

***Washington Elementary***  
***STUDENT & PARENT***  
***HANDBOOK***  
***2021 – 2022***

## Table of Contents

<u>Topics:</u>	<u>Page Number:</u>
Academic Climate	3
Asbestos	4
Attendance	4
Bus Regulations	5
Care of School Property	5
Change of Legal Name	6
Child Abuse	6
Class Schedules	6
Complaints and Grievances	6
Discipline	7
Dress Code	8
Dual Enrollment	8
Electronic Devices	8
Equal Education Opportunities	8
Expulsion	9
Extended Learning Program	9
Fees	10
Emergency Drills	10
Free/Reduced Lunch	10
Hatch Amendment	11
Harassment and Hazing	11 & 12
Health Information/Illness Injury	12 & 13
Lost and Found	13
Medication	14
Open Enrollment	15
School Counseling Services	16
Searches	16
Student Records	17
Substance Abuse	19
Use of Building	19
Visitors	20
Weapons Policy	20
Withdrawal from School	20

# Washington Elementary

615 5th Ave SW

Mt. Vernon, Iowa 52314

319-895-6251

Principal: Kate Stanton

Email: [kstanton@mvcsd.org](mailto:kstanton@mvcsd.org)

- District website: [www.mvcsd.org](http://www.mvcsd.org)  
First Day of School: August 23, 2021  
Last Day of School: May 25, 2022
- Phone numbers:
  - School: (319) 895-6251
  - Counseling office (Nicole Elliott, Counselor): (319) 895-6251 ext. 2011
  - School nurse (Jenna Wear, Nurse): (319) 895-6251 ext: 2003

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Mount Vernon Community School District! Excellence in Academics, Arts and Athletics is our trademark, and we are proud of our tradition of excellence in all these areas. The Mount Vernon Community School District is a comprehensive school district that exists to serve its students, the community, the state, and our nation. Our district offers a varied instructional program serving a wide spectrum of student needs and abilities. Individual students will have plans designed to meet their learning, social, and emotional needs.

This handbook is a collaborative guide for students, parents, and the Washington Elementary staff. Its purpose is to promote a common understanding of the policies and procedures for Washington Elementary.

## ACADEMIC CLIMATE

Washington Elementary is a school focused on both academic achievement as well as social emotional learning. Washington Elementary offers a tiered system of learning throughout our building. We offer high quality instruction in the classroom as well as interventions for those students who need it. Students receive intervention through the structure of the Extended Learning Program as well as through Mustang Minutes, classroom intervention and students being supported by our intervention teacher. Washington Elementary uses the Journeys reading series, Envisions math series and a variety of science kits. Social studies teaching is based on the new Iowa State Standards and taught through supplement resources. We offer conferences two times per year. During conferences you will meet with your child's classroom teacher and be provided feedback regarding your child's academic growth as well her his/her social emotional well-being.

## ASBESTOS

School personnel are sensitive to the potential danger associated with the presence of asbestos within our school buildings. All district buildings are inspected on a regular basis. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires all students, staff, and parents be informed of the presence of asbestos in our schools and what steps have been taken to eliminate any danger to humans.

A record of periodic inspections, a diagram of the locations of asbestos-containing materials, and a copy of relevant EPA regulations are available in each school's main office and the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES

### Absences

Regular school attendance is one of the most important aspects of school success. Research confirms regular attendance enhances student achievement and learning. The following attendance procedures are designed to promote regular school attendance for each class:

- Absences must be verified by a phone call from a parent or guardian within 48 hours of the date of the absence. It is best to phone the school (319-895-6251) on the same day of the absence.
- School officials will determine whether a reported absence will be recorded as *excused* or *unexcused*.

### **Excessive Absences:**

- After 5 absences per trimester, excused or unexcused, a letter will be sent to the student's parents/guardians reminding about the attendance policy.
- After 7 absences per trimester, excused or unexcused, a phone call will be made to the student's parents/guardians regarding attendance.
- After 10 absences per trimester, excused or unexcused, an administrator will address the issue through a conference with the student and his/her parents/guardians. Hospitalization or extended illness under doctor's care will be considered an exception to this conferencing requirement.

## **BUS REGULATIONS**

Students are responsible to the bus driver while on the vehicle, loading, unloading, or leaving the vehicle. The driver has the authority to discipline students who do not satisfactorily follow all bus regulations. The driver may also notify the school principal of inappropriate student behavior. The driver, sponsors, and chaperones are to follow all school district policies, rules, and regulations for student violations, and the good conduct policy is in effect.

Students riding in school district vehicles will adhere to the rules listed below:

- Be at the designated loading location before the scheduled arrival time.
- Wait for the vehicle to come to a complete stop before entering or exiting.
- Exit buses using the front door except in emergencies as directed.
- Depart only at your designated location unless written permission to get off at an alternative location is given to the driver.
- Stay at least ten (10) feet away from the front of the vehicle when walking in front of the vehicle to cross a roadway. Exit the bus, look in both directions, and wait for the driver's signal before starting across the roadway.
- Do not extend arms, heads, or personal items out of the vehicle's windows.
- Do not throw any object inside or outside the vehicle.
- Obtain permission of driver before opening windows.
- Sit in an assigned seat if directed to do so by the driver.
- Keep feet on floor of vehicle and off the seats.
- Avoid using an excessively loud voice while riding.
- Avoid roughhousing, crowding, or pushing while riding, entering, or exiting.
- Use waste containers on vehicles to dispose of all trash.
- Keep aisles of buses clear at all times.
- Assist younger riders in following all bus regulations.
- The good conduct policy is in effect and will be enforced.
- Remain seated while on bus.

## **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The school building and grounds reflect our pride in the Mount Vernon community. Every student is encouraged to assist our staff in maintaining a neat, clean school environment.

Students are not allowed to mark walls, lockers, or desks. Defacing, abusing, or destruction of school property or equipment will result in disciplinary action. Students will be charged for repair or replacement costs incurred by the school.

## **CHANGE OF LEGAL STATUS**

If a student's legal status (i.e. name change, custodial care change) should change during the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school office in order to keep current, accurate information on each of our students.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

It is the policy of the Mount Vernon Schools that any employee who has reason to believe that a student has been abused, as defined by law, must report to the Department of Human Services. Legal reference: Chapter 35A, the Code of Iowa. The level one investigator for suspected abuse by a district employee is our high school assistant principal.

## **CLASS SCHEDULES**

At Washington Elementary students are members of a self-contained grade level classroom. Your child's classroom teacher will provide a daily schedule at the beginning of the year. All students K-4th grade also participate in the following specials: PE, Music, Art, Spanish, Guidance and Library.

## **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The goal of the District is to resolve all parent complaints at the appropriate level and with the appropriate person. Parents are encouraged to address problems with the classroom teacher, resolution before addressing the issue with administration. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this first level, the parent should discuss the matter with school administration. If the complaint is still unresolved, the parent may discuss the problem with the superintendent.

## Discipline Guidelines

The discipline guidelines for the Mount Vernon Community School District are rooted in the following principles of respect . . .

Respect for Learning  
Respect for Staff  
Respect for the School  
Respect for Self  
Respect for Others

While not all encompassing, the discipline guidelines provided below provide a framework of expectations for Mount Vernon Community School District students while at school, while participating in or attending school events, while on school grounds, and while representing the school district in any function outside of the Mount Vernon community. Any behavior the District deems to be prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the District may also be addressed through disciplinary consequences.

The school reserves and retains the right to modify, eliminate, or establish school district policies, rules, and regulations as circumstances warrant, including those contained in this handbook. Parents with questions or concerns about the current enforcement of the policies, rules, and regulations should contact the elementary principal.

At Washington Elementary we use the program of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a multi-tiered system approach to the areas of social, emotional and academic supports. PBIS improves social, emotional and academic outcomes for all students. Part of the structure of PBIS is defining appropriate behaviors for our students. We have worked as a school to define expected behaviors and those that are unexpected or not allowed. These behaviors are called Major and Minor behaviors. If your student demonstrates a major or minor behavior, they will receive a major or minor office referral. Office referrals represent a way to document your child's unexpected behavior and allow for communication between home and school. Click on the link to see a list of major and minor behaviors. [Major and Minor Behaviors](#).

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY**

Wearing appropriate shoes for PE and recess are important for the safety of your child. We also suggest wearing coats outside at any temperature below 60 degrees. We will go outside for recess until it is below 0 degrees wind chill. Appropriate cold weather clothing is essential for your child. If you are in need of appropriate clothing, please call our school nurse.

Student dress at school should show respect for themselves and others within the educational environment. Students who dress in a manner that causes a disruption to the educational environment will be asked to remove, change, or cover up the objectionable attire. Students who fail to comply with these requests will be referred to administration.

Ultimately, appropriate clothing to be worn at school is left up to administrative discretion. Whether or not hats may be worn in the classroom is left up to the discretion of the individual teacher.

## **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Home school or home school assistance students enrolled in classes or who participate in school activities in the district are subject to the same policies, rules, and regulations as other students. Home school or home school assistance program students are subject to the same disciplinary consequences as other students. Dual enrolled students who are interested in participating in school activities or enrolling in courses taught at the high school should contact the principal.

## **USE ELECTRONIC DEVICES DURING SCHOOL DAY**

Students are allowed to have electronic devices at school. We do ask all students put electronic devices in backpacks or on his/her teacher's desk during the school day.

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

The Mount Vernon Community School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status (for programs), socioeconomic status (for programs), disability, religion, and creed. Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services with the district who feel that they have experienced discrimination are encouraged to contact Matt Thede, Equity Coordinator, Mount Vernon Community High School, 731 Palisades Road SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314, telephone: 319-895-8843 x4005, where our district has a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of Civil Rights – Region VII, US Department of Education,; 310 W. Wisconsin Ave.; Suite 800; Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203-2292 (phone: 414-291-1111) or to the Iowa Department of Education; Grimes State Office Building; Des Moines, Iowa, 50319-0146 (phone: 515-281-5294).



## **EXPULSION**

The Mount Vernon Board of Education has the sole authority to expel any student for a violation of rules or regulations approved by the Board, or when the student's presence is considered to be detrimental to other students within the educational setting. The building principal will make a written recommendation for expulsion to the Board. The principal will have the authority to suspend the student from attending school until such time as a special meeting of the Board can be convened. This hearing will be held within a reasonable time, no later than five (5) days following the decision to suspend the student pending a hearing date. The student will be afforded an opportunity for an alternative education so that they may continue to complete schoolwork while they are awaiting a hearing date. If it is impossible to schedule the hearing within five days, the student may be granted provisional re-admittance to classes until a hearing date is scheduled.

The superintendent or designee will notify the student, and parents/guardians of the date, time, and location for the hearing with the Board. This notice will be oral and in writing, and will include a summary of the specific reason(s) for the recommendation of expulsion. In addition, the student and parents/guardians will be made aware of their right to be represented by legal counsel; to present a defense against the charges; and to provide oral testimony, written affidavits, or witnesses on the student's behalf. All written statements to be considered at the hearing will be available at the hearing and accessible for examination by the student, parents/guardians, or representative of the student.

If a student is expelled by the Board, the student may only be readmitted by the Board. The decision to expel may be appealed in writing by the student, parents/guardians, or their legal representative to the State Board of Education.

## **EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAM (ELP)**

Washington Elementary's Extended Learning Program is for students who demonstrate in a variety of ways they need extended or enriched programming in any subject area. Students are nominated by teachers when their aptitude, creativity or achievement determines this need. In the ELP Learning Lab, students may work in small enrichment groups, work with the teacher on an extension of a concept or unit, or receive individualized alternate instruction in a certain area. The program is flexible and allows for students to cycle in and out based on their individual needs. ELP is designed to enrich the curriculum and subject matter in which a child has already demonstrated mastery. Those mastered skills are used to explore deeper thinking, take concepts further, and stretch wings.

## **FEES**

The Mount Vernon Board of Education recognizes that school fees and charges are necessary and appropriate for students and their families. However, certain students and their families may not financially be able to pay these authorized school fees and charges. The Mount Vernon Community School District will consider granting full, partial, or temporary waivers of school fees and charges depending upon the circumstances and the student's or parent's/guardian's ability to meet the financial criteria as outlined below.

### **Waivers:**

1. Full waivers – Full waivers of fees charged by the school district will be granted if the parents/guardians meet the financial eligibility criteria for free school lunch under the Child Nutrition program, Family Investment program, Supplemental Security Income guidelines, or Transportation Assistance through open enrollment.
2. Partial waivers – Partial waivers of fees charged by the school district will be granted if the parents/guardians meet the financial eligibility for reduced price school lunch under the Child Nutrition program. A partial waiver will be based on the same percentage as the reduced price meals.
3. Temporary waivers – Temporary waivers of fees charged by the school district may be granted in the event that the student's parents/guardians are facing a financial difficulty. Applications for temporary waivers are available throughout the school year

Application forms for these waivers are available in the office. Parents/guardians or students may apply at any time. All waiver applications must be renewed annually so parents/guardians or students must re-apply each school year by completing a new application form. The school district will treat the information on waiver application forms and the application process in accordance with student confidentiality and access provisions.

All appeals for denials of applications for waivers should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

## **FIRE, SEVERE WEATHER, AND INTRUDER DRILLS**

Fire, weather alerts, and outside intruders are considered serious matters. Students and staff will participate in two fire drills, two severe weather drills, and one intruder drill each semester to prepare for these events.

## **FREE /REDUCED LUNCH**

The Mount Vernon Community School District serves nutritious meals. Application forms for free/reduced lunch are available in the office and on the district website. This form must be completed by the student's parent/guardian and returned to the office. All information recorded on this application form is confidential.

## **HATCH AMENDMENT**

No student will be required, as part of any applicable program, to submit to a survey or evaluation that reveals information concerning political affiliations; mental or psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family; sex behavior attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other family members; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships; or income (other than that required to determine eligibility for a program) without prior consent of the parent/guardian.

## **HARASSMENT OR HAZING**

District policies protect staff and students from harassment under three circumstances:

- student to student harassment
- student to staff harassment
- staff to student harassment

Forms of harassment may include harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, physical appearance, political party, or sexual orientation. Harassment includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble persons.

Student consequences for alleged harassment will be conducted in accordance with due process procedures. If a harassment complaint is founded, common student disciplinary consequences may include:

- Verbal warning plus parental notification  
In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to legal and/or counseling authorities
- Expulsion from school

Staff consequences for alleged harassment will be conducted in accordance with due process procedures and the district's contractual agreement. If a harassment complaint is founded, common staff consequences may include:

- Temporary suspension from teaching duties
- Required successful completion of remedial action plan
- Documentation of harassment in employee's personnel file
- Recommendation for termination of employment

## **HARASSMENT REPORTING PROCEDURES**

A student or staff member who feels that they have been harassed at school should:

1. Communicate directly to the harasser they expect the harassing behavior(s) to stop. If the victim of harassment is uncomfortable confronting the harasser alone, the victim should ask a teacher, counselor, or the principal for assistance.
2. If the harassment continues after step #1, give a written record of the harassment incident to a staff member, counselor, or the principal. This documentation must include the following information:
  - What, where, and when the harassment incident happened
  - The name of the person alleged to have harassed someone
  - The names of any witnesses to the incident
  - What the harasser said and did during this incident and afterwards
  - What the alleged victim said and did at the time of the harassment and afterwards
  - How the harasser responded to the words or actions
  - How the student felt during and after the harassment incident

## **HEALTH FORMS AND IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATES**

At Washington Elementary it is required we have a physical on file for your child when you start Preschool and Kindergarten. We also require a dental screening, vision screening and lead screening for kindergarten students. All of these screenings can be done by your pediatrician or family doctor. If you have questions regarding the required health forms, please contact the school nurse at 319-895-6251.

Students enrolling for the first time in the district must also provide a current certificate of immunization. Exemptions from this immunization requirement are allowed by the state of Iowa for medical or religious reasons. Please consult the school nurse for more information about immunization exemptions or for any immunization questions.

## **HEALTH CONDITIONS**

The school nurse can provide nursing services for those students with health conditions and need medication and/or treatments during the school day. This can include asthma treatments, diabetes management, dressing changes, severe allergy management, medication administration, and other care as ordered by a doctor. Please consult the nurse for assistance with any health care needs for either a short or long term condition.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

The MVCSD recognizes good health supports education. Our school health program strives to promote healthy habits, provide preventative health education, care for ill and injured students, and provide nursing services for those students needing medication and/or treatments during the school day. The school nurse also serves as a resource for any health-related information for students, families, classrooms, and the community.

Our school nurse, Jenna Wear, is available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. She can be contacted at: (319) 895-6251 or by email: [jwear@mvcasd.org](mailto:jwear@mvcasd.org).

## **ILLNESS AND INJURY**

Students who become ill or injured during the school day are to come to the office to be assessed by the school nurse. If it is determined the student is too sick to stay in school, a parent/guardian will be contacted so the student can be picked up from school.

The school will contact emergency medical personnel when situations warrant. School district employees will administer emergency or minor first aid until emergency medical personnel arrive. Serious injuries will be reported to the office and an accident report will be filed.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

A lost and found box is located in the office. Students who find items should bring take them to the lost and found area. Students or parents who have lost items may check the lost and found at any time for their items. All unclaimed items will be donated.

## MEDICATION

Students are not allowed to carry medication at school, including over-the-counter medication such as ibuprofen or Tylenol. Exceptions to this include asthma inhalers or Epi-Pens with parent permission on a *Self-Medication at School* Form.

Over-the-counter medication is available in the school nurse office. Parents can provide permission for the school to administer over-the-counter medications during the registration process. Students without signed parental permission will not be given medication until permission is given.

If your child requires prescription medication during the school day, the following guidelines apply:

- The medicine must be prescribed by a licensed medical provider or dentist.
- A *Medication at School* form is to be completed and signed by a parent/guardian and will be kept on file in the school nurse office. Forms are available in the office and online through the district website.
- The medication must be brought to school in its original container and will be labeled with the following information (pharmacies will provide an extra medication bottle labeled with the prescription information to be kept at school):
  1. Name of student
  2. Name of medication
  3. Directions for use
  4. Name of physician or dentist
  5. Name and address of pharmacy
  6. Date of prescription
- The medication, while at school, will be in a locked drawer or cabinet. When required, refrigeration will be provided.
- Students who use inhalers and/or Epi-pens for severe allergies are allowed to either carry them at school or have them kept in the school nurse office. A *Self-Medication at School* form must be completed and signed by the student's parent/guardian and kept on file in the school nurse office. Forms are available in the office and online through the district website.
- Access to all medications will be under the authority of the school nurse/office personnel.
- A written record will be kept for all medications dispensed at school. This record will include: the student's name, the name of the medication, the amount of medication given, and the time it was dispensed. The person who dispenses the medication will initial the medication list form.
- All medication that is not dispensed by the end of the school year will be returned the student's parents/guardians or destroyed. No medication will be stored at school through the summer months. If the medication is destroyed, a notation will be made on the student's health record.

## OPEN ENROLLMENT

Parents who wish to transfer students from other school districts to the Mount Vernon Community School District or who wish to transfer out of our school district to another district under open enrollment provisions may pick up the appropriate forms in the superintendent's office. These forms must be completed and returned to the superintendent's office by March 1<sup>st</sup> of the year preceding the requested transfer. If your student will be a kindergartener in the fall, the open enrollment form is due by September 1<sup>st</sup> of their kindergarten year.

Under certain conditions, the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline may be waived for good cause. For the purposes of open enrollment, good cause means that a change in the status of the student or the student's resident district has occurred. A change in the status of the student may include:

- Change in family residence
- Change in the state of residence
- Change in parent's/guardian's marital status
- A guardianship proceeding
- Placement in foster care or adoption
- Participation in a foreign exchange program
- Participation in substance abuse or mental health treatment program

A change in the status of the resident district may include:

- Failure of negotiation for whole-grade sharing agreement
- Reorganization of the school district
- A dissolution agreement
- Rejection of the current whole-grade agreement

In all good cause cases under resident district status changes, the parent/guardian must file within 45 days of the first Board action or within 30 days of the certification of the election, whichever is applicable.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

School counseling services are available to all students. The school counselor is available to help students with personal, social, academic, and career interests. The school counselor at Washington Elementary teaches Guidance lessons to all students one time per week during specials. The classroom guidance lessons focus on many different topics. You will receive a monthly letter from the counselor outlining the next month's guidance lessons. Individual and group meetings also take place with the counselor through the year for a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons your child might be referred to see our school counselor are:

- Friendship struggles
- Classroom struggles
- Patterns of unexpected behaviors
- Support for a variety of personal reasons
- Support in building self confidence
- Social Skill support
- Debriefing and talking through traumatic life events
- Needing a trusted adult to talk to during the day

## **SEARCHES**

School officials reserve the right to search an individual's personal belongings, and anything located on school grounds, including but not limited to personal electronic devices, whenever the search is reasonably necessary to maintain order, discipline, health or safety. All such searches shall be based upon reasonable individualized suspicion the individual has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Searches shall be conducted when school officials are in possession of concrete, objective and clearly expressed facts which may be based upon reliable information or personal observation. All searches shall be conducted in the most minimally intrusive manner possible, shall be limited to the objectives of the search and not be excessively intrusive in the light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.



## STUDENT RECORDS

The Mount Vernon Community School District will release school information in accordance with the Iowa Code 622.10. The custodian of these records is the Board secretary and building principal. Questions regarding student records should be directed to the principal's office. These records include information about the student and the student's education and may include but are not limited to the following types of records:

- identification data
- attendance data
- records of achievement
- family background information
- aptitude assessments
- achievement tests
- educational and vocational plans
- honors and school activities
- discipline data
- objective counselor/staff ratings and observations
- outside agency reports

The Board recognizes the importance of maintaining records and preserving their confidentiality. Student records containing personally identifiable information will be handled confidentially at the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.

Directory-type information from a student's educational records may be released without the consent of the parents. Parents will have an opportunity at the beginning of the school year to request that directory-type information remain confidential. Parents can make this request by completing and signing a confidentiality request form in the office. Directory-type information includes, but is not limited to:

- student's name and address
- student's home telephone number
- student's date and place of birth
- student's dates of school attendance
- name of previous schools and/or institutions attended

Student records are periodically reviewed and outdated information is removed. These record reviews will occur whenever a student moves from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school, or transfers from our district. Student records that are not of permanent importance are destroyed within three (3) years of the last date of school attendance.

Parents/guardians will have access to the student's records during the regular business hours of the school district.

A student record may contain information on more than one student. Parents/guardians have the right to access the information related to their student or to be informed of the information.

Parents/guardians have the right to access the student's records upon request without unnecessary delay and in no instance, more than forty-five (45) days after the initial request for a records review has been made. Parents/guardians will have the right to access the student's records prior to an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meeting or hearing.

Upon the request of parents/guardians, the school district will provide an explanation and interpretation of the student record and a list or types and locations of student records collected, maintained, or used.

If the parents/guardians believes the information contained within the student records is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of the student any of these parties may request that the school district amend the student records. If the school district agrees to make the amendment, the district will make the amendment and inform the parents/guardians or eligible student of this decision in writing. If the school district refuses to make the requested amendment, the district will inform the parents/guardians or the eligible student of their right to a hearing. If the parent's/guardian's amendment is further denied, any of these parties will have the opportunity to place an explanatory letter inside the student record commenting on the school district's decision and setting forth the reasoning for disagreeing with the school district. Additions to the student's record will become a part of the student's educational records and will be maintained as all other school records. If the school district discloses the student's school records, this letter of explanation by parents/guardians will also be disclosed.

Student records may be disclosed in limited circumstances without parent's/guardian's or eligible student's written permission. This disclosure is made on the condition that the student record information will not be shared with a third party without written permission of the parents/guardians or eligible student. This type of limited disclosure may be made to the following individuals or under the circumstance listed below:

- to school officials within the school district whom the superintendent has determined have a legitimate educational interest;
- to school officials from another school district in which the student wishes to enroll, provided the other district notifies the parents/guardians the records are being sent and that the parents/guardians have an opportunity to receive a copy of the records and to challenge the contents of the records;
- to the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state/local educational authorities;
- in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received if this information is necessary;
- to organizations conducting educational studies and the study does not release personally identifiable information;
- to accrediting organizations;

- to parents/guardians of a dependent student as defined in the Internal Revenue Code;
- to comply with a court order or judicially issued subpoena, only if the district makes reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance;
- in connection with a health or safety emergency or as directory information.

The superintendent will maintain a list of the individuals and their positions who are authorized to view a special education student's records without the permission of the parents/guardians or eligible student. This list will be updated annually and be available for public inspection. Permanent student records, including a student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed will be maintained without time limit. Permanent student records must be kept in fire safe vault.

When personally identifiable information, other than permanent student records, no longer needs to be maintained by the school district to provide educational services to the special education student, the parents/guardian or eligible student will be notified. If the parents/guardians or eligible student request the records be destroyed, the school district must destroy the records. Prior to the destruction of the records, the school district must inform the parents/guardians or eligible student of the reasons for which they may want the records maintained. In the absence of parent's/guardian's or eligible student's request to destroy the records, the school district may maintain the records indefinitely.

It will be the responsibility of the superintendent to inform employees about parents'/guardians' or eligible student's rights under this policy. Employees will also be informed about the procedures for carrying out this policy. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to annually notify parents/guardians to view the student's records. The notice will be provided in the parent's/guardian's or eligible student's native language.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The Mount Vernon Community School District participate in the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. This act provides funding to schools and communities to provide substance abuse programs. It is the policy of the Mount Vernon Schools to be tobacco, drug and alcohol free. Our district supports a non-use policy for tobacco, drugs, or alcohol. No student in the Mount Vernon Schools may unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use in school or at a school-sponsored activity any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substance as defined by federal or state law.

### **USE OF THE BUILDING**

Over the course of the year the Washington Elementary building is used for a variety of events, practices and games not related to the school. In order to reserve any of the facilities please contact Val Binsfield at [vbinsfield@mvcasd.org](mailto:vbinsfield@mvcasd.org)

## **VISITORS**

The Mount Vernon Community School District welcomes parents, our alumni and guests of our students to our schools. All visitors must check-in at the office on arrival, notify office personnel of their presence, and wear a visitor name tag during their visit.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

The board believes weapons, other dangerous objects and look-a-likes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects and look-a-likes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes will be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess weapons, dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property are notified of the incident. Possession or confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects may be reported to law enforcement officials, and students may be subject to additional disciplinary consequences including out-of-school suspension and expulsion.

Students bringing firearms to school or knowingly possessing firearms at school will be expelled for not less than one year. The superintendent has the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for students on a case-by-case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes, but is not limited to, any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas. Confiscation of a firearm will be reported to law enforcement officials.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

The school district will transfer a student's educational records to a new school district upon receipt of a written request for the student's records from the new school. Parental consent is not necessary to forward student records to a new school or for our school district to request records from a new student's previous school.

*The Mount Vernon Community School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status (for programs), socioeconomic status (for programs), disability, religion, and creed. Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services with the district who feel that they have experienced discrimination are encouraged to contact Matt Thede, Equity Coordinator, Mount Vernon Community High School, 731 Palisades Road SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314, telephone: 319-895-8843 x4005, where our district has a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of Civil Rights – Region VII, US Department of Education,; 310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 800; Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203-2292 (phone: 414-291-1111) or to the Iowa Department of Education; Grimes State Office Building; Des Moines, Iowa, 50319-0146 (phone: 515-281-5294).*