

# Mesquite High School

## Parent and Student Information Guide

2011-2012



Mesquite High School  
300 East Davis Street Mesquite, Texas 75149  
972-882-7800  
<http://www.mesquiteisd.org/mhs>



**VISION**

Quest for Excellence — Success for All Students



# Educate Empower Expand

THE MISSION OF THE MESQUITE ISD IS TO **EDUCATE** ALL STUDENTS AND **EMPOWER** THEM TO **EXPAND** THEIR OPPORTUNITIES.

## CORE VALUES

- We value all students.
- We value all employees.
- We value family involvement.
- We value continuous improvement and accountability for all.
- We value lifelong learning.

## STRATEGIC GOAL STATEMENTS

- Optimize academic achievement for each student.
- Increase the awareness and involvement of families and community in the success of students.
- Hire, develop, and retain exemplary employees.
- Ensure effective and efficient quality systems.
- Infuse 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills throughout the district, integrating technology as a tool for problem-solving and creativity.

# 2011-12

Mesquite Independent School District  
**High School Calendar  
 and Block Schedule**

2011 Fall Semester - 80 Instructional Days				
AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 (SH) 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

2012 Spring Semester - 97 Instructional Days				
JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

JUNE	JULY
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4* 5 6 7 (SH) 9 10 11 12 13 14 (SH) 16 17 18 19 20 21 (SH) 23 24 25 26 27 28 (SH) 30	1 2 3 4 5 (SH) 7 8 9 10 11 12 (SH) 14 15 16 17 18 19 (SH) 21 22 23 24 25 26 (SH) 28 29 30 31

●	"A" Days
■	No Classes Held (Holiday)
●	No Classes Held (Teacher Preparation Day)
●	No Classes Held (Staff Development Day)
□	Early Release
○	New Teacher Staff Development
[ ]	Six-Weeks Period
(SH)	Summer Hours – MISD Offices Closed

**\*Note About Bad Weather Days:**  
 April 6 and June 1 are "makeup" days if schools must be closed due to bad weather during the year. Please take these two dates into account when planning activities.

**\* IF CLASSES ARE HELD ON JUNE 1:** June 1 will be the last day of school for students, and June 4 will be the final Teacher Preparation Day for staff.

August 10-12	No Classes Held: New Teacher Camp
August 15-18	No Classes Held: Staff Development
August 19	No Classes Held: Teacher Preparation Day
August 22	First Day of School
September 5	Labor Day Holiday
September 12	High School Early Release: Open House
September 26	No Classes Held: Staff Development
October 3	Fair Day Holiday
October 31	No Classes Held: Staff Development
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 19-20	12:30 Dismissal Exam Days
December 21 - January 3	Winter Break
January 4	No Classes Held: Teacher Preparation Day
January 16	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
February 3	No Classes Held: Staff Development
February 22	Early Release: Curriculum Planning
March 12-16	Spring Break
April 6	Holiday or Bad Weather Day #2
May 10	Early Release: Employee Recognition
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday
May 30-31	12:30 Dismissal Exam Days
June 1	No Classes Held: Teacher Prep Day or Bad Weather Day #1
July 4	Fourth of July Holiday (MISD Offices Closed)

## The History of MHS

"Where the Tradition Began" is more than just a catchy motto at MHS. It is a function of MHS' place in the history of Mesquite, Texas. In March of 1901, the citizens of Mesquite voted to create the Mesquite Independent School District. The first school was established at the current site of MHS in 1902 with an enrollment of approximately 200 students. A new high school was built on the property in June of 1923. MHS was officially recognized as an accredited high school in June of 1924 by the Texas State Department of Education, thus allowing its students to attend Texas colleges and universities without having to take remedial coursework. Additional expansions occurred during 1938 and 1939 as a part of the Works Progress Administration created by President Roosevelt. A historical marker can be found at the street side of L. building and an WPA placard can be found on the outside of the art room to mark these significant events in MHS' history.

MHS students became known as "Skeeters" in 1944. This was a simplification of the traditional "Mesquites" which had been the previous mascot name for the school. 1954 marked a significant change at MHS when the district relocated all its other existing grade levels to other sites within the city and the campus was solely dedicated to high school education. Integration of the school began in 1964 when area African-American students were allowed to enroll at MHS for the first time. During 1966, a six-phase renovation project plan was begun. The final phase of construction was completed in 1999.

Throughout this time there has been one existing standard with the community of Mesquite, Texas and that is the excellence that is Mesquite High School. MHS is a school of first: first high school graduates, first high school band, first accredited school, and first to win a state championship. This dedication to excellence is a byproduct of MHS' motto "Where the Tradition Began."



## Administrative Team

Principal

Assistant Principal 9<sup>th</sup>

Assistant Principal 9<sup>th</sup>

Assistant Principal 10<sup>th</sup>

Assistant Principal 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

Assistant Principal 12<sup>th</sup> Attendance/Discipline

Assistant Principal Registrar

Christy Starrett

Derrice Randle

Eddie Jaynes

Emily Gillespie

Kevin Samples

Clay Waller

Regina Jackson

## Guidance Center

Carla Lee

Nancy Hill

Deshandra O'Neal

Mary Spinks

Tonia Westbrook

Marcille Shaffer

Natalie White

Carolyn Porterfield

Leah Williams

Cressan Smith

Secretary

Secretary

Counselor A-Ed

Counselor Eg-Lim

Counselor Lin-Roa

Counselor Rob-Z

Counselor - CATE

Counselor - CATE

Counselor - CATE

Counselor -Crisis

## Useful Phone Numbers

Front Office..... 972-882-7800

Attendance Office ..... 972-882-7888

Nurse ..... 972-882-7822

The Mesquite Independent School District Board of Trustees and the Superintendent have established written policies, rules and regulations of general application governing student conduct in all schools. In addition, each Principal, within his/her school, may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board and the Superintendent. The following explanations are the rules and regulations for Mesquite High School and these are consistent with the MISD Code of Conduct. These are presented to you the parent/guardian and student for further explanation concerning the policies of Mesquite High School. We ask that you take the time to read these entries, and please call Mesquite High School at 972-882-7800 if you have any questions.

### **Arrival**

Student will gain entrance into the building at 7:45 AM. Students are allowed to congregate in the cafeteria, main hall, or outside breezeway. MHS faculty and staff are not responsible for students prior to this time. Students are prohibited from entering any other portion of the building.

### **Attendance Guidelines**

Calling in for absent students: Any time a student is absent from school, the parent or guardian of the student should call the school attendance office by 10:00 AM with the reason for the absence. **Call (972) 882-7888.** All absences are considered unexcused if we do not receive a call, and students are not permitted to make up the work missed in class. **We do not accept parent notes. It must be a phone call from the parent or guardian.**

Excused absences: Absences are excused if a student attends a doctor/dentist appointment or has a court date and can provide original documentation upon return. Students who are ill are excused if the parent calls in for them on the day of the absence. A student who misses three days of school consecutively must have an original doctor's note to excuse the absences. Students are allowed 3 call-ins per semester. If a student is excessively absent due to illness, he or she will need a doctor's note for any future absences. We excuse one-day absences for students who attend the funerals of family members and provide original documentation.

Missing school for a doctor/dentist appointment or required court appearance: According to the State of Texas, a student who is in attendance for a portion of the school day (in our case, at least half of one period) and then attends a medical appointment or a required court appearance will be counted present if the student submits an original and dated doctor's note or court paperwork upon his or her return. This allows the student to maintain his or her semester exam exemptions in the classes they missed. We allow students up to one week to return the doctor/court note, but the absence is marked "unexcused" until the note is turned in to the office. Please note that unexcused absences prevent students from doing any make-up work from the class(es) missed. Unexcused absences that accumulate could result in a complaint being filed with the court for

truancy. Also, forgery of doctor/dental notes is a crime and will be prosecuted if discovered.

Unexcused absences: Going out of town, interviewing for a job, taking the driving test, visiting family, running errands, baby sitting, taking vacations, or other “personal” reasons are not considered excused absences; and students will not be permitted to make up assignments missed. Our expectation at MHS is that our students will be present every day that school is in session. Still, certain situations arise which require students to miss school. We ask that parents work with the school to keep those situations to a minimum. Please make every effort to schedule personal business appointments outside the school day.

Arriving late or leaving early: When situations do arise where students miss a portion of the school day, **it is essential that they sign in or out.** This is the school’s documentation of their whereabouts when they are not in school. Students that arrive to school after 9:00 a.m. will need to sign in at the attendance office. Students that need to leave early will sign out at the kiosk by the library. Students who leave early or arrive late without signing in or out will be marked “unexcused” from the classes missed. We ask that parents or guardians call the school in the morning if a student will be late to school that day due to illness or other extenuating circumstances. As a general rule, we do not excuse absences for students who leave school early for reasons other than their own medical needs. If a student feels ill and needs to go home, he or she must first go to the clinic. Our school nurse will make parent contact and release the student from school. **Students should never leave of their own accord during the school day without receiving parental permission and signing out. To do so will result in an unexcused absence being recorded and an appropriate disciplinary measure being assessed. \*Students will not be released early after 3:30; they will wait until regular release time.**

Tardies: The State of Texas does not distinguish between a student being tardy and being absent. It is a courtesy that MHS does provide a tardy policy which provides some flexibility for the times that students are a few minutes late to class. However, if a student arrives to class more than 25 minutes after the tardy bell, you will be counted absent. These absences will be recorded as unexcused and will be counted when identifying students that will be considered truant. The expectation is that students will be in class and be on time.

Truancy Laws: According to the State of Texas, children between the ages of six and eighteen are required to attend school each day for the entire period that the school’s program of instruction is provided. **Students who accumulate ten or more unexcused absences in a class in a six-month period, or three or more unexcused absences within a four-week period are considered truant by the State of Texas.** When this occurs, it is the legal responsibility of the school district to file a complaint with the proper court against both the parent or guardian and the student (Class C Misdemeanor). This information is found on page 1 of the Student Code of Conduct.

Credit for Classes: The State of Texas requires that a student must be in a class 90% of the time it meets in order to receive credit. On block scheduling that means that a students can only miss a class 4 times (whether excused or unexcused) and still receive credit for that class. If unusual circumstances cause a student to exceed this limit, he or she can make up lost time through our recoup program. Announcements are made periodically, and signs are placed throughout the building which give the times and dates. Students are encouraged to see their administrators for more details. Important: Credits are awarded and denied at the end of each semester, and recoup cannot be served for a class after credit has already been denied. Therefore, recoup for first semester classes must be done during the first semester. This information is found on page 1 of the Student Code of Conduct.

**NOTE: Truancy laws deal with unexcused absences only. Credit for classes involves unexcused and excused classes. A student going to recoup in order to make up lost time does not effect whether a truancy case has or will be filed.**

College Days: Each junior and senior is allowed 2 college days and still maintains his or her semester exam exemption for that day. The spirit of the college day policy is to allow a student to travel out of town to visit a school that could not be seen fully in an afternoon after school. Students are advised to speak with the attendance office **before** making arrangements, in order to ensure that the college visit will be honored. Upon returning, an original letter or other requested documentation from the school must be submitted which verifies the student's visit within 1 week of the college visit. We do not accept faxes or photocopied letters. This information if found on page 12 of the Student Code of Conduct.

Exemption Policy: A student may be exempt from the semester exam in a class if he or she meets the following criteria:

- Perfect attendance
- Passing the course for the semester with at least a 70
- No placement in ISS, ISIP, or other alternative setting.
- No more than 3 tardies in a class

Students who are exempt must still attend their classes on exam days in the fall, but do not have to attend classes for exams in the spring.

### **Care of the Building**

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that our buildings are properly maintained. Therefore, every student, teacher, administrator, or staff member on campus must accept responsibility for keeping our buildings clean and looking its best. Part of each student's education should be the development of pride and respect for the facilities.

### **Cell Phones (see Code of Conduct to clarify)**

Students: All cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off from 8:30 AM – 3:45 PM. Any student using a cell phone or other electronic devices during school hours will have it confiscated. Identification and fee are required to pick up a cell phone/other electronic devices, if confiscated.

### **Clinic**

Students who go home sick and do not go through the clinic will be counted as an unexcused absence.

### **Child Custody**

If you have court-ordered custody agreements which prohibit the child from being released to a particular person, please provide a copy of this agreement to the counseling center.

### **Confiscated Items**

MHS faculty and staff will confiscate inappropriate items such as hoodies and sweaters from students that are not in compliance with MISD Dress Code Policy. Students may retrieve these items at the end of the semester and/or year with student identification.

### **Crimestoppers**

MHS has a Crimestoppers program that will pay reward money for tips, which lead to the solving of crimes committed on the campus. Crimestopper tips may be given by phone, or an anonymous note to either the school SRO or a school administrator. The Crimestopper phone number is 972-882-7869.

### **Digital Recorders/Video Cameras/Audio Recording devices**

Students may not bring Digital Recorders/Video Cameras/Audio Recorders to school for any reason. (Example IPod, PSP, MP3 player, camera phone etc.) These devices will be confiscated and returned to the student at the administrator's discretion. An administrative charge of 15 dollars will be charged for all electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, Ipod).

### **Discipline**

Mesquite High School complies with all Mesquite Independent School District discipline policies.

## **Dress Code**

MHS expects all students to comply with the MISD standard dress code policies.

## **Early Dismissal**

Students who need to leave early due to medical or family emergency must sign out through the kiosk.

## **Early Release**

All students that participate in the early release program must have a signed and approved contract on file with Mr. Waller. All early release students must be off the campus within 15 minutes of release time. Students are prohibited from returning back to campus. Early release students must carry their early release identification at all times.

## **Extra-Curricular Events**

Mesquite High School reserves the right to ban or refuse admissions to students at extra-curricular events. Our hope is that all extra-curricular events will be attended and supported by our students, however we expect our students to behave in an exemplary fashion at these events so that every one can enjoy watching our students perform and be successful at these events. Students wishing to purchase student price tickets will be required to show a school ID.

## **Grading Policy**

MHS faculty complies with the Mesquite Independent School District Administrative Guideline (# 608b). Six weeks exam is 20% of the six weeks average. Of the remaining 80%, no one category or assignment may exceed 40% of a six-week grade. Incompletes are to be recorded when major assignments (exams / research papers projects / labs) are not submitted by the students when an excused absence has been recorded.

## **Identification**

- The expectation is that all MHS students possess an MHS student ID, and it must be visibly displayed on a lanyard around the neck.
- Lanyards will be solid color, college or MHS logo only.
- Students that do not wear their ID where it can be visibly seen will not be eligible to attend and/or participate in and/or be limited on utilizing school liberties to include but are not limited to:
  - a. Spirit jean/t-shirt days
  - b. Identified extracurricular ticket purchases
  - c. Identified extracurricular activities

- d. School transportation
- e. Identified school privileges
- f. Retrieve confiscated items

- Students who fail/refuse to wear their ID's will be subject to disciplinary actions

### **ISS: In School Suspension**

ISS is an on-campus, disciplinary consequence that may be assigned by an administrator as a result of a Code of Conduct violation. If utilized, a student would be reassigned to the ISS room and would not be permitted to attend his/her regularly scheduled courses for a predetermined amount of days. Upon successful completion of the student's ISS placement, the student will be allowed to resume their regular schedule. ISS is a highly restricted environment whereby day-to-day privileges are removed.

If assigned to ISS, the student will:

- be scanned with a security wand
- be relieved of all personal property (cell phone, i-touch, ipod or any other electronic/entertainment device and/or non-educational essentials)
  - o personal property will be returned at the conclusion of the day it was taken with no penalty, punishment or fee
- be confined to a private study cubicle
- be seated on a stool
- utilize a café tray as their work surface
- be expected to complete coursework assigned to them by their scheduled teacher
- be expected to complete the entire day(s)
  - o leaving early for any reason (excused/unexcused) while assigned to ISS will be recorded as an incomplete day, and additional time may be assigned on a case by case basis.
- eat lunch in ISS
  - o sack lunch provided by the café at students expense
  - o sack lunch brought from home in the ISS room
- be provided two bathroom breaks
  - o am/pm

**\*\*This is not an all inclusive list of ISS expectations.**

### **Lunch**

MHS is a closed campus. Students who leave campus will face disciplinary action.

### **Parking**

Students who possess a valid driver's license to operate a registered and insured vehicle may drive to school and park by permit only. Permits may be purchased from the cashier located in the main hallway next the main office entrance. Permits will be available for

## MHS Parent Handbook

purchase beginning August 22, 2011. They may only be purchased before school 8:00-8:30 or after school 3:45-4:00. A grace period of two weeks, 8/22 – 9/17 will be given to allow those who drive to school to obtain and display a parking permit. Beginning Monday, 9/19, automobiles not displaying a valid parking permit will be warned w/ a note left under wiper, stickered w/ orange violation tag or a combination of both. Note: an orange violation sticker may be utilized on the first offense. After your car has been stickered three (3) times it may be towed at the owner's expense.

### Permit Types:

- Regular
- Early Release: Must show Mrs. Small "early release ID" for purchase

### Requirements to purchase permits:

- Valid Drivers License
- Valid Proof of Insurance
- Early Release ID for purchase of Early Release Parking Permit

### Student Parking Locations: Permit Required

- Hanby Stadium
- K Lot (Across from K Hall)

### Student Overflow Parking: Permit Required

- Central Administrative Parking Lot on Davis St. at the East end (East of the double yellow line painted on the parking lot surface)

Student parking in undesignated areas may receive a warning citation, orange violation sticker, and Code of Conduct disciplinary action, loss of parking privilege or a combination of all beginning with the first offense.

## **Physical Education**

Student enrolled in physical education courses are required and expected to dress out daily.

## **P.T.S.A.**

The P.T.S.A. meets several times a year. You are encouraged to attend as many meetings as convenient.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each six weeks marking period.

## **School Cancellation**

Announcement regarding school closings or delays will be made on KEOM (88.5) radio

and the MISD ITV channel.

### **Site-Based Decision Making Committee (SBDM)**

The SBDM Committee will meet at least four times (3rd meeting is open to the public) during the school year. The primary goal of SBDM is to increase student outcomes by improving instruction. SBDM serves in an advisory capacity to assist the principal in decision making, goal setting, and budgeting. The SBDM committee has eleven members: principal, parent, community leader, and a teacher from each department (English, reading, math, history, science, special education) and two elective teachers. Contact Mr. Samples for additional information.

### **Tardy Policy**

Students are counted tardy within the first 25 minutes of each class, after that it is an unexcused absence. Students that arrive more than 5 minutes after the tardy bell are considered to be excessively tardy and a referral will be sent to the office. Students that are tardy/excessively tardy will face disciplinary actions and the accumulation of tardies can affect exemptions for the semester exam.

#### **- Tardy Policy**

- 1<sup>st</sup> teacher warning 30 minute teacher consequence
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 30 minute teacher consequence
- 3<sup>rd</sup> office referral; 30 minute admin consequence
- 4<sup>th</sup> office referral; 2 hour Saturday Detention
- 5<sup>th</sup> office referral; 1 day ISS
- 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, etc office referral; progressive ISS
  - Persistent tardies may result in DAEP placement

#### **- Excessive Tardy Policy (more than 5 minutes past the tardy bell)**

- 1<sup>st</sup> office referral; 1 hour detention/consequence
- 2<sup>nd</sup> office referral; 2 hour Saturday Detention
- 3<sup>rd</sup> office referral; 2 days ISS
- 4<sup>th</sup> office referral; 3 days ISS
- 5<sup>th</sup> office referral; 4 days ISS + ISIP Warning
- 6<sup>th</sup> office referral; 5 days ISIP
- 7<sup>th</sup> office referral; 10 days ISIP

### **Textbooks**

Each student should write his name, in ink, in each book. If a book is lost or damaged, the student must pay for books before a replacement can be issued.

### **Ticket Booth**

The tickets booth operates from 8:00AM – 11:50AM and 1:00 PM – 4:00PM. Students will be required to show campus identification and/or a hall pass to conduct business.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring is available before or after school depending on the individual teacher's schedule. A pass can be obtained from each teacher and is required to attend tutoring.

### **Updating Information**

**It is vital that MHS has current contact information on all students. If there is any change in any student's contact information (address, phone number, etc.), please bring documentation to the Counseling Center as soon as possible. Please remember, the information you give us is the information that we use to contact you.**

#### **Visitors in the Building**

All visitors must check in with the front office upon arrival on campus. Students may not bring visitors to school. Parents wishing to visit their child's classes is requested to make prior arrangements. Visitors must sign in at the front office wear a name badge.