

Apollo Elementary School

Parent- Student Handbook

2025-2026



Mercer County District #404

Aledo, Illinois 61231

309-582-5350

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Apollo Staff-----	2
District Calendar-----	3
Mission Statement/Daily Schedule-----	4
Registration/Insurance-----	5
Student Attendance-----	6-7
Parent Parking/Pickup-----	8
Emergency School Closing Notification-----	8
Student Discipline-----	8-11
Student Health-----	12-13
Lunch Program-----	14
Guidance Counselor-----	14
S.A.T., Title I, LRC, Computers-----	15
General Policies and Information-----	16-21
Pertinent District Information-----	21-28

For the most up to date calendars and information please visit our district website at:

<http://www.mercerschools.org/>



Apollo Elementary School Staff

2025-2026

OFFICE

Chad Robertson – Principal
Katie Dengler – Assistant Principal
Tonya Finch – Secretary
Erin Headley – Cafeteria/Special Ed. Secretary
Krissy Dixon – District Nurse

SPECIAL SERVICES

Emily Voller – School Counselor
Melissa Maloney – Title I Reading
Jessica Thomas – Title I Reading Aide
Julie Brodrick – Math Interventionist
LeeAnn Baldwin – Math Interventionist Aide

KINDERGARTEN

Bridget Wilkerson
Staci Sharp
Cassidy Murray

1st GRADE

Andi Churchill
Paula Riddell
Alison LaFever
Chloe Ellison

2nd GRADE

Kathy Olson
Paula McGraw
Aubree Norton

3rd GRADE

Kristi Robertson
Lindsay Fearman
Katherine Lower

4th GRADE

Charlotte Hartman
Amber Hessman
Amy Duncan

5TH GRADE

Chris Leng
Breanna McManus
Jamie Heartt

SPECIAL SUBJECT TEACHERS

Peter Nelson – P.E.
Hannah Baker – Art
Kristin Reick – Music
Sara Dunn – Librarian/Computers

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Carolyn McCrory – Spec. Education Coordinator
Bob Self – School Psychologist
Liz Anderson – School Social Worker
Kelsi Schnack – Speech Therapist
Amber Roberts – K-2 Resource Teacher
Alex Johnson – 2-3 Resource Teacher
Malorie Matlick – 3-4 Resource Teacher
Barb Bryant – 4-5 Resource Teacher

PARAPROFESSIONALS

Colette Sunken – Kindergarten
Tammy Trout – Kindergarten
Jillian Long – Kindergarten
Lilah McCaw – Kindergarten
Hiedi Mills – Special Education.
Shawndee Anderson – 3rd-5th RTI
Kamryn Whitmire – Special Education
Linda McAuley – Special Education
Jaime Kernan – Special Education
Chelsey Paslawski – Special Education
Natalie Finch – Special Education
Mark Reick – Special Education
Carrie Walter – Special Education
Rebekah Demuth – Special Education
Kasara Osborne – Special Education
Devan Chander – Special Education
Pam Spangler – Classroom

CAFETERIA PERSONNEL

Julie Oary
Stacey Dehm
Kim Parkinson

TECHNOLOGY

Geff Long, Jr. – District Network Specialist
Amber Norton – Technology Support
Andrea Norton – Technology Support

CUSTODIANS

Dale Mitchell
Jeanette Lange
Hoa Harvey
Larry Rudsell

2025-2026 Mercer County Schools Calendar

July 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						12

September 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
						21

October 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
					10	12

November 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						17

December 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
						15

January 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						18

February 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
						19

March 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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29	30	31				
					10	7

April 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
						21

May 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						14

June 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Calendar Key

	= Normal School Day	August 14 - First Day of School	Dec 20 - Jan 4 - No School (Winter Break)	176
	= No School - Teacher Institute	September 22-27 Homecoming Week TENTATIVE		Q1 43
	= Emergency Days	October 23 & 24 - Student-Led Conferences	March 13 - End of Third Quarter	Q2 44
	= No School	October 17 - End of First Quarter	March 16-20 - No School (Spring Break)	Q3 47
	= HS Graduation	December 19 - End of First Semester	May 17 HS Grad & May 21 Tent. Last Day School	Q4 42



APOLLO MISSION STATEMENT
“Preparing Every Student to Succeed Every Day”

DAILY SCHEDULE

- 7:40 am** Doors open for students who participate in the breakfast program
- 7:40 am** All students may enter the building and report to the playground or cafeteria
- 8:00 am** Breakfast line closes
- 8:05 am** Recess bell rings and students report to homeroom
- 8:15 am** Tardy bell rings; announcements are given

APOLLO ELEMENTARY LUNCH SCHEDULE

Kindergarten	Lunch 11:00-11:20	Recess 11:20-11:40
1st Grade	Lunch 11:10-11:30	Recess 11:30-11:50
2nd Grade	Lunch 11:25-11:45	Recess 11:45-12:05
3rd Grade	Lunch 11:35-11:55	Recess 11:55-12:15
4th Grade	Lunch 11:50-12:10	Recess 12:10-12:30
5th Grade	Lunch 12:00-12:20	Recess 12:20-12:40

- 3:00 pm** Kindergarten pick-up students are dismissed (Recess Doors)
- 3:10 pm** Walkers and car riders are dismissed
- 3:15 pm** Bus riders are dismissed

Note: *Individual classroom schedules may vary somewhat from day to day, depending upon the special subjects schedule and other factors. Special subjects (P.E., Art, Music, Library, etc.) are scheduled on a rotating basis for the entire building.*

REGISTRATION

Registration is typically held approximately two weeks prior to the beginning of the school year. Please watch for announcements through the local media. At this time, you will be required to furnish the following:

- ◆ Documentation of a physical examination and all necessary immunizations, if your student is
 - Entering kindergarten
 - Entering Illinois schools for the first timeThe examination must be done within one year prior to each of these entrance dates by a physician practicing within the state of Illinois. Kindergarten students are also required to have vision exams, dental exams, and a lead screening.
- ◆ A copy of your child's official birth certificate (if not already on file). Official birth certificates are issued by the county courthouse, **NOT** the hospital.
- ◆ Payment of registration fees. If you are unable to make the registration payment at the time of registration, you should go to the District Office to make arrangements for payment before you come to Apollo.
- ◆ Be prepared to fill out a registration card containing updated information about your child, your residence, your phone number (home and work), and emergency care information. You will need to provide a current phone number of the person who will accept responsibility for your child should the school be unable to reach you. Please let us know immediately if any of these phone numbers change. This person must be available during school hours.
- ◆ Personal information about your student regarding any health conditions that might require special care, medication, PE restrictions, etc.
- ◆ Signatures indicating agreement with the Mercer County District Internet Acceptable Use Policy, permission to have your child photographed for various recognition/publicity purposes, and field trip permission form.
- ◆ Purchase of lunch tickets and/or application for free or reduced lunches/breakfasts. See price list elsewhere in this manual.

INSURANCE

Students are offered accident insurance as a school service. Neither the school nor any school employee profits from it. The plan is strictly voluntary. Cost, coverage, and payment information is available from the Apollo office at the time of registration. All accident report forms are filed with the Apollo office immediately following the accident occurrence. The office will keep a copy of the accident report and provide a copy to parents upon request. Insurance claim forms are provided by the student health insurance provider.

PRESCHOOL SCREENING

Each spring, school districts in the State of Illinois are required to screen children of three to five years of age for potential problems in hearing, vision, muscular, and emotional development. All children must be tested who will be three years old on or before December 1st of this year and through the ages of those students who will be attending kindergarten next fall. The purpose of the screening is to enable early childhood problems to be corrected before entering school. Even though the child may have been screened the previous year, parents are urged to have him/her screened each year since, during formative years of growth, children change from year to year. There is no charge for this screening. Screening dates and location will be publicly announced several weeks in advance.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is necessary if students are to receive the maximum benefit from their educational experiences. Getting an education is a full-time job, and each student should be at school every day that school is in session. As necessary, the following rules will be applied:

Absences

- If a student arrives 30 minutes or later after the start of the school day, that absence will be recorded as a half day absence.
- If a student leaves with more than 30 minutes left at the conclusion of the school day, that absence will be recorded as a half day absence.
- When students are absent from school for any reason (other than pre-arranged), a phone call must be made to the school office the morning of the absence, preferably prior to 8:30 A.M. When not notified of an absence, state law requires the school to make attempts to contact the parents. If contact is not made with the school, the child must bring a note written by the parent to the office the day he/she returns.

Tardies

- If a student arrives within 30 minutes of the beginning of the school day, that will be counted as a tardy.
- If a student leaves with less than 30 minutes left at the conclusion of the school day, that will be counted as a tardy.
- Should a student accrue five or more tardies within a semester, those tardies will then be counted as a half day absence.

Truancy

- Students are allowed five (5) parent call-in days **per semester**. These call-in days may be used for any reason the student is not in attendance at school. There are only two exemptions for an excused absence: a death in the immediate family or a visit to the doctor's office for the student with an excusal from the doctor for that date. These excusals do not count toward a parent call-in or truancy. Once a student has missed five days or used all of their parent call-ins, the student will then be considered truant by the state and the district
- **Truancy Guidelines for truant students:** (after all five call-ins have been used per semester)
 - Initial Letter from Apollo after your 5 call-ins have been used

- 3 Days Truant (8 total)
 - Letter sent to the parents/Guardians from the Regional Office of Education (ROE)
 - Student is referred to the ROE for truancy
 - 6 Days Truant (11 Total)
 - 2nd letter sent from the ROE
 - Student is referred to the ROE for truancy
 - ROE will make contact with the parents/guardians
 - 9 Days Truant (14 Total)
 - Parent/Guardian will be issued a citation from the ROE
 - 12 Days Truant (17 Total)
 - 3rd letter sent from the ROE
 - Contact made from the truancy intervention and liaison officer from the ROE
 - 15 Days Truant (20 Total)
 - A Legal Notice to Appear will be sent to appear before the Truancy Review Board
 - 18 Days Truant (23 Total)
 - Upon any additional unexcused absences after the TRB, a petition to the State Attorney of the County resided in will be filed.
- The student/parent is responsible for acquiring makeup work assignments from his/her teacher(s). Students will be allowed one additional day plus the number of days absent to complete missed work.
 - If your child is absent and you request that makeup homework be gathered to be picked up from the office please give the teacher a reasonable amount of time to do this. If you do request homework please be sure to pick it up or have it sent home with a sibling or neighbor.
 - *If a student is to be absent from school due to vacations or appointments known in advance, the parent must write a note to the principal for approval.* The note must explain the reason for the absence and the dates involved. A pre-arranged absence slip will be given to the teacher so that arrangements can be made for completion of work that will be missed. *Family emergencies and other unexpected emergencies may be accepted as an excused absence by the principal.*

ARRIVAL TIMES AND TARDINESS

Any student not in his/her classroom by the sound of the third buzzer at 8:15 AM is considered tardy. **Parent cooperation is requested in seeing that children arrive at school after 7:40 am and before 8:05 am.**

REQUEST FOR EARLY DISMISSAL OR CHANGE IN TRANSPORTATION

Students are not to leave the building or grounds until the end of the regular school day. **Many important school activities take place during the last few minutes of the day and it is important that the children be present.** If it becomes absolutely necessary for a pupil to be dismissed earlier than the customary time, for doctor's appointments, etc., the parent or guardian must send a note explaining the circumstances and should come to the office to call for the student at the time of pick-up. **Parents are not to go directly to classrooms to meet students.**

Students who regularly ride the bus, walk, or are picked up by their parents after school, are not to leave school in any other manner unless written permission, signed by a parent, is received by the teacher. Students who regularly attend an after-school function, such as scouts, need to bring a note only one time. It will be kept on file. The school should be informed of any changes in this arrangement.

PARENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Parents should use the drive through lane on the East side of Apollo and the parking lot between Apollo and the Junior High to loop around to drop students off at the gate and sidewalk at the West side of the playground. **Parents are not to leave a vehicle unattended (parked) in the drop off and pick up zone; this is a drop-off and pick-up area only.** Please exercise caution and be patient as this is a congested area at arrival and dismissal times. Parents are not to go directly to classrooms or wait in hallways prior to school dismissal times. Parents who wish to pick up their students at the end of school should use the parking lot between Apollo and MCJH, or the drive through lane on the East side of Apollo. Kindergarten students who get picked up will be dismissed through the door that leads to the playground.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mercer County Schools will call, email, or text you directly with important announcements. In addition to this, emergency school closings or early dismissals are announced on the radio stations WRMJ (FM 102.3), WRAM (AM 1330), WMOI (FM 97.7) and TV stations KWQC, WHBF and WQAD. In the event school is dismissed early, please instruct your child as to where he/she should go after school. Please talk with your child about what to do if he/she arrives home and no one is there.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will promote a safe, orderly learning environment for all. Any behavior which causes the learning atmosphere to be disrupted, or which infringes upon the rights of others in the school, will not be tolerated.

EXPECTATIONS

School-wide expectations for behavior will be clearly communicated to the students throughout the school year. The system we have chosen involves only three basic expectations for ALL students, regardless of age or grade level. These three school-wide expectations can be applied to any situation/location within our school, as the following chart demonstrates. Please go over these expectations with your student before he/she comes to school.

The Apollo staff will encourage students to display appropriate levels of behavior to meet these expectations throughout the building. Time will be spent to explain and teach these expectations to all students, at all grade levels. The expectations are designed to make all students feel safe and to establish the best possible learning environment.

School-wide Expectations for Student Behavior at Apollo Elementary:

- 1. BE RESPECTFUL**
- 2. BE RESPONSIBLE**
- 3. BE SAFE**

The following chart shows how these three expectations can be interpreted in different settings throughout our building. Students will be expected to display the behaviors described in this chart as they move throughout the building.

Apollo Elementary Behavior Expectations			
	Be Respectful	Be Responsible	Be Safe
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow Classroom Rules - Be a good listener - Allow others to learn - Work together - Quiet voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow Classroom Rules - Give your best effort - Stay on task - Be prepared & organized - Complete assignments - Take pride in your work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow Classroom Rules - Keep desk/table clean - Keep area neat & tidy - Use supplies appropriately
Hallways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single file line - Stay to the right - Voices off - Walking feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single file line - Stay to the right - Walking feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single file line - Stay to the right - Hands & feet to yourself - Face forward and walk
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be kind and include others - Take turns - Line up quickly when asked - Listen to the recess monitor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dress for the weather - Play in a safe manner - Use and return equipment properly - Line up quickly when asked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use equipment properly - Leave rocks and tire chips in place - Stay in the recess area - Hands & feet to yourself
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use restroom appropriately - Give others privacy - Flush the toilet - Quiet voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use restroom appropriately - Wash your hands - Flush the toilet - Keep restrooms clean - Throw away towels/trash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use restroom appropriately - Keep neat and tidy - Hands & feet to yourself - Keep water in the sink
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use your manners - Quiet voices - Eat your own food - Stay seated until asked to get up - Listen to lunch monitors - Clean any messes you make 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use your manners - Use utensils correctly - Eat your own food - Leave uneaten food on your tray - Keep your area neat & tidy - Clean any messes you make 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking at all times - Clean up your area - Use utensils correctly - Pick up and return tray by walking - Hands to your own food
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the driver's instructions - Quiet voices - Stay in your seat - Be friendly to those around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the driver's instructions - Stay seated and face forward - Throw away trash - Keep your area neat & tidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the driver's instructions - Stay seated & face forward - No throwing items - No food or drinks - Leave windows alone - Walking on and off the bus

P.B.I.S. (POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS)

The staff at Apollo Elementary School has implemented a discipline system designed to promote appropriate student behaviors through direct instruction of those behaviors, and positive rewards for students who correctly demonstrate those behaviors on a regular basis. Through this system we hope to focus more on encouraging students to behave correctly, with the anticipated result that only a few students will need to be disciplined or punished for doing otherwise. We have instituted various ways to reward students for their good behavior. This includes frequent verbal praise, awarding of “tickets” which may be redeemed for small prizes or major principal prizes, occasional classroom parties or special activities for achieving group goals, as well as some school-wide celebrations. Throughout the year, the staff will continue to re-teach and reinforce the expected school-wide behaviors. The P.B.I.S. system is a three-tiered system. Those students who are unsuccessful following our school-wide efforts to teach

appropriate behaviors may be referred to the S.A.T. program, which serves as the second line for intervention and support. Occasionally we will have one or two students who may need support beyond what we can offer at school. These students will receive assistance through a third level of programming involving family and community, sometimes referred to as “wrap-around” services.

CONSEQUENCES

When students fail to meet expectations, consequences should be expected. Depending on the severity and frequency of misbehavior, and the age of the student, consequences may be any one or more of the following, or others as deemed appropriate in specific situations:

- ◆ Verbal correction from adult supervisor/teacher
- ◆ Student self-reflection on behavior
- ◆ Change in seating or line-up arrangement
- ◆ Loss of recess time
- ◆ Temporary denial of special privileges or preferred activities
- ◆ Temporary denial of positive behavior incentives or rewards
- ◆ Natural consequences related to misbehavior (cleaning up mess, writing an apology, etc.)
- ◆ Communication with parent via note, telephone call, or conference
- ◆ Referral to counselor
- ◆ Referral to principal’s office
- ◆ Time-out from the classroom (short-term detention)
- ◆ In-school suspension
- ◆ Out-of-school suspension
- ◆ Referral to S.A.T. student assistance team
- ◆ Behavioral contract agreement
- ◆ Referral to outside agency
- ◆ Referral to school-based insight group
- ◆ One-on-one mentoring with staff member
- ◆ Suspension or Expulsion

This list does not necessarily represent a continuum of consequences that will be applied in the order listed. It does, however, represent a menu of consequences from which school personnel may select.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Students who damage property, unless by accident, will be required to pay for the damages done, which includes replacement and/or repair if possible. Whenever possible, students will be required to assist in the repair of the property.

HARASSMENT

All students and staff members have the right to be free from harassment, which includes sexual harassment and physical torment, while in school and while passing legitimately on the school grounds. ALL INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE PRINCIPAL OR COUNSELOR.

PROFANITY

Disrespectful or vulgar language will not be permitted. This is recognized as a type of bullying behavior and will be treated as such. Consequences can be expected.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

The Mercer County School District has adopted a policy concerning discipline of special education students. The policy is in compliance with federal and state guidelines. The policy explains the rules and procedures that will be followed when disciplining special education students. Parents of special education students are to receive a copy of the policy after the start of the school year.

SUSPENSION /EXPULSION POLICIES

Two types of suspension are possible. One is the in-school suspension (or alternative educational placement) when the student remains in an assigned school area to complete assignments under the supervision of a staff member. An out-of-school suspension may be assigned by the building principal at his/her discretion, up to a maximum of 10 days. All out-of-school suspensions will be treated as unexcused absences. Parents will be notified prior to the suspension. They will be given a full statement of the reasons for the suspension and the beginning and ending dates of the suspension. They will also be advised of a right to an appeal to the District Superintendent, and then to the Board of Education, if needed. The decision of the Board of Education is final. Students serving out-of-school suspension time are not permitted on school property and may not participate or attend any school activity. Before the student returns to school, a conference with the parents may be arranged.

A student may be suspended for the following:

1. Use or possession of prohibited drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
2. Use or possession of a weapon, or any object that can reasonably be considered, or looks like, a weapon.
3. Gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:
 - behavior which is injurious to persons or property, or intended as such
 - behavior which substantially and materially disrupts the educational process or discipline in the school
 - repeated minor incidents of misbehavior that other disciplinary measures have failed to deter
 - gross disrespect of teachers, staff or administration

A recommendation for expulsion may occur as a result of a third suspension in the academic year or for gross disobedience or misconduct showing a clear and flagrant disregard for the educational process. The student may be temporarily suspended from school pending a hearing before the Board of Education to determine the outcome of the case. Board of Education policy will govern the procedures, and a copy of the policy will be made available to the student and his/her parents at the same time he/she is advised that a recommendation for expulsion is to be made.

STUDENT HEALTH

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

In accordance with Illinois law, before entering kindergarten, all students are required to have a physical examination, including required immunizations. Any students who are new to the Mercer County School District must also show evidence of the required examinations and immunizations. The examination must be completed within one year prior to the entrance date by a physician practicing in the state of Illinois, and the documentation should be provided to the school at the time of registration. **Students whose records are not complete and on file in the health office will be excluded from school until the records are complete.**

For all kindergarten students lead screen, dental examination, and vision examination are also now required by the state.

Dental examinations are required for all second grade students.

VISION SCREENING

We will be screening vision for prekindergarten, special education students, and kindergarten, second, and third grade. *This vision screening will not take the place of the vision exam required for kindergarten entrance or first time enrollees in Illinois schools.* The Illinois school code states: "Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months." Hearing screening will be done for kindergarten through third grades and those new to Illinois schools. Throughout the year, we will try to screen vision and hearing on all students.

WHEN IS YOUR CHILD TOO SICK FOR SCHOOL?

Many parents wonder when their child is too ill to attend school. If your child experiences any of the following symptoms before school, please keep them home:

- Sore Throat (Rash of Unknown origin)
- Fever – 100 degrees or over
- Severe Headache
- Severe Coughing or Sneezing
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea within the last 8-12 hours
- Chills associated with a fever
- Red, burning, itchy or watery eyes – white or yellow discharge, eyelids stick together in the morning, or eyelids that are red and swollen
- Swelling in the face or jaw – can be due to swollen glands underneath your child's jaw or the back of the neck. It may also be due to an abscessed tooth
- Earache – a child pulling on his ear, bleeding or drainage from the ear canal or pain

Please make sure your child is fever free for 24 hours and has not vomited for 24 hours before they return to school.

REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Students are not permitted to keep medication in their possession while at school. The Mercer County School Nurse will provide first aid only as authorized by the State Board of Health. Over-the-counter medication will only be given with written permission from the parent. Prescription medication will be administered at school only if the physician requests in writing to the school, and with the following guidelines:

- Any medication to be taken **Three Times a Day Need Not** be taken at school.
- Any child taking medications must:
 1. Leave medication at the school office
 2. Have medication in bottle or box plainly marked with the following
 - Name of student
 - Name of medication
 - Dosage
 - Doctor prescribing medication
 - Reason for taking medication
 - Termination date for Administering the medication

3. Be responsible to come to the office at designated time to take medication.
4. Be responsible for picking up medication if it is to be taken home at the end of the day.

IF THE ABOVE RULES ARE NOT FOLLOWED, MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE GIVEN.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE RE-ADMISSION PROCEDURE

Children who develop cases of communicable diseases may be readmitted to school after all health department provisions for isolation and quarantine have been met and the attending physician has given permission, in writing, for return to school.

Children with certain skin diseases may return if under treatment from a physician who gives written permission to return.

Researchers have shown that the discovery of lice or their eggs on the hair should not cause the child to be sent home or isolated. Therefore, Mercer County Schools will not routinely send a child home, but will notify the parent of proper methods to treat the head lice after the child returns home at the end of the day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All pupils will be required to participate in regular physical education activities unless excused for valid reasons, i.e. illness or injury. Requests to be excused from Physical Education must be made in writing by the parent or physician. ***Students should have a pair of gym shoes to be worn during P.E.***

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Students are responsible for maintaining a reasonable standard of cleanliness and grooming. Counseling will occur to help each student meet appropriate standards.

STUDENT INJURIES – ILLNESS

An attempt will always be made to notify parents when their child is significantly injured or becomes ill at school. When the parent cannot be reached, we will keep the child as comfortable as possible until the parents can be contacted. If a serious injury or illness should occur, and parents cannot be located, we will contact those people listed in the student's registration information, or contact the student's physician. **It is very important that contact information, including phone numbers, be kept updated with our school office.** Should hospital care be required, we will have the child transported to the emergency room of Genesis Medical Center in Aledo by ambulance. An adult will always accompany the child to the hospital if this situation should occur.



SCHOOL SERVICES

LUNCH PROGRAM

The Apollo lunch program includes complete mid-day lunches served in the all-purpose room. Some students may choose to bring their lunch to school. We ask parents not to include pop, energy drinks or candy in these lunches. Milk may be purchased at a price of 40 cents per half-pint carton. Optional daily milk breaks are available for \$30 per semester or \$60 per school year. These are not covered by the free and reduced lunch program. Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch at Apollo. However, our

wellness policy stipulates that parents are not allowed to bring prepared restaurant food to lunch at Apollo. Parents are welcomed to eat the school hot lunch (please pay in the office) or to bring home-packed bag lunches.

Eating lunch at school should be a pleasant, social, and educational experience. Because it is necessary to serve a large number of students in a relatively short time period, we ask that students enter and leave the cafeteria in an orderly and quiet manner. Students will also be expected to follow certain clearly communicated procedures to maintain order and efficiency throughout the lunch period.

Breakfast is served each school day in the all-purpose room from 7:40 to 8:05 A.M. This can be extended if buses are running late.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Apollo has a full time counselor. The counselor helps students overcome problems that may impede learning. The counselor may meet with individual students or with groups of students who may have similar problems. The counselor may contact parents directly about the need for continuing services.

S.A.T. – Student Assistance Team

The S.A.T. program is a joint school staff and community effort to identify, assist and support all students who have actual or potential problems that may interfere with academic or extracurricular performance. The main goal of S.A.T. is to identify students whose behavior, attendance, health or grades indicate that they may have problems or be “at-risk”. Faculty, staff, and parents will be able to notice and respond to students who are exhibiting difficulties and refer them for help through the S.A.T. Core Team. The Core Team is composed of teachers and school staff members who have been trained to receive referrals and to intervene in a student’s problematic pattern of behaviors and offer assistance. The S.A.T. program is an important component of the P.B.I.S. system and the RTI initiative, as it is designed to provide targeted interventions for those students who, for one reason or another, are having difficulty adjusting to the behavioral or academic expectations of the school.

TITLE I PROGRAM

The Title I program in the Mercer County School District is funded under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Title I of this act provides financial assistance to local school districts to provide services which help at-risk children achieve the high standards expected of all children.

The main goal of our program is to provide a wide range of assistance so that students can achieve the high standards expected of all students. Characteristics of the Mercer County Title I programs are:

1. The instruction is supplemental to the regular instruction taking place in the classroom.
2. In class as well as after class assistance is provided.
3. Through diagnosis and teaching, we endeavor to discover and overcome the special and particular needs of each student.
4. The Title I program is correlated to the student’s classroom program.
5. The Title I teachers keep in close touch with the classroom teachers to find out what the Title I student’s immediate needs are.
6. The District/School has a parental involvement plan in order to assist and encourage parents to become involved in their child’s education.

LEARNING CENTER

Apollo Elementary has a library-media center that is located centrally to all classrooms. Students are scheduled into the center on a regular basis, but are encouraged to make use of the facility at other times,

also. **Students are responsible for any book(s) or equipment that are checked out. If lost or damaged, fines will be assessed based on replacement or repair costs.**

CHROMEBOOKS AND CLASSROOM COMPUTERS

There are district purchased Chromebooks or tablets for all students to use for educational purposes. Students are expected to use the equipment responsibly and according to guidelines that are established by the teachers and administration. Parents are asked to provide a signature at registration indicating agreement with our district's Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO TAKE THE CHROMEBOOKS OR TABLETS HOME UNLESS IT IS NEEDED FOR HOMEWORK AND PERMISSION IS GRANTED BY THEIR CLASSROOM TEACHER.**

In the spring all third, fourth, and fifth grade students participate in the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) test. This test will assess the Career and College Readiness Standards or Common Core Standards.

AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING PROGRAM (PENDING FUNDING)

Grant funds (Project Stay-In) from the Regional Office of Education, in combination with district funds, offer us the opportunity to provide limited after-school tutoring services to students who are identified as needing such assistance to complete classroom assignments and/or homework. The number of students who can be served and the time frame for tutoring services will be determined by the amount of funding available to support these services annually.



GENERAL POLICIES and INFORMATION

ASBESTOS

The Mercer County District #404 has complied with the U.S. EPA-AHERA regulations, as well as the Illinois State Board of Education Rules and Regulations, concerning asbestos. The inspection of our buildings identified and located some asbestos containing materials (ACMs). Documents are available in our Unit Administration Office and in each school's office for review.

BICYCLES

While all students are permitted to ride their bikes to school, it is recommended that parents make sure their children know the safety rules before they do so. Bicycles are to be parked in the bike racks provided outside the building. All bikes should have locks. Bicycles are not to be ridden on school property, and should be walked to and from the street to the bike racks. Safety helmets are recommended.

BIRTHDAY TREATS AND PARTY INVITATIONS

Birthday treats may be passed out during the last few minutes of the school day. **Homemade treats are not allowed.** Treats must be pre-packaged or prepared in a state-licensed kitchen facility. Birthday party invitations may only be distributed to the student's homeroom classmates or grade level if all are included.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO

The use or possession of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco by students will not be tolerated. Any violation of this rule on school property, or at any school activity, will be dealt with severely. Students are asked to report any suspected infractions of this rule to their teacher or principal. School personnel have the right to conduct a search if there is reasonable suspicion of possession of any of these items.

The Mercer County District #404 has been designated a Drug Free School Zone. This means that any drug, alcohol, or tobacco violation within one city block of a school campus can result in disciplinary action by school officials.

MONEY AT SCHOOL

Money should not be brought to school unless it is needed for school expenses. Lunch money should be placed in an envelope with proper information, i.e. each child's name, classroom, number/amount of lunches to be purchased. It is not necessary to enclose checks in an envelope if you indicate at the bottom of the check the names of children, amount for each, and their classrooms. Lunch money envelopes should not include money for any other purpose. Individual cartons of milk may be purchased in the lunch line. If the student does not have money in the lunch line, the milk will be charged to their account.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Annual district-wide parent/teacher conferences are scheduled each fall. These conferences are held to discuss each student's progress in school. **Parents are strongly encouraged to attend.** Additional follow-up conferences may be scheduled as needed. Parents are encouraged to request a conference with the teacher whenever questions arise.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Apollo Elementary has an active Parent-Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) that helps serve the needs of the school during the course of the year. They help by volunteering services, sponsoring programs, and funding special projects that would not normally be available through our district budget. You are invited to be a part of this group. Call the Apollo office for details and meeting times.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE/ DRESS CODE

In keeping with our goal of creating a safe and respectful school community, please review the following information regarding appropriate attire for students in school. We respectfully request your support in adhering to these guidelines to ensure proper decorum for elementary school activities.

The following attire is NOT permitted in school or during school sponsored activities:

- Clothing promoting alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, or items displaying lewd or inappropriate statements or pictures
- Spaghetti strapped tops or dresses (Straps should be no thinner than two inches)
- Midriff tops or crop top shirts. (tops that expose the belly and back)
- Off the shoulder tops or dresses
- Flip-flops or sandals (Need appropriate footwear for running and playing)
- Shoes with wheels
- Skirts/shorts above the mid-thigh
- Low cut shorts, jeans and pants that expose the belly/back and/or undergarments during normal school activity.
- Hoods, hats or baseball caps inside the building.
- Sunglasses inside the building

Normal elementary school activities involve walking, jumping, sitting, playing etc. Please keep these activities in mind when assisting your child to select appropriate school attire. **Shoes appropriate for**

running should be worn every day. Students that are not dressed according to the school dress code will be asked to call home for a change of clothing.

If you are in doubt about your child's attire, we encourage you to err on the side of caution.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken articles. Please mark all items brought from home, such as coats, hats, and book bags, with your child's name. Students should not bring items to school that have significant sentimental or monetary value. Students are not to bring toys, balls, trading cards, or electronic games or devices to school. Kindle/Nook type devices are allowed at the discretion of the individual classroom teacher and should only be used as directed by the teacher. The teacher and school will not be held liable if the device is stolen or broken. Cell phones are allowed at school but must be turned off and in a student's backpack at all times during school hours. Scooters, skateboards, and roller blades are not allowed at school due to safety considerations and lack of available storage. Lost and found articles should be brought to the office.

PETS

Students are not to bring pets to school. Parents, in rare cases, may bring in small animals for educational purposes. This will only be allowed with advance permission from the principal and parents must take the animals with them when they leave the school.

RETENTION PROCEDURE

Successful completion of coursework in the core areas of our curriculum is essential to the student's probability of doing well in the next grade level at Apollo and as students move to Junior High.

- A student must receive a passing grade in each of the following subject areas: **English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.**
- A student who **fails two** of the core classes will be offered the opportunity to attend a remediation summer school. Successful completion of the summer school coursework will allow the student to advance to the next grade level.
- Students who **fail more than two** core classes will be in serious consideration to be retained and not move on to the next grade level.
- The final grade for the core classes will be determined by **averaging the four quarter grades** of the class during the year. Therefore, it is essential that a student put forth a consistent effort throughout the school year in order to receive a passing grade for the class.
- Mercer County District #404 will not socially promote any student in accordance with the Illinois School Code. The final decision to retain a student will be made by the school administration.
- Please feel free to contact the principal, counselor, or any of your child's teachers at any time during the school year concerning his/her academic progress.

If a student is in danger of failing a grade, parents will be informed well in advance so they are aware that their child needs extra help during the school year. The following procedure will document the student's progress throughout the year so if retention is necessary, a parent may feel comfortable that a right decision has been made.

1. **Parents should be informed** of a student's progress during the first parent-teacher conference, or as soon thereafter as difficulties are recognized.
2. **If the student is having difficulty**, another conference will be set up between the parents and teachers early in the 2nd semester. This conference will specifically mention that retention is a possible consideration with written documentation.
3. **As appropriate**, the teacher will refer the student to the SAT Team for assistance in planning and implementing interventions to provide support for the child who is at risk of not being promoted.
4. **A teacher/parent/principal conference will be scheduled** after the 3rd nine weeks to consider any student who still is not achieving satisfactorily. The purpose of this meeting will be to determine recommendations for promotion or retention of the student.
5. **By the end of the school year**, the teacher and principal will meet to determine students to be retained. The parents will be informed of the decision to retain or to promote as well as the reasons for retention.

REPORT CARDS

A progress report is made on each student every nine weeks during the school year – or four times per year. Report cards are sent home one week after the conclusion of each nine-week period.

SCHOOL BUS RULES

Mercer County District #404 employs a commercial carrier, Johannes Bus Service, to transport pupils to and from school. Issues concerning bus routes, pick-up and drop-off times, etc., should be directed to the Aledo office of Johannes Bus Service at 582-2922.

Children who have the privilege of riding a bus must assume the responsibility for good behavior on the bus. School buses cannot wait for children who are not ready on time. Students must be at the assigned bus stop on time each morning.

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and will report infractions of conduct to the principal. Students are expected to observe all bus rules and regulations established by the state, the school district, and the bus driver. Any misbehavior can be a distraction to the driver and endanger the lives of all the students on the bus. Such behavior will not be tolerated. The principal will have the discretion to take disciplinary action for reported misbehavior on the bus. Serious or repeated infractions may result in the student being denied the privilege of riding the bus for a specified period of time. Parents of the student, the District Superintendent, and the Board of Education will be notified of all bus suspensions.

When necessary, the district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus. In most situations the first offense will result in a one-day suspension, the second offense will result in a 3-day suspension, and the third offense will result in up to 10 days suspension. The administration may move a student to a higher level of suspension depending on the severity of the offense.

The following are general bus safety rules that should be observed by all bus riders:

1. Stand clear of the bus when waiting for it to arrive.
2. Board the bus and promptly take your seat.
3. Do not talk in a manner which may disrupt the driver; silence is to be observed during all critical driving situations, especially at railroad crossings.
4. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.

5. Keep the main aisle clear; place all large items, such as musical instruments, in available seats.
6. Do not stand or move from one seat to another.
7. Keep all parts of the body inside the bus.
8. Do not throw anything out the windows.
9. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
10. Do not bring glass items on the bus.

Parent and Community Bus Complaints:

It is permissible for parents to talk with the Transportation Supervisor about daily route changes or to ask questions about route times. However, all parent and community complaints should be directed to the Transportation Director, not the Transportation Supervisor.

SCHOOL MASCOT AND SCHOOL COLORS

We are the Apollo Golden Eagles. Our school colors are navy blue and Las Vegas gold.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's records may be examined by the student's parents following receipt of a written request to the building principal. Additional information regarding the rights of students and parents where student records are involved is available in the Apollo Elementary Office and the District #404 Office.

TELEPHONE

Students are not to make phone calls on any school phone unless permission is given. Students are not to be dismissed from class to make phone calls. Students are not to use the phone to ask permission to go to another student's home after school. Students will not be called to the phone to receive incoming calls unless an emergency exists. Messages to students will be delivered under reasonable and necessary circumstances. Please limit interruptions to teachers and students.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided on a rental basis to the student. These will be distributed in the classroom by the teachers. At the end of the year, the same books are to be returned without marks in or on them. Charges will be assessed for excessively worn, marked, or lost textbooks.

VISITORS

All visitors during the regular school day must report directly to the office, sign in and obtain a "Visitor's Pass" before entering other areas of the building. Non-authorized persons should not be in the school building or on the school premises at any time without clearance from the office. Please help us to make our school the safest place possible.

School visitation by parents and grandparents is encouraged. Parents or grandparents are welcome to eat lunch with their child at school when they are visiting. However, our wellness policy stipulates that parents are not allowed to bring prepared restaurant food to lunch at Apollo. Parents are welcomed to eat the school hot lunch or to bring home-packed bag lunches. When eating the school hot lunch we ask that you call ahead and make a reservation to do so. Students are not permitted to bring other children to school as visitors.

Parents at Classroom Parties and Field Trips.

Here at Apollo we try to involve parents as much as we can and we want them to always feel welcome whenever they visit our building. However, it is impossible to accommodate all parent wishes. If every parent came to every classroom party or every parent chaperoned every field trip it would be chaos. For this reason, we try to spread it around. Each classroom teacher and grade level have systems in place to ensure all parents have an opportunity to participate at some point throughout the year. Please be respectful of their decisions. Chaperones should not bring younger siblings along and all students are required to ride the bus back to school except in extenuating circumstances that must be cleared by the principal at least 24 hours prior to the field trip.

WEAPONS

A weapon is defined by board policy as any object that may be used to cause bodily harm, including, but not limited to, guns, knives, etc. Other items such as baseball bats, pipes, bottles, rocks, sticks, pencils, and pens may be considered weapons if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm. Possession of any type of weapon on school property is not permitted.

MTSS Multi Tiered System of Supports (RTI)

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) laws both require the use of research based instruction and interventions. In Illinois a problem-solving model must be implemented to evaluate student responses to research based interventions. A child's response to interventions is often abbreviated and referred to as MTSS. A problem-solving model is a systematic and data-driven method for determining the degree to which a student has responded in interventions. Services should intensify for a student as the student's response to the intervention is below expectations. The problem-solving model is an initiative that supports general education school improvement goals. It is intended to help as many students as possible to meet proficiency standards without special education.

The model is applicable to academic and behavioral issues.

There are three levels of interventions that are referred to as Tiers. The descriptions of each Tier are described below. These tiers are viewed as a continuum of services where Tier 1 is the least intense, while Tier 3 involves the most intense interventions.

Tier 1 is the delivery of a Scientifically Based Core Program within the general educational setting. Universal screening will determine the students that may be at risk in comparison to the identified district benchmarks. Screenings will be done three times a year. All students receive instruction within Tier 1 in the general education classroom which may include core group interventions designed to promote student to progress at a sufficient rate. When the core program is delivered with fidelity, intensity, passion, and with necessary, appropriate, and practical accommodations it should meet the needs of approximately 80% of the students within the grade level subject area.

Tier 2 is delivered to those students which have been identified to be at risk of failure through the universal screening tool. Students identified for Tier 2 will receive supplemental instruction using targeted interventions. This supplemental instruction will include MORE time, explicit teacher-led instruction, scaffold instruction, opportunities to respond with corrective feedback, language support, intensive motivational strategies and frequent progress monitoring in order for students to decrease the performance gap in comparison to Tier 1 peers. Once the progress monitoring data indicates a student has made sufficient progress toward benchmarks, a decision could be made that the student no longer requires Tier 2 supplemental interventions but Tier 1 instruction will continue. Research indicates that approximately 15% of the students will be in Tier 2.

Tier 3 is designed for students who, through progress monitoring data, do not show significant improvement in their identified deficit area(s) when presented with various Tier 2 interventions. Tier 3 students will receive intensive, individualized targeted interventions. This is in addition to Tier 2 supplemental and Tier 1 core instruction. This intensive instruction will include the MOST time, explicit teacher-led instruction, scaffold instruction, opportunities to respond with corrective feedback, language support, motivational strategies, and frequent progress monitoring in order for students to decrease the performance gap in comparison to Tier 1 peers. Approximately 5% of students will require the intensity of Tier 3 interventions.

Mercer County School District has a written RTI plan in place. The tiered model is intended to be a fluid system that promotes the movement of students from one tier to another as indicated by the data. Our district plan will dictate when a request for evaluation of possible special education services should be considered.

PERTINENT DISTRICT INFORMATION

District Mission Statement MCSD #404

In an active partnership with family and community, shall provide a positive environment in order to promote excellence in education, enabling students to become respectful, productive, and responsible citizens.

CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Mercer County School District #404 will not discriminate and will provide equal educational and extra-curricular opportunities for all students, without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, physical and/or mental disability, age, sexual orientation, economic and social conditions, or actual or potential marital or parental status.

Gender Equity

Mercer County School District #404 does not discriminate on the basis of gender in the provision of programs, activities, services or benefits, and it guarantees both genders equal access to educational and extra-curricular programs and activities. Facilities and related services, equipment and supplies are neither assigned nor limited on the basis of gender (excluding shower and toilet facilities, locker rooms, dressing areas and facilities used by exempt organizations).

Uniform Grievance Procedure

Students, parents, guardians, employees, or community members should notify any District Complaint Manager if they believe that the School Board, its employees, or agents have violated their rights guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy, or have a complaint regarding:

1. Title 2 of the Americans With Disabilities Act;
2. Title 9 of the Education Amendments of 1972;
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400et seq.
5. Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.
6. Equal Employment Opportunities Act (Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act). 42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.
7. Sexual harassment (Illinois Human Rights Act, Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title 9 of the Education Amendments of 1972);
8. The misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children;
9. Provision of services to homeless students.

The Complaint Manager will attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure and, if a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies.

1. Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any District Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same sex. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student. The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

2. Investigation

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. If the Complainant is a student, the Complaint Manager will notify his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may attend any investigatory meetings in which their child is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except (1) as required by law or this policy, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

Within 10 school days of the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time. If a complaint of sexual harassment contains allegations involving the Superintendent, the written report shall be filed with the School Board, which will make a decision in accordance with Section 3 of this policy. The Superintendent will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

3. Decisions and Appeal

Within 5 school days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Superintendent shall mail his or her written decision to the Complainant by U.S. mail, first class, as well as the Complaint Manager.

Within 5 school days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, the Complainant may appeal the decision to the School Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the School Board. Within 10 school days, the School Board shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Superintendent's decision or direct the Superintendent to gather additional information for the Board. Within 5 school days of the Board's decision, the Superintendent shall inform the

Complainant of the Board's action. The Complainant may appeal the School Board's decision to the Regional Superintendent pursuant to Section 3-10 of The School Code and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent pursuant to Section 2-3.8 of The School Code.

This grievance procedure shall not be construed to create an independent right to a School Board hearing. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

The complaint managers are listed as follows:

Joel Zaiser, Principal
Mercer County High School
1500 S. College Ave.
Aledo, IL 61231
(309) 582-2223

Tim Sedam, Principal
Mercer County Junior High
1002 SW 6th St.
Aledo, IL 61231
(309) 582-2441

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All children with disabilities have a right to a free appropriate public education as provided under the Illinois School Code. Mercer County School District shall provide, upon request, written materials and other information that indicates the specific policies, procedures, rules and regulations regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of children with disabilities. Inquiries should be directed to: Mrs. Carolyn McCrory, Special Education Coordinator for Apollo Elementary.

STUDENT RECORDS (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write the school principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health and medical staff and law enforcement unit

personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

Directory information may be disclosed without prior notice or consent unless the parent/guardian or eligible student notifies the Records Custodian or other official in writing, before October of the current school year, that he does not want any or all of the directory information disclosed. Directory information includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

NOTIFICATION

Medicaid Data Release – Special Education Students Only

If your child receives special education services and is also Medicaid eligible, Mercer County District can seek partial reimbursement from Medicaid for health services documented in your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Medicaid reimbursement is a source of federal funds approved by Congress to help school districts maintain and improve diagnostic and therapeutic services for students.

The reimbursement process requires the school district to provide Medicaid with your child's name, birth date and Medicaid number. Federal law requires annual notification of our intent to pursue this reimbursement opportunity.

If you approve of the release of information to Medicaid, do nothing.

If you object to the release of information to Medicaid, now or at any time in the future, please state your objection in writing and forward it to: District Medicaid Reporter, 1002 SW 6th St. , Aledo IL.

Regardless of your decision the district must continue to provide, at no cost to you, the services listed in your child's IEP.

This program has **no impact** on your child's or your family's current or future Medicaid benefits. Under Federal law, your decision to participate in this program CANNOT:

- a) decrease lifetime coverage or any other public insurance benefit,
- b) result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid,
- c) increase your premiums or lead to discontinuation of benefits or insurance, or
- d) result in the loss of eligibility for home or community-based waivers.

Your continued consent allows us to recover a portion of the costs associated with providing health services to your child.

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incrimination, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -*
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use -
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer to from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. Mercer County School District #404 has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Mercer County School District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Mercer County School District will also directly notify, such as through US Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Mercer County School District will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, and HARASSMENT

Bullying is NOT acceptable and is strictly prohibited. Bullying conduct that is covered within the handbook and by the full Mercer County School District's Policy on Bullying, is conduct that occurs on school property or at school or at school sponsored activities or events; while students are being transported or walking to or from school or school sponsored activities or events; while students are waiting at school bus stops, or when the conduct otherwise would substantially impede the educational environment, regardless of where the conduct occurs.

- Any student who engages in bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion and referral to local law enforcement. A student's bullying conduct also may be addressed through any other behavioral interventions.
- Any student who is a bystander to any bullying conduct and who fails to take any action to discourage the bullying conduct also may be subject to appropriate discipline.
- No student shall be retaliated against for reporting bullying conduct. Any student who is determined to intentionally have falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to appropriate discipline.
- For purposes of this Policy, a **bystander** to bullying is a witness to bullying conduct and may be considered to be aiding or abetting the bully. This aiding and abetting includes, but may not be limited to, standing idly by, looking away or otherwise actively encouraging the bully
- Anyone who witnesses any conduct that could constitute bullying shall make a written report as soon as possible to any school staff member.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is any type of conduct that may:

1. Reflect a coercive imbalance of power; AND
2. Is purposeful and repeated; AND
3. Places an individual in reasonable fear of substantial detrimental effect to his or her person or property or to otherwise substantially interfere in participating in any activity.

Cyber-bullying is:

Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)].

For purposes of this Policy “Conduct” includes:

- Physical acts, such as physical contact with another, stalking, sexual assault and destruction, harm or damage to property of another;
- Written and electronic communication any medium as well as verbal threats made to another or blackmail, or demands for protection money;
- Non-verbal threats or intimidation such as aggressive menacing gestures may also be considered conduct for purposes of this policy;
- Use of school property, including computers, the electronic network, or any other electronic device, to communicate with others; and.
- Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds when such conduct creates, or reasonably can be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the school setting and/or at school sponsored activities and events.

This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Conduct that would not *ordinarily* be considered bullying for purposes of this policy includes:

- Mere teasing
- “talking trash”
- Trading insults
- The expression of ideas or beliefs (expressions protected by the First Amendment), so long as such expression is not lewd, profane, or intended to intimidate or harass another.

The complete copy of the Mercer County School District’s ‘Policy on Bullying’ can be found at mercerschools.org.

The ‘Bullying Report Form’ is available at each Mercer County School District school building and on the district website on the last page of the ‘Policy on Bullying’. This report then shall be immediately submitted to the principal or designees(s) responsible for student discipline who, as soon as practicable, shall conduct or cause to be conducted a thorough investigation of the alleged incident.

The police and State’s Attorney shall be notified immediately of all incidents involving bodily harm, property damage or any conduct which reasonably is believed by the school administrator(s) to be a violation of the criminal laws. The investigation of any such bullying conduct shall proceed in cooperation with the police and other applicable law enforcement authorities. The School District always retains its right to investigate and impose any discipline for violation of this Policy, whether or not criminal charges are pursued.

Administrative Contact Information

Tim Farquer, Superintendent	582-2238
Joel Zaiser , High School Principal	582-2223
Brandy Dornon High School Assistant Principal	582-2223
Tim Sedam, Junior High Principal	584-4174
Cheyenne McCann, New Boston Principal	587-8141

Chad Robertson, Apollo Principal	582-5350
Katie Dengler, Apollo Assistant Principal	582-5350

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY

The Illinois State Police provides an online listing of sex offenders required to register in the State of Illinois. The database is updated daily and allows searching by name, city, county, zip code, compliance status, or any combination thereof. The list can be viewed by going to the following web address: <http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/>. The school district will be happy to assist you with getting access to the registry if you do not have Internet access.

PARENTAL RIGHT TO REVIEW CURRICULUM

Parents have a right to review the instructional materials used by their child's classroom teacher. Parents wishing to do so should contact their child's teacher to make arrangements.

TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT

The district provides transportation for all students who live more than 1.5 miles away from school. Parents can seek transportation cost reimbursement from the State if they drive their child to and from school because they feel the child's walking route is unsafe. Parents desiring to seek transportation reimbursement should contact the school by November 1 of each school year to obtain the claim forms. A copy of procedures regarding reimbursement disputes is available to parents upon request.

ASBESTOS PLAN

Many of the district buildings contain some form of asbestos. The district maintains an asbestos plan to ensure the safety of the students and staff. Parents and community members wanting to examine the district's asbestos plan should contact the unit office.

VISION SCREENING

Each year, the district conducts vision screenings with all students. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months.