

Student Handbook Checklist

MSBA recommends that school districts annually review student handbooks for legal compliance and consistency with law, Board-adopted policy and current administrative procedures. Please keep in mind that Board policies do not necessarily need to be repeated verbatim in the handbook in most cases but they are useful when drafting handbook language.

LEGALLY REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED

_____ Notice that the district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry or disability. Provide the procedures for reporting allegations of discrimination or harassment, including the definitions and examples of harassment and discrimination and the contact information for the compliance coordinator. (Section 504, Title IX, **Policies AC and IGBA**) The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) now also requires non-discrimination notices to include language from the Boy Scout Equal Access Act.

Sample Notice: Form AC-AF1

_____ Notice describing the district's obligation to provide special education and related services to children ages 3 to 21. (Missouri State Plan, **Policy IGBA**)

Sample Notice: <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/se-com-public-notice.doc>

_____ Notice of the district's obligation to identify and provide education and assistance to students who are homeless, migratory and/or are learning English as a second language. Provide contact information for coordinators. (Recommended)

(20 U.S.C. §6391, §6812, 42 U.S.C. 11431; **Policies IGBCA, IGBCB, IGBH**)

Sample Notice:

“Missouri school districts are responsible for meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population by providing a wide range of resources and support to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed and be college prepared and career ready. Our school district has programs designed to help meet the unique educational needs of children working to learn the English language, students who are advanced learners, students with disabilities, homeless students, the children of migratory workers, and neglected or delinquent students. For more information, contact _____.”

_____ Notice on how to file a complaint regarding certain federal programs. (**Policy KLA**)

_____ If a school receives Title I funds, provide notice that parents can receive, upon request, information regarding whether the student's teacher is certified to teach in the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional certification status; and whether the student is provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional. (20 U.S.C. §6312, **Policy GBL**)

_____ A statement that the district's policy on student participation in statewide assessments is made available in the district's office for public viewing. This should include who is

expected to participate, a list of statewide assessments the district participates in (MAP, NAEP, LEP, EOC, etc.) and dates on which those assessments are given, if known. The notice will reference district Policy IL and must include information on whether a parent/guardian can opt a student out of an assessment and the process for doing so. (Currently state law does not allow for students to opt out of statewide assessments.) (20 U.S.C. §6312, §160.570, **Policy IL**)

_____ District and building accountability report cards, unless distributed in some other manner. (§160.522, **Procedure KB-API**)

_____ Notice of the free and reduced price lunch eligibility guidelines, unless distributed to all parents in some other form. (7 C.F.R. §245.5, **Policy EFB**)
Official Notices: http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/provision2publicrelease_0.docx
or <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/CEP-MediaRelease.docx>

_____ The district’s procedure on how the district addresses past-due meal charges. (**Procedure EF-API**, USDA Guidance: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges>)

_____ Notice of district’s nutrition standards for food brought by parents and students to be served during school hours. (**Policy ADF, Procedure ADF-API**)

_____ Information on MO HealthNet for Kids Program.
(§208.658, RSMo., **Procedure KB-API**)
See: <http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/1606>

_____ A notice of rights under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a notice that the district will release the names, addresses and phone numbers of secondary students to military recruiters or institutions of higher education unless the parent/guardian notifies the district otherwise and a definition of “directory information” that the district will release without parental consent.
(20 U.S.C. §1232g, 20 U.S.C. §7908, **Policy JO, Procedure JO-API**)

Sample Notices:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/lea-officials.html> and
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/mndirectoryinfo.html>

Note: Please make sure that the directory information published in the student handbook matches the district’s Policy JO!

_____ Notice of rights pursuant to the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) including:
a) Privacy regarding surveys
b) Privacy regarding non-emergency, invasive physical examinations
c) Privacy regarding the collection of information for marketing purposes
(20 U.S.C. §1232h, **Policies JHC, JHDA, KI**)

Sample Notice:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ppra/modelnotification.html>

_____ Notice regarding the presence of asbestos and any inspections, re-inspections, surveillance, and response or post response actions taken. (*Procedure EBAB-API*)

Sample Notice: http://www.pueblochristianacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Asbestos_Notification_Letter_Parents_2015.pdf

_____ Materials prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency that develops public awareness and understanding of earthquakes and explains safety measures to be taken. (§160.455, RSMo., *Policy EBC*)

Sample Materials: <http://www.fema.gov/earthquake/earthquake-safety-school>

_____ Notification of the content of the district or school’s human sexuality curriculum and notification of the parent’s right to remove the student from any part of the instruction. (§170.015, *Policy IGAEB*)

_____ The web address of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative to parents/guardians. (§161.1050, RSMo.)

<https://dese.mo.gov/traumainformed>

_____ Notification that the district is required to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students unless the parents/guardians or 18-year-old student submits a written request not to release the information without prior written consent. (20 U.S.C. § 7908, *Policy JO, Procedure JO-API*)

_____ Notice regarding the district’s requirement to teach students the characteristics of, and ways to identify, sexual predators; the safe and responsible use of the Internet, including the dangers of online sexual predators; the potential consequences of inappropriate texting and the importance of open communication with responsible adults regarding any inappropriate situation, activity, or abuse. (§170.015, *Policy IGAEB*)

_____ Notice regarding searches, including:

- a) Students have no expectation of privacy in lockers, desks, computers or other district-provided equipment or areas.
- b) The district will conduct periodic and unannounced administrative searches of lockers, computers and other district equipment.
- c) The district uses dogs to indicate the presence of alcohol, drugs or other prohibited substances on campus, including the parking lot.
- d) Additional searches of bags, purses, coats, electronic devices, other personal possessions and cars in accordance with law.
- e) The district may require a student to submit to a drug or alcohol test if there is reasonable suspicion that the student has consumed prohibited substances.
- f) The details of extracurricular drug testing, if applicable.

(Fourth Amendment of U.S. Constitution, *Policy JFG and JFCI* when applicable)

_____ Notice of the school’s daily schedule, including when before- and after-school supervision will be provided to students and a statement that the district will not be responsible for

supervising students outside the stated times. Inform parents not to drop off or leave children at the school during unsupervised periods.

_____ A copy of the discipline policy, which must include:

- a) Definitions of offenses and the consequences for violations.
- b) The district's position on the use of corporal punishment.
- c) Prohibition against suspended student being within 1,000 feet of school if the student committed an act of violence, drug-related activity, or specified offenses.
- d) Define what the district considers a "weapon" and state that if one is brought or used at school, on school property or at a school activity by a student, the student may be suspended for a period of not less than one year or expelled.
- e) Define "drug" or any other illegal substances prohibited on school property – including in cars.
- f) Define an act of violence and a serious violation of Board policy – both of which require districts to maintain records of the offense.
- g) A statement that the list of offenses is not exhaustive and that the district can discipline a student for any action that is disruptive to the school environment, whether it occurs on or off school property.
- h) A statement that the consequences may be increased or decreased depending on the circumstances.
- i) A statement that the district works cooperatively with police and will notify police when a crime occurs on school property.
- j) Make sure there is no conflict with Board policy!
(§160.261; *Policies JFCF, JFCH, JFCJ, JG, JG-R1, JGA, JGE, JGF*)

_____ A copy of the district's bullying policy. (§160.775, RSMo. *Policy JFCF*)

_____ Information about the district's suicide awareness and prevention policy (§170.048, RSMo., *Policy JHDF*)

_____ Notice that qualifying students may enroll in virtual courses offered in the Missouri Course Access Program (MOCAP) at district expense. (§161.670, RSMo., *Policy IGCD*)

_____ A statement regarding the use of prescription or over-the-counter medicine. State whether students may possess these items and, if not, how they are to be handled. (*Policy JHCD and Form JHCD-AF2*)

_____ If the district provides information on immunizations, infectious diseases, medications or other school health issues to parents/guardians of K–12 students, the district will also provide parents/guardians of K–12 students influenza and influenza vaccination information that is identical or similar to that produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (§167.637, RSMo., *Procedure KB-API*)

_____ Notice of the district's policy on use of electronic communication devices and audio and visual recording equipment.
(*Procedure EHB-API and Policy KKB*)

_____ Notice of the district’s policy on electronic communication between staff members and students. (*Policy GBH*)

_____ If the district operates a preschool, daycare center, and/or nursery school, a notice stating the district must notify parents of children in those schools that they may ask if any child in the preschool, daycare, or nursery school has an immunization exemption on file. The district should not release the name of any child who has the exemption, the type of exemption, or any information other than the fact that there is at least one student with an exemption. (§210.003, *Policy JHCB*)

_____ Prior to November 1 of each year (perhaps in the handbook), each high school in the district will provide its students with information concerning occupations that have a critical need or shortage of trained personnel as provided by the State Board of Education. (§167.902, RSMo., *Procedure KB-API*)
<https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/school-counseling/legislation>

GOOD INFORMATION TO INCLUDE

_____ The district’s mission statement. (*Policy AD*)

_____ The school calendar, highlighting parent-teacher conferences.

_____ Contact information, including the telephone numbers of all or key staff members.

_____ The district’s web address and information available on the website.

_____ Where to locate the district’s policy manual.

_____ Notice of emergency response procedures including fire and earthquake procedures, designated evacuation pick-up points and information on the communication procedures that will be used in case of an emergency situation.

_____ If the district stocks epinephrine or emergency asthma medication that can be used on any student in an emergency, a notice stating this and informing parents to notify the district in writing if they do not want these medicines administered in an emergency. (*Policy JHCD, Form JHCD-AF2*)

_____ Information on how student illnesses will be handled and how parents will be contacted.

_____ An explanation of how the public will be notified in case of school cancellation or early dismissal.

_____ A copy of the district’s attendance policy and the procedures for reporting absences and completing missed work. (*Policy JED and Procedures JED-API and JED-AP2*)

- _____ A copy of the district's dress code policy. (*Policy JFCA and Procedure JFCA-API*)
- _____ The district's dismissal rules, including who the district will release a student to and the types of identification needed. (*Policy JEDB*)
- _____ Graduation requirements, mentioning that exceptions may apply. (*Policy IKF*)
- _____ Early graduation policy. (*Policy IKFA*)
- _____ Grading scales.
- _____ Eligibility for honors and awards.