



Merivale High School

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2015-2016

Merivale High School
1755 Merivale Road
Nepean, Ontario
K2G 1E2

Telephone: (613) 224-1807

Fax: (613) 224-1416

Attendance: merivalehsattendance@ocdsb.ca

www.merivalehs.ocdsb.ca

Principal: Barb Gage

Vice-Principals: Tim Hawes (A-K)
Jon Cappello (L-Z)

Office Administrator: Barbara Dettmar
Assistant Administrator: Patricia L. Clark

Chief Custodian: Michael Harr

2015-2016 Student Council

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Co-Presidents - | Grace Ayoo Swagat Ghimire |
| Secretary - | Thilini Herath |
| Grade 12/Grad Rep - | Carina Zambrano |
| Spirit & Event Committee - | Kiran Edwardson Sarah Harrold Gabrielle Pancu Piotr Spychalski Kate Van den berg |
| Mastermind Committee - | Kenzie Morin Foster Rose Jenna Smart Helin Wang |
| Publicity Committee Heads - | Aleyna Akgun Adrianna Chang Tyrus Gibson Samantha Shein |
| Administrative Committee - | Katie Alexander Kiana Gibson Claire Sethuram |
| Staff Advisors - | Ms. Bourret Ms. Cimpello Mr. Stratton |

MHS DAILY SCHEDULE
Year 2015-2016

- 7:30 Main office opens
- 7:50 Classrooms are opened and supervised by teachers
- 8:00 Reminder bell! Five minutes until opening exercises

DAY 1

DAY 2

| Period | Times | Period | Times |
|--------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| 1 | 8:05 – 9:20 | 2 | 8:05 – 9:20 |
| 2 | 9:30 – 10:45 | 1 | 9:30 – 10:45 |
| Lunch | 10:45 – 11:35 | Lunch | 10:45 – 11:35 |
| 3 | 11:35 – 12:50 | 4 | 11:35 – 12:50 |
| 4 | 1:00 – 2:15 | 3 | 1:00 – 2:15 |

Day 1: Odd numbered days on the calendar (i.e. 1, 3, 5 ...)

Day 2: Even numbered days on the calendar (i.e. 2, 4, 6 ...)

YEARLY CALENDAR

Please visit the Merivale website for the most up-to date calendar.

<http://www.merivalehs.ocdsb.ca>

Important Dates

September

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| September 8, 2015 | First Day of School |
| September 9, 2015 | Photo Day |
| September 10, 2015 | Grade 9 & 10 Assembly |
| September 11, 2015 | Grade 11 & 12 Assembly |
| September 15, 2015 | School Council Meeting |
| September 17, 2015 | Club Fair / Meet the Teacher Night |

October

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| October 6, 2015 | School Council Meeting |
| October 8, 2015 | Progress Reports Go Home |
| October 9, 2015 | PD Day |
| October 12, 2015 | Thanksgiving Day (<i>school closed</i>) |
| October 16, 2015 | Photo Retakes |
| October 27 – 30, 2015 | Grad Photos |
| October 29, 2015 | Parent/Teacher Interviews |
| October 29, 2015 | Grade 12 Parent Info Night |

November

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| November 3, 2015 | School Council Meeting |
| November 4, 2015 | Take Our Kids To Work Day |
| November 12, 2015 | Academic Awards Night |
| November 19, 2015 | Report Cards Go Home |

December

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| December 1, 2015 | Grad Photo Retakes |
| December 1, 2015 | School Council Meeting |
| December 1, 2015 | Musical - Matinee |
| December 2-5, 2015 | Musical Performances |
| Dec. 21, 2015 – Jan. 1, 2016 | Christmas Break (<i>school closed</i>) |

January

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| January 5, 2016 | School Council Meeting |
| January 13-14, 2016 | EQAO Grade 9 Math |
| January 26 – February 1, 2016 | Exams |

February

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| February 2, 2016 | Semester 2 starts |
| February 2, 2016 | School Council Meeting |
| February 9, 2016 | Course Fair / Meet the Teacher Night |
| February 11, 2016 | Report Cards Go Home |
| February 12, 2016 | PD Day |
| February 15, 2016 | Family Day (<i>school closed</i>) |
| TBD | Photo Retakes |

March

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| March 1, 2016 | School Council Meeting |
| March 3, 2016 | Progress Reports Go Home |
| March 14-18, 2016 | March Break (<i>school closed</i>) |
| March 25, 2016 | Good Friday (<i>school closed</i>) |
| March 28, 2016 | Easter Monday (<i>school closed</i>) |
| March 31, 2016 | Grade 10 Literacy Test |

April

April 5, 2016
April 7, 2016
April 21, 2016

School Council Meeting
Parent/Teacher Interviews
Report Cards Go Home

May

May 3, 2016
May 23, 2016

School Council Meeting
Victoria Day (*school closed*)

June

June 3, 2016
June 7, 2016
June 8-9, 2016
June 21-27, 2016
June 28, 2016
June 29, 2016
June 29, 2016
June 30, 2016

Art Show
School Council Meeting
EQAO Grade 9 Math
Exams
PA Day
PA Day
Commencement Ceremony
PA Day

MERIVALE'S CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

At Merivale our code of behavior is about respect: we respect ourselves, others and our environment. This code applies to all MHS students on OCDSB property, school buses and school related activities such as field trips, sports events and all other school sponsored activities.

The philosophy of the school is to provide support and encouragement to help students. If, however, repeated forms of encouragement fail, students will face disciplinary action based on the philosophy of “progressive discipline.”

ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

If students are absent from school and are under the age of 18, parents or guardians should contact the office and leave a message (613) 224-1807 and press “1” or send an email to merivalehsattendance@ocdsb.ca. Students are responsible for all work missed during an absence, regardless of the reason. If students have missed any evaluation during an absence, they must contact the teacher of the course to make appropriate arrangements regarding make-up tests or extensions, following school policy. As a general rule of thumb, when students return from an absence, they should be prepared to write any missed tests or submit any due assignments.

If parents or guardians wish their children to miss five or more days of school, they must seek permission from the Principal in writing in advance of the absence.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

If a student participates in academic fraud (e.g. cheating on tests or exams, plagiarism in assignments), he/she is deemed not to have met the expectations associated with that particular evaluation. A mark of zero may be assigned to the particular piece of work. The teacher in consultation with the department head and Principal will assign an appropriate consequence in accordance with the OCDSB progressive discipline policy.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Assessment and evaluation nurture self-esteem by providing plans for improving and enriching student performance.

The Merivale High School evaluation policies for individual subjects will be given to students at the beginning of the semester. Evaluations are based on a balanced approach and will feature content-rich tasks. Student responsibilities in the assessment and evaluation process include:

- *Attending all classes regularly;*

- *Submitting assignments on or before due date;*
- *Checking with teachers regarding any assignments that may have been given during an absence;*
- *Communicating with teachers well in advance, when there is going to be a planned, excused absence that will interfere with any form of assessment or evaluation (i.e. medical appointments, field trips, student council activities, sports events, family responsibilities, etc.).*

A final examination is a part of most course programs. All students are expected to take the final exam on the scheduled date. We regret that we do not reschedule early exam dates for students. Therefore, it is important to schedule appointments and holidays accordingly. Please do not plan early departures from school. Students who have no legitimate reason for missing an examination will receive an “incomplete” for that component. Please note that failing to complete the summative assignment by the contracted date will also result in an “incomplete”, unless a doctor’s note is provided.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Regular attendance on the part of students is vital to the process of learning. Participation is an integral part of each course. Students who habitually miss class will suffer in the evaluation process because their participation and achievement cannot be fully assessed. Students are expected to be on time and to attend all classes.

GETTING TO SCHOOL BY BUS

The eligibility for students in grades 9-12 have changed. All students meeting the distance criteria (over 3.2 km) from their designated school are eligible to receive transportation services. OSTA will select the most appropriate mode of transportation which may include yellow bus, public transit or small school purpose vehicle. Please refer to the website for more information or call 613-224-8800. Cross-boundary transfer students are ineligible for any transportation services. Similarly, regardless of financial need, students living closer than 3.2 km from the school are also ineligible.

COMPUTERS & INTERNET USE

Using the Board Internet service is a privilege, not a right. Internet use must support education for classroom activities. All students must sign a comprehensive technology policy agreement based upon Board procedure PR.611.IT. The key points are listed below:

- *Students will not transmit, relay or receive information or materials that are inappropriate or unlawful;*
- *The school has the right to monitor all electronic communication;*
- *Students will exercise extreme caution about revealing personal information to others. Users will not share passwords or gain*

unauthorized access to information resources;

- *Students will familiarize themselves with and respect copyright laws and licensing agreements.*

MISUSE AND CONSEQUENCES OF MISUSE

If any of the above conditions or any other conditions contained in the policy agreement are violated, the following consequences may occur:

- *Suspension or cancellation of user access privileges;*
- *Payments for damages and repairs;*
- *Discipline under other appropriate Board policies, including suspension or expulsion;*
- *Civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.*

Should an infraction occur, Board and/or school network administration may immediately revoke user privileges at any time. Any user identified as a security risk or as having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the board's computer network and all related services.

Note: Using computers for personal emails, chat rooms, live journals and/or games is prohibited!

COURSE LOAD

Students in Grades 9, 10 and 11 must take a full program of 8 credits, four each semester. Students in Grade 12 may request a study period (spare) if they meet the following criteria:

- *They will have a total of 30 credits by the end of the academic year;*
- *They have a graduation plan approved by a guidance counsellor;*
- *They have 3 scheduled courses at Merivale each semester.*

Students with a free period are to work in the library or cafeteria.

COURSE CHANGES AND TIMELINES

| Change | Semester 1 | Semester 2 |
|--|------------|------------|
| Last day to make a timetable change | Sept. 12 | Feb. 13 |
| Last day to make a level change (i.e. academic to applied) | Nov. 21 | May 1 |
| Last day to drop a course (see Full disclosure) | Nov. 20 | Apr. 30 |

FULL DISCLOSURE

The Ministry of Education has issued the following policy statement regarding full disclosure: If a student withdraws from a grade 11 or 12 course five instructional days after the first provincial report, "W" will be entered in the credit column and the student's mark at the time of

withdrawal, expressed as a percentage, will be noted in the achievement column on the Ontario Student Transcript.

DANCE POLICY

Merivale's Students' Council and the school administration will continue to plan for successful school dances. The following guidelines adhere to the Board's clearly articulated policy on school dances:

- *Admission to evening dances will be by advance sales only. Tickets will not be sold at the door;*
- *All students must show current student identification at the door;*
- *Each guest must be accompanied by the MHS student who has sponsored him/her. Guests must also show current student identification at the door. The school reserves the right to refuse admission to guests;*
- *Doors will be open from 7:30-8:30 p.m. with no admission after 8:30 without prior permission from the administration;*
- *Students will not be allowed to re-enter the building after leaving;*
- *Lockers and hallways are out of bounds during a dance;*
- *All coats and bags are to be checked in the coatroom. MHS will not accept responsibility for students' property;*
- *Dances take place in a smoke, drug, alcohol, and weapon free environment.*

Failure to adhere to these conditions will result in a parent or guardian being requested to pick up the student immediately. Additional consequences may apply in accordance with Board policy. Dances or other events held off school property are neither supported nor sanctioned by Merivale High School.

Traditionally, graduates organize a formal dinner dance and other activities to celebrate the end of their high school career. **These are solely student initiatives and are not supported, monitored or supervised by staff.** Any school sanctioned graduation activities will be announced via invitation letter bearing the school letterhead.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

An excused absence is defined as a legitimate illness (documentation may be required), a religious observance, compassionate leave or participation in a school sanctioned activity. All absences not called in must be verified by a note which should include the following information: the date on which the note was written; the reason for the absence; the date(s) of the absence; the signature of the parent or guardian (student, if over 18).

Signing In: Students arriving at school after classes begin must sign in at the main office before proceeding to the class in session.

Leaving school during the day: Students must sign out at the main office if they are leaving the school early. A note must be presented or a call from parents/guardians must be received. If there is no note, a member of the office staff or the Vice-Principal will contact parents/guardians, if it is necessary to leave the school before the end of the day (i.e. at lunch or during a class).

Unexcused absences will result in consequences applied by the Teacher and/or the Vice-Principal, according to the OCDSB progressive discipline policy.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

In accordance with the Education Act there will be periodic planned testing of the school's fire alarm system. All persons in the school must evacuate the building. Everyone must:

- *Follow route directions as indicated in classrooms;*
- *Leave the building quickly and quietly, not stopping to gather outdoor clothing;*
- *Stay well clear of the building and away from all access roads and driveways;*
- *Return to the school after the "all clear" bell has sounded;*
- *In the case of an alarm, students will not return to the building until the Fire Department has arrived and determined that there is no fire.*

Note: The Fire Department advises that the ringing of a false alarm constitutes a criminal offence and all violators will be prosecuted.

HALLWAYS

Once classes have begun, students are to remain out of the halls. **Students with spares must be in the Library or the Cafeteria in order for us to maintain a quiet working environment.** Skateboards and roller blades are for outdoor use only and must be kept away from entrances and walkways. Students are asked not to throw balls in the hallways or in front of entrances and walkways. **Lunches are to be eaten in the Cafetorium, A Wing and B Wing only.**

INTERSCHOLASTICS

It is the aim of the Merivale athletics department to positively influence students' lives through sport. We strive to be consistent in encouraging *dedication, responsibility* and *commitment* among our student athletes. Our focus is on the development and improvement of fitness and skill levels for all athletes as they are challenged physically and mentally in tryouts, practices, and competitions.

Students must follow Merivale’s Athletic Policy which includes attendance on game days and maintaining passing grades. Tryouts, practice dates and times are announced on the PA and posted on the Athletic bulletin board. All athletes on team sports will be expected to pay a fee to cover registration costs, transportation, etc.

Collectively we work together to deliver an interscholastic program which provides safe and fun opportunities for all students to experience the benefits from participation in organized sport. All student athletes must understand and sign the Student Athlete Contract. This contract incorporates our focus with NCSSAA and OFSAA athlete expectations and codes of conduct. Student athletes are to commit to one and only one team for any given season of play. An athlete on a team shall not be denied the opportunity to try out for an upcoming team provided there is no drastic overlap between the two sport seasons.

SAMPLE INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT OFFERINGS

| Gender | Fall Season | Winter Season | Spring Season |
|---------|---|---|--|
| Females | Basketball Field Hockey Cross Country Golf Ultimate Soccer | Volleyball Badminton Curling Hockey Nordic Skiing Swimming | Soccer Rugby Track & Field Touch Football |
| Males | Volleyball Sr. Cross Country Golf Ultimate | Basketball Badminton Curling Hockey Nordic Skiing Swimming Volleyball Jr. | Baseball Rugby Track & Field |

LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTRE

Merivale High School has a welcoming and comprehensive Library Resource Centre, giving students access to a wide variety of print and electronic sources of information. We’re open to students before and after school, at lunch, and during class time for students on spare. In addition, students have online access to encyclopedias, magazine and newspaper databases, as well as course-specific links and materials through our school website at <http://merivalehs.ocdsb.ca>

For optimal use of the Library Resource Centre, students are asked to note the following:

- Please present your MHS Student ID card to sign out books. Books are loaned for a period of three weeks; you can renew before your due date if you need them for a longer period of time.
- A late fee of \$0.10 per day will apply to all overdue books, so check your due date and don't forget to renew! Additional fees will apply for lost or damaged books.
- No food or drink is permitted in the library. Please help us keep our space clean.

Library hours are posted on the door. Please drop by, grab something good to read, and discover all that our library has to offer!

LINK CREW

Link Leaders provide a number of important services to the student body, focusing on the grade nine population and their transition into high school. They are trained to help fellow students resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. In addition the group helps new students feel welcome, through orientation sessions and by providing peer contacts. Link Leaders are also responsible for presenting workshops to grade 9 classes throughout the year, organizing social events and assisting with study skills and habits.

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

It is important to be proactive in response to an emergency situation and to have clear procedures in place should such an occasion arise. A lock-down procedure would be used in response to an emergency situation that involves potential serious physical threat / harm to students or staff. Once the office has been notified of such an emergency, administration will use the PA system to announce the lock-down. In such a situation:

- *All staff and students will proceed to the nearest classroom;*
- *Teachers will lock classroom doors, cover the windows, turn out the lights, and direct students to a place that is out of view from the doors and windows;*
- *All bells, announcements and fire alarms should be ignored. Everyone will remain where they are until a visit to the classroom from a member of the Police Department ends the lock-down;*
- *Students must follow all instructions given by teachers to ensure their safety.*

LOCKERS

Each Grade 10-12 student will choose his or her own locker at the beginning of the school year. Grade 9 lockers will be assigned by "LINK" grouping to help build cohesion among the students. For your own protection, students are not to share lockers. Each locker is to be secured with a high quality

combination lock provided at the beginning of the year. All combinations and locker locations must be provided to the main office. Lockers are the property of the Board; as such, the school reserves the right to open them if necessary. **MHS is not responsible for loss or theft from lockers.**

Students are advised to leave valuable items, such as tablets and ipods at home. Valuable electronics, bus passes, or special clothing items should not be left in change rooms. Daily use lockers are available in the gym to securely store items.

PASTORAL CARE

Merivale High School welcomes the Pastoral Care Worker assigned to our community. This role is filled by Dr. Aisha Sherazi. She is available to students and faculty as a "listening ear" in matters of a spiritual nature. These might include issues about morality, religious practice or tragic events. Aisha is in the school on a regular basis and can be contacted through Student Services.

SAFE SCHOOLS POLICY

The Board believes that it is the right of each student and each staff member to a safe and orderly learning environment, free of concern about personal safety and, therefore, the Board shall:

- (a) reduce and try to eliminate the incidence of bullying and violence in the schools;
- (b) provide opportunities for students to develop the skills necessary to handle and avert violent and potentially violent situations;
- (c) promote the long-term prevention of violence by preparing students to manage their lives and relationships in non-violent ways;
- (d) work co-operatively and in shared responsibility with students, parents, school councils, staff, the wider community and the police to foster a safe and inclusive school environment and to fulfill the guiding principles and objectives of the Board;
- (e) ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity

A progressive discipline approach is used to deal with inappropriate behaviour. This may include written work with a learning component, withdrawal of privileges; withdrawal from class; detention; restitution for damages; conflict resolution; individual, peer and group mediation; volunteer service to the school community; referral to counselling; suspension; and expulsion.

SCENT FREE CONSIDERATION

While fragrances may be pleasing to some people, they can be unpleasant and harmful to others. Scents can cause serious health problems. People with allergies, multiple chemical sensitivities (MCS) and asthma can become

quite ill when exposed to scents. Reactions can vary from mild to severe and can interfere with daily activities and being able to stay at school or work.

Please be respectful of people with allergies, use scent-free products, avoid using perfume, cologne or other scented products when coming into our scent considerate school.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

All schools in the OCDSB have an SRO from the Ottawa-Carleton Police Service. The SRO is in the school in a supportive role to assist staff, students and parents. Students wishing to speak with our SRO may contact him/her through their Counsellor or Vice-Principal.

SMOKING

According to Ontario's Tobacco Control Act, no person shall smoke anywhere on OCDSB property. This includes any bus owned, operated or approved by the OCDSB, or school related trips. Students found smoking on school property will be suspended. Bylaw officers patrol regularly and students could be fined if found smoking on school property. The use of “e-Cigarettes” or other vapour inhalers (regardless of whether they are nicotine, herbal, or flavored vapour based) on school property is similarly prohibited.

STUDENT CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

Merivale students participate in many clubs and activities. Listen to announcements, look at bulletin boards, and check MTV and with teacher advisors about these and other activities:

- *Art Club*
- *Athletic Council*
- *Audio-Visual Club*
- *Drama Council*
- *Environment and Social Justice Club*
- *Gay/Straight Student Alliance*
- *Math Club*
- *Music Council*
- *Peer Helpers*
- *Peer Tutoring*
- *Photography Club*
- *Prayer Group*
- *Reach for the Top*
- *Space Club*
- *Students' Council*
- *Swing Club*
- *United Colours*
- *Writers' Club*

* **Advertising club activities:** Please ensure your posters are signed by the Vice-Principal **before** copying. In order to support green initiatives, a maximum of 15 posters per activity may be posted around the school.

STUDENT DRESS

Consistent with board-wide policies, students are expected to dress in clean, neat clothing, which is appropriate for a safe and respectful learning

environment. The following articles of clothing are not permitted on school property:

- *Sexually explicit or revealing clothing; i.e. visible underwear*
- *Clothing with wording or graphics that is profane, sexist, racist or demeaning to another person;*
- *Clothing with wording or graphics that advocates violence or consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs or depicts weapons;*
- *Clothing etc. that is recognized by the OCDSB Safe Schools Committee to be associated with gang membership (i.e. Bandanas, do-rags etc.).*

Amendments to this code may change during the year. Final decisions as to what is deemed appropriate will be made by the administration. based on input given by parents, staff and students.

STUDENT EXPENSES

While we recognize the costs that face families at the beginning of the school year, we also know that your expectations for a high quality program are as important to you as they are to us. In some courses, enhancement fees are requested for materials and resources to provide enrichment and learning support. With the full support of School Council, we ask for your continued assistance in this matter of voluntary fees. These fees help us to maintain the wide variety and high quality of our programs. Merivale High School has always supported any family in need. If you have any concerns about these costs, please contact the Vice-Principal or your son's or daughter's Guidance Counsellor; we will exercise discretion in resolving the issue. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Our school student activity fee is used to provide support for the following student initiatives:

- *Student cards;*
- *Grade 9 students will be provided with a high quality combination lock; this lock may be used throughout their time at Merivale High School;*
- *Agendas;*
- *Refreshments and supplies for student events*
- *Student Council led spirit activities, dances and special events.*

The student activity fee is also used to subsidize student events, leadership initiatives, intramurals and transportation.

STUDENT PARKING

Generally all students' cars must be parked in the area between the high school property and the Merivale Arena although there are limited designated spots at the west side of the school. Cars parking in reserved spaces for staff or visitors will be ticketed or towed. Students park at their

own risk. Damage or vandalism to parked vehicles remains the owner's responsibility.

STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Merivale's Student Services Team is made up of two counsellors, an office assistant, a psychologist, a social worker and counsellors from outside agencies/programs. The team is available to assist students with education, career and personal concerns. There are a wide variety of resources available on universities, colleges and community agencies in the Student Services area.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are supplied with textbooks for most courses. Since the textbooks are very expensive and must last several years, students are expected to take proper care of these books. If a text is lost or badly damaged, the student will be required to pay for replacement.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be used in a courteous and respectful manner at all times. We must respect the safety and privacy of our school community. Therefore, **cell phones and other electronic devices are NOT to be used in the classrooms, unless permitted by the teacher; devices must remain "OFF AND AWAY" unless explicit permission to use it is given by the supervising teacher; inappropriate usage may result in the device(s) being sent to the main office.** All users of electronic devices in the school must adhere to the OCDSB policies.

VISITORS TO MERIVALE

When arriving at Merivale, please report to the main office to sign in. Visitors are not allowed on school property without permission from the administration. Failure to follow this policy may result in a trespass notice being issued. Alumni are welcome to visit during lunchtime and afterschool after signing in at the main office.