to provide consultative service to the students.

The specialty clinic services listed below are offered to appropriate students if parental permission is granted.

- Neurology Services
- Ophthalmology Services
- Nutrition Services

Emergent Care Guidelines

The nurse will examine a student and decide the appropriate level of care. The child's needs could necessitate a visit to their primary care provider, to an urgent care center, or to the hospital through 911 services. The Medical Director will be contacted if needed. If the student needs to go to the hospital in an ambulance, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible. A staff person who knows the student will accompany the student to provide comfort and familiarity. MSB staff cannot give permission for medical treatment of a student, so the parent or guardian will need to go to the emergency room as soon as possible. Only the parent or legal guardian can give permission for medical care or treatment. Also, the student can only be released into the parent's or guardian's custody. MSB staff cannot take the place of the parent and are unable to provide transportation from the hospital.

After being discharged from the emergency room for anything other than a minor injury, the student needs to go home to recuperate for at least a 24-hour period. When they are ready to return to school, students must return to school via the Health Center. The paperwork from the emergency room and in the company of a parent or guardian. If there are any questions about what paperwork is necessary for the student to return to school, please call the Health Center and speak to one of the nurses.

If a student needs to go to the hospital, but not in an ambulance, a parent or guardian will be called, and the expectation is that the student will be picked up and taken to the hospital or other source of urgent care.

Medications

Registered nurses or certified medication technicians (CMT) administer medications at the school. The regular medication administration times are 8 a.m., 12 noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m., and 8 p.m. Parents/guardians are responsible for administering medications before a student comes to school. All other medications need to be given at home. On short field trips, a certified medication technician or trained staff person will administer medications prepared by one of the nurses. Each student's special medications, such as inhalers, will also be sent on field trips. EpiPens, seizure medication such as Valtoco and Diastat, etc. will also be sent on the field trips. Education how to administer these medications will be given to the certified medication technician (CMT) prior to each field trip.

Medications are locked in a medication cart that allows for double locking and this cart is locked in a closet when not being used.

Medication orders must be written on the approved medication form: [Maryland State School Medication Administration Authorization Form](#).

Our nurses may give some over the counter medications to students via medical directives that our Medical Director has authorized and the parents have given consent. Parents must give annual written permission for the medicines that can be given.

A doctor's order is **required** for any medication that is administered at the school. The Health Center staff cannot take medication orders off the directions on the bottle.

When getting a prescription filled, it is easiest to obtain a copy of the prescription before giving the prescription to the pharmacy and to send it into school, as this would serve as the doctor's orders. Multivitamins, creams, and other over-the-counter medications also require a doctor's order.

ALL medication orders need to be renewed at the beginning of each school year. All prescription and non-prescription medications must be sent to school in pharmacist-labeled bottles/boxes that match the physician's medication order exactly.

Sometimes parents/guardians make arrangements for a student to go home with someone else for the weekend. In these situations, it is the parents' responsibility to arrange for medications to be sent.

Over the Counter (OTC) Medications:

Over-the-counter medicines are given as needed. Parent permission is **REQUIRED** for students under 18 years of age and those who cannot consent for themselves. This permission must be renewed yearly.

Self-Medication:

While at school, no student may administer their own medication until they have been approved for self-medication by the Health Center. Students may not keep medications in their rooms (neither prescribed nor over the counter medications.)

A student may administer their own medications, with supervision, if self-medication is a goal in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and if the student successfully completes the self-medication course. Independent self-medication is for senior students and for students who carry emergency medicines, such as rescue inhalers or an EpiPen. Written permission is obtained from the parent/guardian and primary physician to enable students to self-administer these medications. These emergency medications must also be stored in locked closets in the dormitories when not being carried by the student.

Medications Started at Home:

All medications, even over-the-counter medications, must have a pharmacy label and a doctor's order. Any short-term medications, prescriptions, or over-the-counter medications that are started at home, and that need to be continued at school, must be brought to the Health Center when the child returns to school. The first dose of a newly prescribed medication must be started at home.



Pharmacy Policy

Parents must have their student's medications filled by their pharmacy. We ask parents to send in a 10-day supply of each medication and document the amount sent to MSB; we can provide a form. Parents are responsible for providing an ongoing supply of medication for their child. All medication must be in a properly labeled bottle and the directions must match the provider's order. Students will be sent home if they run out of essential medication.

Sick Students

Sick Student Policy:

The goal of the Sick Student Policy is to keep all students, staff, and visitors as safe, healthy, and free from exposure to communicable illnesses as possible. Students may be admitted to the Health Center for observation of an illness such as a communicable disease, temperature elevation, vomiting, or diarrhea. Parents are contacted to inform them of their child's admission to the Health Center as soon as possible.

With guidance from the Medical Director through medical directives of the Health Center, the nursing staff determines if a student has symptoms of a communicable illness.

MSB follows the American Academy of Pediatrics standards for schools as it pertains to students with communicable illnesses.

If your child becomes ill at school, the Medical Director of the Health Center, or designee, will contact the parent/guardian to immediately come to the school and pick up their child. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, the parent/guardian's designated Emergency Contact will be phoned and is expected to respond. Parents are required to contact the Education Office immediately whenever there is a change in address, telephone number, or designated contacts for the Emergency Contact Sheet. All decisions concerning the Sick Student Policy are based on the judgment of the Medical Director of the Health Center and are considered final.

If a child is sent home for medical reasons, the nurse will explain the process for returning the child to school. A student returning to school after an illness, or a communicable disease, must be examined by one of the nurses on duty when they return to school. The nurse on duty will determine whether the student may return to school.

Prolonged Absence:

If a student is absent from school for more than five days due to a prolonged illness, hospitalization, or surgery, the Health Center will need updated information in order to provide optimal care when they return to school. Before the student returns to school, the following information MUST be received by the Health Center at least 24 hours before their return:

1. A note from the physician stating that the student is ready to return to school.

2. Current activity orders or new restrictions from the physician.
3. Current medication orders from the physician.
4. A copy of the discharge summary if the student was hospitalized.

If necessary, a return to school meeting may need to be scheduled. If changes need to be made to the student's program, their team will review all temporary accommodations necessary. The teacher or Principal will schedule this meeting and notify you if the team feels this is necessary.

Use of Safety Equipment

Oxygen and AEDs:

Oxygen for use in emergency situations is located throughout the campus. There are eight automated external defibrillators (AED) on campus. They are located in the following locations: Blanton Health Center, Hoover Building, Welsh Building, vestibule between Welsh Cottage A and B, Newcomer Building, Knefely Gym and Early Learning Center. Security staff also have one that is kept in the security vehicle.

Bedbug Protocol — Positive Finding

Definition: A positive finding is defined as a confirmed bedbug sighting or a positive alert by the detection dogs.

Process: Suspected Bedbug Sighting

1. When someone finds what they believe may be a bedbug, a piece of clear tape is to be used to gently pick up the bug.
2. The taped bug is to be taken to the Health Center for identification.
3. An assessment is made as to whether or not the bug is, in fact, a bedbug.
4. The Nurse contacts the Supervisor of Housekeeping to also make an assessment.
5. If the bug is determined by both parties to be a bedbug, the Bedbug Protocol* is implemented.

Process: Alert from Detection Dogs

If the detection dog alerts to the presence of bedbugs (referred to as a "positive hit"), the Bedbug Protocol* is implemented.

Bedbug Protocol – Sighting or Positive Hit in the Environment

1. All fabric items in the area are immediately bagged, sealed, labeled, and sent to Facilities for heat treatment.

2. The area is secured and deemed off limits. No one may enter and nothing may leave the area once it is secured.
3. Sign is placed on door/s indicating "Do Not Enter."
4. In the event the area has an adjoining room, both rooms are secured and labeled "Do Not Enter."
5. If a student space, parents of users are contacted and made aware of findings, next steps, what to look for at home, and temporary relocation plan.
6. Heat treatment of space is scheduled through Facilities Office.
7. Space remains off-limits until deemed clear by detection dogs. (Dogs typically come about two weeks following treatment. If not clear at dog's first check, re-treatment may be warranted. Space remains off-limits until clear).

Bedbug Protocol – Sighting or Positive Hit on Student Clothing/Personal Belongings

1. Parent is contacted and made aware of findings, protocol, and what to look for at home.
 - a. An offer to send literature on bedbugs to parents is extended.
 - b. A suggestion is made to have home inspected.
2. The student is sent immediately to shower, with aid if necessary.
3. Clothes that the student is wearing and fabric personal belongings (backpacks, jackets, etc.) are sent to Facilities for treatment (bagged, sealed, labeled). Any clothing left in the classroom or dorm may also be bagged up and sent for treatment.
4. Student wears clothes provided by the school for duration of heat treatment.
5. Student changes back into clothes they came in with upon completion of heat treatment.
6. Until resolution to problem is reached (i.e., source is determined and treatment obtained), student showers and sends clothes to Facilities for treatment immediately upon arriving at school each day (day students) or each week (residential students). If residential student returns home at any time during the week, they must shower and send items for heat treatment again immediately upon return.
7. Parents may send in an extra set of clothes for heat treatment so student has their own clothes to change into while theirs are being treated. (Student wears school clothes on first day while both sets are being heat-treated. Student wears one set of treated clothes home. Other remains here for changing into next day.)
8. Detection dogs are scheduled through Facilities.
 - a. Areas that the student frequents at school are inspected:
 - i. If the area has a positive hit, area is treated as per steps 2–7 in previous section.
9. If the original finding was on a student upon entering school or on their personal belongings upon entering school, shower/treatment portion of protocol continues until parent produces document indicating home has been inspected and is clear.
10. Once home clearance document is produced, showering/changing/treatment protocol ends.



In case of recurrence following clearance document from home, showering/changing/treatment protocol will resume.

Latex-Free Campus

The Maryland School for the Blind is a latex-free campus. This policy is in place to protect the health and safety of our students, staff, and visitors, some of whom have known and potentially unknown latex allergies. Some latex allergies can be severe and require emergency medical attention.

As such, latex-containing items are strictly prohibited on campus. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Balloons
- Gloves (gloves provided by MSB are latex-free)
- Classroom materials or supplies that may contain latex

Transportation

School bus transportation for students who attend The Maryland School for the Blind is the **sole responsibility of the Transportation Department in the county or city in which they live**. Students who attend MSB are transported to and from school by yellow school buses or transportation vans provided, paid for, and operated by the county or city in which they live. For example, students living in Baltimore County are transported by Baltimore County school buses. These school buses are owned, operated, and staffed by the Baltimore County Public School System. Several counties and Baltimore City contract with local bus companies. These companies are owned, operated, and staffed privately by each individual company. However, the same standards, policies, and safe practices still apply.

Transportation is arranged with the highest regard for student safety. If you have any questions regarding transportation for your child, please contact the Transportation Director or Supervisor in the county or city in which you live, the bus company (if applicable), and/or The Maryland School for the Blind's Transportation Coordinator. For the phone number for your local school system, please see [ATTACHMENT F](#).

Any transportation changes requested to the counties/city may take five to ten business days to take effect. Therefore, parents/guardians need to notify the school of any changes as soon as possible. **Change of address should be made through the Student Services Coordinator at extension 1261.** While changes are pending, parents may be required to transport their child to/from school. Some changes may require an IEP meeting or an IEP amendment before processing begins.

Several counties transport students to MSB on a daily basis. Day students are scheduled to arrive by school bus between 7:50 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Day students depart from school at 3:15 p.m. Monday – Thursday and 12:30 p.m. on Friday.

Students who attend the **Early Learning Program** may attend school on a half-day schedule. Students who attend the **morning session** are scheduled to arrive at school between 7:50 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. and depart from school at 11:30 a.m. Students who attend the **afternoon session** arrive at 12:15 p.m. and leave between at 3:05 p.m. Parents/guardians of Early Learning students who **routinely** transport their child to/from school should do so at the **Preschool Early Learning Outreach Center school building**.

Parents/guardians who **routinely** transport their child to school in the morning should drop them off between 7:50 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. at the **Welsh Building, or the Hoover Building**.

In the afternoon, parents/guardians who routinely pick up their child from school at 3:15 p.m. on Monday–Thursday and 12:30 p.m. on Friday from the Welsh, Hoover, or Early Learning Building should pick him/her up at the usual time.

Parents who plan to pick up their child at the end of the school day on a **non-routine** basis **must notify** the Education Office (extension 1218) in advance (**before 2:45 p.m.**) so we do not hold up the school buses while trying to confirm the status.

Parents and guardians who routinely provide transportation to and from school, or to and from a bus stop location, may be eligible for reimbursement for their travel expenses. Application for reimbursement must be completed and approved in advance through the Transportation Department in the county/city in which you live.

Parents need to have their child ready and waiting for the school bus **five minutes** before their designated pick-up time. If the school bus arrives early at your home or bus stop location, the bus driver will wait until the designated arrival time. If the student is not present at that time, the bus driver will wait approximately one to two minutes (depending on your county/city's policy). **Please note that the bus driver and/or the bus attendant are not allowed to leave the school bus to knock on your door. They are also not allowed to blow the horn to signal that they have arrived.**

If a child misses the bus to school, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to transport them to school.

Bus drivers are required to drop students off (at home or at a bus stop) where a responsible person is present. If a responsible person is not present, the county/city will contact the school and request that they locate a parent or neighbor who will receive the student in a timely manner.

If the school is unable to locate a responsible person, he or she may be referred to the Department of Social Services. This is a last resort when all other options have been exhausted.

Special transportation arrangements may be made with your transporting county if advance notice and approval are obtained. These requests are required to be made by the School to the Transportation Director and/or Supervisor in the county or city in which you live. Requests for your child to be picked up or dropped off in a different county/city in which you do not reside will not be approved. The county/city in which you live is obligated to only provide school bus transportation to/from any legitimate address within your county/city.

A decision to suspend transportation for a student is made by the county or city responsible for transporting the child. The Maryland School for the Blind does not suspend students from the school bus.

Students who have developed a contagious illness while in school **cannot ride** the bus home. In these circumstances, a parent or guardian is required to pick up their child from school.

The Maryland School for the Blind requests that parents put their child's name on their suitcases and other belongings. This will help to ensure that their belongings will be sent home on the appropriate school bus. It is also very important that your child's clothing and other personal items be identified with their name in order to prevent loss.

Please retain a copy of the current school calendar for your reference. Parents and guardians will be notified through "Infinite Campus" of non-routine transportation dates/times, holiday schedules, and early dismissals.

Students Who Use a Wheelchair

When traveling in a motor vehicle it is generally safest for wheelchair-using passengers to transfer to a vehicle seat and use the vehicle seatbelt system or a child safety seat that complies with federal safety standards whenever possible. The wheelchair should then be secured to the vehicle. If transferring is not manageable and/or safe, it is very important to secure the wheelchair and its passenger on the school bus in a forward-facing position using wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint system (WTORS).

Each wheelchair requires four tie-downs to secure the wheelchair to the vehicle. The majority of wheelchairs have transit brackets where these tie-downs must be secured. Each wheelchair-using passenger needs a seatbelt system with lap belt and diagonal shoulder belt (similar to the seatbelt systems in personal vehicles). The lap belt should be positioned low across the front of the hips, not high over the abdomen. The diagonal shoulder belt should comfortably cross over the shoulder and the center of the chest and should connect to the lap belt at the hip of the wheelchair passenger. The shoulder belt should be anchored above and behind the top of the wheelchair using passenger's shoulder so that the belt is in contact with the shoulder and chest while traveling.

Positioning belts or vests attached to the wheelchair are for positioning only and are not intended to secure the wheelchair passenger in their wheelchair safely in a crash. All wheelchair-using passengers need to be secured with the occupant restraint system intended for a wheelchair.

The most current national school bus safety standards and research suggest that wheelchair trays should not be in position during transport due to the possibility of abdominal injury in the event of a sudden stop or crash. Wheelchair trays must be removed from wheelchairs, and they must be properly secured in the school bus so that they do not pose a risk of injury to others in the event of a crash or sudden stop.

Maryland's Child Passenger Safety Law

Effective October 1, 2012 Maryland's Child Passenger Safety Law was changed to reflect that all children under 8 years of age **must** ride in an approved child safety seat or booster seat in a vehicle unless the child is 4 feet 9 inches or taller. This does not apply to all children who ride yellow school buses to and from school.

However, MSB does routinely request that small children be secured in a federally approved car seat, booster seat, or safety vest with pelvic/crotch straps when transported on a school bus. Older and larger students may also need to be secured in safety vests in order to prompt them to remain safely in their seat.

MSB may request or will provide a child safety seat or booster seat in accordance with age, height, and weight requirements for school-sponsored off campus travel.

Partners for Success

The Parent Coordinator at MSB helps families of students that attend the school and families of students that are blind or low vision that attend Maryland public schools by:

- Increasing parental involvement in the special education decision-making process.
- Providing information in resolving concerns and making informed decisions regarding their child's education.
- Increasing collaborative relationships within the school system through information and training.
- Providing resources for the families to gain information on their child's disability.
- Empowering parents through experience and resources to help them navigate through their child's special education process.

For more information about The Maryland School for the Blind and resources for your child,

contact the Parent Coordinator, at 410.444.5000. ext. 1489

Attachment A

Staff Directory - Instructional

Joshua Irzyk, Ed.D. - Director Of Education
joshuai@mdschblind.org • 410.444.5000 ext. 1410

Early Learning Coordinator/Principal Kate Borg kateb@mdschblind.org 410.444.5000 ext. 1378	Welsh Building Principal Carol Seckington carols@mdschblind.org 410.444.5000 ext. 1246/1712
	Assistant Principal TBD TBD 410.444.5000 ext. 1448
Hoover Building Principal Nicholas Pagani nicholasp@mdschblind.org 410.444.5000 ext. 1226	Newcomer Hall and Case Hall Principal Heather Saran heathers@mdschblind.org 410.444.5000 ext. 1453
Assistant Principal Cathy Dunnigan cathyd@mdschblind.org 410.444.5000 ext. 1505	Assistant Principal Serena Garcia, EdD serenag@mdschblind.org 410.444.50000 ext. 1448



Intensive Needs Classrooms (Welsh)

Coordinator
LB Bender

lbender@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1254

Attachment B
Staff Directory
LiFE Program (formerly Residential)

Maureen Bisesi - Director

maureenb@mdschblind.org • 410.444.5000 ext. 1714

Kathleen Johnston - LiFE Program Coordinator

kathleenj@mdschblind.org • 410.444.5000 ext. 1414

Night Care Supervisor

Lakeesha Beverly
lakeeshab@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1741

Bledsoe Dorm Manager

Bridgett Smith
bridgetts@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1376

Welsh Cottage A & B Dorm Manager

Katrice Gordon
katriceg@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1660

Hoover Blue/Orange Dorm Manager

Tammy Davis
tammyd@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1450

Hoover Yellow/Green Dorm Supervisor

Quanisha Saunders
quanishas@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 ext. 1530

Home Living/Materials Group

Kelly Bingley
kellyb@mdschblind.org
410.444.5000 Ext 1434

Bledsoe Dorm Manager	
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Latisha Brodie

latishad@mdschblind.org

410.444.5000 ext. 1532

Attachment C

Student Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

1. I understand that my cell phone must stay off and stowed (backpack or locker) during the school day.
2. I understand that I may use my cell phone after 3:15 p.m. only in designated areas and during times that do not interfere with my programs.
3. I understand that my cell phone cannot be used after bedtime.
4. I will not use any electronic device while walking.
5. I will use appropriate language (no profanity, bullying, or harassing) when using electronic devices.
6. I will use electronic devices for instructional purposes only.
7. I will not change, delete, or damage materials that belong to others.
8. I will not use electronic devices to create, access, download, or print material that shows obscenity, cursing, use of weapons, or violence.
9. I will not share passwords and usernames.
10. I understand that MSB monitors my use of electronic devices and that my privilege for using the devices can be taken away if I do not follow the rules stated above.



Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Attachment D Campus Map



Attachment F

Local Transportation Telephone Numbers

Alleghany County • 301.729.3773	Anne Arundel County • 410.222.2910 or 410.222.2925
Baltimore City • 410.396.7440	Baltimore County • 443.809.4321
Calvert County • 443.550.8786 or 443.550.8777	Caroline County • 410.479.1460
Carroll County • 410.751.3229	Cecil County • 410.287.4656
Charles County • 301.934.7262	Dorchester County • 410.221.1111
Frederick County • 301.644.5366	Garrett County • 301.334.8907
Harford County • 410.638.4092	Howard County • 410.313.6732
Kent County • 410.778.2141 or 410.778.7117	Montgomery County • 301.840.8130
Prince George's County • 301.952.6570	Queen Anne's County • 410.758.2403
St. Mary's County • 301.475.4256	Somerset County • 410.621.6227
Talbot County • 410.822.9535	Washington County • 301.766.2902
Washington, D.C. • 202.724.8600	Wicomico County • 410.677.4499
Worcester County • 410.632.5000	