

**ANNUAL NOTICES MOUNT CARMEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
AUGUST 2021**



**Notification of Rights under FERPA**

*The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:*

1. The Right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 30 days of the day the Mount Carmel Area School District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or director of special education a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school principal or special education director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible students 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 is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Mount Carmel Area School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should make a written request to the school principal or special education director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the Mount Carmel Area School District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the Mount Carmel Area School District will notify the parent or eligible students 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 the Mount Carmel Area School District is notified of the request for 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 education interest. A school official is a person employed by the Mount Carmel Area School District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the Mount Carmel Area School District has contracted to perform a special task (such as 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 in the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school system to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-46054.

### **Programs for Eligible or Protected Handicapped Students (IDEA) Refer to board policy 113**

In compliance with state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Mount Carmel Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying disabled students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students). Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

1. Autism
2. Orthopedic Impairment
3. Deaf/Blindness
4. Other Health Impairment
5. Deafness
6. Specific Learning Disability
7. Emotional Disturbance
8. Speech and Language Impairment
9. Hearing Impairment
10. Traumatic Brain Injury
11. Intellectual Disability
12. Visual Impairment
13. Multiple Disabilities

Potential signs of developmental delays and risk factors that might indicate disabilities include:

Early warning signs: Preschool -

- Late talking, compared to other children - Pronunciation problems - Slow vocabulary growth, often unable to find the right word - Difficulty rhyming words - Trouble learning numbers, the alphabet, days of the week - Extremely restless and easily distracted - Trouble interacting with peers

Early warning signs: Kindergarten through fourth grade - - Slow to learn the connection between letters and sounds - Confuses basic words (run, eat, want) - Makes consistent reading and spelling

errors - Transposes number sequences and confuses arithmetic signs - Slow recall of facts - Slow to learn new skills, relies heavily on memorization - Impulsiveness, lack of planning - Unstable pencil grip - Trouble learning about time - Poor coordination, unaware of physical surroundings, prone to accidents ([www.Idonline.org](http://www.Idonline.org))

If you feel your child is in need of early intervention or screening, evaluation processes designed to access the needs of your child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon written request. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to Mrs. Nicole Edmondson or any building principal. In compliance with state and federal law the Mount Carmel Area School District will provide to all protected handicapped students, without discrimination or cost to the students or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspects of the school program. These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs. This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, rights, and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For additional information on the rights of parents and children, provision of services, evaluation, screening, and rights to due process procedures, you may contact in writing Mrs. Nicole Edmondson or any building principal.

For preschool age children, information may be obtained through the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit at 570-523-1155. This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, rights, and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. Confidentiality: All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The district has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, distribution, and disclosure to third parties of this information.

## **Gifted Services**

In compliance with state law, the Mount Carmel Area School District, provides services designed to meet the unique needs of gifted students. The Mount Carmel Area School District identifies "gifted" students on a case-by-case basis based on state law and district policy. Under Pennsylvania regulations the term mentally gifted is defined as "including a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher and when multiple criteria indicate gifted ability." A person with an IQ lower than 130 may be gifted when other educational criteria in the child's profile strongly indicates gifted ability.

## **Integrated Pest Management**

The Mount Carmel Area School District uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for managing insects, rodents, and weeds. Parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school may request prior notification of specific pesticide applications made at the school. To receive notification, you must be placed on the school's notification registry. If you would like to be placed on this registry, notify the district in writing to the attention of Mr. Dave Fegley (Building and Grounds Supervisor.)

## **Non-Discrimination/Non-Retaliation (Please refer to board policy 103)**

Notice Title IX-Title VI—Section 504 The Mount Carmel Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies. - Mr. Pete Cheddar, Superintendent, 600 West 5th Street, Mount Carmel, PA 17851.

## **Annual State Compliance Announcements**

The following parent notifications are in compliance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Parents shall have the right to inspect all instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, audiovisuals, and other supplementary instructional materials used in the instructional program in accordance with School Board Policy.

The school district shall provide a program for each student whose dominant language is not English for the purpose of facilitating the student's achievement of English proficiency and the academic standards. Parents who believe their child qualifies for this program should contact the building principal. The school district shall provide a program to address the needs and provide appropriate services to migrant student attending the district's schools. Parents who believe their child qualifies for this program should contact the building principal. The school district shall provide a program to address the needs and provide appropriate services to homeless students attending the district's schools. Parents who believe their child qualifies for this program should contact the building principal.

The school district provides health examinations and screenings as defined in School Board Policy #209. This policy states, "Parents/guardians of students who are to receive physical and dental examinations or screenings shall be notified. The notice shall include the date and location of the examination or screening and notice that the parent/guardian may attend or may have the examination or screening conducted privately at the parents'/guardians' expense." Each student shall receive a comprehensive health examination upon original entry, in sixth grade, and in eleventh grade. Each student shall receive a comprehensive dental examination conducted by the school dentist upon original entry in third grade and in seventh grade.

A private health and/or dental examination conducted at the parents or guardian's expense will be accepted in lieu of the school examination. In addition, each student shall receive vision tests, hearing tests, height and weight measurements, tuberculosis tests, and other tests deemed advisable at intervals established by the district. Students may be exempted from such examinations or screenings if they conflict with the parents' religious beliefs. The School Board permits the disclosure or required student information about secondary students to representatives of postsecondary institutions and to representatives of the armed forces of the United States. The disclosed information to recruiters routinely includes names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Parents have the right to request that information not be disclosed without prior written consent. Parents who desire to request that the district withhold this information should notify the building principal in writing. Parents of Title I students shall receive, upon request, information regarding the qualifications and academic degrees instruction/instructional support to their child. Parents desiring more information should contact the school district superintendent.

### **Notification of Rights under the 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. Sexual behaviors or attitudes; 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, 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. 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 from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State Law. Mount Carmel Area does not participate in any surveys or collect information affected by this amendment. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with Family Policy Compliance Office, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5920.

## **Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) Federal Programs and Complaint Procedures**

The Mount Carmel Area School District in accordance with the Every Child Succeeds Act, 2015 (formerly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) is hereby notifying parents/guardians of their rights to receive information regarding: student performance Individual school performance district performance teacher/staff qualifications The District/School performance profiles which include aggregate information including student achievement, graduation rates, and school performance are posted on the Mount Carmel Area School District website and updated annually. Individual student assessment reports on the PSSAs and Keystone exams are mailed or sent home to families each fall and student scores are printed on the student report cards. The assessment score reports provide parents/guardians with a detailed record of student achievement on state academic standards.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires Pennsylvania to ensure that the total number of students assessed in each subject using the PASA does not exceed one percent of the total number of all students in the state assessed on the statewide assessments. Each local educational agency (LEA) must complete and submit the PASA 1.0 Percent Participation Threshold Justification to BSE if it anticipates that more than 1.0 % of its students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 11 will be assessed using the PASA. A list of LEAs who anticipate exceeding the threshold will be made publicly available on the PDE website, in accordance with 34 CFR 200.6 (c)(3) regulations. LEAs must also make the document publicly available upon request, removing any personally identifiable information. The Mount Carmel Area School District anticipates exceeding the 1.0 percent threshold for PASA participation for the 2019-20 testing cycle. The necessary justification information has been submitted to the Bureau of Special Education. Questions on the Mount Carmel Area School District participation rates should be directed to Nicole Edmondson, Special Education Coordinator, (570) 339-1500 ext 3145.

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

Notice for Directory Information The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Mount Carmel Area School District, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Mount Carmel Area School District may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the school district to the contrary in accordance with school district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school district to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

## **Searches (Please refer to board policy 226)**

School officials have the authority to lawfully search students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, without a warrant, when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules.

## **Lockers**

Lockers are assigned to or otherwise made available to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials and limited personal property, and to facilitate movement between classes and activities and to and from school. Such lockers are and shall remain the property of the school district, and to the extent students have any expectation of privacy of lockers at all, it is very limited.

No student may place or keep in a locker any substance or object that is prohibited by law, Board policy or school rules, or that constitutes a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the occupants of the school building or the building itself. Students are required to ensure that their lockers do not contain spoiled food items or beverages, or soiled clothing which may attract pests, create odors or cause unhealthy conditions. A student locker may be opened and inspected for cleanliness, with or without the consent of the student, whenever there are odors, pests or other indications that a locker contains spoiled food, soiled clothing in need of laundering or similarly unhealthy matter.

Students are exclusively responsible for locking their assigned lockers to ensure the security of their personal belongings and school property entrusted to them. Students are permitted to secure their assigned lockers only with locks provided by the district, or if the district does not provide locks, personal combination locks for which the combination has been provided to designated school staff.

Prior to an individual locker search or inspection, the student to whom the locker is assigned shall be notified and be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. However, when there is a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the school population, student lockers may be searched without prior notice to the student.'

## **Review of Curriculum (Policy 105.1)**

Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make existing information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. For more information please contact Mrs. Lisa Varano, High School Principal and Curriculum Coordinator.

## **Photographs/Videos of School Pupils**

On occasion, the Mount Carmel Area School District will photograph or videotape students for use in district publications, including the district website. In addition, newspapers and television stations may photograph or videotape students. Parents who do not want photo or video images of their child to appear should send a letter to the district office. 600 West 5th Street, Mount Carmel, PA 17851.