Kent ISD

Annual Notifications

2024-2025

Nondiscrimination

No person may be denied admission to any school /program in the District, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, or other School District program or activity based on the person's sex, gender orientation, religion, race, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic.

The Board of Education has adopted a Nondiscrimination and Retaliation Policy (Board Policy #3115) which prohibits all forms of illegal harassment and discrimination within the District. Any person who believes that s/he has been the victim of discrimination may seek resolution of his/her complaint through the procedures that have been established by the District. A person wishing to pursue a complaint of discrimination (other than sexual-based) may contact the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Legal Services, serving as the Civil Rights Compliance Officer. The Office of Human Resources is located at 2930 Knapp St., Grand Rapids. Phone: 616-365-2216.

Please see the **Title IX** section below for those wishing to pursue a complaint based on sexual harassment.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The District, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and Board Policy #5307 will ensure that homeless children and youth in transition have access to a free and appropriate public education, including preschool, and be given a full opportunity to participate in state and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. A student may be considered eligible for services if he/she is presently living:

- In temporary shared housing, a shelter, or transitional living program;
- In a hotel/motel, campground, or similar situation due to lack of alternatives;
- At a bus station, park, car, or abandoned building; or
- In a temporary or transitional foster care placement

The District has designated Ms. Casey Gordon as the School District's Coordinator under the Homeless Assistance Act. For questions or assistance, please call 616-363-1333 or email at caseygordon@kentisd.org. Her office is located within the Educational Services Center at 2930 Knapp St., Grand Rapids, MI 49525.

Drug Free Environment/Protection

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the entire school community. In accordance with the Federal and State law, the Board establishes a "Drug-Free School Zone" that extends 1000 feet from the boundary of any school property. The Board prohibits the use, possession,

concealment, delivery, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia at any time on District property, with the Drug-Free Zone or at any District-related event. Further, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, will take the necessary steps to ensure that an individual eighteen (18) years of age or older who knowingly delivers or distributes controlled substances so designated and prohibited by Michigan statute within the Drug-Free School Zone to another person is prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. (Board Policy #3102)

Programs for English Language Learner Students

Kent ISD provides secondary and center programming for students from their local/resident districts. While Kent ISD generally does not provide direct ELL services, it does provide some level of paraprofessional or supplementary support at the secondary and center programs.

Special Education and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The District is required, by law, to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities. The process of locating, identifying and evaluating children with disabilities is known as child find.

Child find extends both to children who may be eligible for special education under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and those who may be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

If you believe your child may qualify under either the IDEA or Section 504, please contact your child's resident school district to request assistance or an evaluation. (Board Policies #5601 and #5603). Kent ISD secondary program staff will collaborate with the resident district regarding any disability related concern, including child find.

Personal Curriculum

The Personal Curriculum (PC) is a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) endorsed process, permitting modification of specific credit requirements and/or content expectations based on the individual learning needs of a student. It is designed to serve students who want to accelerate or go beyond the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) requirements and students who need to individualize learning requirements to meet the MMC requirements.

Kent ISD refers inquiries regarding Personal Curriculum to the student's resident school district as it is the resident school district that ensures compliance with the MMC and graduation requirements. In the event a parent/guardian and/or student requests a PC, Kent ISD staff will refer the request to the students local/resident district and collaborate if/as needed.

School Property

The Board acknowledges the need for a reasonable degree of in-school storage of student possessions and will provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Where lockers are provided, students may lock them against incursion by other students, but lockers remain School District property. Students do not have a reasonable expectation of

privacy with respect to District personnel or their designees in lockers or other in-school storage places provided by the District. (Board Policies #5102)

Search and Seizure

The Board also authorizes the use of canines, trained in detecting the presence of drugs or devices. Canines may be used to determine the presence of drugs in locker areas and other places where such substances may be concealed. Canine detection is usually conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities or other certified organizations and is not used to search individual students without legally sufficient suspicion, a warrant or parental permission has been obtained.

School authorities are authorized to take reasonable steps to safeguard the safety and wellbeing of the students by, among other things, implementing the District's Student Handbook / Code of Conduct. Within the discharge of their responsibilities, District personnel may search students, student property and school property in the manner permitted by law. (Board Policy #5103)

Confiscation of Student Property

Kent ISD school officials or staff members may confiscate personal property in the possession of a student, as evidence of a crime or violation of the Student Handbook / Student Code of Conduct. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of any such student will be notified by the principal or designee.

Notice of Asbestos in School Buildings

Each school building within the District has been inspected for the presence of asbestos containing materials as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). A copy of the Building Inspection and Management Plan for each building is available in the building's main office. The plans may be inspected by members of the public and by District employees during normal business hours. A copy of the plan will be made available upon request for a nominal fee.

Pesticides

The Board of Education has adopted a Policy (#3406) to provide students and staff with an environment that is free of pests, pesticides and harmful chemicals to the extent required by law. The Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM) includes routine inspections or surveys of all school facilities and various strategies to prevent pests from becoming a problem. Pesticides are used only as a last resort and parents will be notified prior to a pesticide application in a school building or on school grounds.

Student Records: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The federal law known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days after the day Kent ISD receives a request for access.

   Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal or designee 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 education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

   Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the District to amend their child's or their education record should submit a written request to the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why they believe it should be changed. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student at the time they are notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

   One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A designated school official with a legitimate educational interest includes a person employed by the school district as an administrator or teacher, or another person designated by the Board of Education. A school official also includes a liaison officer who, while not employed by the District, may be granted access to student educational records (including video footage) at the direction and supervision of a school administrator. A school official also may include a contractor or consultant who, while not employed by the school district, performs an institutional service or function (such as design and maintenance of the District's security camera system) for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school district with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from student education records.

4. The right to refuse to allow the disclosure of “directory information”.

   “Directory information” regarding a student may be released to any requesting person or party, in addition to the eligible student, his/her parent, or legal guardian, without written consent. The Board designates the following student record information as directory information (Board Policy #5309):

   - A student’s name, address and telephone number;
   - A student’s grade level;
   - A student’s photograph, including photographs and videos depicting a student’s participation in school-related activities and classes
   - A student’s enrollment status
   - A student’s dates of attendance (e.g. 2013-2017)
   - A student’s birth date and place of birth
   - A student’s participation in School District related programs and extracurricular activities;
   - A student’s height and weight, if a member of an athletic team for which such information would be published;
   - Major field of study
   - Most recent educational agency or institution attended; and,
   - Honors, degrees and awards received by a student

   The Board further designates the District-assigned student email addresses as directory information for the limited purpose of: (1) facilitating the student’s participation in and access to online learning platforms and applications; and (2) inclusion in internal school and District email address books.

   In the event inconsistency exists between the Board of Education policy defining “directory information” and this annual notification, the policy prevails.

   Eligible students, parents, and/or legal guardians may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such directory information upon written notification to the District within thirty (30) days after receipt of this, the District's public notice. Parents may submit an Opt Out Form to the building principal of their child’s school.

The District is required to provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students as is permitted and/or required by law. "Armed forces of the United States" means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard. An eligible student or the parent or legal guardian may submit a signed, written direction to the District that the student's directory information not be accessible to United States Armed Forces recruiters. In such case, the information will not be disclosed.

5. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the 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 SW
Washington DC 20202-5280

As permitted by FERPA, Kent ISD may forward education records, without student or parental consent, to other agencies or institutions in which the student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled, upon request from the other agencies or institutions, and so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

The District will comply with a legitimate request for access to education records within a reasonable period of time, but not more than thirty (30) days after receiving the request or within a shorter period as may be applicable by law to students with disabilities. The requesting party may be charged a processing fee for the information.

Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information

Under the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and School District policy, no student will be required as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior parental consent, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political or religious affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- Sexual behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students or the student's parents have close family relationships;

- Legally-recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and religious leaders;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical exams and screenings.

Parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will be given access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

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

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

Parental Inspection of Instructional Materials

Parents have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the District's educational curriculum. Parents will be provided access to instructional materials within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal. The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, including printed and representational materials, audio-visual materials and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or assessments. (Board Policy #5401)

Title I Funds:

The only Federal Title I funding received by the District is in the form or a Regional Assistant Grant which provides supports and resources to local school districts. Local districts are responsible for providing parents of participating children a written Title I Parent and Family involvement policy, where applicable.

Title IX

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces, among other statutes, Title IX. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX 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 education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. A person wishing to pursue a complaint may also contact either the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Legal at 616-365-2214 or daverodgers@kentisd.org. The Human Resources office is located at 2930 Knapp St. (Board Policy #3118)

Child Nutrition Program

Kent ISD breakfast and lunch food services provided to students attending the District's center programs are coordinated by Grand Rapids Public Schools, with the exception of Empower U North (Sparta Schools is the coordinated partner) and Empower U South (Wyoming Schools is the coordinated partner.)

If you require information about eligibility or related questions, please contact:

For Empower U North:

Melissa Alley – Sparta Schools Food Service Director (616) 887-1744

For Empower U South:

Connor Kooyers – Wyoming Schools Dining Services (616) 530-7522

All other Center Programs:

Philip Greene – GRPS Director of Nutrition Services (616) 819-2135

If you have questions about availability of meals (breakfast and/or lunch) programs, please contact your child's school for basic information or the respective Food Service programs listed above for more specific questions.

In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age or disability.

School Wellness Policy

The District is committed to creating a school environment that enhances lifelong wellness practices. As required by law, the Board has adopted a Wellness Policy, which is periodically reviewed. (Board Policy 5707)

Physical Examinations and Screenings

In the absence of an emergency or an IEP or Section 504 plan, the District does not provide physical examinations and screenings on school premises. In the event the District does provide physical examinations and screenings, parents may opt-out their student from participation by sending the request, in writing, to their student's building principal.

Michigan Constitutional Postings

Consistent with MCL 380.10a, the required excerpts of text from the Michigan Constitution are posted in locations where the Board of Education meets, as well as school offices and the Superintendent's office.

Emergency Drills

Consistent with MCL 29.19 Kent ISD provides the Kent County emergency management coordinator a schedule of required safety / emergency drills.