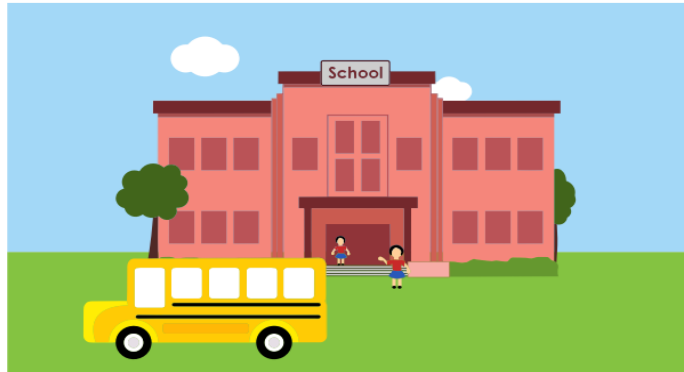


Tri-County Elementary Handbook 2023-2024 School Year



Tri-County Administration

Chad Straight Superintendent/Equity Coordinator

Jennifer Berg Principal/ Curriculum Coordinator

Tri-County Elementary Faculty

June Williams PK-12 Secretary

Dara Fisher Preschool

Barb Seaton Kindergarten

Ashley Peak First Grade

Baylee VanErsvelde Second Grade

Michaela Lundy Third Grade

Megan Nemechek, Fourth Grade, 4-6th Math

Bari Parrott Fifth Grade, 4-6th Social Studies

Scott Edmundson Sixth Grade, 4-6th Science, Athletic Director, and Substitute Bus Driver

Mary Brainard Elementary Special Education

Peggy Miller Media Specialist

Jill Hall, PK Paraeducator /Child Nutrition Food Director

Tammy Pierce Child Nutrition

Carolyn Danner Child Nutrition Associate

Julie Wagner Child Nutrition Associate

Kylie McDonald Paraeducator

Abby Huber Paraeducator

Cheyenn Yeager Paraeducator

Patty Davis Paraeducator

Paige Bermudez Paraeducator

Marina Springer Substitute/Paraeducator

Dylan Springer Physical Education

Jamie Schultz Title I

Samantha Brumbaugh School Nurse

Tim Ehrman Custodian

Josh Icenbice Maintenance/Transportation

Rabbi Decker, Bus Driver

Andy Thomas, Bus Driver

Tri-County Community School District

Mission Statement

Tri-County Community School District will challenge students by offering engaging experiences, encouraging them to participate, overcome barriers, and to learn to their full potential.

Message to Students and Parents

Welcome to Tri-County Schools as we kick off the 2023-2024 school year! We invite you to take advantage of the educational opportunities that are offered. Set goals for yourself which include respect for yourself, your classmates, faculty, and school property. Develop good study habits and strive for good attendance. These things will enable you to be successful. Follow the PBIS guidelines of being a **True Trojan** and **show respect, responsibility, and be safe; at all times. Remember the three R's when you are at school and at school functions.**

The assignment notebook and handbook are valuable tools. Know and follow school rules. Come prepared to class each day with your assignment notebook. Keep it up to date and take it home at night to share and discuss its contents with your parents. A parent/guardian's signature is recommended every day. We wish you a rewarding school year.

Registration Fee: \$50.00

The above fee should be paid at Registration. Assignment notebooks are provided for each student. If a notebook should need to be replaced, there will be a **\$5.00 fee**.

Breakfast: Breakfast will be served daily, except for late starts. Serving time for breakfast will be **8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.** **The breakfast program will begin on the first day of school.**

Lunch: Every student will have a lunch account. **The lunch account program is accessible on PaySchools.** Daily breakfast and lunch will be deducted from this account. Students who bring their lunch must eat in the lunchroom. Students who bring their lunch are allowed to get milk daily. No pop is allowed during lunchtime or any time during the day. Guidelines for free or reduced lunches will be made available to all students. Free and reduced forms are available at school. Hot lunches will begin on the first day of school. Lunch menus are posted at school on a monthly basis. They are listed in the monthly newsletter.

Update: The Tri-County School Board approved allowing peanut butter products back at Tri-County.

Lunch Accounts Lunch accounts must have a positive balance. **Lunch accounts are NOT through Powerschools. They are in PaySchools.** Lunch accounts are individual student accounts and no longer are family accounts. Notes will be sent home via postal mail or email notifying parents when their lunch account is low or has a negative balance. If you are **eligible for reduced or free lunch, you must fill out a Free and Reduced Form annually.** These are available online and in the offices. If you have any questions, please contact our Food Director, Jill Hall at jill.hall@tri-countyschools.com

School Hours We request parental assistance in scheduling the departure of children from home so that the children (except those riding buses) **do not**

arrive at school prior to 8:00 a.m. Students will gather and be supervised in the elementary gym until 8:15 a.m. at which time they will go to their classroom. Students eating breakfast will report to the lunchroom immediately. **Classes begin at 8:20 a.m.**

Absence Attendance is very important for success in school as well as to instill a good work ethic. If your child is ill, he/she should stay home. The school requests that parents contact the school by phone or with a note carried to the office by a neighbor or older sibling if a child is unable to attend school. **Please contact the school by 8:00 a.m. if your child will be absent.** If a parent does not contact the school and the classroom teacher notifies the office of the child's absence, the secretary will contact the home. This plan provides a measure of protection for the safety of the children. Without this procedure, the parent may assume his/her child to be in school, and the teacher may also assume the child to be at home. If you oversleep, please have your child come into school as soon as possible. If you do not have transportation, please call the school and we will see what we can do to help out. Students will not be excused from school under any circumstances unless the request is made by the parent and the child is picked up by the parent (unless the parent authorizes the school to do otherwise). The school will not send a student home due to illness, etc. without first contacting the parent or another person(s) so designated by the parent on the emergency form filled out at the beginning of each year. **In those cases where students reach five absences, a note will be sent to parents. Further absences may result in a parent conference. In those cases where students reach eight (8) absences within one semester, those students may be subject to a parental conference as well. If a student is absent for a total of 12 days a quarter a parent/ administrator/student conference will be held to resolve the attendance issue. After this time, the county attorney may be notified unless other factors prevail. Students are considered truant if they are absent from school or any class without good cause. The county attorney may request a meeting with the school administrator, parents, and the school. This will all be documented and expected to be followed through upon a meeting with the county attorney.**

Tardies: Being tardy to school can impact your child's day. They miss valuable instructional time. **After 8 tardies**, your child may be issued a detention, in-school suspension, a meeting between the teacher, parent(s), and administration may be held, and excessive tardies will be turned into the County Attorney.

Legal Status of Student If a student's legal status, such as the student's name or the student's custodial arrangement, should change during the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school district and provide the necessary paperwork. The school district needs to know when these changes occur to ensure that the school district has a current student record. Only legal names are recorded on students' permanent records.

Dismissal: Have your child go directly home after dismissal unless prior arrangements have been made and the school has a note advising them of those arrangements. Without this notification, the usual arrangements will be followed. Bus drivers also appreciate a note or phone call from the parent if the student will not be riding the bus. ****If you are having your child stay after school for an extracurricular activity, they are not to be unsupervised. They must have prior permission to stay with a staff member. Please communicate this with Mrs. Williams in the office or Ms. Berg.****

Students who want to ride a bus other than their assigned regular route bus will need written permission from the parent and approval by the secretary/teacher. **Parents/Guardians must communicate this with Mrs. Williams at Ext. #140 or write a note in their child's assignment book.** This permission slip will then be given to the bus driver when boarding the bus. As our buses are at capacity, if extra students want to ride on a given day, there might not be enough room available. It's a good policy for parents to check ahead of time if they want a group of students to ride a bus (examples-scout meetings, ball practice, child's party, etc.)

Administrative Discretion: The administration reserves the right to use a certain amount of discretion in determining the severity of any student violation of a policy, rule, or directive of the district and/or any inappropriate act or behavior on the part of the student.

Birthday/Party Treats Birthday treats or treats for special occasions may be brought to school. They need to be store-bought. It is recommended that they be nutritious in value.

Early Dismissals/Late Starts Several times during the year, school will be dismissed or will start late for a variety of reasons. Some are scheduled and you will be notified in writing while others will be emergency situations such as inclement weather. This information will be announced on School Alert and local radio and TV

stations - WHO 1040, KBOE, KGRN 1410, KCRG-TV channel 9, KCCI-TV channel 8, the TC Website, and the TC Facebook page. For emergency dismissals, if you have young children, you should have an alternative place for them to go in case you are not at home and they do not have an older brother/sister to look after them. If you have not already done so, please notify your child's teacher where your child should go in case of emergency dismissals or if the child gets ill at school and you are not at home.

Student Health and Immunization Records To ensure healthy children at our public schools, the Board requires children to be immunized and receive physical examinations in accordance with its policies and the law. A student enrolling for the first time in the district shall also submit a certificate of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubella, chicken pox, and any other immunizations required under law. The student will be admitted conditionally to the attendance center, if the student has not yet completed the immunization process but is in the process of doing so. Failure to meet the immunization requirement will be grounds for suspension from the school until the immunization process is underway or is complete. Exemptions from the immunization requirement will be allowed only for medical or religious reasons recognized under the law. Complete Tri- County policies and State Codes dealing with immunizations are available in the administrative offices.

****Please update all information in PowerSchool annually.
Parents/Guardians must update themselves, a school staff member does not update information for families.****

Allergies If a student has food allergies or other allergies that might be impacted by others, a note will be posted outside the classroom door. Every precaution will be taken to ensure the child with specific allergies is not exposed to the elements that create the allergic reactions.

Accidents and Illnesses at School Our primary aim to prevent accidents is by teaching safety. Should an accident occur or your child becomes ill, you will be notified at once. For this reason, it is very important that the information on the emergency form be kept as accurate and complete as possible. Parents should notify the school of any change in the information contained on the emergency form. ****Please update all information in PowerSchool as it changes. The staff does not update Powerschool, each parent must do this themselves.****

Students who have vomited or have a fever are not allowed to return to school for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication.

Hearing Screening Hearing screenings will be conducted for each student in the preschool. A teacher or a parent/ guardian may also make requests for screenings. If there is any concern, parents/guardian(s) will be notified.

If a child is injured or becomes ill at school, he/she will be cared for temporarily in the office until a parent or a person designated by the parent is able to take the child home. The school may only provide emergency first aid in the case of an accident or illness. Complete local policy for Student Injury or Illness at School is available in the administrative offices.

Contagious Diseases Children with definite signs of illness such as colds, skin diseases, or communicable diseases should be kept at home. Please send a note so the teacher knows about it. This policy is both for the health of the affected student as well as the health of classmates who could become infected. Complete Tri-County policies and State Codes dealing with communicable diseases are available for review in the administrative offices.

Head Lice If a student is suspected to have head lice, his/her head will be checked. If live lice is detected a note will be sent home stating that the student's hair will need to be treated before returning to class. Lice shampoo and cleaning agents may be requested via the PK-12 secretary or the principal if you are in need of them.

Administration of Medication **NO** medication will be administered without the written authorization from the parent. These forms are available during registration and in the offices. **NO medicine may be brought on the school buses.** Parents will need to bring in their child's medication. Medication includes Tylenol, cough drops or cough syrup, and prescription as well as non-prescription medicines. **ALL** prescription medicines **MUST** be in the **ORIGINAL PHARMACY** containers with the pharmacy label of instructions on them. All non-prescription medicines should be in the original containers. If a student gets frequent headaches, *parents may bring in a bottle of pain reliever and a permission slip to give to the student needed and indicated on the form.*

Communication Pertinent school announcements will be in the PK-6 news calendar which is sent home with students at the beginning of each month. Parents are responsible for knowing the contents of the notes or papers sent home and for

promptly returning any requested forms. Daily assignment books are an excellent bridge between home and school.

Student Appearance and Dress Student dress and/or appearance which are disruptive to the general operation of the school will not be tolerated. This decision is at the discretion of the building principal or staff member. Several things to keep in mind regarding school dress are:

1. Maintain personal hygiene with clean hair, body, and clothes to avoid offensive odor.
2. Shoes must be worn at all times. **Bed slippers do not qualify as shoes.**
3. Do not wear hats, hoods, or caps inside the school building. Hats and caps may be confiscated by Tri-County staff members until the end of the day.

Appropriate clothing must be worn to school. No T-shirts with offensive wording, graffiti, or advertising logos from an inappropriate organization should be worn to school. Shirts promoting alcohol or tobacco or having suggestive language will not be allowed. Skirts/shorts must be at least as long as the student's fingertips (with arms down at the student's sides). Shirts with cut out arms must not show bare skin or undergarments. This is for both females and males. If your child violates a dress code rule they will first be warned, asked to change or cover up, and in the case of a second offense they will be issued a minor or major violation.

Tobacco, Drug, or Alcohol Use Any form of drug, alcohol, or tobacco use, or any other type of behavior which would be detrimental to the welfare of students will not be permitted anywhere on the school grounds, school buses, or during school sponsored activities.

The school will not permit the use, sale or manufacture of **any form of** drugs, alcohol or tobacco on school property. Should such a charge be substantiated, the school will take such action which is consistent with (1) the drug's potential for abuse, (2) the condition under which the offense was committed: i.e. using, sharing, selling or manufacturing, and (3) the quantity of the substance.

Discipline Discipline is not a problem of the school alone, and any effort to improve pupil behavior needs support from the home. When parents work cooperatively with teachers to solve problems, pupils emerge with self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.

Our discipline plan is based on the belief that all students can be responsible and self-disciplined. Tri-County is a PBIS school and adheres to the guidelines presented through PBIS. Students are expected to be True Trojans and be respectful, responsible, and safe. Students need to be involved in making choices and dealing with the consequences, learn what they have done wrong, learn about the consequences of their actions, and help resolve their problems.

Classroom and playground rules have been designed to create a learning environment that is safe and accepting for all students. Rules are clear, specific, and contain realistic expectations and have been designed to create an environment safe, instructional, and accepting of all students. Rules and expectations align with the PBIS model of being respectful, responsible, and safe at all times in all areas of the school. Most of the discipline problems are handled by the classroom teacher and the student. For more severe infractions, a violation is filled out and sent to the office. The principal meets with the student to discuss the violation and consequences may include detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion. Students are expected to help resolve the problem with a reasonable solution. Parents will be contacted about the problem and the solution. We emphasize the positive behavior of our students. Each month a drawing is completed for students who have exhibited responsible, respectful, safe, and positive behavior. These students are nominated by their classroom teacher and honored at a small assembly. Students may also be nominated as Student of the Month recipients if they are demonstrating positive behavior. Go Trojans!

You will be contacted if your child should receive a violation report within a few days either through the assignment book, an email, or a phone call or during a face to face parent meeting if applicable.

Violations (both minor and major) may be given by any school personnel on buses, playgrounds, and in the school building for any of the following problems:

- Disruptive Behavior
- Damage to School Property
- Disrespect
- Unacceptable Language
- Harassment (of adults or other students)
- Physical Fighting

- Or other acts as determined by the principal and school staff.

If numerous violations are received during one semester, a parent conference may be held to create a constructive plan and the student may be nominated for a specific CICO (Check in, Check Out) PBIS plan with individualized rubric to promote appropriate behaviors. The student will be assigned to a classroom teacher they have or can develop a positive relationship with. This is a positive interaction in which the mentor teacher serves as an additional support system to the student. This is typically not their classroom teacher. Fostering positive relationships can be key in overcoming behavioral issues.

Bullying/Harassment The Tri-County CSD Board of Education recognizes that a school is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all students, promotes good citizenship, increases student attendance and engagement, and supports academic achievement. To protect the rights of all students and groups for a safe and secure learning environment, the Board of Education prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with both a school's ability to educate its students and a student's ability to learn. All administrators, faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, and students are expected to refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment, and to demonstrate respectful behavior.

"Bullying" is a behavior that meets all of the following criteria:

Is reasonably perceived as being intimidating, aggressive, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm and/or emotional distress;

Is directed at one or more pupils;

Is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological, isolation, or emotional means;

Significantly interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;

Adversely affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress;

Is based upon a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, or is based upon an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics; and Is a repeated action or behavior and happens *over a period of time*.

The Tri-County CSD Board of Education expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, and volunteers.

***Incidents by the same person will result in stricter consequences with each occurrence.

Late Work Policy Late work problems will be handled by each classroom teacher. Your support and cooperation is appreciated. Teachers will communicate with you through the assignment book, email, or phone if a problem is perceived. The goal is not to punish the student, but to get the work done and to encourage responsibility for such tasks. Students may stay in for recess to make up late work at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Late work may result in loss privileges such as PBIS incentives.

Due Process Due Process is afforded (awarded) to each student regardless of the severity of an offense. This includes an informal or formal investigation of the allegations, written or oral notice to the student of the allegations against him/her and an opportunity to respond. In cases where suspension or Board action is contemplated, further legal procedures will be followed.

Appeal Procedures: Contact the principal for appeal procedures.

Search and Seize of Students Students will be subject to searches according to Board policy and State Code of Iowa. District authorities may without warrant search students, student lockers, desks, personal effects, work or protected areas. This search must be based on a reasonable suspicion that a district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated.

The search shall be reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the district facility.

It is within the school's authority to seize any substance or item found during a

search that violates school policy and/or state/federal law. Law enforcement may be contacted to perform a search along with administration. A dog may accompany law enforcement, but the dog cannot legally search a student. Any school activity, function, or trip will be subject to this Board policy and subject to disciplinary action by the school and authorities.

Weapon Policy Children will not bring toy or real guns, knives, matches, etc. to school. All weapons including water pistols, sling shots, and other nuisance items will be taken away and **will only be returned to parents**. The complete Tri-County Weapons Policy is available in the administrative offices.

Use of Profanity The use of vulgar, obscene, or profane language and/or gestures is expressly forbidden. Students who use such language or gestures may be subject to disciplinary measures such as a minor or major violation which can be given by any school personnel and transportation drivers.

Electronic Equipment Phones, iPads, and electronic devices will not be allowed from the time students walk into the building until the time they leave at the end of the day unless authorized by a supervising school personnel or the principal. If a student is using an item that falls under this description, it will be taken away and given back at the end of the day. If the student brings the item a second time, it may be taken away and will be returned only to the parent or guardian. Individual bus drivers will establish a rule at the beginning of each school year in regards to the use of electronic equipment on their buses. *Cell phones should stay in a student's locker during the school day.*

Bus Riding Regulations Although the law requires the district to provide transportation, it does not relieve parents from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Nor does it relieve students from the responsibility to behave in an orderly and safe manner on the bus. School bus transportation is a privilege that can be taken away at any time a student's conduct jeopardizes the safety of other passengers. The right to safe transportation will not be taken away from the entire busload of students because a few disobey the rules.

The bus driver will have complete control of the bus and the students he/she is transporting for the duration of the bus ride. Any problem arising with a student will be promptly reported to the principal who shall discipline the student in accordance with procedures developed by the superintendent and approved by

the Board.

Those students guilty of flagrant, repeated or gross disobedience or misconduct on school buses are subject to suspension within the guidelines of the District's Student Suspension Policy. Continued violation of bus rules will be considered sufficient cause of refusing to transport the student(s) involved, and may lead to suspension from school, depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct.

Recess Students go outside for recess unless the weather is too cold (*below zero*) or too wet. Children should be properly dressed for outdoor play. This includes wearing boots when conditions necessitate (mud, rain, or snow). In fall and late spring, old shoes vs. boots are permitted because of wet grass or mud caused by rain. Children who are not wearing the proper footwear will not be allowed off the hard surface areas at recess on those days protection is needed. We highly encourage you to send a change of clothes appropriate for seasonal wear. These may be kept in the student lockers issued at the beginning of the school year. We do have additional clothing materials. Please contact June Williams if you are in need.

The following policy allows for flexibility to satisfy the health needs of the students. Parents should dress their children warmly and provide adequate protection for their shoes to keep them dry. Each daily recess time allots thirty minutes of play. A teacher and a paraeducator will both be on duty to ensure an adequate teacher to student ratio.

- The teachers and paraeducators on duty will make the decision if it's advisable to go out.
- Written requests from a doctor for the child to stay in because of illness must be provided.
- Children will not be permitted to go out for recess when it is raining.

Telephone Use The school telephone is reserved for school business. Student use of the phone is limited to cases of absolute necessity. If your child needs to use the telephone they may request to come to the office to make a call.

Computer Usage The use of technology must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of the Tri-County Community School District. Use of computer, networks, and/or computing resources of any

other organization must comply with Tri- County's 1:1 Computer Initiative Policies and Procedures. Annually, this computer policy and procedure agreement must be signed by the student, parent, and administrator. The technology agreement is on the online registration platform within Power Schools. Fees will be charged to students who damage a school issued device.

Fees are:

Charger—\$29.95

Chromebook—\$245.00

Computer Bag—\$33.00

Fees will be noted on Payschools.

Holidays Holidays which are celebrated with school parties are Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. The types of celebration will vary from grade to grade. Information relevant to individual parties will be sent home from the teacher. Only pre-packaged treats are acceptable. Other parties for students or teachers will be permitted only by administrative approval. Personal party invitations should not be brought to school unless the whole class or all the boys or all the girls are to receive one. Costumes are permitted to be worn by the students.

School Building and Property Students are expected to use all possible care in dealing with the building and property. The school belongs to the community. Students should accept the responsibility of seeing that the buildings, grounds, and equipment are kept in good condition. Pride and care shown for the school facilities are gratifying and appreciated.

Visitors The school welcomes parents and alumni as visitors. While you are welcome in the building, please limit the time you are here as new visitors in the classroom can interrupt classroom learning. ***All visitors should stop at the elementary office and receive visitor permission before visiting anyone in the building.*** Please do not bring younger siblings to school when you are visiting. We ask that there be no visitors during the first 10 days and last two weeks of school and during assessment times. These times may vary. We ask parents and visitors to give teachers **at least two days' notice in advance.** Parents and visitors must check in and check out with June in the elementary office and are required to wear a

visitor badge. We ask that a visiting student spend no more than half of the day (including lunch) at school.

If your child is tardy to school, please have them walk down to the room independently so as to not disrupt instruction time.

This protocol is to ensure safety for all students, staff, and parents within the building.

If you would like to meet with a teacher, please schedule a time before or after school.

Areas of Study

- Health
- Spelling
- Title I Reading
- Penmanship
- Special Education
- Reading/Language Arts
- Physical Education
- Talented and Gifted
- Mathematics
- Music
- Speech
- Social Studies
- Library
- Science/STEM
- Crafts
- **Computer Science (Grades 1-6) will be offered at one grade level 2023**

All students take physical education. When playing in the gym, students are required to wear tennis shoes. Stocking feet are not permitted as most starting, running, stopping, and especially jumping on the hard floor can be injurious to unsupported feet and may be a health and/or safety hazard. Please note: If your child is attending school, but cannot participate in P.E. class for a period of time because of illness or injury, a physician's note to the instructor explaining the reason will be required. When your child is ready to join the class, a note of a doctor's release will be needed from you in order to admit your child back into the class activities.

Student Assessment The Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress is administered to students in grades 3-6. This standardized testing is a systematic means of monitoring student progress. Students in grades K-6 will be given FAST three times a year in the area of literacy, mathematics, and social emotional learning (SEL). Report cards are sent home following all four quarters. Midterms are sent out in grades 4-6. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year.

Area Education Agency Great Prairie AEA provides consultants in the various academic areas, hearing clinicians, preschool instruction for children with developmental problems, social workers, psychologists, and speech clinicians. If you wish further information regarding the services offered, please feel free to call the school or contact the parent coordinator at the AEA or request information from Ms. Berg or Mrs. Brainard.

Equal Opportunity/Non Discrimination The Tri-County Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following service areas:

- Agriculture Education
- Business Education
- Health
- Industrial Technology

It is the policy of the Tri-County Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Chad Straight, Superintendent, 3003 Hwy 22 PO Box 17, Thornburg, IA 50255, (641) 634-2636, chad.straight@tri-countyschools.com.

Director of the Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-7204,
Telephone: (312)730-1560 Facsimile: (312) 730-1576, Email:
OCR.Chicago@ed.gov)

**Section 504 - Notice of
Nondiscrimination**

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Tri-County Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, gender identity, physical or mental ability or disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, physical appearance, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII Title IX, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3 is directed to contact:

Superintendent of Schools

3003 Hwy 22 PO Box 17
Thornburg, Iowa 50255 641-634-
2636

who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII Title IX, the ADA, § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the board. The board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by other students, by school employees, and by volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization of students, based on any of the following actually or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon the employee's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age or disability is also prohibited.

This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of the board; while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and the welfare of the school and school district. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the students shall be disciplined by appropriate measures which may include suspension or expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures which may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures which may include exclusion from school grounds. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

When looking at the totality of the circumstances, harassment and bullying mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actually or perceived trait or characteristics of the students and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following: :

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to student's person or property;
- Has substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, electronic text messaging or similar technologies.

Approved ____ Reviewed ____ Revised ____

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT
POLICY

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc.;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly as a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors:

- Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities; and/or
- Requiring submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for decisions affecting the student.

Any person who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceedings relating to the report.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. Individuals who knowingly file false harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliation in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of the policy shall be subject

to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

The school or school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The principal or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment. The principal or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by employees alleging harassment.

It also is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the investigator and principal to develop procedures regarding this policy. The superintendent develops procedures regarding this policy. The superintendent is also responsible for organizing training programs for students, school officials, faculty, staff, and volunteers who have direct contact with students. The training will include how to recognize harassment and what to do in case a student is harassed. It will also include proven effective harassment prevention strategies. The superintendent will also develop a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy in reducing bullying and harassment to the board.

The board will annually publish this policy. The policy may be publicized by the following means:

- Inclusion in the student handbook
- Inclusion in the employee handbook
- Inclusion in the registration materials
- Inclusion on the school or school district's website, and a copy shall be made to any person at the central administrative office at 3003 Hwy 22, Thornburg, IA 50255.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. ** 1221-1234i (2004).

29 U.S.C * 794 (1994). 42 U.S.C ** 2000d-2000d-7 (2004). 42 U.S.C ** 12001 *et.seq.* (2004) Senate File 61, 1st Regular Session, 82nd General Assembly, (2007). Iowa Code ** 216.9; 280.3 (2007). 281. I.A.C. 12.3(6)

Morse v. Frederick, 127 S.Ct. 2618 (2007).

Cross References: 502 Student Rights and
Responsibilities

503. Student
Discipline 506 Student
Records