

THE 2023-2024 CALENDAR

AND INFORMATION GUIDE FOR
THE MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

UPDATED EACH MONTH

ON THE DATE INDICATED ON EACH CALENDAR PAGE.

NEXT UPDATE IS FEBRUARY 27.



"Home of the Mustangs"

Mercer Area Elementary School
Mercer Area Middle School
Mercer Area High School

GLOSSARY OF EDUCATIONAL TERMS

In every field, professionals use acronyms and terms so that there is a common language among people involved in that profession. Sometimes those terms can be perplexing to those who are not involved professionally in the field. Below are some frequently-used acronyms and terms in the field of education. A number of the terms and descriptions contained below were taken from the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website. Parents with questions about these or other terms should feel free to contact the school for further details.

PDE	Pennsylvania Department of Education	USDE	United States Department of Education
IU	Intermediate Unit	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education	EI	Early Intervention
IEP	Individualized Education Program	SPP	School Performance Profile FRIPA Future Ready Index Pa.
MAWA	Mutually Agreed Upon Written Arrangement	SAS	Standards Aligned System
PIN	Parents Involved Network	PSSA	Pennsylvania System of School Assessment
PPI	Pennsylvania Performance Index	ESL	English as a Second Language
Prompt	a topic or guiding question about which students are to reflect	Rubric	a scoring guide listing specific criteria for grading
PASA	Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment	NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
LEA	Local Education Agency	ELA	English Language Arts—including reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and English
PA Core	Pennsylvania Common Core State Standards	ARP ESSER	identifies the American Rescue Plan (2021) Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief funds which provide Pennsylvania with \$5 billion in emergency funding
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act		

Every Student Succeeds Act	The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. The Act reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
State Assessment	State tests are aligned with PA Core standards. Students in grades 3 through 8 take the PSSA test in the areas of mathematics and ELA. Students in grades 4 and 8 take the PSSA test in the area of science. Keystone tests are administered at the end of course in the area of Literature (10 th grade), Biology (9 th grade), and Algebra I. If necessary, students are provided with multiple opportunities, through the end of their eleventh grade year, to earn proficiency status on their Keystone exams.
Disaggregated Data	“Disaggregate” means to separate a whole into its parts. In education, this term means that test results are sorted into groups of students who are economically disadvantaged, come from racial and ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency. This practice allows parents and teachers to see more than just the average score for their child’s school. Instead, parents and teachers can see how each specific student group is performing. (PDE 2006)
Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic	These are placement levels that students are assigned based on their scores on the Pennsylvania state tests.
Academic Standards	These are aspects of various disciplines such as math, reading, writing, science, etc. that are defined as necessary for students to know and understand. These standards form the basis of the Pennsylvania state tests.
Ready to Learn Block Grant	This is supplemental money which the Commonwealth has appropriated for use by schools in a number of designated research proven areas of educational enhancement. These areas include full-day kindergarten, lower class size in the primary grades, technology, and subgroup intervention.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The Mercer Area School District Board of Directors is pleased to present this edition of the district calendar with important school activities and dates listed for the 2023-2024 school year, 51 years after the district's first publication for 1972-1973.

This year's edition includes specific dates and events for the current and following month, with monthly updates made each successive month. Months without specific dates and events will still include key facts about the school year. **Remember to check the "new" calendar every month.**

Sports schedules are found at <https://merceraletics.com>. Updates are on the district website.

Permission is granted to individuals to download to a personal electronic device or to print any or part of this publication for personal use only.

In addition to the dates, important school policies and information are also provided. We urge you to read this material carefully. We hope that this guide will be of value to you, and we welcome and encourage your suggestions for this publication. For more detailed information, please go to <https://pa02218537.schoolwires.net/domain/184>

Board of Education--

David Lengel, president	Aimee Peters	Rodney Bobby
Shane Nugent, vice president	Matthew Hazi	Derek Stotsky
Arthur W. Amos, treasurer	Steven VanWoert	J. Jarrett Whalen

*Michael Stabile secretary

*Knox McLaughlin Gornall & Sennett, solicitors

*indicates non-members

The Board of Education consists of nine elected members serving terms of four years; terms of office are staggered so that there is a constant balance between experienced and new members sitting in session during the operation of the schools. The directors are responsible for the total operation of the public schools and are empowered to construct buildings as needed, raise monies for operating expenses, and formulate policies for personnel who are employed by the district. The Mercer Board of Directors meets in the middle-high school library on the third Monday of each month, except December (the first Monday) and January and February, (the fourth Monday), as noted in the calendar section. A copy of the monthly school board meeting agenda will be available on the District website at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. All meetings are public, and visitors are welcome to attend. The directors also have a representative (Mr. Lengel, Chairman) on the board of the Mercer County Career Center, 776 Greenville Road, Mercer. (Phone: 724-662-3000) and a representative (Mr. Bobby) on the Midwestern IU IV board.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

It is the responsibility of the Mercer Area School District to inform the public that asbestos-containing material exists in small undisturbed quantities at the middle/senior high school. These isolated areas are limited to floor tile and inaccessible pipe fittings.

All other asbestos-containing material was removed in 1998-1999 at the middle/senior high school; all known asbestos containing material was removed from the elementary school in 2008-2009. If any additional asbestos-containing material is found at either building, the public will be made aware of its existence and location.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance as defined in Section 1327 of the Pennsylvania State Code is required by all students. Absent excuse forms are on p. 31

Reasons for excused absence:

1. Illness (be specific); 2. Quarantine; 3. Serious illness or death in immediate family; 4. Emergency medical or dental attention; 5. Absence approved in advance with the principal (example: pre-planned educational trip); 6. Authorized religious holiday; 7. Impassible roads; 8. Exceptionally urgent reasons affecting child and his home or accepted by principal; and 9. Court appearance.

Reasons not considered excused:

1. Truancy; 2. Missing school bus; 3. Trips not approved in advance; 4. Shopping; 5. Hunting, fishing, or attending sports events; 6. Birthday or other celebration; 7. Baby sitting; 8. Driver's examination; and 9. Other reasons not listed in the legal excuse grouping.

The school has the responsibility to inform parents of the attendance regulations which apply to their children. Parents should use the absence excuse form in the back of the calendar. If a written excuse is not given within a week, the unexcused absence is considered illegal. A written excuse--although mandatory--does not necessarily mean that the absence is "excused." (See above lists.)

Children who are absent a total of ten days will need a signed statement by the doctor for each absence beyond the ten days. The doctor's statement will be required the day the student returns to school. If the school does not receive the doctor's statement, the absence(s) will be marked unexcused, and appropriate action will be taken by the superintendent as required by the state attendance laws. Middle/high school students who miss more than 30 class periods in a full-credit course or more than 15 class periods in a half-credit course (not including school-related absences and extended illnesses or injuries) may not receive course credit.

School is important, and regular attendance is vital to students' success.

THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) ACT'S REQUIRED HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN SET BY MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan, hereinafter referred to as a Health and Safety Plan.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body, posted on its publicly available website, and reviewed every six months throughout the life of the ARP ESSER Fund (ends Sept 30, 2024).

The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Mercer Area School District reviewed its ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan on January 22, 2024 and posted the approved plan on the district website on January 23, 2024.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

The Mercer Area School District will use the Blackboard Connect platform to alert families of changes to the district's ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan.

Please note the school district will be continually updating the district website with letters and documents noting valuable information related to COVID-19 procedures and related school operations, such as Free Meals for students throughout the school year.

Note: ARP Act: American Rescue Plan Act

ESSER Fund: Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund

LEA: Local Education Agency

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

With the aim of assuring equal rights and opportunities within our community and to comply with Federal Laws (including Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972), State Laws, and State Departments of Education regulations concerning these, the Mercer Area School District reaffirms itself to be an Equal Rights and Opportunities School District. As an Equal Rights and Opportunities School District, it does not discriminate against individuals or groups because of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or non-relevant handicaps and disabilities. The school district's commitment to nondiscrimination extends to students, employees, prospective employees, and the community.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 states that no person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Sex discrimination under Title IX includes sexual harassment and sexual violence. Sexual Harassment is defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Any unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be made to Equal Rights and Opportunities Director, or to the Director of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, Welfare, Washington, D.C.

Issues dealing with Title IX should be brought to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator (Dr. Michael Piddington, Assistant Superintendent – 724-662-5100 or mpiddington@mercerc.k12.pa.us) at the district's central office where copies of the district's Title IX Grievance Procedure also may be obtained.

BUS LOADING PROCEDURES

It is the driver's responsibility to establish a regular schedule within a reasonable range of time. (That range will increase, of course, in extreme weather or when there are problems with the bus itself.)

Drivers are not permitted to wait for students at pick-up points. It is unlawful for a bus to hold up traffic. Also, a bus that waits for one child will be late for the next child and all subsequent children.

Parents are responsible for having their children at bus pick-up points on time. Parents also should instruct their children to stay back from the road until the bus is fully stopped and the lights are flashing. This is especially important in bad weather. In case of young children, parents should help form good safety habits. They should talk to their children about situations that might arise: what to do if a pet comes to the bus, if papers blow out of the child's hand and under the bus as the driver is pulling away, or if a stranger tries to pick up the child. Children should be instructed to go directly home after departing the bus.

Students will be assigned to both a specific bus and bus stop. Students are permitted to ride only the bus to which they have been assigned and must get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. In the case of an extreme emergency such as serious family illness or death, the building principal may grant an exception. Parents may choose to have their child picked up at one location and dropped off at another, but any change must be the same for every day of the week and must be approved based on seat availability, bus routing, and cost to the district.

It is very difficult for drivers to keep track of their children if they do not follow a safe, daily routine. It is important that parents support the bus driver and school principal when dealing with the misconduct of students riding the bus. The school's only concern is for the safety of the children. The administration has the authority to suspend students at any time from the bus.

THE CAFETERIA

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Food and Nutrition Division approved last year the Mercer Area School District's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) application.

CEP is a four-year program that began with the 2022-2023 school year and will end after the 2025-2026 school year, during which time CEP will provide **all students one free breakfast and lunch per day during the school year.**

Under the CEP program, no lunches will be available for pickup. Please note that free meals do not include extras or snack items, and students who want a double lunch or an extra entree will be charged for the additional food items. No items in the snack line qualify as a free meal; therefore, all food in the snack line will be a charged item.

For parents with any questions or a need for additional information, please contact Mercer's Food Service Director, Mrs. Jane Ferguson, at 724-662-5104 extension 23.

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

It is the responsibility of the total school community to maintain an atmosphere conducive to a pleasant and effective educational program. Rules that are reasonable as well as consistent are necessary for a wholesome school climate. If learning is to prevail, discipline is essential. It sets the stage for learning, and it seeks to educate toward self-discipline. It is the intent of Mercer Area Schools to create and maintain disciplinary guidelines that provide a school setting that is safe and consistent for the students and staff.

The board, administration, and staff shall require each student of this district to adhere to these rules and regulations and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of these rules. The code prescribes minimum steps to be followed for offenses. The board, administration, and staff may impose more stringent penalties in exceptional situations. The rules shall govern student conduct in school including all school activities and during the time spent in travel to and from school.

Each student will receive a student/parent handbook, which outlines school rules, expectations, and disciplinary measures.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Information on scholarships, grants, and loans is available in the high school guidance office for those students who wish to further their education upon graduation from Mercer Area High School. The guidance department phone number is 724-662-2272. Many of these opportunities have deadlines early in the second semester. Seniors should not overlook the dozens of local awards that are given in addition to Pell Grants, SEOG (Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants), CWS (College Work Study), and aid from the institution the student will attend.

This year's financial aid presentation took place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, December 7 in the high school LGI.

HANDBOOKS FOR STUDENTS/PARENTS

School board-approved student/parent handbooks reflect expectations for students, disciplinary measures, and building and district policies. Each student will receive a copy of the building student/parent handbook. Find the info on line at <https://pa02218537.schoolwires.net/domain/184>

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/ GRADE PROGRESSION FOR GRADES 9-12

In essence, students bear the responsibility to comply with graduation requirements. For school purposes a student will progress clerically with a homeroom, but may not have successfully completed all courses to date. A student will not fail a particular grade, but must meet all graduation requirements. Therefore, it would be possible for a student to be in a senior homeroom but not be able to comply with graduation requirements as indicated below by the end of the senior year.

Students earn a diploma at graduation with a total of 24.5 credits in grades 9-12. Minimum required courses are these:

English—4	Social Studies—4	Math—3	Science —3
Arts/Humanities—1	Health—1	PE —1	Electives – 6
Computer Application/Technology—1	Family/Consumer Science—.5		

Each student is also required to complete a culminating project as required by the State Board of Education 22 PA Code Chapter 4 and score at a proficient level or better on the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature or must demonstrate proficiency through an alternate pathway as set forth in Act 158.

A pupil may not accrue more than 1.5 credits in failure in grades 9-12. If possible, students should attempt to remove failures from their records.

Career Center pupils must complete all state requirements in addition to the Career Center program.

Only those senior students who have completed requirements for a diploma will be permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.

HOMEWORK

Homework is properly defined as any work planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher.

Philosophy: We believe these points:

1. Assigning homework is an acceptable practice. It becomes an essential part of the total education of the student when it provides the opportunity

for the student to practice, apply, integrate, or extend school learning, reinforce independent work-study skill, use school and community resources, and develop self discipline.

2. Homework must be based on student needs, abilities, and/or interests.

3. Each teacher, student, and parent has a responsibility for insuring the success of homework assignments: the teacher for following district and departmental guidelines when assigning homework, the student for completing the assignments according to the criteria established by or with the teacher, and the parent for providing the work area, time, and conditions necessary for the student to complete the assignments.

In-school and after-school tutoring for grades 7-12 is available. Interested students should contact the guidance office.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children eligible to enter kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year will be registered from 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Monday, March 18 through Friday, March 22, 2024.

Specifics about how to register students for the Class of 2037 will be available on the school district's home page under "Announcements" as registration dates near.

Parents must call the office to schedule an appointment at 724-662-5102. Vision, speech and hearing, and kindergarten readiness screenings will be done during registration, with the entire process taking 20-30 minutes. Parents are required to show a state-issued birth certificate (must be five years old by August 31, 2024) and evidence of the completion of immunizations as required by state law. These include four doses of DT (one after the child's fourth birthday); three doses of oral polio vaccine; two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (first dose after the child's first birthday); three doses of hepatitis B vaccine; and two doses of varicella (given after the child's first birthday) or proof of the disease.

Immunizations can be obtained from your private physician or from the state Department of Health, at 724-662-4000.

Two proofs of residency are also required. If a student does not reside with both parents, a custody agreement or proof of guardianship is required.

MEDICINES DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Mercer Area School District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for giving medicines to their children. Medicines will be given by the school nurse or her designee under the following conditions:

**Non-Prescription:* Medicines will be given only if accompanied by a doctor's order for them. For each day that the medicine is to be given during school hours, the parent must write a note stating the name of the medicine, the reason the medicine is to be given, the amount to be given, and the exact time the medicine should be given. Medicines must be in their original containers or they will not be given.

**Prescription:* Parents are required to bring and deliver to the school nurse all prescription medicines. Students are not permitted to bring prescription medicines to school. Medicines will be given only if needed more than three times a day.

The parent must bring only enough medicine for the doses required at school; medicines must be in the original pharmaceutical dispensed container. The parent must also sign a note stating when and why the medicine is to be given. Students taking medicine on a regular, daily basis must secure a medicine sheet from the health room to be completed by the student's doctor and parent or guardian.

All medications and written consents must be given to the school nurse.

OPEN HOUSE

Residents of the Mercer Area School District were invited to attend open house from **5:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 30 at the middle/high school** and from **5:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 14 at the elementary school**.

Parents are always urged to remember that the purpose of Open House is to enable them to meet their children's teachers and to view school facilities. Due to the great number of visitors during the evening, it is impossible for the teachers to discuss appropriately an individual student's progress. Should parents desire to discuss the child's work, a conference should be arranged with the teacher.

DISTRICT COMMITMENT TO HEALTH

The Mercer Area School District approved its required ARP Health and Safety Plan on January 22, 2024 and posted the approved plan on the district website on January 23, 2024. Details are found on page 4, with the dates listed being for the most recent approved and posted plan.

PRIVACY RIGHTS OF PARENTS & STUDENTS

The Mercer Area School District and its employees are required by federal law and state and federal rules to protect the rights of the students.

The foundation of these rights comes from federal legislation entitled Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (also known as the Buckley Amendments). There are state rules and regulations dealing with regular and special education students' rights and privacy. All students are covered by the state regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as the Students' Rights and Responsibilities. The basic premise of the above-mentioned laws, rules, and regulations is that information about students cannot be disclosed without written parental consent.

Educational records, personally identifiable information, and directory information: Educational records consist of information directly related to a student which is maintained by an educational agency. Personally identifiable information includes the student's name, the name of the parent or other family members, a personal identifier, or a list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable. Education records and personally identifiable information cannot be disclosed or released without written parent consent or, if a student is over eighteen, without student consent. There is certain information that can be released without consent, which is called directory information. Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The school district designates what information is labeled as directory information. It shall include the following: the student's name, address, 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 by the student. Disclosure of information means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communications of education records, or the personally-identifiable information contained in these records to any party by any means, including oral, written, or electronic. This means that information about a student cannot even be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge of a student.

Written parental consent is necessary for disclosure of personally identifiable information and education records. The consent must specify the records that may be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the part of the class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. Furthermore, the school district must maintain a written record of disclosure for the parents to inspect in case information has been released.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Board of School Directors of this district that each student shall be moved forward in a continuous pattern to achievement and growth that is in harmony with the student's own development, within the following guidelines:

1. Sequential levels of a course must be passed before a student can move from one level to the next (e.g., Spanish I to Spanish II).
2. A student will spend no more than two years in each of grades 7 or 8 unless determined by the administrator and counselors.
3. A student may not accrue more than one and one-half (1-1/2) credits in failures in grades 9-12. Students should attempt to remove failures.
4. If promotion is to be granted on the basis of summer school, the make-up course must consist of 30 hours of instruction at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.
5. One-on-one tutoring to earn promotions will be offered at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.
6. Conducted by Mercer staff or their designees, group tutoring sessions to earn promotion are offered in selected courses for a minimum of 30 hours at a cost incurred by the student, payable in advance.

Within the elementary school, student grade assignments will be made on the basis of student performance and progress and will focus on what is in the best interest of the child. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the decision-making process involving their child(ren).

FOLLOWING PROPER PROCEDURE

When parents feel that their child is having difficulties in school, they should use the following procedures for obtaining corrective action:

1. If the problem is related to a teacher, an appointment with the teacher should be made through the school office. If the problem cannot be resolved with the teacher, an appointment should then be made with the principal.
2. If the problem is other than teacher related, the parents should contact the building principal.
3. If satisfaction is not obtained at the teacher or building level, then the parents should contact the superintendent of the schools.
4. After the three levels have been exhausted, parents can always appeal to the president of the board of education.

We strongly urge all parents to use the procedures, as we have found that in 99% of all cases, most problems can be solved at the teacher or building

principal level. The board of education has strongly endorsed this procedure and recommends that parents observe the suggested processes.

REPORT CARDS

All students in kindergarten through twelfth grades will receive report cards every NINE (9) weeks. Parents of students in kindergarten through sixth grade should sign the report card and promptly return it to the school. If you have a question about your child's progress, please feel free to call and arrange for a conference with your child's teacher.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Rules and Regulations: All students who participate in extra-curricular activities, regardless of whether they are dances, assemblies, plays, concerts, ceremonies, sports, or any unclassified activity identified with or representing the school, whether on school property or elsewhere shall automatically abide by these rules:

1. Promptness and attendance: When a sponsor is relying on students to be at a prescribed place at specific times, failure to be present and prompt can cause delays in transportation and in the entire activity. This can bring about much inconvenience for those who are present.
2. All school rules prescribed in the discipline code apply to school activities, with penalties listed.
3. Participation in a school function is a part of a student's education. Thus, school officials will encourage participation of all students who demonstrate the proper attitude, willingness to work, attend practice, etc.

Failure to abide by the above rules will result in suspension or expulsion from the activity as enforced by the sponsor and other penalties provided by the discipline code in the student/parent handbook.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

AND SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT TEAMS

The school district provides a Student Assistance Program, a way to identify students who are having problems in school because of alcohol or other drug abuse or because of other high-risk behaviors and to refer them for help. This program is not designed as treatment, but as an intervention program. The ESAP/SAP teams of specially-trained school personnel may receive referrals from other school personnel, parents, and students themselves; the team will conduct a pre-assessment to determine the need for action. Formal assessments, if indicated, are provided by a professional counselor or interventionist outside of the school. Further information on this program is available by calling the school office.

The elementary school will also utilize the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS-RtII) through its Child Study Team (CST) process to monitor and provide a comprehensive system of supports that includes standards-aligned, culturally responsive, and high quality core instruction, universal screening, data-based decision-making, tiered services and supports, family engagement, central/building level leadership, RtII/SLD determination, and professional learning. Simply put, MTSS represents a broad set of evidence-based practices that may be implemented across a system to include Academics *and* Behavior within a recursive and systematic problem-solving process. MTSS is intended to help all students meet with continuous academic and behavioral success.

This collaborative effort requires a team of educators working along with the student's family. By working together to design instruction that works best with an individual student, we expect to provide an optimal learning experience for each and every child.

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

Parents or eligible students shall be permitted upon request to inspect and review the student's records of attendance, health, discipline, and education. Any request should be made to the building principal, who will arrange a meeting at a mutually agreeable time. At parental request, a professional employee will be available to explain items in the record.

A list of the school district's professional staff having access to students' records is kept in the file. Each staff member must sign an access sheet every time a record is reviewed and state the purpose for the review.

Any persons or agency representative not appearing on the access list must obtain written consent from the parent or eligible student to review any portion of the record.

Prior to the destruction of records, written notification to the parents shall be sent to inform them of their right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed.

RIGHT-TO-KNOW RECORDS

The complete records policy is available in each building's office. The Open Records Officer is Dr. Michael Piddington. All Right-to-Know requests may be sent to openrecordsofficer@mercerc.k12.pa.us or to Mercer Area School District, Attn: Dr. Michael Piddington, 545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students shall have all legal rights as given to them by law. These rights include the right to an education, the right to express their opinion, and the right to be free from discrimination.

Along with student rights come student responsibilities. These responsi-

bilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and compliance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the faculty and administration the responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

Other student responsibilities are as follows: 1. to be aware of and to obey school rules and regulations; 2. to meet common standards of decency; 3. to take care of school property; 4. to attend daily classes, except when excused, and to be on time for all classes; 5. to come to class with necessary books and supplies; 6. to come to class with assigned work completed; 7. to avoid disrespectful, indecent, or obscene gestures or language; 8. to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous way and consider the rights of others at all times; 9. to obey the bus safety rules and safety practices in all school programs such as gym, shop, etc.; 10. to display good conduct and proper table manners in the school cafeteria; 11. to understand the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and the abuse of drugs; and 12. to be guided by acceptable public behavior and good taste in their conduct with others.

STUDENTS IN SCHOOL PICTURES

Throughout the year, pictures and/or videos are taken during various school activities and may be used in bulletin board displays, school/local newspapers, assemblies, the school website, and other media. Professional photographers take individual/group pictures for ID, yearbooks, sports/extra-curricular programs, collages, and educational documents.

Parents who do not want their child(ren) to be included must notify the appropriate principal in writing.

SUPPORT SERVICES EDUCATION PROGRAM

To meet the needs of eligible students, services are available which meet the needs of the entire district: *Within the district*--gifted support, learning support, supplemental autistic support, supplemental emotional support, supplemental life skills support, speech and language, vision support, hearing support, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and adaptive physical therapy. *Outside of the district*--supplemental and full-time life skills support, autistic support, emotional support, multi-handicapped support, and approved private schools.

WORKING PAPERS

No minor under 18 years of age (unless a HS graduate) shall be employed without an Employment Certificate (Work Permit), issued by the school district. Apply in person at the office of the superintendent.

The student must show evidence of date of birth (birth certificate, passport, driver's license, etc.). The completed application, including parent signature, must be returned to the superintendent's office.

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal laws called the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA 2004).

The IDEA requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents in newspapers or other media before any major identification location or evaluation activity. The IDEA requires this notice to contain certain information. Pennsylvania law requires each school district to fulfill this notice requirement by providing an annual public notice.

The school district is required by the IDEA to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. Pennsylvania has adopted state laws which conform with the IDEA and which school districts must follow. In Pennsylvania school age children with disabilities who need special education related services are identified as a child with a disability.

Students are exceptional if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities: autism/pervasive development disorder, serious emotional disturbance, traumatic brain injury, deafness or hearing impairment, specific learning disability, intellectual disability, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, blindness or visual impairment, and speech or language impairment

In Pennsylvania, students also qualify as exceptional if they require specially designed instruction and are determined to be mentally gifted.

The IDEA requires the provisions of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners. In Pennsylvania, a child between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners who has a development delay or one or more of the physical or mental disabilities listed above is identified as a child with a disability.

These children are afforded the rights of school age exceptional children, including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provisions of appropriate programs and services. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and

services to these children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act.

Screening: Each school district must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities, which include but are not limited to review of group-based data (cumulative record, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded class, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening.

Through the district's Student Assistance Program and elementary school's Child Study Teams (CST), parents and members of the professional staff have the right to request screenings.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted in the student's home school unless other arrangements are necessary. Contact the district coordinator of special education, Mrs. Shirley Spiegel (grades K-12) at 724-662-5102, extension 3020.

Evaluation: When screening indicates that a student may be exceptional, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. "Evaluation" means procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that meet the child's needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is called a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which must include a school psychologist, a teacher and the parents. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and use procedural safeguard procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation may not be racially and culturally biased.

The MDE process results in a written evaluation report (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. The evaluation report also makes recommendations for educational programming regardless of whether or not the team recommends that the student is exceptional.

Once parental consent for an evaluation is obtained, the school district has timelines and procedures specified by law, which it must follow.

Parents who think their child is a child with a disability may request at any time that the school district conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the Coordinator of Special Services. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation the school district shall provide the parent with a form for written permission. Instructional Support (IS) activities do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request, at any time, including prior to or during the provision of instructional support activities, a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation. The school district must provide to parent, on request, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained.

Educational Placement: The determination of whether or not the student is exceptional is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is exceptional. The IEP team must include a district representative, the student's teacher, special education teacher and the parents. If the student is determined to be exceptional an IEP will be developed.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, and objectives, and the individual programs and services, which the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students: Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students and therefore be protected by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. The school district must ensure that protected handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for the individual student.

In compliance with state and federal law, the school district will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aides, 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 of school age with a

physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect 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.

The school district or parent may initiate an evaluation of a student under the laws, which protect handicapped students. Parents who wish to have a child evaluated should contact the building principal or the coordinator of special education.

Confidentiality: Each school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its exceptional and protected handicapped students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws.

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. These rights are as follows:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives 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 principal 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 student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate.

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 education interests. A school official is a

person employed by the 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 school has contracted to perform a special task (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 task.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational 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 failure by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605

This amendment to the Annual Notice has been in effect since the start of the 2018-2019 school year:

The addition of this information fulfills the state and federal requirements under 22 PA Code 14.121 and 34 CFR § 300.111 Child Find. Also, the addition of this information to the Annual Notice meets compliance requirements as per 34 CFR § 300.600 State monitoring and enforcement.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

*PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.

*PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

The school district maintains its education records in compliance with the guidelines for the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of pupil records. Category “A” data which includes the minimal personal data necessary for operation of the school district will be maintained for a minimum time period of a 100 years. Category “B” data which includes verified information of clear importance, but not absolutely necessary to the school, over time, in helping the child or in protecting others will be maintained until the child leaves school. Category “C” data which includes potentially useful information, but not yet verified or clearly needed beyond the immediate present will be reviewed at least once a year and destroyed

as soon as its usefulness has ended.

In addition, the school district may release “directory information” without parental consent unless a prior written objection to the release of such information is provided to the school district by the parent(s). “Directory information” includes the following: student’s name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, photographs, videotapes, major fields of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, duties of attendance, honors and awards received. If you object to the disclosure of this information, you must submit a written letter of objection to the school district on or before end of September. Written objections should be mailed to Mercer Area Schools, 545 West Butler St., Mercer, PA 16137.

See Mercer Area School District Confidentiality Policies 216, 216.1, and 216.2 effective April 2019 for additional information on Confidentiality.

Procedural Safeguards: Procedural safeguards protect the rights of parents and students. These safeguards include the following:

Parent’s consent is always required prior to conducting an initial (for the first time) evaluation or a reevaluation, initially placing a child with a disability in a special education program, and disclosing to unauthorized persons personally identifiable information.

The school district must notify parents in writing whenever it wants to begin, change, or discontinue special education and related services. Along with this notification, the school district will provide the parents with a comprehensive, written description of their rights.

Parents who disagree with such actions proposed or refused by the school district have the right to request a hearing by an impartial third party using a procedure called due process. School districts also have the right to initiate due process in certain situations. During a due process procedure, a student must remain in the last agreed upon educational placement (a status called pendency). Due process procedures are governed by timelines and procedures in Pennsylvania law.

Due process usually begins with a pre-hearing conference between the school district and the parents, although either party may waive the right to a pre-hearing conference. Throughout due process, any person, including an attorney, may represent parents. If a pre-hearing conference does not resolve the dispute, the parent may request an impartial due process hearing with an independent hearing officer.

Due process hearings are oral personal hearings and are open to the public, unless the parents request a closed hearing. The decision of the hearing officer shall include finding of fact, a discussion, and conclusions of law; the decision may be appealed to the appropriate court.

Pennsylvania has also made mediation services available throughout the Commonwealth at Commonwealth expense. Mediation services help parents and agencies involved in a dispute over special education to attempt to reach a mutually agreeable settlement with the assistance of an impartial mediator. Mediation does not deny or delay a party's right to a due process hearing.

Each school district must make available, upon request, printed information regarding special education programs and services and parent due process rights. This printed information is available from each building principal and the coordinator of special education.

Mode of Communication: The content of this notice has been written in straightforward, simple language. If a person does not understand any of this notice, that person should contact the school district or IU and request an explanation.

The school district or IU will arrange for an interpreter for parent with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district or IU will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode of normality used by the parent (e.g. sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

For further information, contact the district's coordinator of special education, Mrs. Shirley Spiegel, (grades K-12) at 724-662-5102, ext. 3020.

The Mercer Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or any other legally protected classification. Announcements of this policy are in accordance with the state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1966, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information regarding grievance procedures, services, activities, programs and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons or, for inquiries regarding compliance with the above nondiscriminatory policies, please contact Dr. Ronald Rowe, Superintendent of Schools, Mercer Area School District, 545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137 or at 724-662-5100.

Mercer Area School District will make reasonable accommodations to its programs and services to assure access to all persons. If, because of a disability, you require an accommodation please contact the Superintendent of Schools, Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 724-662-5100.

TITLE I

Title I is a 100 percent federally-funded supplemental education program that provides financial assistance to LEAs (Local Educational Agencies) to improve educational opportunities for children. Title I programs are designed to help children meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts, and mathematics. In buildings with 40 percent or more poverty, LEAs may utilize Title I funds to upgrade the entire curriculum of the school and are school-wide programs. In buildings with less than 40 percent poverty, programs are designed to help specific children and are known as targeted assisted programs. LEAs and schools are subject to consequences of school choice and supplemental education services if they do not meet adequate yearly progress as determined by the SEA. (PDE - Division of Federal Programs)

The Mercer Area Elementary school-wide Title I Program provides instructional services developed at helping students improve their skills in mathematics and/or reading. Students qualify for these services based on assessments such as DRAs, NWEAs, PSSAs, and teacher recommendations. All students are assessed at least three times per year and can successfully exit or test into the program. Progress monitoring is done regularly and results are sent home so that families can stay informed.

At least one Family Participation event is conducted each year, sponsored by Title I. The format is an Introduction and Information. Title I families are encouraged to attend these informative and enjoyable experiences. Additionally, Mercer Area Elementary has two Scholastic Book Fairs, and the second one coincides with our Annual Book Talk Night. Students are invited to share their love of books and reading, and then all attendees are invited to the Scholastic Book Fair for purchases.

TITLE I RESOURCE CENTER

The Title I teachers can provide take-home packets that contain materials to practice skills at home. Please contact any of the Title I teachers regarding which skills you would like your child to work on or ask for the teacher's recommendations. Title I teachers would be glad to work with your child's classroom teacher and send a packet/materials home.

TITLE I CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Greg Acre, Principal/Title I Coordinator at 724-662-5102, ext. 3010
Parents' questions and comments are encouraged. Please do not hesitate to contact us. Your involvement in your child's education makes *all* the difference.

HOMELESSNESS

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children as “individuals who lack a fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence.”

The Act provides examples of children who fall under this definition. They are children and youth...

- *sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship.
- *living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations.
- *living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- *abandoned in hospitals.
- *awaiting foster care placement.
- *whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodations (e.g., park benches, etc.).
- *living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus or train stations.

If you think you or your family is currently in a situation similar to any of the above examples, please contact Dr. Michael Piddington, assistant superintendent at 724-662-5100 or in person within the central office.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

- * <http://www.miu4.org/spac> (PA State Parent Advisory Council—SPAC.—has information to help families improve student achievement.)
- * <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc> (Title I Program and parent involvement information).

TEXT AND E-MAIL ALERTS AVAILABLE

Mercer Area School District offers both text and email alerts to parents via **Blackboard Connect**. These alerts will be provided in addition to regular TV and radio notices. Contact information that is within the Tyler Student Information System (Tyler SIS) will be used to send out notification messages to families.

As such, it is incredibly important to update the school with any changes that are made to telephone numbers and/or email addresses any time throughout the school year.



Information on the mass notification system can be found on the Mercer Area School District website (www.mercer.k12.pa.us) under the “Family & Community – Parent Quick Links – School Notification Program.”

MERCER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

MERCER AREA SCHOOLS

www.mercer.k12.pa.us

545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137

Mercer Area Schools Phone Number

724-662-5100

Mercer Area Schools FAX Number

724-662-5109

Superintendent: Dr. Ronald R. Rowe, Jr. Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Michael Piddington. Office Manager/Secretary: Mrs. Lynn Long. Maintenance: Mr. Justin Haynie. Facilities Director: Mr. Arthur A. Amos. Transportation Director: Mr. Mark Roman (ext. 40). Athletic Director: Mr. Eric Mount.

MERCER AREA SCHOOL BOARD

545 West Butler Street, Mercer, PA 16137

Mercer Area School Board Phone Number

724-662-4120

Business Manager/Board Secretary: Mr. Michael Stabile. Assistant to the Business Manager/Payroll Specialist: Mrs. Diane Nugent. Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Dana Rowe.

MERCER AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

301 Lamor Road, Mercer, PA 16137

Mercer Elementary Phone Number 724-662-5102; -5107; -5108

Mercer Elementary FAX number

724-662-5103

Principal: Mr. Greg Acre. Assistant Principal: Mrs. Shirley Spiegel. K-12 Coordinator of Special Education: Mrs. Shirley Spiegel. Secretaries: Mrs. Heather Busch, Mrs. Linda Ryan. Special Education Secretary: Mrs. Brittany Milliren.

MERCER AREA MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

545 West Butler St., Mercer, PA 16137

Middle/High School Phone Number

724-662-5104; -5105

Middle/High School Guidance Office

724-662-2272

Middle/High School FAX number

724-662-2993

High School Principal: Mr. Eric Mausser. Middle School Principal and Coordinator of the Mercer Virtual Academy: Mrs. Amanda Simpson. K-12 Coordinator of Special Education: Mrs. Shirley Spiegel (724-662-5102). Secretaries: Mrs. Summer Green, Mrs. Darla Roman.

MASD MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mercer Area School District is to provide a world-class education to all students.

-MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL-

Art: Mrs. Meghan Glass.

Computers: Mr. Michael Morneweck.

Director of Athletics: Mr. Eric Mount.

Family/Consumer Science: Mrs. Marlena Priester.

Foreign Language: Mrs. Mandy Oates, Spanish; Mrs. Shelley Rowe, French.

Guidance: Ms. Emily Pepper, 9-12 counselor; Miss Courtney Brown, 7-8 counselor. *Secretary:* Mrs. Jennifer Wamboldt.

Health and Physical Education: Mr. Tyler Hile, Mrs. Michelle Santom.

Industrial Arts: Mr. Doug Schmid.

Language Arts: Mrs. Jill McCracken, Miss Breanna Renkin, Mrs. Danielle Ross, Mrs. Nicole Walzer.

Speech/Language Pathologist: Mrs. Kelsey Rose.

Librarian: Mrs. Janice Langdon. *Library Aide:* Mrs. Valerie Ellenberger.

Mathematics: Mr. William Chess, Mrs. Cynthia Gilmore, Mr. Michael Morneweck, Mr. Troy Morris, Miss Macey Redmond, Mr. Doug Schmid.

Music: Mrs. Michalee Christy, vocal; Mr. Jonathan Freidhoff, instrumental.

Nurse: Mrs. Jennifer Mausser, R.N. (Phone: 724-662-5104, ext. 21).

Certified School Psychologist: Mrs. Jillian Braden.

Science: Mr. William Chess, Mrs. Anna Cook, Mrs. Erin Ellis, Miss Samantha Hong, Mr. Luke Rust.

Social Studies: Mr. Justin Gadsby, Miss Merrilynn Giles, Mr. Derek Myers, Mrs. Cassie Washil.

Support Services Education: Mr. Andrew Burk, Mr. Doug Edney, Mrs. Jessica Ingley, Mrs. Erica Mild, Mr. Kevin Reese.

Student Services: Aides/Paraprofessionals: Mrs. Mary Borowicz, Mrs. Brenda Briggs, Mrs. Karen Egger, Ms. Shelia Grossman, Mrs. Jamie Heckman, Miss Daina McAdams, Miss Jessica Montalvo, Mrs. Terri Stringert, Mrs. Shawna Ziegler.

Technology Aide: Mr. David Foley.

Greeter: Mrs. Cindy Green, Mrs. Joanne Weaver.

Mercer Area School District is a proud host site for Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps and Mr. Max Hamilton, serving students for 2023-2024.

-ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL-

K: Mrs. Rachel Algoe, Mrs. Jennifer Beach, Mrs. Lexi Bourdeau, Mr. Caleb Ritenour, Miss Mara Weekley.

Grade 1: Mrs. Ava Bresnan, Mrs. Tammy Bright, Mrs. Andrea Crooks, Mrs. Amy Neugebauer, Mrs. Courtney Shepherd-Conner.

Grade 2: Mrs. Alexis Cannon, Mrs. Marcy Dadich, Mrs. Debbie Gawne, Mrs. Julee Reese, Mrs. Carrie Schmid.

Grade 3: Mrs. Amanda Jockel, Mr. Marshall Nych, Mrs. Kerry VanWoert, Miss Lacey Weaver.

Grade 4: Mrs. Emilie Mulneix, Mrs. Laura Nych, Miss Allysen Uber, Mr. David Urey IV.

Grade 5: Mrs. Savannah Colteryahn, Mrs. Karen Handerhan, Mr. Chuck Mathias, Mrs. Amy Murray.

Grade 6: Mrs. Kristen Cassano, Mr. Nathan Crooks, Mrs. Meredith Saffran.

Student Services: Aides/Paraprofessionals: Ms. Kristina Claypool, Ms. Earla Ferry, Miss Kelsey Marsh, Ms. Renee Masson, Mrs. Diana McFeely, Mrs. Kathy Miller, Miss Brianna Parker, Mrs. April Reid, Mr. Justin Reno, Mrs. Rachel Richardson, Mrs. Shenna Ross, Mrs. Kelly Sealand, Mrs. Nannette Sirofchuck, Ms. Virginia Smith, Mrs. LeeAnn Stotsky, Mr. Dave Tomson. **Art:** Mrs. Delaney Munnal. **Computer Lab:** Mrs. Maggie Ference. **Gifted Support:** Mrs. Kathleen Grossman. **Guidance:** Mrs. Allysen Rust. K-6 counselor. **Librarian:** Mrs. Janice Langdon. *Library Aide:* Mrs. Cory Myers. **Math Lab:** Miss Lisa Wishart. **Music:** Mr. Jonathan Freidhoff, instrumental; Mrs. Beth Weller, vocal. **Nurse:** Mrs. Elizabeth Ellison, R.N. (Phone: 724-662-5102, ext. 3025).

Physical Education: Mrs. Wendy McClure. **Certified School Psychologist:** Mrs. Jillian Braden. **Speech/Language Pathologists:** Mrs. Lydia Sipe, Mrs. Korina Yanak, Mrs. Kelsey Rose. **CST:** Mrs. Shirley Spiegel.

Support Services Education: Mrs. April Edney, Mrs. Julie Harris, Mrs. Joni Kostelnik, Mrs. Bridget Kniess, Miss Haley Wells. **Technology Aide:** Mr. Tony DiFede. **Greeter:** Mrs. Ruthie Hazlett.

Title I Staff: Mrs. Julie Harris, Mrs. Kristen Sansone, Mrs. Nancy Smith, Miss Lisa Wishart.

Mercer Area School District is a proud host site for Keystone SMILES AmeriCorps and Miss Dahlia Jacks, serving students for 2023-2024.

*School personnel may be contacted by e-mail by typing the first initial of their first name before their last name and adding @merc.k12.pa.us
Updated news, changed dates, links to school groups, and other items of interest are all available on the district's website: www.mercer.k12.pa.us*

August 2023

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.

*Unless noted, all meetings are in the multi-purpose room at the elementary school and in the cafeteria at the middle/HS.

THIS PAGE WAS UPDATED ON AUGUST 22.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.</p> <p>Gray boxes indicate days when schools are closed.</p>	<p>NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session.</p> <p>Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.</p>	<p>Success by Six Show Choir Camp at HS 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Band Front Mini-Camp: 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Drumline and Pit: 11 a.m.-1 p.m..</p>	<p>Success by Six Show Choir Camp at HS 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Band Front Mini-Camp: 9 a.m.-noon</p>	<p>Success by Six Show Choir Camp at HS 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Band Front Mini-Camp: 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Drumline and Pit: 11 a.m.-1 p.m..</p>	<p>Success by Six</p>	<p>AUGUST TEST ING 26: SAT</p>
6	<p>Success by Six Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p> <p>First golf practice permitted by PIAA</p> <p>Football: Heat Acclimatization</p> <p>Band Boosters—7 p.m.</p>	<p>Success by Six ends today</p> <p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p> <p>Senior yearbook headshot photos by Leary's in HS library 9 a.m.-noon</p> <p><i>7th grade Orientation and Chromebook pickup at HS—7 p.m.</i></p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-noon</p> <p>Band: Jefferson Twp. Fair performance—6 p.m.</p>	12
13	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m..</p> <p>School Board—8 p.m.</p> <p>First non-golf fall sports practice permitted by PIAA</p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p> <p><i>Chromebook pickup at M/HS—9 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m.</i></p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p> <p><i>Chromebook pickup at M/HS—4-6:30 p.m.</i></p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.</p> <p><i>Chromebook pickup at M/HS—9 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m.</i></p> <p>School Board Committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)</p>	<p>Band Camp: 8 a.m.-noon</p>	<p>Band: at Kennywood Fall Fantasy Parade</p>
20	<p><i>Chromebook pickup at M/HS—4-6:30 p.m.</i></p> <p>School Board—7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>CALENDAR UPDATE DAY</p> <p>NEXT UPDATE:</p> <p>September 20</p>	<p>Photo Day for band and fall sports noon-6:15 p.m.</p> <p><i>Chromebook pickup at M/HS—4-6:30 p.m.</i></p> <p>Meet the Mustangs at M/HS field—7 p.m.</p>	<p>Band: Parent Preview 6-8:30 p.m. football field</p>	<p>TEACHER INSERVICE</p> <p>Kindergarten Orientation</p> <p>5th Quarter Dance for Mercer students only in the cafeteria</p>	<p>SAT testing date</p> <p>BEST Robotics Kick-Off at Grove City College</p> <p>Band Fundraiser 10 a.m.-5 p.m. HS cafeteria</p>
<p>NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5)</p>	<p>TEACHER INSERVICE</p> <p>Kindergarten Orientation</p>	<p>1/179</p> <p>FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL</p> <p>BACK TO SCHOOL</p>	<p>2/178</p> <p>M/HS Student Orientation</p> <p>First show choir rehearsal</p> <p>MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE and CHROMEBOOK PICKUP 5:30-7:30p.m.</p>	<p>3/177</p>	<p>Make sure to check the calendar online every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.</p>	<p>Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.</p>

September 2023

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.

THIS CALENDAR PAGE WAS UPDATED ON SEPTEMBER 20
WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)</p>	<p>Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.</p>	<p>NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session.</p> <p>Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.</p>	<p>NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.</p>	<p>SEPT. TEST WINDOWS 5-29 NWEA K-9 9: ACT</p>	<p>4/176 Chorus: Marianna sub orders through 9/11 Junior Class candy sale through 9/29</p>	
3	<p>LABOR DAY</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>5/175 NWEA tests—Gr. K-9 Elementary Student Orientation meetings 7th Grade Class officer applications available</p>	<p>6/174 NWEA tests: Gr. K-9</p>	<p>7/173 NWEA tests: Gr. K-9</p>	<p>8/172 NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>ACT testing date</p>
<p>ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK</p>	<p>9/171 9/11 REMEMBRANCE DAY Sub sale ends Elementary Book Fair begins NWEA—Gr. K-9 Band Boosters—7 p.m.</p>	<p>10/170 7-11 PHOTOS TAKEN 7th Grade Class officer applications due Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>11/169 Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9 Mercer County Band Festival at Hickory HS</p>	<p>12/168 ELEMENTARY OPEN HOUSE 5:30-7:30 p.m. Elementary Book Fair during Open House 7th Grade officer election NWEA—Gr. K-9 School Board committees 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)</p>	<p>13/167 Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9 5th Quarter Dance for Mercer students only in the cafeteria</p>	<p>ROSH HASHANAH (starts at sundown September 15) Band: LMBA show at Meadville</p>
<p>ROSH HASHANAH</p>	<p>14/166 7th Grade Student Council applications available Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9 School Board—7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>15/165 Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>16/164 Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9</p> <p>CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: October 17</p>	<p>17/163 Elementary Book Fair NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>18/162 7th Grade Student Council applications due Book Fair ends NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>FALL BEGINS 2:50 a.m. Girls' Soccer to Pittsburgh Riverhounds-New Mexico match—7 p.m.</p>
24	<p>19/161 YOM KIPPUR (starts at sundown September 24) NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>20/160 ROSH HASHANAH 7th Grade Student Council election K-6 PHOTOS TAKEN NWEA—Gr. K-9</p>	<p>21/159 NWEA—Gr. K-9 Speech: Reorganization 7 p.m. LGI</p>	<p>22/158 K-12 progress reports due Speech: Reorganization makeup 6:30 a.m. LGI NWEA—Gr. K-9 Honors Chorus auditions at Westminster College Marianna subs delivered</p>	<p>23/157 NWEA—Gr. K-9 Juniors' candy sale ends Homecoming assembly Homecoming football</p>	<p>SUKKOT (starts at sundown September 29) Homecoming Dance: 7-10 p.m.</p>

October 2023

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

**THE OCTOBER CALENDAR PAGE
WAS UPDATED ON OCTOBER 17.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
OCTOBER TEST DATES 7: SAT 11: PSAT for juniors 28: ACT	24/156 Chorus: candle sale through 10/13 Band Boosters—7 p.m.	25/155 NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	26/154 Blood Drive at HS 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Speech Parents—7 p.m.	27/153 ACT 80 EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elem.; 1:15 p.m. M/HS Juniors and Seniors at Theil College/Career Fair Elem. Parent Conferences Honors Chorus auditions at Westminster College	28/152 ACT 80 EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elem.; 1:15 p.m. M/HS Elem. Parent Conferences	SAT testing date Robotics competition at Ross Park Mall
NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. <i>(Details on page 5.)</i>	COLUMBUS DAY NO SCHOOL NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK		30/150 PSAT All juniors take the PSAT—8 a.m. Speech: Orientation for new members/parents 7 p.m. LGI	31/149 School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)		Boom Bash The Barn at Lake Latonka Tickets: \$30
NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK 	33/147 School Board—7:30 p.m.	34/146 CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: November 15	35/145 M/HS Fall Choral Concert 7 p.m. HS aud. Academic Games: Onsets (Gr. 3-12)	36/144 First Grade to Iron Mills Farmstead	37/143 Grade 5 Career Day Parents Day Off 3-5 p.m. at Mercer Elem. Robotics competition at Grove City College 5th Quarter Dance for Mercer students only in the cafeteria	Robotics competition at Grove City College
	38/142	39/141 Elementary Student Council to MIU4 Summit  Band: In-Review Concert—7 p.m. HS gym	40/140	41/139 Honors Chorus at Westminster College	42/138 Honors Chorus 5th Quarter Dance for Mercer students only in the cafeteria	ACT testing date Honors Chorus Concert—2 p.m. Band: LMBA championship at Erie Veterans Stadium
	43/137 Speech Meetings begin	44/136 Happy Halloween 		NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.	Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	

November 2023

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info

Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.

THIS CALENDAR PAGE WAS UPDATED ON NOVEMBER 15.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NOVEMBER TEST DATE 4: SAT	NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)	45/135 ALL SAINTS' DAY 1ST QUARTER ENDS Academic Games: Propaganda (Gr. 7-12)	46/134 2ND QUARTER BEGINS French students to Les Misérables in Pittsburgh	47/133	SAT testing date
DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS—"FALL BACK" ONE HOUR. 	48/132 Band Boosters—7 p.m.	49/131 MUNICIPAL ELECTION DAY IN PENNSYLVANIA  Polls open: 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Honors Band auditions at Slippery Rock University	50/130 K-12 REPORT CARDS Speech Parents—7 p.m.	51/129 Band: at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee	52/128 VETERANS DAY PROGRAM—9:30 a.m. elementary gym Band: at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee	 VETERANS DAY HONORING ALL THOSE WHO SERVED Band: at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee
DIWALI Band: at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee	53/127 AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK	54/126	55/125 7-11 PHOTOS MAKEUP Academic Games: Propaganda (Gr. 3-6) CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: December 12	56/124 Mercer County Chorus at Grove City HS Concert—7p.m. School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	57/123 K-6 PHOTOS MAKE-UP First winter sports practice permitted by PIAA Madrigal Dinner \$25 HS cafe—6 p.m. Doors Open—5:45 p.m.	Madrigal Dinner \$25 HS cafe—6 p.m. Doors Open—5:45 p.m.
	58/122 School Board 7:30 p.m.	59/121	60/120 EARLY DISMISSAL 1 p.m. elementary 1:15 p.m. M/HS	THANKSGIVING 	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
	NO SCHOOL	61/119	62/118	63/117 Tech Ed Club: The Wood Shoppe open 2:45-4 p.m. School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.

December 2023

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

**THIS CALENDAR PAGE
WAS UPDATED ON DECEMBER 12.**


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
DEC. TEST WINDOWS 2: SAT 5-7: Winter Keystone 9: ACT	NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes postponements, etc.	Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. <i>(Details on page 5.)</i>	NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	64/116 Show Choir: at QLS Mercer 1:15 p.m. Show Choir and Wind Ensemble: at Mercer Light-Up Night Courthouse Square	 Breakfast with Santa—9 a.m. HS cafeteria Show Choir: at Buhl Park Light-Up Night —8 p.m. SAT testing date
ADVENT BEGINS 3	65/115 Band Boosters—7 p.m. School Board—7:30 p.m. 4	66/114 Winter Keystone exam: Algebra Tech Ed Club: The Wood Shoppe open 2:45-4 p.m. HS Band: Winter Concert 5	67/113 K-12 progress reports due Winter Keystone exam: Biology Speech: Mercer CFL Tournament—4 p.m. 6	68/112 Winter Keystone exam: Literature Tech Ed Club: The Wood Shoppe open 2:45-4 p.m. Financial Aid Night 6 p.m. LGI (See p. 5) Honors Band at SRU 7	69/111 FIRST DAY OF HANUKKAH (starts at sundown December 7) Chorus: Marianna sub orders through 12/15 Honors Band at SRU 8	Speech: North Catholic Show Choir: at Cottage Gardens—11 a.m. Honors Band Concert: 2 p.m. at SRU ACT testing date 9
Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page. 10	70/110 Academic Games: LinguiSHTIKS (Gr. 7-12) Show Choir: at Shenango on the Green—5:45 p.m. 11	71/109 Tech Ed Club: The Wood Shoppe open 2:45-4 p.m. CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: January 23 12	72/108 Academic Games: LinguiSHTIKS (Gr. 3-6) Show Choir: at the Lakes at Jefferson—5:30 p.m. Speech Parents—7 p.m. 13	73/107 Tech Ed Club: The Wood Shoppe open 2:45-4 p.m. 14	74/106 LAST DAY OF HANUKKAH Elementary Band/Chorus Holiday Concert—9 a.m. LGI Speech: at Central Catholic 15	Speech: at Central Catholic 16
 M/HS Choral Concert 2 p.m. 17	75/105 Chamber Choir: at Courthouse—noon Show Choir: at Avalon Sp. Elem. PAKK/Student Council Holiday Feast in elem. cafeteria—5 p.m. Show Choir: at New Castle Big Brothers/Sisters —6 p.m. 18	76/104 EARLY DISMISSAL 11:35 a.m. elementary 11:50 a.m. M/HS Show Choir performance at elem.—8:30 a.m. Deadline to submit senior headshot photo for yearbook Christmas Staff Luncheon 19	CHRISTMAS BREAK 20	CHRISTMAS BREAK  WINTER BEGINS 10:27 p.m. 21	CHRISTMAS BREAK 22	CHRISTMAS BREAK 23
 CHRISTMAS EVE 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	 FIRST DAY OF CHRISTMAS 25	CHRISTMAS BREAK 26	CHRISTMAS BREAK 27	CHRISTMAS BREAK 28	CHRISTMAS BREAK 29	CHRISTMAS BREAK 30

January 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.




THIS CALENDAR PAGE WAS UPDATED ON JANUARY 23
WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JAN. TEST WINDOWS 8-31: NWEA K-6 8-2/15: NWEA 7-9	 1	2	77/103 Speech Parents—7 p.m. 3	78/102 Speech: CFL Tourney TBA 4	79/101 LAST DAY OF CHRISTMAS Musical auditions at HS 3:15 p.m. 5	EPIPHANY Speech: Sparkle Online Tournament 6
Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Com- munity," found on the district's home page. 7	80/100 NWEA tests: K-9 Academic Games: Presidents (Gr. 9-12) Band Boosters—7 p.m. 8	81/99 NWEA tests: K-9 9	82/98 NWEA tests: K-9 Academic Games: Presidents (Gr. 3-8) Speech Parents—7 p.m. 10	83/97 NWEA tests: K-9 District Band at Hopewell 11	84/96 NWEA tests: K-9 District Band at Hopewell 12	Speech: North Allegheny District Band Concert 3 p.m. Hopewell HS 13
14	85/95. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY NO SCHOOL  ACT 80 TEACHER INSERVICE 15	86/94 NWEA tests: K-9 16	87/93 NWEA tests: K-9 County Band Festival at Grove City College 17	88/92 NWEA tests: K-9 County Band Festival Speech: CFL Tourney TBA School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) 18	89/91 NWEA tests: K-9 Junior Class Doughnut sale through February 1 Grade 3: <i>Alice in Wonderland: the Musical</i> at Youngstown Playhouse 19	Speech: Pine-Richland 20
21	90/90 2ND QUARTER ENDS Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 School Board—7:30 p.m. 22	91/89 3RD QUARTER BEGINS Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 <u>CALENDAR UPDATE DAY</u> <u>NEXT UPDATE:</u> <u>February 27</u> 23	92/88 District Chorus at Mercer HS Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 Academic Games: Equations (Gr. 7-12) 24	93/87 TU B'SHEBAT (starts at sundown January 24) District Chorus Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 Book Fair/Talk—5:30 p.m. Elementary LGI 25	94/86 District Chorus Concert—7 p.m. MHS auditorium Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 26	49th annual Mercer Speech Invitational  27
28	95/85 K-12 REPORT CARDS Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 29	96/84 Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 30	97/83 Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: K-9 Academic Games: snow date 31	Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)	NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, postponements, etc.

February 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

**THE FEBRUARY CALENDAR PAGE WAS UPDATED ON JANUARY 23
WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
FEB. TEST WINDOWS 1-15: NWEA 7-9 10: ACT testing date	The school board will set and announce the 2024-2025 school calendar dates in the first few months of 2024.	NOTE: For the 2023-20234 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)	Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.	98/82 Elementary Book Fair NWEA tests: 7-9 Doughnut sale ends delivered February 9 Speech: CFL tourney TBA	99/81 GROUNDHOG DAY  Elementary Book Fair ends NWEA tests: 7-9	Speech: Hampton Middle School Dance HS cafeteria—6:30-8 p.m.
4	100/80 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL NWEA tests: 7-9 Band Boosters—7 p.m.	101/79 NWEA tests: 7-9	102/78 NWEA tests: 7-9 Academic Games: Equations (Gr. 3-6) Webinar on 24-25 FAFSA Forms—Noon-1 p.m. District Orchestra Hickory High School Speech Parents: 7 p.m.	103/77 NWEA tests: 7-9 District Orchestra at Hickory HS Deadline to purchase a yearbook Senior Ad	104/76 NWEA tests: 7-9 Doughnuts delivered District Orchestra Speech: Three Rivers Overnight Tournament at Upper St. Clair	CHINESE NEW YEAR ACT testing date Speech: Three Rivers Tournament Father-Daughter Dance HS cafeteria—6-9 p.m.
 SUPER BOWL SUNDAY	105/75 NWEA tests: 7-9	106/74 MARDI GRAS NWEA tests: 7-9	107/73 ASH WEDNESDAY LENT BEGINS VALENTINE'S DAY NWEA tests: 7-9 Academic Games: Current Events (Gr. 3-12)	108/72 NWEA tests: 7-9 Speech: CFL tourney at Meadville	TEACHER INSERVICE NO SCHOOL Senior Exit Interviews	Speech: Postseason Prep Tournament at Mars
High School Dance HS cafeteria	PRESIDENTS' DAY NO SCHOOL	109/71	110/70 ASH WEDNESDAY Academic Games: snow date	111/69 K-12 progress reports due Tech Ed. Club to Mill Fabricating and East Coast Chair Company School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	112/68 Blood Drive at HS you've got TALENT Talent Show—MHS aud.	Speech: District 1 State Qualifier
25	113/67 Academic Games: states School Board—7:30 p.m.	114/66 Academic Games: states CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: MARCH 20	115/765 28	116/64 LEAP DAY AP Calculus to YSU Mathfest  29	Make sure to check the calendar online every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	

March 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

**THE MARCH CALENDAR PAGE WILL BE UPDATED ON FEBRUARY 27
AND MARCH 20 WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MARCH TEST DATE 9: SAT testing date NOTES FOR JUNIORS **Deadline for 11th grade physicals to be turned in to health room is April 3. **Registration deadline for May 4 SAT is April 19.	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5)	NOTE: Up-to-date sports schedules are found at www.mercerathletics.com and include game changes, and postponements, etc.		Make sure to check the calendar online at the end of every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	117/63 READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY	Speech: CFL Erie Diocesan National Qualifier at Penn State Behrend Youth Cheer Clinic HS gym—9 a.m.-noon Conservation Club Game Dinner—HS cafeteria
3	118/62 NATIONAL GRAMMAR DAY NATIONAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK First spring sports practice permitted by PIAA Band Boosters—7 p.m.	119/61 5	120/60 Region Chorus at Mars HS Speech Parents—7 p.m.	121/59 Region Chorus	122/58 MAHA SHIVARATRI Region Chorus Concert 7 p.m. Mars HS Grade 1: <i>Shrek: the Musical</i> at Youngstown Playhouse	SAT testing date Region Chorus Speech: Pittsburgh District National Qualifier at Taylor Alderdice HS
DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS—"SPRING AHEAD" ONE HOUR	123/57 RAMADAN STARTS (starts at sundown March 10)	124/56 12	125/55 Jazz Band at Maplewood Jazz Festival	126/54 NATIONAL PI DAY Speech: state tournament at Bloomsburg University School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	127/53 Speech: state tournament	Speech: state tournament
ST. PATRICK'S DAY	128/52 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (See page 6 for details) Chorus: Marianna sub orders through 3/27 School Board—7:30 p.m.	129/51 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (See page 6 for details) Spring begins at 11:06 p.m.	130/50 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (See page 6 for details) CALENDAR UPDATE DAY NEXT UPDATE: APRIL 17	131/49 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (See page 6 for details)	132/48 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION (See page 6 for details)	Speech: Seton LaSalle freshman-sophomore tournament
PASSION/PALM SUNDAY PURIM (starts at sundown March 23) EASTER	133/47 HOLI (starts at sundown March 24)	134/46 PMEA Junior Honors Band at Seneca Valley	135/45 3RD QUARTER ENDS Jazz Band at Tri-C Jazz Festival	HOLY THURSDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	30

April 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.





**THE APRIL CALENDAR WILL BE UPDATED ON MARCH 20
AND APRIL 17 WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
APRIL TEST WINDOWS 13: ACT testing date 19: Registration deadline for May 4 SAT test date 22-26: PSSA English/LA Grades 3-8 29-5/2: PSSA Math Gr. 3-8 29-5/2: PSSA Sci. Gr. 4, 8 29-5/2 PSSA Makeups 3-8		136/44 4TH QUARTER BEGINS	137/43 Junior physicals due in the health room. Speech Parents—7 p.m.	138/42	139/41 K-12 REPORT CARDS	
7	140/40 Band Boosters—7 p.m.	141/39 EID AL-FITR	142/38 Speech: Reorganization 2:47 p.m. LGI	143/37  Hello, Dolly! High School Musical School Board Committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	144/36  Hello, Dolly! High School Musical	 Hello, Dolly! High School Musical ACT testing date
14	145/35 TAX DAY Prom Registration begins School Board—7:30 p.m.	146/34 Prom Registration	147/33 Prom Registration State Band and Chorus Festival—Erie <u>CALENDAR UPDATE DAY</u> <u>NEXT UPDATE:</u> <u>MAY 15</u>	148/32 Prom Registration ends State Band and Chorus	147/33 State Band and Chorus Registration deadline for May 4 SAT test date Academic Games Nationals in Atlanta	State Band and Chorus AG Nationals
AG Nationals	149/31 EARTH DAY PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 AG Nationals 	150/30 FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER (starts at sundown April 22) PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8	151/29 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 Jazz Fest Fundraiser	152/28 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 Marianna subs delivered	153/27 PSSA: ENG./LA Grades 3-8 Speech Dessert Show 7 p.m. HS auditorium	Speech Dessert Show 7 p.m. HS auditorium
28	154/26 AG Nationals Concert Band and Wind Ensemble at Norwin HS for assessment PSSA: MATH Grades 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE Grades 4, 8	155/25 LAST DAY OF PASSOVER PSSA: MATH Grades 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE Grades 4, 8	Make sure to check the calendar online every month; it is updated to include new dates and added events.	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. <i>(Details on page 5)</i>	NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session. Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.	Sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line at "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the district's home page.

May 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.
Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

THE MAY CALENDAR PAGES WILL BE UPDATED ON MARCH 29, APRIL 17, AND MAY 15 WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.




Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MAY TEST WINDOWS 1-2: PSSA Math Gr. 3-8 1-2: PSSA Sci. Gr. 4, 8 1-2 PSSA Makeups 7, 8 4: SAT testing date 6-10: PSSA Makeups 3-8 6-10: Sanford Test Gr. 2	MAY TEST WINDOWS 6-13: AP Exams 6-31: NWEA K-6 13-24: Spring Keystone Exams and Makeups 28-31: 7-12 Final Exams (Finals Makeups June 3-5)		156/24 Jrs. Cedar Point Signup Class Officer applications available for 2024-2025 PSSA: MATH—Gr. 3-8 PSSA SCIENCE—Gr. 4, 8	157/23 Jrs. Cedar Point Signup PSSA MATH —Gr. 3-8 PSSA Science—Gr. 4, 8	NO SCHOOL 	Suggested date for Mercer juniors to take the SAT 
	158/22 K-12 progress reports due NWEA tests: K-6 Stanford Testing: Grade 2 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-6 AP Chemistry—noon Top Ten Dinner Band Boosters—7 p.m.	159/21 NATIONAL TEACHER DAY NWEA tests: K-6 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-6 Stanford Testing: Grade 2	160/20 AP English—8 a.m. NWEA tests: K-6 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-6 Stanford Testing: Grade 2 Class Officer applications due for 2024-2025	161/19 ASCENSION AP Psychology—noon NWEA tests: K-6 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-6 Grade 5: at Lutherlyn Stanford Testing: Grade 2 Mercer County Track and Field Championship	162/18 NWEA tests: K-6 PSSA Make-Ups Gr. 3-6 Stanford Testing: Grade 2 Class Officer elections PROM at Tiffany's 6:30-10 p.m.	
MOTHERS' DAY	163/17 SC applications available for 2024-2025 AP Calculus Exam—8a.m. NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone	164/16 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone	165/15 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam CALENDAR UPDATE DAY FOR JUNE AND JULY	166/14 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam Committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)	167/13 Elem. Choral/Band Spring Concert 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. LGI SC applications due for 2024-2025 Spring Keystone exam NWEA tests: K-6	
PENTECOST	168/12 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam School Board—7:30 p.m.	169/11 NWEA tests: K-6 Grade 4: at Lutherlyn Spring Keystone exam Student Council elections for 2024-2025	170/10 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam	171/9 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam Grade 3: at Munnell Run Farm K: to Keystone Safari Speech: CFL Nationals in Chicago	172/8 NWEA tests: K-6 Spring Keystone exam Speech: CFL Nationals	Speech: CFL Nationals
Speech: CFL Nationals	 MEMORIAL DAY NO SCHOOL	173/7 7-12 Finals Commencement Practice NWEA tests: K-6 <i>Chromebook collection for seniors</i>	174/6 7-12 Finals Commencement Practice NWEA tests: K-6	175/5 7-12 Finals NWEA tests: K-6 Grades K-3 Field Day at elementary <i>Chromebook collection for grades 7 and 8</i>	176/4 7-12 Finals NWEA tests: K-6 Grades 4-6 Field Day at HS <i>Chromebook collection for grades 9, 10, and 11</i>	NOTE: For the 2023-2024 school year, the Mercer Area School District is providing breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5)

June 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change.

Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

**THE JUNE AND JULY CALENDAR PAGES WILL BE UPDATED ON
APRIL 17 AND MAY 15 WITH ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND INFORMATION.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<p>NOTE: For the 2024-2025 school year, the Mercer Area School District will provide breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)</p>	<p>JUNE TEST DATES 1: SAT testing date 3-5: 7-12 Finals makeups 8: ACT</p>	<p>NOTE: Shaded GRAY blocks indicate days that school is not in session.</p> <p>Shaded PURPLE blocks indicate early dismissal dates.</p>		<p>SAT testing date</p> <p>1</p>
2	<p>177/3 Finals Makeups Commencement Practice</p> <p>3</p>	<p>178/2 Finals Makeups Commencement Practice</p> <p>4</p>	<p>179/1 Finals Makeups Commencement Practice Jrs. at Cedar Point BACCALAUREATE 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>180 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL Juniors' Breakfast—7:45 Senior Awards—8:45 a.m. Grade 6 Promotion—10 a.m. K-6 REPORT CARDS EARLY DISMISSAL</p> <p>6</p>	<p>TEACHER INSERVICE COMMENCEMENT 7:30 p.m.</p>  <p>7</p>	<p>ACT testing date</p> <p>8</p>
9	<p>Camp Invention at Elem. 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.</p> <p>10</p>	<p>Camp Invention at Elem.</p> <p>11</p>	<p>SHAVUOT (begins at sundown on June 11) Camp Invention at Elem.</p> <p>12</p>	<p>7-12 REPORT CARDS MAILED Camp Invention at Elem. School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative)</p> <p>13</p>	 <p>FLAG DAY Camp Invention ends.</p> <p>14</p>	15
<p>FATHERS' DAY Speech: Nationals in West Des Moines, Iowa</p> <p>16</p>	<p>EID AL-ADHA (starts at sundown June 16) Speech: Nationals School Board—7:30 p.m.</p> <p>17</p>	<p>Speech: Nationals</p> <p>18</p> <p>CALENDAR UPDATE DAY</p>	<p>JUNETEENTH Speech: Nationals</p> <p>19</p>	<p>FIRST DAY OF SUMMER  4:50 p.m. Speech: Nationals</p> <p>20</p>	<p>Speech: Nationals</p> <p>21</p>	22
<p>23 30</p>	24	25	26	27	28	<p>NOTE: Events and dates on the 2024-2025 school district calendar will be available on line on July 30 to help families plan for the coming school year.</p>

July 2024

NOTES: Due to health and/or weather concerns, this calendar is subject to change. Visit www.mercer.k12.pa.us for the latest info.

*During school, guests and those picking up students must use the front main doors and report to the main office.

*Parents may sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts from the school or file an absence from school form on line. Go to "Parent Quicklinks" under "Families & Community," found on the school district's home page.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>NOTE: Events and dates on the 2023-2024 school district calendar will be available on line on July 30 to help families plan for the coming school year.</p>	1	2	3		5	6
RATH YATRA 7	8	9	10	School Board committee meetings 6 p.m. HS lib. (tentative) 11	12	ACT testing date 13
14	School Board—7:30p.m. 15	16	ASHURA (starts at sundown July 16) 17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	<p>THE 2024-2025 CALENDAR/GUIDE IS ONLINE TODAY</p>	31			<p>NOTE: For the 2024-2025 school year, the Mercer Area School District will provide breakfast and lunch at no cost for all students. (Details on page 5.)</p>

PLEASE PRINT, CUT ON THE DOTTED LINE, AND RETURN TO THE SCHOOL WITH YOUR STUDENT.

A report may also be made on line at <https://pa02218537.schoolwires.net/Page/448>

Mercer Schools Report of Absence Form 2023-2024

Please return within five days of absence

STUDENT NAME: _____ TODAY'S DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ ABSENCE DATE(S): _____

Please check the reason for your child's absence:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Illness | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Town (school pre-approval required) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Death in the immediate family | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Family Vacation (school pre-approval required) |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Quarantine | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Holiday | |

On the back, please state reason for number 7

Note: Numbers 1 — 4 are considered Legal Excuses.

Numbers 5, 6, and 7 may be declared unexcused/illegal.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

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