



**Student Handbook  
2024-2025**

Meridian Technology Center  
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Stillwater, OK 74074-1899  
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[www.meridiantech.edu](http://www.meridiantech.edu)

Property of: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, please notify: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Board of Education and staff welcome you to Meridian Technology Center.**

Mrs. Gaye Lynn Chaney  
Mr. Brett Enmeier  
Mrs. Sherri Huneycutt  
Mrs. Lorrie Janzen  
Mr. Randy Kellogg

Superintendent/CEO .....Dr. Doug Major  
Executive Director, Career Planning/Career Development ..... Jeanie Zagar  
Director of Instruction, Professional Services Programs ..... Sara Collins

Biomedical Sciences – STEM Academy  
Business Technology  
Culinary Arts  
Digital Media  
Early Childhood Development/Teacher Prep  
Information Technology  
Pre-Engineering – STEM Academy

Director of Instruction, Health and Public Safety Programs .....Dustin Hicks

Criminal Justice  
Health Careers – Medical Assistant  
Health Careers – Phlebotomy/Intro to Emergency Medical Response  
Health Careers – Pre-Nursing  
Health Careers – Pre-Radiological Technician  
Medical Coding & Billing  
Pharmacy Technician  
Practical Nursing  
Radiologic Technology

Director of Instruction, Trade and Industry Programs..... Dr. DeAnna Little

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration  
Automotive Technology  
Carpentry  
CNC Machining  
Collision Repair Technology  
Computer Aided Drafting  
Daytime Cosmetology  
Evening Cosmetology  
Electrical Technology  
Power Production and Distribution  
Electric Utility Lineworker  
Industrial Technology  
Precision Metal Fabrication  
Underground Utility Locating Technician  
Welding Technology

**Mission Statement**

Educate. Enrich lives. Secure economic futures.

**Vision Statement**

An extraordinary experience for learning. A passionate partner for success.

## **CAREER PLANNING/COUNSELING SERVICES**

Regular office hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and other times by appointment.

## **CAREER GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION**

Services are available to assist students in selecting an enjoyable career. Assessment and counseling focus on the student's interests and aptitudes. Information on salary, training, and job outlook is available for a wide variety of careers. Contact the Career Planning Center to schedule an appointment.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Financial Aid is funding to help students and their families pay for educational expenses. Sources of aid are federal, state, institutional, community, foundation, and business and industry programs. Additional information on financial aid programs offered at Meridian Technology Center is available in the Financial Aid Office located in the Career Planning Center.

## **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

Students can receive college credit in some programs at Meridian Technology Center. Information on available college credit and other postsecondary transition strategies can be obtained in the Career Planning Center.

## **GUIDANCE COUNSELING**

Assistance is available for finding out about program opportunities. There are daytime and evening programs, as well as short-term course options. If the need arises for counseling, counselors are available to help clients identify and reach their career goals through meaningful and well-informed choices. Contact a counselor in the Career Planning Center to schedule an appointment. Services are available to assist with study skills and test taking strategies. Contact a career counselor to get assistance.

## **TRANSLATION SERVICES**

Assistance is available for Spanish speaking students to receive educational guidance, career advisement, and translation in and out of the classroom. At the request of the instructor or student, they may receive individual help in test taking translation, in-classroom translation and comprehension of the subject, and in their classroom. Individual tutoring in English language speaking, reading, and writing is also available.

## Admissions Team

<b>Jeanie Zagar</b>	<b>Executive Director, Career Planning/Career Development</b>	<b>Ext. 237</b>
Recruitment	Grades	
Enrollment	Attendance	
Crisis Intervention/Referral	Academic Probation	
Career Advisement and Development	Tuition	
<b>Ashley Hernandez Torres</b>	<b>Financial Aid Officer</b>	<b>Ext. 298</b>
Financial Aid		
Scholarship Information		
Oklahoma's Promise		
<b>Teresa Klingsick</b>	<b>Career Development Specialist</b>	<b>Ext. 395</b>
Assessments (Pre-ACT, etc.)		
Career/Guidance Counseling		
IEPs		
High School Recruitment/Enrollment		
<b>Teri Ray</b>	<b>Career Counselor/Student Organization Coordinator</b>	<b>Ext. 219</b>
Student Organizations		
Career/Guidance Counseling		
Adult Recruitment/Enrollment		
<b>Megan Grant</b>	<b>Career Development Specialist</b>	<b>Ext. 384</b>
Career Readiness/Development		

## Meridian Technology Center School Calendar 2024-2025

Professional Days .....	August 5-12, 2024
CLASS BEGINS.....	August 13, 2024
Labor Day – Campus Closed .....	September 2, 2024
PD/Discovery Day.....	October 2, 2024
FIRST QUARTER ENDS.....	October 16, 2024

45 Days Taught

Professional Days .....	October 17-18, 2024
SECOND QUARTER BEGINS.....	October 21, 2024
Professional Days .....	November 25-26, 2024
Thanksgiving Holiday.....	November 27-29, 2024
SECOND QUARTER ENDS.....	December 20, 2024
Christmas Break.....	December 23, 2024-January 3, 2025

40 Days Taught

Professional Day.....	January 6, 2025
THIRD QUARTER BEGINS .....	January 7, 2025
MLK Jr. Day (Campus Closed) .....	January 20, 2025
President’s Day (Campus Closed) .....	February 17, 2025
THIRD QUARTER ENDS.....	March 14, 2025

47 Days Taught

Spring Break .....	March 17-21, 2025
FOURTH QUARTER BEGINS.....	March 24, 2025
Professional Days.....	April 28-29, 2025
FOURTH QUARTER ENDS .....	May 23, 2025
Memorial Day (Campus Closed) .....	May 26, 2025

45 Days Taught

**Morning Session: 7:50-10:40 a.m. | Afternoon Session: 12:45-3:35 p.m.**

**If you have any questions about the included policies please visit the Career Planning Center for clarification.**

### **NONDISCRIMINATION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

*Meridian Technology Center does not condone, nor will it tolerate any form of discrimination based on race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information in its programs, services, activities, and employment. The technology center also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Jeremy Zweiacker has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the technology center’s non-discrimination policies and any individual, who has experienced some other form of discrimination, including discrimination not listed above, may contact: Jeremy Zweiacker, Coordinator for Title VI, VII, IX/504/ADA, Age Act, Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Road, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 74074, or by phone at (405) 377-3333. Outside assistance may be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, or by phone at (816) 268-0550, fax at (816) 268-0599 TTY at (877)-521-2172 or email at [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov).*

# Table of Contents

<b>NONDISCRIMINATION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE AND ENROLLMENT .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>MERIDIAN’S CAREER READY CREDENTIAL .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL ENDORSEMENTS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Postsecondary Ready Endorsement .....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Citizenship Ready Endorsement.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).....</i>	<i>9</i>
<b>ADMISSION INTO MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER PROGRAMS (I-402-A) 10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>MINOR STUDENT RESIDENCY (I-402-C) .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE IN FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-407-A) .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY – ADULT STUDENTS (I-449-A) .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>EXCUSES FROM CLASS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>RELEASE FROM CLASS OR LEAVING CAMPUS (I-421-A) .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES (I-420-A).....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>GRADING SYSTEM (I-409-A).....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Programs Enrolling Both Secondary and Postsecondary Students .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Programs Enrolling Only Postsecondary Students (Adult-Only Programs) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>CHANGE OF CAREER MAJOR (I-405).....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>TRANSFER OF CREDIT (I-402-B) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE AGREEMENTS FOR COLLEGE CREDIT .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>TUITION .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>FINANCIAL AID .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>STUDENT WITHDRAWAL – FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-422-A).....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>REFUND POLICY FOR FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-408-B).....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>STUDENT RECORDS POLICY (I-427-A) .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY STUDENT RECORDS (I427-B1) .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>CUMULATIVE STUDENT RECORDS POLICY (I-428-A) .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION/FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS &amp; PRIVACY ACT .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>DISABLED STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (I-417-A) .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>CRIMINAL RECORD BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR STUDENTS IN HEALTH-RELATED OCCUPATIONS (I-406-A) .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>VIRTUAL, HYBRID, AND DISTANCE LEARNING (I-460-A).....</b>	<b>31</b>

<b>DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR.....</b>	<b>35</b>
Discipline .....	35
<b>ADULT STUDENT BEHAVIOR (I-412) .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Adult Student Behavior/Secondary Student Discipline Code .....	38
<b>SECONDARY STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE (I-411-A) .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>SECONDARY STUDENT SUSPENSIONS/OUT OF SCHOOL (I-411-C).....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>STUDENT BULLYING (I-411-D).....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>STUDENT POSSESSION OF DANGEROUS WEAPONS (I-355-A).....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>WEAPONS FREE SCHOOLS - STUDENT SUSPENSION POLICY (I-448-A).....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>GANG CODE (I-447-A).....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>STUDENT DRESS CODE (I-416-A) .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>DRUG-FREE SCHOOL AND CAMPUS (I-426-A).....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS (I-425-A).....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR FILING, PROCESSING AND RESOLVING COMPLAINTS ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION (I-433-A) .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>TITLE IX—SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (I433-B1)....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (I-455-A) .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL (I-455-B) .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>USE OF COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (I-423-B).....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS SAFETY AND APPROPRIATE USE (I-423-C).....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>STUDENT COMPUTER INTERNET ACCESS AGREEMENT (I-423-C8).....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY (I-431-A) .....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>ACCEPTABLE USE OF FILE SHARING TECHNOLOGY (I-423-D).....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES—STUDENTS (I-354-A).....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>SERVICE ANIMALS (I-457-A).....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>SECURE CAMPUS PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>TORNADO SAFETY PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>INSURANCE (I-424-A).....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>LOCKERS .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>MEDIA/MODEL RELEASE .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>MOMENT OF SILENCE (I-450).....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>SEARCHES .....</b>	<b>91</b>

**CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (I-419-A)..... 91**

**STUDENT CONTESTS (I-418-A) ..... 91**

**STUDENT DIVERSITY ..... 92**

**MISCELLANEOUS STUDENT POLICIES ..... 92**

**TELEPHONE POLICY ..... 92**

**CLASS BREAKS ..... 92**

**PERSONAL PROPERTY..... 92**

**FOOD AND DRINKS..... 92**

**TEXTBOOK AND EQUIPMENT CARE (I-415-A) ..... 92**

**TRANSPORTATION (I-435-A)..... 92**

**MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER POLICY UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT LAW (I-453-A)..... 93**

**VACCINATIONS ..... 95**

**SAFETY DATA SHEETS/SDS..... 95**

**ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO MINOR STUDENTS (I-445-A) ..... 95**

**MEDICAL MARIJUANA, HEMP & CANNABIDIOL (CBD) (I-458-A) ..... 100**

**SUICIDE AWARENESS, TRAINING, AND PREVENTION (I-461-A)103 STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS PROTOCOL (I462-B1)..... 105**

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (I-437-B) ..... 106**

**USE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY RESTROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS (I463A).....107**

**FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (I-459-A) ..... 108**

**ANNUAL NOTICE OF REQUIRED DISCLOSURES OF STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION ..... 110**

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANNUAL NOTIFICATION FOR PARENTS, INSTRUCTORS AND EMPLOYEES ..... 110**

## **ATTENDANCE AND ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment at Meridian Technology Center indicates a sincere interest in career and technical education. Acceptance into a program of study provides an opportunity for an enjoyable and successful educational experience. This is possible only through a complete understanding of the policies and procedures of the school and full cooperation on the part of each student in abiding by them. The following information should be studied carefully. Reference numbers, e.g., I-412, refer to the Meridian Technology Center Policy Manual. Please refer any questions to a program instructor.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be successful in a career, students will need to meet all technical and academic standards related to their career of choice at Meridian. Meridian offers rigorous programs of study designed in cooperation with business and industry to ensure students are fully prepared for the demands of the workplace.

## **MERIDIAN'S CAREER READY CREDENTIAL**

When a student completes all standards as set forth in their program of study, they will be considered a graduate of Meridian and receive the Career Ready Credential. Students who do not meet these standards will not be considered graduates of Meridian. Students should have: Completed all courses in a career major with a grade of "C" or above and achieved required industry-based certifications for the career major. Achieved WorkKeys® scores at or above the level required for the career major or earned an ACT® composite score of 19 or greater (Students may substitute equivalent scores on SAT, ACCUPLACER or other approved assessments.)

## **ADDITIONAL ENDORSEMENTS**

Students earning a Career Ready Credential may also earn the Postsecondary Ready Endorsement, Citizenship Ready Endorsement and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC).

### ***Postsecondary Ready Endorsement***

Earned, or was on track to earn, a high school diploma or GED at the time of Meridian graduation. Achieved a subscore of 19 or greater on the ACT® in math, English, reading and science (Students may substitute equivalent scores on SAT, ACCUPLACER or other approved assessments.).

### ***Citizenship Ready Endorsement***

Completed employment profile, résumé, job application, cover letter, mock interview and job search training through OKJobMatch.com. Documented active membership in a CareerTech Student Organization or professional association related to the program of study. Documented 20 hours of volunteerism or service in a community activity.

### ***National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)***

Completed WorkKeys® assessments in Applied Mathematics, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents and received a silver, gold or platinum National Career Readiness Certificate through the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

## **ADMISSION INTO MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER PROGRAMS (I-402-A)**

Any individual whose legal residence is in the Agra, Carney, Glencoe, Guthrie, Morrison, Mulhall-Orlando, Pawnee, Perkins-Tryon, Perry, or Stillwater School Districts are considered to be members (residents) of the Meridian Technology Center district.

### ***Full-Time Programs (Secondary Students) Not Eligible for Title IV Federal Aid***

Secondary students who live in the Meridian Technology Center District and who exhibit interest and aptitude are eligible to enroll tuition-free with the consent of parents, the home high school, and the concurrence of Meridian Technology Center. Non-resident secondary students who attend a Meridian Technology Center district high school and pay taxes to another career tech district may also enroll in a program without paying out-of-district tuition.

For the purpose of enrollment in Full-Time programs with the exception of Pre-Engineering and Biomedical Sciences, secondary students are defined as high school juniors and seniors. Sophomore students may enroll in Pre-Engineering and Biomedical Sciences. Sophomores who are over-aged or at risk will be considered for enrollment in other full-time programs only upon recommendation of their home high school and special permission from the Meridian Technology Center administration.

After the enrollment demands of the resident secondary students have been met, adults may be enrolled.

Students will be admitted on the basis of vocational interest, academic ability in past school experiences, and vocational aptitude for a particular program. Students who do not demonstrate a reasonable chance for success or who may be a safety hazard will not be allowed to attend. Non-resident secondary students who do not pay taxes to a career tech district or who attend a high school outside of the Meridian Technology Center district may enroll if they meet the other requirements, pay out of district tuition, provide their own transportation, if the program has not reached maximum enrollment, and they have the approval of their parents or guardian, and the full-time program administration.

Secondary Students are not eligible to receive Title IV federal aid.

### ***Full-Time Programs (Adult Students)***

A non-refundable deposit is required for the enrollment of adults in all full-time training programs. Students enrolling in the Radiologic Technology, Practical Nursing, Medical Coding and Billing or Evening Cosmetology programs will be required to submit a non-refundable deposit at the time of their notification of acceptance.

Adults in full-time training programs will pay tuition according to the payment schedule provided to them. Payment is due on the day listed. Adult students enrolling in Radiologic Technology, Practical Nursing, Medical Coding and Billing or Evening Cosmetology are responsible for purchasing books and supplies required for that training program. Adult students enrolling in full-time programs may qualify for Title IV Federal Student Aid if they meet the general admission requirement.

Tuition for non-resident adult students is double the amount of those who live in the Meridian Technology Center district. Exceptions to this policy are when Meridian Technology Center has program offerings not available at surrounding Technology Centers.

For Meridian Technology Center full-time programs, any full-time public-school employee or board member, who is a member of the Meridian Technology Center District, or any full-time State Department of Career and Technology Education employee will be charged one-half tuition but will be responsible for all other costs. Proof of employment must be shown at the time of enrollment.

### ***General Admission Requirements for Federal Student Aid Eligibility***

Adult students admitted to Meridian Technology Center may apply for Federal Student Aid. Students must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:

1. Must be enrolled as a regular student in an eligible program. A regular student is someone who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree or certificate offered by the school.
2. Must be beyond the age of compulsory attendance.
3. Must have a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent. Home school students must provide documentation from the home school system verifying completion or a copy of their diploma.
4. Must meet satisfactory academic requirements of maintaining cumulative grade point average of 2.0 "C" or more, maintain 90% attendance, and complete an acceptable percentage of the program's scheduled objectives.
5. Must be enrolled in an eligible program.
6. Must have resolved any drug conviction issues. Students who were convicted of sale or possession of drugs may be ineligible for aid if the offense occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV aid.

### ***Career Guidance/Consulting***

Clients seeking educational enhancement and/or assessment services will be assessed a fee as prescribed in the individual prescription of services. The fees vary and are dependent upon the type of service rendered. Clients are defined as full-time high school students, part-time or full-time adult referrals from the business and industry sector, adult or child from any town within the Meridian Technology Center District. Career Guidance/Consulting services are free to any high school and adult student enrolled in a Meridian Technology Center full-time day or full-time evening program; fees are assessed to all other client groups. Full-time employees of Meridian Technology Center may benefit from these services, with a scheduled appointment, free of charge. Spouses and dependent children will be charged one-half of the fee for services rendered. Special materials needed to perform the requested services will be the responsibility of the participant.

### ***Short Courses***

Students enrolling in short courses must be 16 years of age. If under the age of 16, the student must be accompanied by an adult who is also enrolled in the course.

At the time of enrollment in a short course, a non-refundable deposit per course is required. The non-refundable deposit guarantees enrollment in the course and is applied toward the tuition. The deposit shall be \$50 for courses with tuition amounts less than \$400 and \$100 for tuition amounts of \$400 or greater. The balance of tuition is due by the first class meeting and is non-refundable. Published tuition for short courses includes tuition and other costs (unless noted otherwise).

When a student chooses to utilize the online enrollment option, total tuition is due at the time of enrollment. Deposits and/or tuition are non-refundable except when Meridian Technology Center

cancels the course or the student has documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Tuition for all short courses shall be set to allow the courses to be self-sustaining. Any full-time public school employee or board member, who is a member of the Meridian Technology Center District, or any full-time Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education employee will be charged one-half tuition, but will be responsible for all other costs. Proof of employment must be shown at the time of enrollment.

### ***Workforce and Economic Development***

Programs offered through Workforce and Economic Development for specified companies will be billed for tuition and supplies once class begins.

### ***Client Based Programs***

The Business Development program is focused on the support and services to client companies located in the Center for Business Development and The Peak. A business plan summary and completed application form are required for admission screening into the Center for Business Development and The Peak. Due to the nature of the technical diversity and diverse business models of these client companies in various early stages of startup, growth, research and development, and market penetration, consultation and services are provided on an individualized basis.

The Business Management program provides consulting on business plan development on an individual basis. All individual consulting fees are charged on a case-by-case basis based on the services provided. Business management seminars are offered to district companies on specific business issues on an open-enrollment basis. Tuition for these seminars is due at the time of enrollment.

## **MINOR STUDENT RESIDENCY (I-402-C)**

The technology center is established for the purpose of serving the educational interests of resident students. This includes homeless students, students who are not documented citizens, and students whose parents/guardians are not documented citizens. The district will not inquire into a student or parent/guardian's citizenship status as a part of enrollment, and will only use information regarding a student's living situation to better serve the student. The district will periodically review its practices and the documents it seeks as a part of establishing residency within the district to ensure that its processes are not overly burdensome and do not discourage the enrollment of homeless students and/or undocumented students.

### ***Basic Residency Requirements***

State law provides that a child's residence for school purposes is the district in which the (1) parents, (2) guardian or (3) person having legal custody of the child holds legal residence. Children may also establish residency if their attorney-in-fact is a resident of the district. Children who are foster children are granted residency in the district if they attended the district prior to entering foster care, if their current/prior foster family is/was a resident of the district, or if another child in their current foster home attends school in the district pursuant to a transfer. The district does not permit students to establish residency based on the mere affidavit of a person who has assumed permanent care and custody of the child under OKLA. STAT. tit. 70 § 1-113 or based on an attorney in fact affidavit under OKLA. STAT. tit. 10 § 700.

### ***Procedure for Resolving Residency Disputes***

Meridian Technology Center recognizes that there may be occasions when there is a dispute regarding residency. Upon enrollment in the school the technology center will verify that the student is a resident of the district or is otherwise entitled to attend school at Meridian for any reason authorized by law. As a part of this verification process Meridian will obtain an address from each student or the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child. In providing an address to Meridian that is within the district's boundaries the student and student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child represent that this address is the student's residence. Meridian may also require, in order to verify residency, certified copies of court orders, guardianship documents, written agreements and affidavits relating to the care, custody, and control of the student, and any other information that Meridian deems relevant.

If at any time a Meridian administrator has a reasonable belief that the reported residence may not be the residence of the child for purposes of school attendance, the administrator shall notify the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child that there is a question regarding the student's legal residency. The student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child shall be given an opportunity to submit information regarding the student's residency to Meridian's residency officer. All notices required by this policy shall be in writing.

Additionally, reasonable alternative arrangements for documenting communications will be made for those persons who are visually impaired or otherwise unable to communicate in writing. Information or documentation to prove student residency in Meridian shall include but not be limited to proof of provision of utilities, payments of ad valorem taxes, local agreements or contracts for purchasing/leasing housing, driver's licenses, income tax returns, notes, mortgages, contracts and any other source of proof that is not in conflict with statutory provisions relating to the residence of students.

Any question or dispute as to the residence of a student not deemed to be a "homeless student" shall be determined by the residency officer and the board of education pursuant to the following procedures:

1. The student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child must notify the residency officer in writing of the review request within three school days from the date of written denial of admittance or from the date of written notification that the student is considered not to be a resident of the Meridian district. Upon receipt of a request for review, the residency officer shall allow the parent, guardian, or person having legal custody to provide additional pertinent information in accordance with the technology center's criteria and the statutory provisions regarding residency. This information must be submitted with the request for review.
2. The residency officer must render a decision and notify the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child of the decision and reasoning therefore in writing within three school days of receipt of the request for review.
3. If the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child disagrees with the residency officer's decision, such person shall notify the residency officer in writing within three school days of his or her receipt of the residency officer's decision. The residency officer will submit his or her findings and all documents reviewed to the board of education. The board of education will review the decision and the documents submitted on behalf of Meridian

Technology Center and the student and will render a decision at the next board meeting. The decision of the board of education shall be the final administrative decision.

4. In an effort to place students in school as quickly as possible, timelines shall be followed unless due to emergency circumstances both parties agree to an extension of timelines.

### ***Miscellaneous Policy Provisions***

A. Hearings involving more than one student where students are related or residing in the same household may be consolidated at the discretion of the residency officer and the board of education.

B. If the residency dispute involves an 18-year-old student, all notices will be delivered to the student.

C. If already enrolled and attending school in the district, a student or students involved in a dispute related to the student's residency may remain in school until available appeals are exhausted when the student or the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child has filed an appeal in the manner and within the time permitted by this policy.

D. The residency officer shall be in charge of maintaining the files related to a residency dispute, ensuring that the administrators and others directly involved in such a dispute forward their records of the dispute following their involvement, and otherwise keeping all communications involving the dispute intact.

E. The district's residency officer is the Career Planning Center Executive Director.

F. The board of education understands that there may be some instances where residency may be established on a date other than the date the student was enrolled in Meridian. For any period during which a student is enrolled at Meridian, but is not a resident of the district, Meridian may charge tuition if it is established that the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child knew or should have known that the child or children who are the subject of the residency dispute were not residents of the district. The tuition shall be based on a per capita cost of educating a student at Meridian Technology Center during the preceding year. This issue may be raised along with other issues related to the residency dispute and shall be heard in the same manner.

G. Meridian Technology Center shall provide for educational services for homeless children as required by law. Meridian Technology Center reserves the right to require reverification of student residency at the beginning of each school term. A copy of this policy shall be provided to the student's parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child as soon as possible following the inception of any residency dispute.

### ***The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (the "Act")***

The Act applies to all children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, such as children living in homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, runaway and homeless youth shelters, transitional living facilities, cars, campgrounds, motels or children and youth living doubled up, and homeless and migratory children.

The Act provides that homeless children and youth:

- Do not need a permanent address to enroll in school;
- Have a choice of school placement;
- Cannot be denied school enrollment because school records or other enrollment documentation are not immediately available;
- Have the right to participate in all federal, state, or local programs and activities for which they are eligible;
- Cannot be isolated or separated from the mainstream school environment; and
- Have the right to receive prompt resolution of any dispute regarding educational placement.

Therefore, in accordance with the Act, the technology center shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their education that may exist. The technology center will not stigmatize or segregate homeless students and youth, and these students shall have access to the same public school programs available to other students of the technology center. The technology center will identify and provide equal access to secondary education and support systems for homeless students, runaway youths, and youths separated from public schools. The technology center will also work to identify and remove those barriers which prevent youths from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.

***Programs, Activities, and Social Services***

Meridian Technology Center will provide each homeless student or youth those programs, activities, and social services available to Meridian students which are determined to be in the student's best interests.

The programs, activities, and services include the following:

- Preschool
- Special education
- Title I
- Limited English Proficiency
- Before and after school care
- Academic and extracurricular activities
- Magnet schools
- Summer school
- Career and technology education
- Advanced placement
- Online learning
- Charter school
- School meals and
- Transportation

Meridian will waive those fees which may present a barrier for homeless students or youths, including those associated with the school meal programs and transportation.

***Enrollment, Records, and Immunizations***

The Act provides that homeless children and youth, individually or through a parent or guardian, may choose to attend the school in the area in which they are currently living. Meridian's residency officer will determine whether a student is a homeless child or youth for purposes of establishing residency and promptly advise the parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child of the decision, both orally and in writing, if possible. If there is no such person, the

residency officer will advise the student. Whenever possible, the technology center will comply with the wishes of either the parent, guardian, person having legal custody of the child, or student regarding enrollment. Meridian will enroll each homeless student and permit his or her full participation in all school programs, whether or not the student is accompanied by a parent, guardian or person having custody of the child, and without proof of residence, current immunizations and traditional enrollment documentation, such as school records and medical/immunization records. Meridian's homeless liaison may assist the student and school in obtaining those items. A parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child who disagrees with the residency officer's determination may appeal the decision to the board of education under the procedure identified in this policy. If there is no parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child available, the student may appeal the decision.

### ***Appeals Procedures***

Meridian will make every effort to resolve disputes regarding homeless children at the lowest level possible by utilizing the following process:

1. At the time a homeless student seeks enrollment, Meridian will notify the student or his/her family of these procedures and provide the student/family with a copy of this policy.
2. Meridian will promptly notify the Career Planning Center Executive Director that a homeless student seeks enrollment and will seek to involve the coordinator in decisions regarding the student's education.
3. Students/families who disagree with a decision regarding the student's education may meet with the coordinator for an informal resolution. The coordinator will notify the student/family that a written complaint may be submitted within five days (or longer if agreed upon by the parties).
4. If the coordinator receives a written complaint, the coordinator will prepare a decision (plan of action) and provide it to the student/family within five days of receipt of the written complaint. The coordinator will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal to the superintendent.
5. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the superintendent within five days of receipt of the coordinator's plan. The superintendent will meet with the student/family within five days of receipt of the appeal. The superintendent will issue a decision within five days of the meeting with the student/family. The superintendent will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal to the board of education.
6. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the board of education by submitting a written notice to the superintendent within five days of the superintendent's decision. The appeal will be placed on the next agenda (or the following agenda, if the appeal is received after the agenda posting deadline) and the board's decision is final at the technology center level. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file an appeal with the Oklahoma State Department of Education utilizing the procedures established by the OSDE.

A standard form adopted by the Oklahoma State Department of Education to identify any student who is a homeless child or youth shall be completed annually at enrollment by the parent or guardian of a student or by the student if he or she is not in the physical custody of a parent or

guardian. Meridian shall report the results of the form-collected data to the Oklahoma State Department of Education no later than June 1 of each year.

### ***Establishing Residency***

A student shall be considered in compliance with residency provisions of this policy and state law if he or she is a student whose parent or legal guardian is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order. The parent or legal guardian of such a student must provide proof of residence in the technology center within ten (10) days after the published arrival date provided on their official documentation.

The following may be used to establish proof of residency:

1. A temporary on-base billeting facility,
2. A purchased or leased home or apartment, or
3. Federal government or public-private venture off-base military housing.

State law provides that transitioning military children placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis, may attend school in the district in which the noncustodial parent or person standing in loco parentis to the transitioning military child holds legal residence. Similarly, transitioning military children placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis may continue to attend the school in which the student was enrolled while residing with the custodial parent. A special power of attorney relating to the guardianship of a military child and executed under applicable law shall be sufficient for purposes of enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation and consent.

### ***Enrollment***

For a student whose parent or legal guardian is transferred or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order, the technology center shall accept applications by electronic means, including enrollment in a specific school or program within the technology center and course registration.

Meridian will promptly accept unofficial or “hand-carried” educational records and transcripts in lieu of official education records and transcripts for transitioning military children. Upon receipt of such records, Meridian will promptly enroll the transitioning military child. However, upon enrollment, Meridian will request official educational records and transcripts from the school in the sending state. Meridian residency officer will determine whether a student is a transitioning military student for purposes of establishing residency and promptly advise the parent or other person standing in loco parentis of the decision, both orally and in writing, if possible. A parent or other person standing in loco parentis who disagrees with the residency officer’s determination may appeal the decision to the board of education under the procedure identified above.

### ***Course Level and Educational Program Placement***

To the extent that Meridian is in a receiving state, the technology center may subsequently perform course placement and educational program evaluations of a transitioning military student. However, Meridian will initially place the transitioning military student in courses and programs comparable to those in which the student was a participant while in the sending state. Meridian will make these accommodations whether or not the student has fulfilled the necessary prerequisites in the sending or the receiving state.

### ***Extracurricular Activities***

When appropriate, Meridian will provide transitioning military children the opportunity to participate in extracurricular participation, regardless of application deadlines.

### ***Immunizations***

Transitioning military children shall have 30 days from the date of enrollment to obtain any immunizations required by Oklahoma law. For a series of immunizations, such children must obtain initial vaccinations within 30 days.

### ***Tuition***

Meridian may not charge tuition to a transitioning military child placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis who lives in a district other than that of the custodial parent if the parent or other person standing in loco parentis lives within the boundaries of this technology center district.

## **ATTENDANCE IN FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-407-A)**

Attendance is a very important factor in career and technical education. To maximize training opportunities, students are expected to be in attendance every day. Failure to participate in program projects daily will result in poor performance and a void in skill achievement. Because of the commitment of Meridian Technology Center to prepare students for careers, many of the policies and procedures of the school reflect those found in the work place rather than those typically found in a school.

Students are expected to attend classes daily and be in class on time. Violation of this policy may result in withdrawal. Students will be allowed nine absences per semester. Allowed absences for students entering during the semester or who are on a non-traditional schedule will be prorated. It is the student's responsibility to call and/or inform the instructor each time he/she will be absent.

### **Adult Student Absences is defined as missing more than 30 minutes of class time.**

- ***Part-time & Full-time Adult students*** who exceed nine absences in a semester or nine consecutive days with no contact will be withdrawn or dropped.
- ***Part-time Adult students*** are allowed nine total absences in the session (AM or PM) in which they are enrolled.
- ***Full-time Adult students*** are allowed nine absences in the AM session and nine absences in the PM session.
- ***Transfers:*** If the adult student is enrolled full-time and transfers to part-time in the middle of the semester, the accumulated absences for AM or PM are calculated to get the total number of absences. (The same is true if they are enrolled part-time and transfer to full-time.)

Exceptions to this policy are students enrolled in Full-time Adult Programs that have board approved handbooks reflecting the attendance policies applicable to their program.

An absence for high school students is defined as missing more than 30 minutes of class time. High school students who exceed nine absences in a semester will be withdrawn or dropped and returned to the partner school at the end of the 9-weeks for schools with block schedules, or the

semester for schools with traditional schedules and may forfeit credit for the semester. To earn credit toward high school graduation, high school students must attend, with exception to the allowable number of absences, Meridian's entire academic year. Therefore, regardless of their sending school's calendar, Meridian students are expected to attend each day Meridian is in session or be considered absent.

When a student reaches four absences, a meeting will be called between the student and a student advisor. It is the instructor's responsibility to call a parent/guardian each time a student is absent and document the call.

Missing less than 30 minutes of class by either arriving late or leaving early results in a "tardy" or an early "out". Each incident of either will count as one tardy or one out. **Three tardies and/or early outs equal one absence.**

Pre-approved school activities, a leave of absence, inclement weather days (if secondary student's high school is closed or on virtual/distance learning due to weather), jury duty, subpoenas for court appearance and military duty are the only absences that will be considered "exempt".

When circumstances require that instruction be delivered using a method other than regularly scheduled, in-person instruction, attendance may be counted using alternative methods. If students are required to participate in class using an alternative format (including, but not limited to, online virtual learning or other forms of distance education) the student must check-in to class daily as directed by their instructor and complete and turn in any classwork as assigned. Failure to check-in with the instructor and/or have their classwork turned in will result in an absence for each day the student fails to check-in and/or for the day associated with classwork that was assigned. Absences that occur during periods of alternative instructional delivery are subject to the attendance appeals process.

All students are expected to make up missed assignments due to an absence or tardy.

Continuation of enrollment in the Meridian Technology Center programs will be based on satisfactory academic progress, defined as maintaining a "C" average. If a student fails to maintain this average for one grading period, he or she will be counseled and put on probation. If the grade is not brought up to a satisfactory level by the end of the next grading period, the student may not be allowed to continue enrollment in the program. (For students attending full-time [6 hours per day], grading period is defined as one quarter. For students attending half-time [3 hours per day], grading period is defined as two quarters).

Students who have missed more than nine consecutive days and are not on an approved leave of absence will be automatically dropped from Meridian Technology Center.

Students enrolled in programs with external accreditation that requires a separate student handbook be approved by the board of education (i.e. nursing, radiologic technology, etc.) will be subject to guidelines published in those, if different.

Students attending Meridian Technology Center under various financial aid programs (including, but not limited to, Oklahoma Promise, Pell Grants, and Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant) must follow guidelines relating to these programs. Information regarding these guidelines may be obtained

from the Financial Aid Office. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and abide by these guidelines. Failure to comply with the guidelines will result in loss of benefits.

### ***Attendance Appeals Process***

If a student misses more than nine days of school due to extenuating circumstances, the parent and/or student may present their case to the Attendance Appeals Committee who will have the discretion to grant exceptions. Attendance Appeal Committee members will be established by Meridian Technology Center. A written request for appeal must be submitted to the Executive Director of the Career Planning Center within three business days of exceeding the absentee limit.

Adult and High School students are encouraged to keep documentation from unexcused absences in the event that the attendance policy is exceeded and an appeal must be filed.

After the appeal is requested the student should attend until a decision is handed forth by the attendance appeals committee.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY – ADULT STUDENTS (I-449-A)**

A student, for legal, medical, military service, or personal/family reasons, can apply for an extended leave of absence. Except as otherwise provided, in this policy, a student is not eligible for more than one extended leave of absence during the academic year.

To be eligible for a leave of absence the student must:

1. Complete the leave of absence application form, sign and date it before the leave begins.
2. Not have had a prior leave of absence during the current academic year.
3. Have maintained a minimum of a “C” average on current coursework.
4. A student may apply for a second leave of absence in the event the student can show extenuating circumstances, beyond the student’s control, that warrant a second extended leave. Extenuating circumstances that would qualify for a second leave are those that involve catastrophic medical conditions of a student or immediate family or involuntary military service.

### ***Extended Leave Procedures***

1. Student shall meet with the student’s instructor. Instructor will, if appropriate, sign the extended leave form.
2. Student shall meet with the Executive Director, Career Planning/Career Development for a review of the leave application and supporting documentation and to receive final approval of the leave or an explanation for the denial of leave.
3. The leave shall, to qualify as an extended leave of absence, be no less than one week and no more than nine weeks.
4. The dates of leave must be consecutive and not intermittent.
5. The student must return to the program at the end of the extended leave of absence. If the student fails to return to the program at the end of the approved leave period, an automatic dismissal will be recorded for the student. Also, failure to return from an approved leave of

absence may result in the student owing repayment of financial aid previously received by the student.

6. During an approved leave, attendance hours earned are placed on hold. Therefore, the program completion date may need to be extended in order to account for time missed. This extension will be based on the length of the student's extended leave and the nature of the program. The Executive Director, Career Planning/Career Development, the program instructor, and the Financial Aid Officer will communicate with the student if a program extension is necessary.

7. Copies of the leave form will be made for the following: Finance, Financial Aid, Student, Student File, and the Instructor. Copies of supporting documentation shall be located in the Student File and will only accompany the form furnished to departments and the Instructor if the documents represent essential information for the department or instructor.

Failure to comply with any of the above conditions and procedures may result in automatic dismissal from the program. Leave of absence is available to all eligible students. An approved leave of absence has the effect of placing the student's aid and tuition on hold for the period of time the student is on approved leave. However, students receiving financial aid should meet with the Financial Aid Officer to discuss any affect the leave could have on disbursement dates. A student who violates the terms of an approved leave risks automatic dismissal as well as liability for the repayment of financial aid received by the student.

## **EXCUSES FROM CLASS**

Upon request from the high school principal, absences due to local school functions will not be charged against a student's record. Any such request should be called in or brought to the Career Planning Center prior to the day excused. The Career Planning Center will notify instructors in writing of the effective date of the school activity.

## **RELEASE FROM CLASS OR LEAVING CAMPUS (I-421-A)**

Under no conditions will a high school or adult student leave the Meridian Technology Center campus without permission from the Career Planning Center or short-term adult programs. For high school students under the age of 18, requests will be considered only when verified and confirmed by the home high school principal and/or the student's parent or guardian. Those students violating this procedure will be considered truant and dealt with accordingly.

## **STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES (I-420-A)**

All student fund-raising activities shall be coordinated and approved through the Career Planning Center and Superintendent, and all monies shall be deposited in the activity fund.

## **GRADING SYSTEM (I-409-A)**

### ***Programs Enrolling Both Secondary and Postsecondary Students***

Meridian Technology Center programs in which secondary students are enrolled are on a four-quarter plan. At the end of each nine-week period, evaluations will be made and grades of secondary students will be sent to their home high schools to be recorded.

Students failing to make satisfactory progress may be placed on academic probation for one semester. If at the end of that semester the student has not achieved a 70% average (C grade level) or better, continued enrollment in the same training program may not be permitted. The student may change to another training program only with the permission of the administration.

The grading scale for programs enrolling secondary students will be:

A: 90-100

B: 80 - 89

C: 70 - 79

D: 60 - 69

F: 0 - 59

### ***Programs Enrolling Only Postsecondary Students (Adult-Only Programs)***

Due to accreditation requirements for some programs enrolling only postsecondary students, grading systems may be different than those programs in which secondary students are eligible to enroll. The grading system for these programs will be published in program-specific handbooks which are adopted by the Board of Education each year.

### **CHANGE OF CAREER MAJOR (I-405)**

Students will be permitted to change career major when/if the following criteria apply:

1. Availability of space in another career major and
2. Approval of Executive Director of Career Planning/Career Development, instructor of the career major to which the student desires to change, and the local high school principal or counselor.

There are prescribed limits of class size, and these limits cannot be exceeded. Students are permitted one career major change per year.

### **TRANSFER OF CREDIT (I-402-B)**

Meridian Technology Center personnel will review previous education and/or training documentation, to include military transcripts, and determine whether or not the student may receive advanced credit for previous education and/or training. If advanced credit is given, the total number of career major hours the student needs to complete is reduced by the number of credits awarded.

### **COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE AGREEMENTS FOR COLLEGE CREDIT**

Meridian Technology Center has established Cooperative Alliance Agreements with Oklahoma State University-Institute of Technology, Cowley County Community College and Northern Oklahoma College. These formal agreements, approved by the State Regents for Higher Education and the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, allow high school and adult students who are enrolled in approved technical career majors at Meridian Technology Center to obtain college credit. This college credit can be applied toward an Associate of Applied Science degree at these higher education institutions. The number of college credits varies by career major. Students are responsible for meeting Cooperative Alliance Program requirements and completing the admission process before college credit is granted. Colleges will transcript the credit. It is not automatic. Contact the College and Career Transition Coordinator or Program Administration for more information.

## **TUITION**

A deposit is required for enrollment of adults in all full-time training programs. Adult students are responsible for purchasing books and supplies required for that training program.

Adults in regular full-time training programs will pay tuition according to the payment schedule provided to them. Payment is due on the day listed. Students enrolling in the Radiologic Technology, Practical Nursing, or Evening Cosmetology programs will be required to submit a deposit at the time of their notification of acceptance.

When students have need for financial assistance to meet these obligations, arrangements should be made prior to the beginning of the student's training. Every effort will be made to meet the student's need through the variety of financial assistance programs available.

Students who are sponsored by an outside organization shall provide a letter from that sponsor before the first day of class stating the fees for which the organization will be responsible. If such a letter is not produced, other financial aid arrangements have not been made, or the student has not paid the required fees when due, he or she will be dropped from the class.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Financial Aid is available to students that qualify and can assist students and their families with educational expenses. Sources of aid include, Federal Pell Grants and Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grants through the FAFSA process, Oklahoma's Promise, various scholarship opportunities, and tuition waivers.

Additional information on financial aid programs offered at Meridian is available through the financial aid and scholarship links on the Meridian Technology Center website as well as through contacting the Financial Aid Officer located in the Career Planning Center. The Financial Aid Officer is available to see students individually between the hours of 8:00 and 5:00, Monday – Friday. Please call 405-377-3333 if you would like to make an appointment.

### ***SAP- Satisfactory Academic Progress***

Students receiving Title IV Pell Grant assistance must follow the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy to continue their aid eligibility. This includes attendance requirements and program grade expectations, among other details. A copy of this policy will be explained and given to all Pell recipients. Title IV recipients may refer to the Financial Aid Handbook located in the Financial Aid Office and the Consumer Information Guide located on the Meridian Technology Center website for specific details.

Meridian Technology Center does not participate in the Federal Direct Student Loan Program and does not participate in or provide information regarding any private education loan programs.

## **STUDENT WITHDRAWAL – FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-422-A)**

Any student who is withdrawing from Meridian Technology Center must complete the proper procedure through the appropriate administrative offices. Students must complete an official withdrawal form or submit a letter to their respective director of instruction to be eligible for any tuition refund, if applicable. Any student receiving Title IV funds and withdrawing before the 60% point in a disbursement period must return all or a portion of Title IV funds received. This may cause the student to owe money to the school and/or Federal Government. Students withdrawing

during the semester must return all books, checked out equipment, and unused supplies owned by the school.

Adult students with an unpaid balance on their student account or unreturned books, equipment or unused supplies will not be able to obtain copies of their transcripts until all outstanding charges have been paid or equipment and unused supplies returned.

## **REFUND POLICY FOR FULL-TIME PROGRAMS (I-408-B)**

### ***Full-Time Programs***

Upon written notification of withdrawal\*, a tuition refund less the deposit will be remitted to individuals enrolled in full-time programs according to the following guidelines:

1. A 100% refund, less the deposit, will be remitted to students who officially withdraw within the first five days of a payment period.
2. No tuition will be refunded to a student who has not officially withdrawn within the first five days of a payment period or is dismissed due to breach of MTC policy.
3. A 100% refund, including the deposit, will be remitted only to students who have documented extenuating circumstances that have been approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

\*Written notice of withdrawal is considered to be the completion and submission of an official withdrawal form or a letter that is dated and signed by the student and addressed to the Director of the Career Planning Center.

### ***Refund Policies for Recipients of Title IV Financial Aid***

A federally mandated refund must be calculated for all Title IV financial aid recipients who withdraw prior to the completion of the period of enrollment for which he/she has been awarded aid according to the following federal regulations. If a student withdraws on or before the 60% point for the current period of enrollment, a portion of the total of Title IV funds awarded a student (Pell Grant and Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant) must be returned, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to the school and/ or the federal government.

## **STUDENT RECORDS POLICY (I-427-A)**

### ***Purpose***

This policy and the procedures included within it are intended to satisfy the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Oklahoma law. The board of education authorizes the superintendent to inform parents of minor students, adult students and the public of the policy and to take appropriate action to implement the policy and procedures.

### **TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY STUDENT RECORDS (I427-B1)**

Transgender and nonbinary students may use different terms to describe their lives and experiences of gender. Terminology and language may differ and evolve based on region, language, race or ethnicity, age, culture, and many other factors. These terms often mean different things or refer to different experiences. Meridian employees should use the terms that students use to describe themselves, and avoid terms that make these students uncomfortable.

The following definitions are not provided for the purpose of imposing labels, but rather to assist in understanding this policy and the obligations of Meridian Technology Center personnel. Students may or may not use these terms to describe themselves or their experiences.

“Gender Identity” is a person’s deeply held knowledge of their own gender, which can include being a man, woman, another gender, or no gender. Gender identity is an intimate part of a person’s identity. One’s gender identity may or may not align with society’s expectations for sex assigned at birth (e.g., male, female, or intersex).

“Gender Expression” refers to one’s expression of gender, whether through hair styles, makeup, or personal fashion, which changes over the course of a lifetime.

“Transgender/Trans” is an adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. A trans woman is a woman whose sex was assigned male when she was born. A trans man is a man whose sex was assigned female when he was born. Some transgender people are neither male nor female, and may use terms like nonbinary to describe their gender.

“Cisgender” is an adjective describing a person whose gender identity corresponds with the gender that society typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, a cisgender woman’s sex was assigned female at birth assigned male at birth, and he identifies his gender as male.

“Gender Nonconforming” is a term sometimes used to describe people whose gender expression differs from social expectations, such as “feminine boys,” “masculine girls,” and people who are perceived as androgynous in some way. Being gender nonconforming is distinct from being transgender, although some trans people may consider themselves to be gender nonconforming. For example, a cisgender woman who has short hair and likes sports might consider herself nonconforming, but may not identify as transgender.

“Nonbinary” is a term used to refer to people whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female, including those who identify with a different gender, a combination of genders, or no gender. Nonbinary may be considered a subset of transgender or a distinct identity. Other similar or more specific terms may include genderqueer, gender fluid, agender, or Two-Spirit (for Native American students).

“Sexual Orientation” refers to a person’s romantic and/or sexual attraction to other people. This includes being straight, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or many other terms used to describe sexual orientation. This is different and distinct from gender identity.

“Transition” is the process through which a person begins to live according to their gender identity. This process is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve specific medical treatments or changes to official documents. There is no single step or set of steps that an individual must take in order to have their gender identity affirmed and respected.

“LGBTQ+” is an acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (or queer). The acronym sometimes includes an “I” for intersex, an “A” for asexual, a “P” for pansexual, and other letters. A “+” is sometimes placed at the end of the acronym to signal that there are additional letters/identities that fall under a similar umbrella.

“QTBIPOC” is an acronym that stands for queer/trans, black, indigenous, and people of color.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

Meridian Technology Center will ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to transgender and nonbinary students is kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local, and federal privacy laws. Meridian employees and staff shall not disclose any information that may reveal a student's gender identity to others, unless the student, parent, or legal guardian has authorized such disclosure, or there is another compelling need.

Prior to disclosing any such information about a transgender or nonbinary student, Meridian employees will work with the student and any parent or legal guardian to discuss the appropriate manner, time, and message of the disclosure. This will include providing the student with appropriate support services they may need to make the disclosure in a safe and supportive environment.

Transgender and nonbinary students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much private information to share. The fact that a student chooses to use a different name, to transition at school, or to disclose their gender identity to staff, educators, or other students does not authorize Meridian employees to disclose a student's personally identifiable or medical information to anyone. Meridian or no Meridian employee shall encourage, coerce, or attempt to encourage or coerce a minor child to withhold information from the student's parent/guardian.

The 2023 Oklahoma "Parents' Bill of Rights" (OAC 210:10-2-1, et seq.), requires the technology center to disclose to a student's parent/guardian any information known to Meridian or its employees regarding material changes reasonably expected to be important to the parent/guardian regarding their student's health, social, or psychological development, including identity information. Disclosure of this information shall occur within 30 days of learning the information. "Identity information" means information including, but not limited to, any names or pronouns used by a student at school and any social transition or other transition to a gender that differs from the student's sex. "Sex" means the physical condition of being male or female based on genetics and physiology, as identified on the individual's original birth certificate.

## Use of Preferred Name, Pronoun, or Gender

All adult students have the right to be addressed by a name, pronouns, and other terms that correspond with their gender identity. This respect should not depend on whether a student has access to a legal name change or gender marker change on official documents. Meridian and its employees should always use the pronouns and name with which a student identifies or requests. Meridian and its employees are expected to respect and use a student's name and pronouns, once they have been made aware of said student's correct information.

A minor student has the right to be addressed by a name, pronouns, and other terms that correspond with their gender identity, provided their parent/guardian has provided written consent to the technology center for the student to be addressed by a preferred name or pronoun that may be different from the student's original birth certificate. This respect should not depend on whether a student has access to a legal name change or gender marker change on official documents. Meridian and its employees are expected to respect and use a student's name and

pronouns, once they have been made aware of said student's correct information and parent/guardian consent for the student to use a preferred name or pronoun.

### Student Records

Meridian Technology Center shall maintain an official, permanent record with the legal name and gender appearing on the student's birth certificate. On all other school-related records or documents, however, at the request of or with the consent of the student's parent/legal guardian as appropriate (unless the student is over 18), Meridian will use a student's requested name and gender pronouns. This would include physical records and documents, diplomas and other certificates of advancement, electronic records and documents, and school IDs. Reasonable efforts will be made to update student records with the student's requested name and gender pronoun or gender marker, and not to circulate records with the student's assigned birth name or gender marker. Meridian will also make reasonable efforts to also identify routine areas where a student's privacy could be violated by the improper usage of the legal name and gender marker. These include but are not limited to pre-printed labels, standardized tests, student IDs or library cards, school photos, notices from the main office, attendance slips, grade books, posted lists of student names, lesson plans, seating charts and roll sheets used by substitute teachers, and any other places where students' names are commonly written.

In order to protect a student's privacy, and to prevent accidental disclosure of a student's status, Meridian will maintain the official, permanent record in a secure location, separate from the student's other records. If the official record is maintained electronically, similar security measures shall be implemented to protect student privacy.

When a student or parent/legal guardian presents Meridian with documentation of a court-ordered legal name and/or gender change, Meridian will then change the official, permanent pupil record, to reflect the student's new legal name and gender, in a timely manner.

Transgender and nonbinary students who transition after having graduated or transferred out of Meridian may request that Meridian amend school records, a diploma, or transcripts that include the student's birth name and gender. When requested, Meridian will amend the student's records, including reissuing a school diploma or transcript, to reflect the student's current name and gender.

### **CUMULATIVE STUDENT RECORDS POLICY (I-428-A)**

A comprehensive system of records is kept on each student during his or her enrollment with Meridian Technology Center. This includes such information as grades, attendance, punctuality, results of safety tests, and work experience. Upon completion of the program by the student, a transcript is prepared for each student and retained as a permanent file. Attendance and grade records for high school students are transferred to the home high school to become a part of their permanent record.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT INFORMATION/FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT**

Meridian Technology Center may provide directory information in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The following items of information are considered "directory information" and cannot be released without consent or a record of disclosure:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Telephone number (unless it is unlisted)
4. Date and place of birth
5. Major Field of study
6. Dates of attendance
7. Degrees and awards received
8. Previous educational agency or institution attended
9. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
10. Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Requests to withhold directory information must be submitted in writing by the parent or guardian, or the student personally if 18 years of age or older, within 10 calendar days after the first scheduled day of class. All written requests for non-disclosure will be honored for only one academic year.

## **DISABLED STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY**

Meridian Technology Center's facilities are accessible to disabled students. In addition, programs and instructional materials are adapted for high school students based upon the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Adults who want to request accommodations for a documented disability must complete an Accommodation Request Form available in the Career Planning Center. Adults must furnish documentation of the disability, which meets the requirements of the *Americans with Disability Act* and Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. Adults must allow sufficient time for the request to be processed. Further information is available from a counselor in the Career Planning Center.

## **ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (I-417-A)**

In order to provide Meridian Technology Center students with practical experience prior to their joining the job market, the majority of programs place qualified students in on-the-job training locations where they continue to develop the skills learned in the classrooms and lab areas.

Participation in on-the-job training is a privilege which is extended to the student for the purpose of assisting the student in his/her vocational objective. Students afforded on-the-job training opportunities are expected to review the On-The-Job Training Plan. While participating in on-the-job training the student is required to attend one day per week on the Meridian Technology Center campus for discussion and classroom instruction. In addition to the responsibilities that the student must fulfill for the On-The-Job Training Plan, general program coursework must be completed and turned in by given deadlines. Students must maintain a 70% grade average in order to continue in any on-the-job training program. Violation of standards and requirements established as a condition of participation in on-the-job training and/or breach of any aspect of this policy may result in termination of the On-The-Job Training Plan and experience, discipline of a student, and/or termination of the training program(s).

## **CRIMINAL RECORD BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR STUDENTS IN HEALTH-RELATED OCCUPATIONS (I-406-A)**

Meridian Technology Center seeks to provide eligible students with clinical opportunities consistent with their occupational choices. These clinical opportunities may be an elective of the student or may be a requirement essential to successful program completion.

In either case, when applicable a national felony record search will be required of the student prior to the student's commencement of the clinical experience. The purpose of the national felony record search is to ensure the safety and security of patients and the public and to ensure that, upon program completion, the student will meet the requirements for professional certification and/or licensure required by the profession.

In accordance with this requirement MTC has established the following student requirements:

1. To be considered for placement in a clinical site requiring a criminal record search, the student must comply with the request for a national felony record search and must also present a satisfactory search. Any reference to a national felony record search in this policy includes a Sex Offender and Violent Offender Registry check.
2. The cost of and arrangements for the national felony record search are the responsibility of the student.
3. International students are subject to the same criminal history information review as required in paragraph two above. It may be necessary for the student to contact his/her embassy, or utilize a commercial investigative service in order to comply with this requirement. International students are responsible for obtaining the required record search at the student's expense.
4. Faculty members are required, upon initial hiring, to have a national felony record search that complies with this policy and must obtain a new search following any breaks in employment, if other than the normal summer break or authorized leaves.
5. The student's national felony record search must be dated after their acceptance into their respective program. If the student leaves the program and is later readmitted, another search must be completed at the students' expense.
6. Students may obtain information on how to obtain the national felony record search from the program department's secretary or program coordinator. The student is responsible for insuring that the records search includes a Sex Offender Registry (SOR) search.
7. The national felony record search must be conducted by the designated third party authorized by the health occupations area. No other forms, photocopies, or record searches will be accepted.
8. Students should understand that by enrollment in the program they agree to obtain a national felony record search in accordance with this policy and also understand that information obtained through the national felony record search may be furnished to the clinical site(s).
9. MTC reserves the right to request additional information from its students as needed by an affiliate training site and/or of concerning offenses committed in other states, expunged offenses, municipal offenses and pending offenses.

10. A copy of the national felony record search, copies of court records and related correspondence shall be included in the student's permanent record.

***PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWING CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS***

Meridian Technology Center shall ensure that all national felony record searches are examined for the purpose of:

1. ensuring the student's compliance with the District's policy concerning national felony record searches;
2. ensuring the safety and security of patients and the public; and
3. ascertaining the student's eligibility to continue in the health-related program and participate in clinical rotations.

Meridian Technology Center personnel assigned to review national felony record searches shall examine the report(s) to determine:

1. Whether the report discloses any criminal history on file.
2. Whether in the sex offenders' section of the report the report shows that there is no sex offender record or registration.
3. If a criminal history is identified, the examiner will determine the criminal offenses and report them to his or her supervisor for the purpose of determining whether the offense is one which will jeopardize the security or safety of others and whether the offense is one which affects the student's ability to successfully complete the program or to participate in clinical rotations.
4. The examiner shall specifically inspect the criminal history to determine felony charges and/or registration as a sex offender and not other charges or convictions.
5. If the review of the report indicates a felony charge or registration on the Sex Offenders Registration list, Meridian Technology Center shall request the student obtain certified copies of court records related to the charge. If the student declines to obtain the records, Meridian Technology Center shall obtain those records from the courthouse in the state and county in which the charges were filed. The purpose of obtaining the records will be to determine whether a charge filed as a felony was reduced to a misdemeanor and to determine the judgment and sentence rendered by the court.
6. If the student has a history of felony charge or charges or registration as a sex offender, the examiner will review the case with the appropriate administrative official and, if relevant, with its clinical facility or facilities to determine whether the student will be able to commence or complete the clinical rotation. This process should also be used to determine whether placement of the student in clinical rotations could jeopardize the safety of others.
7. Based on the information obtained, the evaluation of the criminal history on the safety and security of others, and the student's ability to complete the clinical requirements of the program, Meridian Technology Center will notify the student of the effect of the record and any related information on the student's continuation in the program or any restrictions placed on the student.
8. In the event a decision is made that the student, for reasons arising out of the national felony record search, is not eligible to continue the program, the student will be advised of the

determination, the basis for the determination, and opportunities for alternative programs (if any). If the effect of the national felony record search is to disqualify the student from the program the student may appeal the decision using the procedures provided for adult students suspended, dismissed, or removed from school.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Meridian Technology Center is accredited by the Oklahoma Board of Career Technology Education (OBCTE) and the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Some full-time career majors have additional accrediting agencies. Current or prospective students wishing to review documents describing the institutions accreditation, approval or licensing should submit a written request to the Superintendent's office. Within ten working days of submission of the request, documentation will be made available.

## **VIRTUAL, HYBRID, AND DISTANCE LEARNING (I-460-A)**

***This policy may be used if students are unable to attend class or able to attend class only on a part time basis for various health or safety reasons. Complete technology center closure is not a prerequisite to use of this policy.***

When Meridian engages in virtual, hybrid, or distance learning, instruction can be delivered via a number of Technology Center-Approved Means and Mediums, but in all cases, instructional delivery methods will comply with requirements and guidance from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) and Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. These methods can include, but are not limited to, means and mediums already implemented or may be implemented in the future by Meridian administration which may or may not include use of technology. Although the student may not be on campus, programs will continue, and the Meridian shall continue to engage students with instruction and experiences that provide opportunities for continuous learning while allowing them to stay connected with their instructors.

Whether provided through virtual, hybrid, or distance instruction, Meridian shall, to the greatest extent practicable, provide students with quality educational opportunities and continuity of instruction that is consistent with Meridian's vision and mission. When making decisions regarding the means and mediums utilized for virtual and distance learning, the technology center shall strive to bridge any equity gaps between those students with and without the technology and resources necessary to access virtual instruction. Meridian shall utilize all available funding sources and means to bridge these gaps in compliance with federal and state law.

## **IMPACT ON EXISTING POLICIES, RULES, AND SERVICES**

Once this policy is effectuated, though instruction will be provided via virtual, hybrid or distance learning, each is a continuation of the Meridian's instructional program. Therefore, the rules and responsibilities of students, their legal guardian(s), and Meridian personnel, unless otherwise expressly stated in this policy, are the same as if students were present at school during the instructional day. Unless specifically noted in this policy, existing provisions of a Student Handbook, "Acceptable Use" policies and agreements, privacy policies, and related Meridian policies shall remain in effect. For example, students shall attend scheduled online meetings or classes in a timely manner (attendance), prepare for class in advance of the day's curriculum objectives, meaningfully and appropriately participate in instruction (program participation), and shall also adhere to all existing rules concerning behavioral (e.g., bullying, harassment,

discrimination violations of the Acceptable Use Policy) and academic misconduct (e.g., cheating, unauthorized group work on individual assignments). When students are visible to technology center personnel or other students, they shall dress in conformance to the school dress code.

### ***Attendance***

Students must continue to meet all state-mandated compulsory attendance requirements and are not exempt from state truancy laws, except to the extent permitted or required by the OSDE. To the extent appropriate under the circumstances, Meridian attendance policies shall remain in effect, and student attendance and participation shall be monitored and recorded as closely as possible to existing Meridian policies. Attendance and participation shall be measured by means appropriate in a virtual, hybrid, or distance learning environment which may include, but are not limited to, technology center-approved-and-monitored chatrooms and message board posts, emails, submission of assignments, or other Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.

Teachers shall make contact with each of their students a minimum number of times per school week, as determined by technology center administration, and count these contacts as full-time attendance. These contacts may include, but are not limited to, student participation in virtual classes or virtual learning platforms, submissions or posts to approved message boards, instructor confirmation with a student's legal guardian(s) that the student did participate, and physical or electronic submission of assignments.

### ***Grading, Class Rank, Promotion and Retention***

In conformance with guidance from the OSDE and to the extent reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances, all existing requirements related to student progression, including retention, grade assignment, and removal shall remain in effect as if virtual, hybrid and/or distance learning had not replaced in-person instruction. Traditional letter grades shall continue to be issued in conformance with the Meridian's grading practices. Appropriate efforts shall be made by all technology center personnel to ensure that the circumstances which effectuate this policy shall not negatively impact student grades.

### ***Special Education***

While this policy is in effect, when appropriate, each student's IEP contact shall communicate with the student's legal guardian(s) to discuss the student's individualized plan for virtual, hybrid, or distance learning. Instructors and related service providers shall share learning resources with the student's legal guardian(s) that are appropriate for the student in order to provide a variety of activities and supports which may be utilized that promote continued progress toward the student's IEP goals. IEP meetings shall be conducted as needed via secure Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums that are appropriate under the circumstances.

### ***English Learners (EL)***

EL students shall continue to receive EL services. Unless otherwise designated, each student's EL instructor shall be the primary contact for the student's legal guardian(s) while this policy is in effect. In conformance to guidance from the OSDE, the technology center shall be intentional in ensuring instructors are providing appropriate plans, modifications and accommodations for EL students. Nothing in this policy shall prevent EL students or their legal guardian(s) from directly contacting the student's instructor regarding their educational progress.

## **INSTRUCTION GENERALLY**

### ***Method and Means of Instructional Delivery***

Depending on whether virtual, hybrid, and/or distance learning is employed by the technology center, the superintendent or designee is directed to evaluate and select the means and mediums which shall be authorized for instructional delivery and communication with students and/or their legal guardian(s): the “Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.”

### ***Office Hours***

Every instructor and building administrator must be available during regular working hours to support instruction and student needs. Technology center and building administrators shall develop and distribute a schedule for instructors to hold “office hours.” During office hours, each instructor is required to be available to provide instruction or otherwise provide immediate feedback to students and their legal guardian(s) via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums. A portion of office hours may be utilized to conduct interactive virtual learning lessons with students in conformance with this policy or tutoring.

### ***Communication with Students and Parents***

Instructors are expected to communicate with students and their legal guardian(s) regularly, making actual communicative-contact with students at least two times per week. Electronic or telephonic messages left for instructors must be returned in a timely manner via Meridian-Approved Means and Media.

Meridian personnel who communicate with students shall do so in conformance with this and all other Meridian policies and may do so only via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums, except when expressly approved, in writing, by an immediate supervisor. Such communications shall be limited to discussions regarding program, school, and school-related activities only. At all times, Meridian personnel shall exercise their best professional judgment and act with integrity and concern for their students’ well-being.

### ***Communication with students for the purpose of fraternization is strictly prohibited***

All policies pertaining to professional conduct with students shall be adhered to. Students, legal guardians, and technology center personnel shall have no expectation of privacy when communicating via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.

### ***Intellectual Property***

At no time shall either Meridian personnel or students use, upload, post, mail, display, store, or otherwise transmit in any manner any such material that is protected by copyright, patent, trademark, service mark, or trade secret, or in violation of any Federal Communications Commission rules applicable to public broadcasts, except when such use or disclosure is properly authorized and bears the appropriate notations. Meridian personnel shall consult guidance from the OSDE regarding compliance with applicable infringement laws, including fair use. Instructors shall use public domain resources when permission to use protected material cannot be obtained.

### ***Privacy Laws and FERPA***

In all cases of virtual, hybrid, or distance learning, but especially in an online learning environment, Meridian personnel shall conform with FERPA requirements and other applicable privacy laws and technology center policies.

The recording of classrooms (virtual or otherwise) and/or students by technology center personnel, students, or their legal guardian(s) is strictly prohibited without prior approval of students or, in the case of minors, legal guardians.

#### ***VIRTUAL LEARNING INSTRUCTION***

All virtual learning instruction shall be delivered only via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.

#### ***HYBRID LEARNING INSTRUCTION***

All hybrid learning instruction shall be rendered in accordance with a mix of virtual and/or distance learning instruction and designated in-person instruction dates. The Virtual portion of the instruction shall be delivered only via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.

If the Hybrid instruction is a mix of in-person and distance learning, the campus director or designee shall print, compile, and make distance learning packets available at building sites and, at the discretion of the technology center, other appropriate locations at a to-be-announced time.

If the Hybrid instruction is a mix of in-person and virtual learning, the campus director or designee shall ensure the virtual learning lesson plans for the following week are electronically posted and made available from Technology Center Social

#### ***DISTANCE LEARNING INSTRUCTION***

All distance learning instruction shall be rendered and delivered in print form. The campus director or designee shall print, compile, and make distance learning packets available at building sites and, at the discretion of the technology center, other appropriate locations at a to-be-announced time.

#### ***PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION***

In anticipation that this policy may become effective, Meridian personnel shall receive required professional development instruction on best virtual, hybrid, and distance learning practices, which shall include content area-specific training, in addition to training on any Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums for virtual and distance instruction and communication. Campus administrators shall conduct staff meetings via Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums.

Meridian administrators shall also receive appropriate training on how to supervise and evaluate personnel who are providing virtual, hybrid, and distance learning instruction under this policy. Technology center personnel shall follow OSDE guidance regarding evaluation in virtual, hybrid, and distance learning instruction and shall monitor virtual learning instruction by joining classes in-progress and providing feedback to the instructor.

#### ***Support Services***

Whether virtual, hybrid, or distance learning is utilized by Meridian, appropriate support services will continue to be available to Meridian personnel, students, and (as appropriate) their legal guardian(s) including:

- **Technical Support** — Meridian shall provide basic technical support for instructors, students and their legal guardian(s) in accessing and using Meridian-Approved Means and Mediums of communication and virtual and distance learning instruction.
- **Instructional Support** — Instructors should contact their immediate supervisor with any questions regarding virtual, hybrid, or distance learning instruction.

- **Social-Emotional Wellbeing Support** — To the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances, Meridian shall provide information and resources to assist stakeholders in coping with the circumstances necessitating effectuation of this policy.
- **Special Education Resources and Support** — The Special Education Director or designee will provide support to students with disabilities or other special needs, along with their legal guardian(s), to help them navigate virtual, hybrid, and distance learning instruction and compliance issues while this policy is in effect.

### ***ONGOING EVALUATION AND ADAPTATION TO EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES***

Meridian, in consultation with state, local, and federal officials, shall continuously evaluate this policy, and the procedures herein, and adapt the same based on guidance from appropriate agencies. Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, 34 CFR Part 99

## **DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR**

### ***Discipline***

It is the intent of the Board of Education to provide students a fair and reasonable determination of a discipline issue, providing a strong disciplinary system within the school and affording all the rights and responsibilities intended and decreed by the state and the United States Constitution. The complete cooperation of students is encouraged to assure that classroom time is not lost except under proper cause and proper procedure.

## **ADULT STUDENT BEHAVIOR (I-412)**

### ***Purpose***

Meridian Technology Center serves adult and secondary students. A discipline code is provided for secondary students to inform students of the standards of conduct required of students, and of the consequences that attach to misconduct. School laws that prescribe procedures applicable to secondary students are, in some instances, not applicable to adult students. Accordingly, Meridian has established a separate policy applicable to adult students that explains the standards of conduct and civility expected of adult students and also explains the actions that may be taken when adult conduct violates those standards. Adults are held to standards of conduct that are no less than those which attach to secondary students attending the technology center. Educational opportunities available to adult students may be cut-short or terminated in instances where an adult student's conduct violates the approved standards or when a student, for other reasons, cannot fulfill program requirements essential to successful course completion.

In instances involving a student's dismissal or removal from a course or program, Meridian will utilize procedures that are fair and reasonable. The complete cooperation of students is encouraged to assure that all students have an opportunity to benefit from the educational opportunities available. Conduct which violates policies, rules and practices or which interferes with or disrupts learning must and will be addressed by school administration. This policy explains the Meridian's standards of conduct and describes the procedure that will be used when it is necessary to remove a student from a course or program. Removal may involve a short or long period or may involve a permanent removal.

### ***Procedures***

#### **1. Immediate Removal of a Student**

Whenever an alleged violation of the *Adult Student Behavior Code* is reported to an administrator, he or she will ascertain whether the immediate removal of the student is required. This determination will be based on whether the student's continued presence on campus would

create, in the administrator's judgment, a dangerous and/or disruptive situation with regard to the continued operation and management of the school system. If dismissal is found necessary, the administrator shall document the justification in a report and immediately forward it to the superintendent, and contact the student.

## 2. Evidentiary Hearing

Upon notice of an alleged violation, the administrator will review the evidence relevant to the violation. If dismissal of the student is necessary before a hearing can be conducted, the hearing must be held as soon as possible, but not later than 72 hours of the dismissal. In case of waiver or non-attendance of the hearing by the student, summary disposition of the matter will be indicated in letter form and forwarded to the student with a copy to the superintendent.

If the student is unable to attend the original time and day specified by the administrator for the evidentiary hearing, the matter may be continued only once and, in such case, will be reset to be conducted within the next 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. Any further request for continuance will result in immediate disposition of the matter with notification in writing sent to the student.

## 3. Decision

Once the evidentiary hearing has been held, the administrator will summarize the findings in a written report, which will include the decision as to the student's innocence or guilt and recommended discipline, if applicable. This decision will be announced orally at the conclusion of the hearing with a written report to follow, or within three business days of the conclusion of the hearing, by issuance of the written report. The imposition of discipline will commence following announcement of the decision or issuance of the written report, whichever occurs first. Should the punishment be one of short or long-term removal or dismissal, the administrator will notify the superintendent of the action.

## 4. Appeal

If all or any portion of the administrator's decision is not agreed to, the student has the right to appeal the decision to the superintendent. An appeal is commenced by letter to the superintendent delivered within 72 hours of the decision rendered by the administrator. The administrator, upon receipt of notice of the appeal, will forward the report of the hearing to the superintendent for decision. The superintendent shall have the authority to sustain, overrule, or modify the division administrator's decision. If the student desires an appeal to the superintendent, he or she shall be permitted to remain in school unless the circumstances delineated under the "Dismissal" section, above, are met. At the hearing, the division administrator shall first present his/her evidence and be subject to cross-examination by the superintendent. This will be followed by the student's evidence. The decision of the superintendent shall be final. Such decision shall be communicated orally after the hearing or in writing to all parties, within three business days following the decision. An oral decision, when rendered immediately following the hearing, shall be followed by issuance of the superintendent's written decision, which shall be placed in the mail within three business days of announcing the decision.

## 5. Modification of Corrective Action

The imposition of corrective action is subject to modification upon the recommendation of the administrator at any time prior to the hearing before the superintendent. The discipline imposed by the administrator is based on one or more of the following guidelines:

- A. Seriousness of the offense.

- B. Student’s disciplinary record during the course of the school year or in prior years.
- C. Any final action by civil authorities. (However, action by authorities, in criminal or civil matters, is not a condition precedent to disciplinary action by the school.)
- D. Cooperation and assistance of student during the disciplinary proceedings.
- E. Other circumstances as the administrator may deem relevant.

## 6. Re-admission

A dismissed student is eligible to be readmitted upon proper application for readmission. However, the administration may consider the student’s prior disciplinary and incident record in determining whether to grant a student’s request for readmission.

### ***Notification of Policy***

Copies of any procedural regulations and the *Adult Student Behavior Code* shall be distributed to all adult students annually, and students are responsible for compliance with the school’s behavior and conduct standards. Questions as to the interpretation of any part of the policy should be presented to the appropriate administrator.

### ***Administrative Actions***

Administrative actions provided in this policy may be taken by the administrator designated by this policy or the superintendent. An administrator, whether a division administrator, superintendent, or other administrator in charge, may appoint a designee to act in his/her place. With the exception of the superintendent, designees must be approved by the superintendent.

### ***School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act (Okla. Stat. tit. 70, §24-1002)***

The Oklahoma Legislature established the *School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act* with the express intent of prohibiting bullying in all schools. In addition to the prohibition listed in the student discipline code, above, the board has adopted a separate policy prohibiting bullying and outlining the district’s plan to address it.

### ***Dismissal of Students Because of Failure to Meet or Comply with Essential Course Requirements***

The technology center’s course offerings include those that incorporate requirements essential to successful completion of the course. An example is the clinical hours that are a part of and necessary to completion of many health care courses. When a student cannot complete essential course requirements the student may be dismissed from a program for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to conduct, behavior, or other inability to meet mandatory parts of the program. Students dismissed for reasons falling within this part of the policy, will have the same rights with regard to removal as adult students who violate the district’s disciplinary code.

### ***Students Attending the Technology Center by Virtue of a Special Program***

In some instances, adult students are participating in programs offered by the technology center as a result of their eligibility established by terms of a federal or state program. In these instances, the programs establish eligibility requirements as well as minimum standards which students must meet in order to remain a part of the program and recipient of program benefits. Student participation and dismissal of the student may be governed by the program criteria. Students have no property interest in these programs and, as a result, those who violate expectations related to attendance, participation, and otherwise fail to meet the obligations which accompany participation, may be removed from the program with notice to the student and the program director. Whether to allow the student to return to the program and, if so, under what conditions, will be a joint decision of the designated school representatives and the designees for the federal

or state program. The student's dismissal or removal shall include written notice to the program or project director of the student's dismissal and the reasons for dismissal.

## **Adult Student Behavior/Secondary Student Discipline Code**

The following behaviors at Meridian Technology Center, while in technology center vehicles or going to or from or attending technology center events will result in disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal:

1. Arson
2. Altering or attempting to alter another individual's food or beverage
3. Assault (whether physical or verbal) and/or battery
4. Attempting to incite or produce imminent violence directed against another person because of his or her race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information, by making or transmitting or causing or allowing to be transmitted, any telephonic, computerized or electronic message
5. Attempting to incite or produce imminent violence directed against another person because of his or her race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information by broadcasting, publishing or distributing or causing or allowing to be broadcast, published or distributed, any message or material
6. Academic Misconduct, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of academic materials or other academic misbehavior
7. Complicity in misconduct by others, including, but not limited to, attempting to or encouraging others to commit prohibited conduct. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of prohibited conduct is violative of this policy
8. Conduct that threatens or jeopardizes the safety of others
9. Cutting class or sleeping, eating or refusing to work in class
10. Disorderly conduct, including behaving in a disorderly, lewd, indecent manner or breaching the peace on technology center property or in technology center-sponsored activities. Examples include, but are not limited to, obscene language, profanity, inappropriate behavior or gestures, indecent exposure, nonconsensual photography, video, or audio recording of another person on technology center premises or at technology center-sponsored events when recording causes or is likely to cause injury or distress
11. Disruption of the educational process or operation of the school - as to disruptive behavior in the classroom specifically, engaging in behavior that a reasonable person would view as substantial or repeated interference with the instructor's ability to teach the class or the ability of other students to benefit from instruction
12. Extortion

13. Failure to attend assigned detention, alternative school or other disciplinary assignment, without approval
14. Failure to comply with state immunization requirements
15. False reports or false calls
16. Fighting
17. Forgery, fraud or embezzlement
18. Gambling
19. Gang related activity or actions
20. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including gestures, written or verbal expression, electronic communication and physical acts
21. Hazing (whether involving initiations admission into, affiliations with, or as a continued involvement in a group or organization or not) in connection with any school activity, regardless of location. Hazing, includes, but is not limited to, any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student. Likewise, engaging in any action or activity that causes or is likely to cause physical or mental discomfort or distress that may demean, degrade, or disgrace any person, regardless of location, intent or consent of participants is violative of this policy
22. Immorality
23. Inappropriate attire, including violation of dress code
24. Intimidation or harassment because of race, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information including but not limited to: (a) assault and battery; (b) damage, destruction, vandalism or defacing any real or personal property; or threatening, by word or act, the acts identified in (a) or (b)
25. Physical or verbal abuse, including, but not limited to, physically restraining or transporting someone against their will
26. Possession or use of a caustic substance (unrelated to course work)
27. Possessing, distributing or viewing of obscene materials, including electronic possession, distribution or viewing (sexting)
28. Possession of synthetic urine, a warmer or any other item with the intent to use that item to tamper with a drug or alcohol test

29. Possession, threat or use of a dangerous weapon<sup>1</sup> and related instrumentalities (i.e., bullets, shells, gun powder, pellets, etc.)
30. Possession, claimed possession use, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, conspiracy to sell, distribute or possess or being in the chain of sale or distribution, or being under the influence of (a) alcoholic beverages, (b) any mind-altering substance, except for medications taken for legitimate medical purposes pursuant to district policy, including but not limited to prescription medications for which the individual does not have a prescription, or medications used outside their intended therapeutic purpose, (c) paint, glue, aerosol sprays, salts, incense and other substances which may be used as an intoxicating substance, or (d) any substance believed or represented to be a prohibited substance, regardless of its actual content.
31. Possession, claimed possession, or distribution of illegal and/or drug related paraphernalia
32. Possession, claimed possession, distribution, or claimed distribution of supplements, prescription medicine and/or non-prescription medicine while at school and school related functions without prior administrative approval
33. Purchasing, selling and/or attempting to purchase or sell prescription and non-prescription medicine while at school and school related functions
34. Sexual or other harassment of individuals including, but not limited to, students, school employees, volunteers
35. Theft
36. Threatening behavior, including but not limited to gestures, written, verbal or physical acts, or electronic communication
37. Truancy
38. Use, possession, claimed possession, distribution, or selling marijuana, or marijuana-related products in any form "Marijuana" is defined as provided for in the Technology Center's policy on *Medical Marijuana, Hemp & Cannabidiol (CBD)*.
39. Use, possession, claimed possession, distribution, or selling tobacco or tobacco related products in any form, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, loose tobacco, rolling papers, chewing tobacco, snuff, matches, and lighters, and vapor products which includes noncombustible products that may or may not contain nicotine, that employ a mechanical heating element, battery, electronic circuit or other mechanism, regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce a vapor in a solution or other form. A vapor product also includes any vapor cartridge or other container with or without nicotine or other form that is intended to be used with an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe or similar product or device and any vapor cartridge or other container of a solution, that may or may not contain nicotine, that is intended to be used with or in an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo or electronic device. Vapor products not included are any products regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration under Chapter V of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

40. Use or possession of missing or stolen property if property is reasonably suspected to have been taken from a student, a school employee, or the school
41. Using racial, religious, ethnic, sexual, gender or disability-related epithets
42. Use of the school's technology resources (i.e., computers, electronic mail, internet, and similar resources) in a manner prohibited by policies, in any manner not authorized by school officials, or in violation of law
43. Vandalism
44. Violation of board of education policies, rules or regulations or violation of school rules and regulations including, but not limited to, disrespect, lingering in restrooms, running in halls, bringing unauthorized items to school, inappropriate or unauthorized use of cellular phones or other electronic media, name calling, destroying or defacing school property
45. Vulgarity
46. Willful damage to school property
47. Willful disobedience of a directive of any school official

Students suspended for a violent offense directed toward an instructor shall not be allowed to return to the instructor's classroom without the instructor's prior approval. Whether an offense is considered a violent offense, requiring an instructor's approval as a condition of return to a particular classroom, shall be based on applicable provisions of the Oklahoma school law regarding student suspension and applicable criminal law distinguishing between violent and nonviolent offenses.

In addition, conduct occurring outside of the normal school day or off school property that has a direct and immediate negative effect on the discipline or educational process or effectiveness of the school, will also result in disciplinary action, which may include removal from school. This includes but is not limited to electronic communication, whether or not such communication originated at school or with school equipment, if the communication is specifically directed at students or school personnel and concerns harassment, intimidation or bullying at school.

## **SECONDARY STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE (I-411-A)**

### ***School Safety Bullying Prevention Act (Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 24-100.2)***

The Oklahoma Legislature established the School Safety Bullying Prevention Act with the express intent of prohibiting bullying in all schools. In addition to the prohibition listed in the student discipline code, above, the board has adopted a separate policy prohibiting bullying and outlining Meridian's plan to address it.

### ***Sample Disciplinary Options***

#### **• Instructor or Administrator Intervention:**

May include, but is not limited to: warning conference with student, parent conference, referral to counselor, behavioral contract, restriction of privileges, requirement of corrective action by student, changing student's seat or class assignment, involvement of local authorities or agencies, or other appropriate action as required or indicated by the circumstances.

- **Detention or In-School Intervention:**

Detention is a correctional measure used when it is deemed appropriate. Students are to report to the appropriate teacher/campus director at the specified time with class work to be studied. Detention may be assigned on a week-day or on a Saturday, as deemed appropriate.

- **Alternative In-School Placement:**

Alternative in-school placement is an optional correctional measure that may be used by the administration when deemed appropriate. It involves assignment to a site, designated by the technology center, for a prescribed course of education as determined by school representatives. Any such placement will be made in accordance with applicable special education procedural safeguards.

- **Alternative out-of-School Placement:**

Alternative out-of-school placement is an optional correctional measure specifically authorized in cases when a student has made electronic communications intended to terrify, intimidate, harass, or threaten injury or harm to faculty or students. Any such placement will be made in accordance with applicable special education procedural safeguards.

- **School Service:**

*School service may be required of students when an administrator believes that it would allow the student to understand the logical consequences of his/her conduct. Examples include, but are not limited to, cleaning after vandalism or littering, helping a teacher after disrupting a class, etc. School service will not be utilized to augment the district's workforce, in ways which are likely to endanger a student, or in a manner which is designed to unduly embarrass a student.*

- **Out of School Student Suspension:**

*Students may be suspended out of school pursuant to the technology center's policy regarding student suspension.*

### ***Student Privileges While Under Suspension***

Participation in the extracurricular activities of the technology center is a privilege and not a right. Accordingly, when a student's behavior results in a determination by the campus director to impose disciplinary or other correctional measures against a student, the student will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities offered by Meridian Technology Center during the term of the discipline unless, in the sole judgment of the director, such participation is appropriate given the nature of the offense.

### ***Suspension Imposed by Sending School District***

When a sending school district suspends a student who, at the time of the suspension, is enrolled in the technology center - the superintendent or his/her designee shall promptly review the available information and determine whether the suspension shall also result in a suspension from the technology center. In the event the student shall be suspended from the technology center, for a reason involving suspension by the sending school, the technology center shall follow its procedures for suspension including notice of the suspension, opportunity to respond, and (where applicable) right to a hearing. When the technology center suspends a secondary student, it will likewise notify the sending school district of the suspension. Treatment accorded the technology center's suspension shall be the decision of the sending school district.

## **SECONDARY STUDENT SUSPENSIONS/OUT OF SCHOOL (I-411-C)**

This policy applies only to out-of-school suspensions for secondary students and, unless otherwise noted, all references to “suspension” in this policy mean out-of-school suspension. References to “parent” in this policy mean a minor student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). References to “campus director” mean the campus director or staff member to whom the campus director has delegated the responsibility for student discipline.

### ***Behavior or Conduct that May Result in Suspension***

Students may be suspended for:

1. Violation of a technology center regulation;
2. Possession of an intoxicating beverage, low-point beer, as defined by Okla. Stat. tit. 37, § 163.2, or missing or stolen property if the property is reasonably suspected to have been taken from a student, a technology center employee, or the technology center during school activities;
3. possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled dangerous substance while on or within two thousand (2,000) feet of public-school property, or at a school event, as defined in the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act. Possession of a firearm shall result in suspension as provided in the technology center's policy related to firearms except when firearm is appropriately stored pursuant to Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21 § 1277(D) and (School Policy I-355-A4).

Students who are suspended under categories 1 or 2 will be provided with an education plan as outlined below. No education plan will be required for students who are suspended under category 3.

### ***Violent Acts Toward School Personnel***

Any student in grades 6 through 12 found to have assaulted, attempted to cause physical bodily injury, or acted in a manner that could reasonably cause bodily injury to a technology center employee or person volunteering for the technology center shall be suspended for the remainder of the current semester and the next consecutive semester. For good cause and considering the totality of the circumstances, the superintendent or designee may modify the term of the suspension. Final action as to any such suspension, including its term, remains with the board of education or designated hearing officer, pursuant to a timely appeal.

Students suspended for a violent offense directed toward a classroom teacher shall not be allowed to return to the teacher's classroom without the teacher's prior approval. Whether an offense is considered a violent offense, requiring an affected teacher's approval as a condition of return to a particular classroom, shall be based on applicable provisions of the Oklahoma school law regarding student suspension and applicable Oklahoma criminal law distinguishing between violent and nonviolent offenses.

### ***Prior to Suspension***

Before the technology center administration recommends suspension, other disciplinary options will be considered, including, but not limited to: placement in an alternative school setting reassignment to another classroom, and detention. Meridian will provide additional procedural safeguards as required by law for students identified as having disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Act or Section 504 or the Rehabilitation Act/Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### ***Pre-Suspension Conferences***

When a student engages in behavior or conduct that may result in suspension, the campus director shall conduct an informal conference with the student. At the conference, the campus director shall read the policy, rule, or regulation that the student is charged with violated and shall discuss the student's conduct. The student shall be asked whether he/she understands the policy, rule or regulation and be given a full opportunity to explain and discuss his/her conduct.

If the campus director concludes that suspension is appropriate, the student shall be advised that he/she is being suspended and the length of the suspension. The campus director shall immediately notify the parent by phone and in writing that the student is being suspended and that other disciplinary options were considered and rejected. The written notice will state which alternative disciplinary options were considered and why they were rejected.

A student may be suspended without a pre-suspension conference only in situations when the campus director reasonably believes that the student's continued presence in the building will constitute an immediate danger to the health or safety of the students, employees, technology center property, or would be a substantial disruption of the educational process. In such cases, a conference with the student and the parent will be scheduled as soon as possible after the student has been removed from the building.

### ***Conferences with Parents***

The campus director will seek to hold a conference with the parent as soon as possible after the suspension has been imposed. The parent should be advised of his/her right to a conference with the campus director at the time he/she is verbally notified that suspension has been imposed. The conference will be held during the regular school hours, Monday through Friday, with consideration given whenever possible to the hours of working parents.

At the conference, the campus director will read the policy, rule or regulation the student is charged with having violating and will briefly outline the student's conduct. The campus director will also explain the reason for rejecting other disciplinary options. The parent should be asked by the campus director if he/she understands the rule and the charges against the student.

At the conclusion of the conference the campus director shall state whether he/she will terminate or modify the suspension. In all cases the parent will be advised of the right to have the suspension reviewed by the superintendent, board of education, a hearing officer appointed by the board, or the suspension committee as provided by this policy. If the parent agrees with the campus director's decision, he/she will be requested to sign a waiver of review.

Suspension in excess of five days shall include an Individualized Plan ("plan") shall describe either a home-based school work assignment setting or other appropriate work assignment setting. The Plan shall be prepared by the campus director with the assistance of other school employees.

The Plan shall provide for the core units in which the student is enrolled. Core units shall consist of the minimum English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Art units required by the Oklahoma State Department of Education for high school graduation.

A copy of the Plan shall be provided to the student and parent. The parent shall be responsible for providing a supervised, structured environment monitoring the student's educational progress until the student is readmitted into school. The Plan shall set out the procedure for education and shall also address academic credit for work satisfactorily completed.

### ***Records***

The campus director will keep written records of each suspension conference. The records will contain the date of the conference, names of participants time duration of the conference, and the basis for rejecting alternative disciplinary options. The campus director shall also maintain records related to the Plan and the student and/or parent's compliance with the Plan.

### ***Suspension Terms***

All suspensions will have a definite start and end date. The term of a suspension may be reduced if a student performs a specified remedial act if those conditions are agreed to at the time of the suspension. Suspension lengths will be as consistent as possible between students considering the nature of the conduct and the previous disciplinary history of the student.

Long-term suspensions are those suspensions in excess of ten school days. Suspensions will not extend beyond the current school semester and succeeding semester, except in the case of possession of a firearm, in which case a suspension shall be for a period of not less than one calendar year. Suspensions involving firearms are governed by the technology center's Weapons-Free Schools Student Suspension policy.

Short-term suspensions are those suspensions of ten or fewer school days.

### ***Long-Term Suspension Appeals***

A parent/student may appeal the suspension to the superintendent and board of education or a hearing officer appointed by the board. The campus director shall inform the parent/student of the right to appeal the suspension and the method for appealing. At the parent/student's option the appeal may be directly to the board or the board's appointed hearing officer.

A written appeal must be received by the superintendent within five calendar days after the parent/student receives the campus director's decision. If the superintendent does not receive a written appeal within five calendar days of the campus director's decision, the campus director's suspension decision is final.

### ***Appeals to the Superintendent or Designee ("Superintendent")***

If the superintendent receives a timely written appeal request, the superintendent will hold a conference with the parent or guardian as soon as possible. The conference will be held during regular school hours, Monday through Friday, with consideration given to the hours of working parents whenever possible.

At the conference, the superintendent will read the policy, rule or regulation the student is charged with having violated and will briefly outline the student's conduct. The parent will be asked if he/she understands the rule and the charges against the student. The student/parent will be given an opportunity to provide his/her version of events.

At the conclusion of the conference the superintendent will state whether he/she shall terminate or modify the suspension. In all cases, the parent shall be advised of the right to have the suspension reviewed by the board of education or a board-appointed hearing officer. If the parent agrees with the superintendent's decision, he/she shall be requested to sign a waiver of review by the board.

### ***Appeals to the Board of Education or Designated Hearing Officer***

An appeal must be presented by letter to the superintendent within five calendar days after the parent/student receives the superintendent's decision. If the superintendent does not receive a written appeal within five calendar days of the superintendent's decision, the superintendent's suspension decision is final.

If the board receives a timely written appeal request, the board or an appointed hearing officer will hear the appeal as soon as possible. This decision is final and not appealable.

The parent/student will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing and will have the right to choose an "open" or "closed" hearing. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the work schedule of parents.

#### The following procedures will be followed:

1. The board president or the appointed hearing officer should:
  - a. Announce that the next agenda item is a suspension review hearing.
  - b. Ask whether the parent/student wants the hearing to be open to the public or in executive session. The offer of an open hearing and the response is to be made a part of the minutes of the meeting. If the parent/student requests a closed hearing, a motion to go into executive session per their request should be made and voted on.
2. The board president or hearing officer should advise the parent/student:
  - a. That they are entitled to legal counsel, if they desire it.
  - b. That the administration will present its witnesses first and that after each witness the parent or their legal counsel will be given an opportunity to cross-examine.
  - c. That the parents/student will be given an opportunity to call any relevant witnesses and present any relevant evidence, subject to cross-examination by the administration's legal counsel.
  - d. That the board or its hearing officer will consider the evidence and documents and reach a decision that will be recorded by vote in open session.
  - e. That the parent/student may ask any questions about the procedure.
3. Administration may call witnesses and present documents subject to cross-examination.
4. Parent/student may call any witnesses and present documents subject to cross-examination.
5. After each witness is presented board members or the hearing officer may ask the witness questions.
6. Parent/student's closing statement.
7. Administration's closing statement.
8. Deliberate in private. (If the hearing is not in executive session, the board or its hearing officer may deliberate in executive session with permission of the parent/student.)
9. Return to open session and vote. After adopting a motion making certain findings of fact the board must make a motion to: (1) affirm the suspension; (2) modify the suspension (increase or decrease severity of the suspension); or (3) revoke the suspension. If the hearing is before a

hearing officer, no motions will be required as a part of the hearing process; otherwise, the hearing officer will have the same obligations as the board when rendering a decision.

### ***Attendance at School Pending Appeal Hearing***

Pending an appeal of the student suspension, the student will have the right to attend school under such “in-house” restrictions as the campus director deems proper, except that at the discretion of the campus director, the student may be prohibited from attending school pending any appeal hearing if in the judgment of the campus director the student’s continued presence in the building will constitute an immediate danger to the health or safety of students, employees, technology center property, or would be a substantial disruption of the educational process.

### ***Short-Term Suspension Appeals***

A parent or student may appeal the suspension decision to a suspension review committee established by the superintendent. The campus director shall inform the parent/student of the right to appeal the suspension and the method for appealing.

An appeal must be presented by letter to the campus director within five calendar days after the parent/student receives the campus director's decision. If the campus director does not receive a written appeal within five calendar days of the decision, the campus director's suspension decision is final.

Upon receipt of the request, the campus director shall confirm that the student’s suspension falls within the category of suspensions to which an appeal to the committee is authorized. If the campus director determines that the suspension is a long-term suspension, or the original short-term suspension is extended beyond ten school days prior to the hearing, the procedures applicable to long-term suspensions must be followed and the student must be given the opportunity to appeal any adverse decision to the board of education.

### ***Hearing the Appeal***

1. The superintendent shall appoint a review committee consisting of not less than three certified administrators and/or teachers and shall designate a chairperson for the committee. No administrator or teacher is eligible to serve on the committee who was a witness to the student’s conduct, nor is any teacher eligible to serve who has the student in his/her class for the current school term.
2. The superintendent shall schedule the committee hearing as soon as possible during regular school hours, Monday through Friday. Reasonable consideration shall be given to accommodate the work schedules of the parent whenever possible. The parent/student will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing. The campus director shall attend the hearing. Either party choosing to have legal counsel at the hearing shall give the other party 24 hours advance notice. The failure to give such notice will preclude the party’s right to have counsel attend the hearing.
3. The committee will conduct a full investigation of the student’s suspension in an informal manner. The campus director will briefly outline the student’s conduct, read the policy, rule or regulation that the student’s conduct violated, and present any evidence and witnesses that support the suspension decision. The parent/student will be asked by the committee if they understand the rule and charges against the student. The parent/student will then briefly explain

the student's conduct and present any evidence and witnesses that support the student's position.

4. At the conclusion of the presentation of the evidence, the committee shall retire to render a decision by a majority vote as to the guilt or innocence of the student. The committee shall also determine the reasonableness of the term of the suspension. The committee's decision shall be confirmed in writing and a copy will be mailed to the parent, the campus director and the superintendent.

5. The decision of the committee shall be final and not appealable.

### ***Student Privileges While Under Suspension***

Participation in school extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Accordingly, students who are suspended are immediately ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, notwithstanding the filing of an appeal. "Extracurricular activities" include, but are not limited to, all technology center sponsored teams, clubs, organizations, ceremonies, student government, etc.

## **STUDENT BULLYING (I-411-D)**

### ***Statement of Legislative Mandate and Purpose***

This policy is a result of the legislative mandate and public policy embodied in the *School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act*, 70 Okla. Stat. § 24-100.2 et seq. ("Act"). Meridian Technology Center (Meridian) intends to comply with the mandates of the Act and expects students to refrain from bullying. Bullying is expressly forbidden and students who bully are subject to disciplinary consequences as outlined in Meridian's policy on student behavior. Bullies may also be provided with assistance to end their unacceptable behavior, and targets of bullies may be provided with assistance to overcome the negative effects of bullying.

### ***Understanding and Preventing Bullying***

A full copy of this policy will be posted on the Meridian's website and included in all handbooks. Parents, guardians, community members, and volunteers will be notified of the availability of this policy through the Meridian's annual written notice of the availability of the anti-bullying policy. Written notice of the policy will also be posted at various places in all campuses.

Students and staff will be periodically reminded throughout the year of the availability of this policy, Meridian's commitment to preventing bullying, and help available for those affected by bullying. Anti-bullying programs will be incorporated into Meridian's other violence prevention efforts.

All staff will receive training regarding preventing, identifying, reporting, and managing bullying. Meridian's bullying coordinator and individuals designated as campus investigators will receive additional training regarding appropriate consequences and remedial action for bullies, helping targets of bullies, and the Meridian's strategy for counseling and referral for those affected by bullying. The training shall be completed the first year an administrator or technology center employee is employed by Meridian, and then once every fifth academic year.

Students will receive annual education regarding behavioral expectations, understanding bullying and its negative effects, disciplinary consequences for infractions, reporting methods, and

consequences for those who knowingly make false reports. Parents and guardians of minors may participate in a parent education component.

### ***Student Reporting***

Students are encouraged to inform school personnel if they are the target of or a witness to bullying. To make a report, students should notify a teacher, counselor, or campus administrator. The employee will give the student an official report form, and will help the student complete the form, if needed.

Students may make an anonymous report of bullying, and such report will be investigated as thoroughly as possible. However, it is often difficult to fully investigate claims, which are made anonymously, and disciplinary action cannot be taken against a bully solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

### ***Staff Reporting***

Staff members will encourage students to report bullying. All employees are required to report acts of bullying to the campus director on an official report form. Any staff member who witnesses, hears about, or suspects bullying is required to submit a report.

### ***Bullying Investigators***

Each campus will have a designated individual and an alternate to investigate bullying reports. These individuals will be identified in the site's student and staff handbooks, on Meridian's website, and in the bullying prevention education provided annually to students and staff. Meridian's anti-bullying program is coordinated at the district level by its bullying coordinator, DeAnna Little, Director of Instruction, Trade and Industry.

### ***Investigating Bullying Reports***

For any alleged incidents of bullying reported to Meridian officials, the designated official will investigate the alleged incident(s) and determine:

1. whether bullying occurred,
2. the severity of the incident(s), and
3. the potential for future violence.

In investigating, the designated official shall interview relevant students and staff and review any documentation of the alleged incident(s). Meridian officials may also work with outside professionals, such as local law enforcement, as deemed appropriate by the investigating official. In the event the investigator believes a criminal act may have been committed or there is a likelihood of violence, the investigator will immediately call local law enforcement and the superintendent.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the designated employee will document the steps taken to review the matter, the conclusions reached and any additional action taken, if applicable. Further, the investigator will notify the district's bullying coordinator that an investigation has occurred and the results of the investigation. In the event the investigation reveals that bullying occurred, Meridian's bullying coordinator will refer the student who committed the act of bullying to a delinquency prevention and diversion program through the Office of Juvenile Affairs.

Upon completion of an investigation, the campus director may recommend that available community mental health care or substance abuse options be provided to a student, if

appropriate. The campus director may provide a student with information about the types of support services available to the student bully, target, and any other students affected by the prohibited behavior. These resources will be provided to any individual who requests such assistance or will be provided if a Meridian official believes the resource might be of assistance to the student/family. Meridian is not responsible for paying for these services. No Meridian employee is expected to evaluate the appropriateness or the quality of the resource provided, nor is any employee required to provide an exhaustive list of resources available. All Meridian employees will act in good faith.

Meridian may request the disclosure of information concerning students who have received substance abuse or mental health care (pursuant to the previous paragraph) if that information indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel, provided the disclosure of the information does not violate the requirements and provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Okla. Stat. tit. 12 § 1376, Okla. Stat. tit. 59 §1376 of the Oklahoma Statutes, or any other state or federal laws regarding the disclosure of confidential information. Meridian may request the disclosure of information when it is believed that the student may have posed a danger to him/herself and having such information will allow Meridian officials to determine if it is safe for the student to return to the regular classroom or if alternative education arrangements are needed.

#### ***Parental Notification for Minor Students***

The assigned investigator will notify the parents (minor students only) of a target within one school day that a bullying report has been received. Within one school day of the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will provide the parents (minor students only) of a target with the results of the investigation and any community resources deemed appropriate to the situation.

If the report of bullying is substantiated, within one school day of the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will contact the parents (minor students only) of the bully to discuss disciplinary action and any community resources deemed appropriate to the situation. The timelines in this parental notification section may be reasonably extended if individual circumstances warrant such an extension.

#### ***Parental Responsibilities***

All parents/guardians of minor students will be informed in writing of Meridian's program to stop bullying and will be given a copy of this policy upon request. An administrative response to a reported act of bullying may involve certain actions to be taken by parents of minor students. Parents of minor students will be informed of the program and the means for students to report bullying acts toward them or other students.

They will also be told that to help prevent bullying at school they should encourage their children to:

- Report bullying when it occurs
- Take advantage of opportunities to talk to their children about bullying
- Inform the administration immediately if they think their child is being bullied or is bullying other students
- Watch for symptoms that their child may be a target of bullying and report those symptoms
- Cooperate fully with Meridian personnel in identifying and resolving incidents

### **Monitoring and Compliance**

In order to assist the State Department of Education with compliance efforts pursuant to the *School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act*, 70 Okla. Stat. § 24-100.2 et seq., will identify a Bullying Coordinator who will serve as the contact responsible for providing information to the State Board of Education. The Bullying Coordinator shall maintain updated contact information on file with the State Department of Education and Meridian will notify the State Department of Education within 15 days of the appointment of a new Bullying Coordinator.

A copy of this policy will be submitted to the State Department of Education by December 10th of each school year as part of Meridian's Annual Performance Report.

## **STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

The superintendent, directors of instruction or designees are authorized to detain and search any student and any property in the student's possession while on school premises, at school activities, or in transit under authority of the school, for any item possession of which by the student is illegal or prohibited by Meridian policy, or for property believed to have been stolen from another student, an employee, or the school. The search shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:

### **1. Reasonableness:**

- a. The decision to search must be based upon a reasonable suspicion that;
  1. a violation of the law or school rules has occurred or is occurring;
  2. the student to be searched has committed the violation; and
  3. particular evidence of the violation will be discovered in the search.
- b. In deciding whether a suspicion is reasonable, all the circumstances surrounding the case should be considered including;
  1. the student's age, history and record in school;
  2. the prevalence and seriousness of the suspected violation;
  3. the school officials' prior experience in detecting the problem or recognizing suspicious behavior;
  4. The need to make a search without delay and further investigation;
  5. The specificity and source of the information used as justification for the search; and
  6. the particular instructor or officials' experience with the student.

### **2. Scope:**

- a. The scope or extent of the search shall be reasonably related to the kind of objects being searched for, and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex and the nature of the suspected violation.
- b. A search commenced to discover a particular kind of item may be expanded or continued for additional items if circumstances warrant.
- c. No student's clothing, except cold weather outerwear, shoes, and hand and head coverings, except religious coverings, shall be removed prior to or during the conduct of any warrantless search.

### **3. Discovered items:**

- a. Illegal items or other possessions or substances reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of others may be seized by school authorities. These items will immediately be turned over to law enforcement officials for disposition as they see fit.
- b. items which are used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be temporarily removed from student possession.

c. The Superintendent may designate school personnel to transport any dangerous weapons, controlled dangerous substances, alcoholic beverages, or missing or stolen property that might be in a student's possession from a school site to a centralized location within the technology center or to local law enforcement offices for lawful disposal. While in transport, the designated school personnel shall carry their school identification and a letter from the superintendent confirming their authority to transport the items for disposal. All items transported for disposal shall be transported in a locked container.

4. Refusal to submit to search:

A student who refuses to peaceably submit to a search based on reasonable suspicion or who refuses to turn over items discovered as a result of a search may be suspended for such refusals.

5. Reports:

The person conducting the search shall prepare a report to be maintained by the designated director of full-time programs or an administrator including the date, time, place, names of witnesses, purpose, basis, and result of the search. A copy of the report form is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

## **STUDENT POSSESSION OF DANGEROUS WEAPONS (I-355-A)**

In order to provide a safe environment for the students and staff of the district, the board of education adopts this policy prohibiting the possession and/or use of dangerous weapons, replicas or facsimiles of dangerous weapons and items or instrumentalities which are used to threaten harm or are used to harm any person.

Dangerous weapons, including but not limited to firearms, are a threat to the safety of the students and staff of the district. In addition, possession of dangerous weapons, or replicas or facsimiles of dangerous weapons, disrupts the educational process and interferes with the normal operation of the district.

For the foregoing reasons and except as specifically provided below, possession by any student of a dangerous weapon, as that term is defined in this policy, or a replica or facsimile of a dangerous weapon, while on technology center property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a technology center bus or vehicle, is prohibited. Further, use of any item or instrument by a student to threaten harm to any person or which is used to harm any person, while on technology center property, at a school-sponsored activity or on a technology center bus or vehicle, is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, "dangerous weapon" is defined as any item which was manufactured for the purpose of, or used with the intent to, threaten or cause physical harm to another person.

"Possession of a dangerous weapon" includes, but is not limited to, any person having a dangerous weapon:

1. on his or her person;
2. in his or her locker;
3. in his or her vehicle;
4. held by another person for his or her benefit; or
5. at any place on technology center property, a technology center bus or vehicle, or at a technology center activity.

Weapons expressly prohibited by this policy include a: pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, air gun or spring gun, B-B gun, stun gun, hand grenades, fireworks, slingshot, bludgeon, blackjack, brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind, nun-chucks, dagger, bowie knife, dirk knife, butterfly knife, any knife the blade of which can be opened by a flick of a button or pressure on the handle, dart, explosive smoke bomb, incendiary device, sword cane, hand chains, firearm shells or bullets, garrotes, and choking devices.

Other items that may be considered dangerous weapons when used with the intent to threaten or cause physical harm to another include, but are not limited to, pocket knives (regardless of the length of the blade), credit card knives, mace, pepper spray, and other substances whose principal purpose is for use as a weapon, whether offensive or defensive, and any replica or facsimiles of any of the foregoing items, or any item or instrumentality which is used to threaten harm or is used to harm any person or any chemical, material or substance which can cause an irritation to or reacts with human tissue, or any chemical, material or substance used, given, applied to or administered to another person without that person's consent. The foregoing list of "dangerous weapons" is descriptive and by way of example only and is not to be considered an exclusive or limiting list of dangerous weapons. It will not be a defense to any disciplinary action under this policy that the student possessing the dangerous weapon did not know that it is a dangerous weapon, but such claim of a lack of knowledge may be considered in mitigation of any disciplinary penalty.

Any student in possession of a dangerous weapon, or replica or facsimile of a dangerous weapon, in violation of this policy or who uses any item or instrumentality to threaten harm to any person or is used to harm any person may be placed under emergency suspension from school, pending an investigation of the incident by the appropriate technology center or legal authorities.

Students who violate this policy may be suspended from school, barred from technology center property and all technology center activities for any period of time up to the maximum period authorized by law. Additionally, appropriate technology center staff members may seek to file criminal charges against the student.

If a teacher or other technology center employee has a reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of a dangerous weapon, or a replica or facsimile of a dangerous weapon, the teacher or employee shall immediately investigate the matter and shall confiscate any such weapon found if this can be accomplished without placing any students or staff in jeopardy, and shall immediately notify the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. If the teacher or employee does not believe that the weapon can be confiscated safely, the teacher or employee shall immediately notify the superintendent or the superintendent's designee of the situation.

If the superintendent or his/her designee learns that a student is believed to be in possession of a dangerous weapon or replica or facsimile thereof, the superintendent or designee shall observe the following procedure:

1. Immediately investigate the matter and contact the police or campus security, if appropriate.
2. If not already confiscated by an employee of the district and if it can be accomplished without risk of injury, the superintendent or designee should take possession of the dangerous weapon or replica or facsimile.
3. Notify the superintendent or designee.
4. Notify the student's parents.
5. Cooperate fully with the police.

6. Transfer confiscated weapon to the police department, if feasible.

A student, who has been suspended from another school district because of the possession of a dangerous weapon, or replica or facsimile of a dangerous weapon, shall not be accepted as a transfer student into the district.

An exception to this policy may be granted for students participating in an authorized curricular or extracurricular activity or team involving the use or demonstration of a dangerous weapon, or replica or facsimile of a dangerous weapon. For this exception, prior written approval by the superintendent is required.

A student's inadvertent or unintentional possession of a dangerous weapon or replica or facsimile thereof on technology center property, a technology center bus or vehicle, or at a technology center activity is no defense or excuse to compliance to this policy, but may be considered in determining the length or severity of any punishment for violation of this policy.

Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions, rights of due process for all students and rights of disabled students must be observed in accordance with applicable law and technology center board policies.

#### ***Adult Students and Handguns on School Campus***

HB 1652 amended Okla. Stat. tit. 21 § 1277 by designating the limited areas in which concealed handguns can be located on a technology center campus. Adult students may not carry a gun into any technology center school facility (including offices, common areas, or structures of whatever type or kind). Likewise, it is unlawful for any adult student to carry a handgun onto the campus of a K-12 school whether or not the adult student is engaged in an activity related to the technology center in which the student is enrolled. Students found in possession or control of a handgun in violation of school policies and applicable state or federal laws will suffer the most severe disciplinary consequences available, including removal from school, and referral of unlawful handgun possession or storage to authorities for criminal prosecution. The only area adult students, who have a valid concealed carry license, may have a handgun on a technology center campus is in a vehicle in the parking lot of the school campus, provided the handgun is carried or stored as required by law. No handgun may be removed from a vehicle absent the express permission of the superintendent.

#### **WEAPONS FREE SCHOOLS - STUDENT SUSPENSION POLICY (I-448-A)**

Any student who is determined to have:

- brought a weapon to a school under the jurisdiction of the district; or
- possessed a weapon within 2,000 feet of public-school property; or
- possessed a weapon at a school event

shall be suspended out of school for a period of not less than one calendar year. This policy does not apply to adult students who appropriately store their firearm pursuant to HB 1652 amended Okla. Stat. ann. Tit. 21 § 1277(D) and (School Policy I-355-A4), or students who are members of the JROTC and who possess or bring an inoperable weapon to school for participation in a school program, provided the student obtained prior permission from the campus director, the weapon remains inoperable while at school and the weapon is used consistent with the permission granted.

Any out-of-school suspension imposed under this policy may be modified for any student on a case-by-case basis by the chief administrative officer of Meridian Technology Center.

Enforcement of this policy shall be consistent with state and federal laws dealing with discipline of students with disabilities.

Students who violate this policy will be referred to the appropriate criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. Any firearm seized from a student by any Meridian employee shall immediately be delivered to a law enforcement authority for disposition pursuant to applicable law.

Any out-of-school suspension initiated pursuant to this policy shall be subject to the procedural safeguards set forth in the Meridian's for the out-of-school suspension of students.

Consistent with Oklahoma law, for an out-of-school suspension under this policy, no education plan shall be implemented during the term of the suspension. This policy does not apply to student suspensions for non-weapon violations.

### ***GANG CODE (I-447-A)***

The following is prohibited at Meridian Technology Center during the school day and at all school events (home and away):

1. Possessing, wearing, using, distributing, or the displaying of any sign, symbol, badge, color, or other item that is evidence of affiliation with or membership in a gang.
2. Wearing pants below the waistline (sagging and bagging), or wearing caps, bandanas, handkerchiefs, shoestrings, or any other item associated with gang-related behavior.
3. Participating in any act, either verbal or non-verbal, to include gestures, expressions, handshakes, signs, etc., that may indicate an affiliation with or membership in a gang.
4. Participating in any act that may further the interest in a gang affiliation or gang membership such as, but not limited to, writing or inscribing gang-related graffiti to include messages, symbols, or signs on school property.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension for the current semester and the following semester and the filing of criminal charges, depending on the severity of the infraction.

### ***STUDENT DRESS CODE (I-416-A)***

It is the consensus of the administrative and instructional staff at Meridian Technology Center that, in addition to teaching a marketable skill, the school should help students realize that society generally demands certain personal characteristics of those who hope to succeed within it. Prospective employers prefer that students develop and demonstrate these characteristics during the training period in order that they may adjust more quickly to job responsibilities following initial employment.

Clothing should be neat, clean, inoffensive, and appropriate to meet sanitation and safety requirements specific to their training programs. Some examples of inappropriate attire are clothing or accessories that display obscene or profane language or symbols; symbolic of drugs, alcohol, sex, gangs, or illegal activities, or that unduly expose the body (for example bare midriffs, clothing that allows the undergarments to be visible when the student is sitting or walking, tank tops, short shorts, and leggings/yoga pants without a long shirt). Hoodies worn indoors should have the hoods pulled down. Prohibited are the nude look, see-through blouses and revealing

fashions without appropriate concealing undergarments. For safety and health reasons, footwear is required. Hair should be neat, clean, and well-groomed at all times. Sunglasses should not be worn indoors unless medically necessary.

To reduce the risk of bedbug infestation on campus, students should not bring/use blankets from home to stay warm in class or on the bus. Students may wear program appropriate outerwear as necessary if classrooms/buses are uncomfortably cool.

Any type of wearing apparel that distracts from the classroom atmosphere will be considered inappropriate. Modesty and the avoidance of distracting influences is the key to appropriate dress. Additional guidelines may be required within training programs or departments. Due to safety, sanitation, and security reasons and the safety of those around them, students must be appropriately dressed in relation to the trade for which they are preparing as defined by the instructor in each program and approved by the administration of the school. Students participating in school activities, which require travel, in town or out of town, are expected to present an appearance, both in groups or individually, which will enhance the reputation of Meridian Technology Center. The sponsor of the activity should advise all students of the proper clothing to be worn for all trips. Students who do not adhere to the dress regulations are not permitted to represent the school district. Visible tattoos displaying writing or pictures which are prohibited on clothing need to be covered.

### ***DRUG-FREE SCHOOL AND CAMPUS (I-426-A)***

Meridian Technology Center shall be designated as a drug-free school and campus. Any location at which school is conducted, whether at this site or another site, is included in this policy, as are all school-related activities whether on or off campus. Students are hereby notified that the use, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol is wrong and harmful. Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and re-entry programs are available through the offices of the Director of Instruction and the Director of the Career Planning Center.

To assure the maintenance of a drug-free school environment, drug-detecting dogs may be used to detect narcotics and dangerous drugs concealed in school property assigned to students and in student vehicles parked on school property. Any student who uses a school locker or other school-provided storage area or drives a vehicle to school is deemed to have consented to such a search and refusal to allow such a search may result in suspension.

All students and employees are absolutely prohibited from unlawfully manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using controlled substances (drugs or alcohol) at the school or on any school-related activities. Any student or employee violating the policy is subject to termination and referral for prosecution for the first offense.

### ***USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS (I-425-A)***

The board is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for staff, students, and citizens. The board believes that education has a central role in establishing patterns of behavior related to good health and that measures are necessary to help its students to resist tobacco use. The board is concerned about the health of its employees and also recognizes the importance of adult role-modeling for students. Therefore, the board shall discourage the use of tobacco products by its staff and students.

Smoking and the use of tobacco products in any form is prohibited on Meridian property by all persons. This prohibition includes school buildings, grounds, and school-owned vehicles. Possession of tobacco products by minor students on school property is prohibited.

### ***Enforcement***

The success of this policy will depend upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and non-smokers. All individuals on school premises share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy. Any individual who observes a violation on school property may report it in accordance with the procedures listed below.

### ***Students***

Any student using, possessing or distributing tobacco products in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures, including removal from the program for adult students or out-of-school suspension for secondary students.

### ***Staff***

Any violation of this policy by staff will be referred to the appropriate administrator. One written warning will be issued to the staff member with a copy placed in his or her personnel file. Further violations will be considered willful neglect of duty and will be dealt with accordingly based on established policies and procedures for suspension, demotion, dismissal, and non-renewal of staff.

### ***Citizens***

Citizens who are observed smoking or using tobacco products on Meridian property in violation of this policy will be asked to refrain from using these products on school property. If the individual fails to comply with the request, his or her violation of the policy may be referred to the site director or other administrative personnel responsible for the area or program during which the violation occurred. The administrator shall make a decision on further action, which may include a directive to leave school property. Repeated violations may result in a recommendation to the Superintendent or Board of Education to prohibit the individual from entering Meridian property for a specified period of time. If deemed necessary by the school administration or the Board of Education, local law enforcement officials may be called upon to assist with enforcement of this policy.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR FILING, PROCESSING AND RESOLVING COMPLAINTS ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION (I-433-A)**

### ***Pre-Filing Procedures***

Prior to the filing of a written complaint, the student, parent or guardian, employee or patron is encouraged to visit with the campus director or the Coordinator, as applicable, and reasonable effort should be made by MTC at this level to resolve the problem or complaint.

### ***Filing and Processing Discrimination Complaints***

A. The Grievant submits a written complaint to one of the Coordinators, as applicable, stating the basis, nature and date of the alleged discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the names of persons responsible (where known) and requested action. If the applicable Coordinator is the person alleged to have committed the discriminatory act(s), then the complaint should be

submitted to the Superintendent for assignment. Complaint forms are available from the Coordinator's office.

B. The Coordinator conducts a complete and impartial investigation within 10 days of receiving the complaint, to the extent reasonably possible, which may include but not be limited to, interviewing the Grievant, any witnesses, review of documents and interviewing the Respondent. The Coordinator will ask the Respondent to (a.) confirm or deny facts; (b.) indicate acceptance or rejection of the Grievant's requested action; and (c.) outline alternatives. As to complaints of discrimination by students, parents or guardians and school employees, the Coordinator will disclose the complaint, the identity of the Grievant and information regarding the person who allegedly committed the discriminatory act only to the extent necessary to fully investigate the complaint and only when the disclosure is required or permitted by law. If a Grievant wishes to remain anonymous, the Coordinator will advise him or her that such confidentiality may limit MTC's ability to fully respond to the complaint. If a Grievant asks to remain anonymous, the Coordinator will still proceed with its investigation.

C. Within 5 days after completing the investigation, the applicable Coordinator will issue a written decision to the Grievant and Respondent. If the Grievant or Respondent is not satisfied with the decision, he or she must notify the applicable Coordinator, in writing, within 5 days and request an appeal to the superintendent. The written appeal shall contain a specific statement explaining the basis for the appeal.

D. Within 5 days after receiving the appeal request, the applicable Coordinator will refer the matter to the Superintendent for a hearing. If the Superintendent is the person alleged to have committed the discriminatory act(s), then a different decision maker will be appointed to maintain impartiality. The Coordinator will schedule the hearing with the Grievant, the Respondent and Superintendent. The hearing will be conducted within 10 days after the Coordinator refers the matter to the Superintendent for hearing.

E. At the hearing, the Superintendent will review the information collected through the investigation and may ask for additional oral or written evidence from the parties and any other individual he or she deems relevant. The applicable Coordinator will make arrangements to audiotape any oral evidence presented. In circumstances involving allegations of sexual harassment, the Coordinator may determine that it is appropriate and reasonable to separate the individual who is allegedly being sexually harassed from the alleged harasser in the hearing.

F. Within five days after completing the investigation, the Superintendent will issue a written decision to the Grievant and Respondent.

G. If the Grievant or Respondent is not happy with the decision, he or she must notify the Superintendent, in writing, within 5 days and request an appeal to the Board of Education. The written appeal shall contain a specific statement explaining the basis for the appeal.

H. The Superintendent will notify the Board of Education, in writing, within 5 days after receiving the appeal. The Clerk will place the appeal on a board agenda within 30 days from the date of notification to the Board of Education.

I. The Board will act as an appellate body by reviewing the decisions and the oral and written evidence presented below and making a decision. At the Board meeting, the Board may ask for oral or written evidence from the parties and any other individual it deems relevant. The Clerk will

make arrangements to audiotape any oral evidence presented. Within five days of the meeting, the Board will issue a final decision in writing to all parties involved.

### ***General Provisions***

A. Extension of time: Any time limits set by these procedures may be extended by mutual consent of the parties involved. The total number of days from the date the complaint is filed until the Board of Education issues a final decision shall be no more than 120 days.

B. Access to Regulations: Upon request, the Coordinator shall provide copies of any regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a person's race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, gender expression or identity, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information.

C. Confidentiality of Records: Complaint records will remain confidential, to the extent allowed by law, unless permission is given by the parties involved to release such information. All complaint records will be kept separate from any other records of MTC. No complaint record shall be entered in any personnel file unless adverse employment action is taken against an employee. Complaint records shall be maintained on file for no less than four years after complaint resolution.

D. Representation: The Grievant and the Respondent may have a representative assist them through the grievance process and accompany them to any hearing.

E. Corrective Action: After all facts and circumstances are reviewed, the technology center shall take any and all disciplinary actions to prevent further harassment or discrimination. Possible disciplinary or remedial actions include, but are not limited to: education, training and counseling, transfer, and/or suspension of a student, education, training, counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee.

F. Retaliation: The technology center prohibits retaliation, intimidation, threats, or coercion of any person for opposing discrimination or for participating in the technology center's discrimination complaint process or making a complaint, testifying, assisting, appealing, or participating in any other discrimination complaint proceeding or hearing. The technology center will take steps to prevent the alleged perpetrator or anyone else at the technology center from retaliating against the alleged victim or any person who acts to oppose discrimination or participates in the complaint process. These steps include notifying students and employees that they are protected from retaliation, making sure that victims know how to report future problems and making follow-up inquiries to see if there have been any new incidents. If retaliation occurs, the technology center will take strong responsive action.

G. Basis of Decision: At each step in the grievance procedure, the decision maker will take or recommend the taking of appropriate measures based on the facts, as revealed by the investigation and hearing, taken as a whole, and the totality of the circumstances, such as the nature, extent, context and gravity of the activities or incidents.

H. Section 504 Due Process Procedures: For information concerning impartial hearing and review procedures under Section 504, the Grievant should contact the 504 Coordinator.

### **Notice**

The technology center will notify all students, parents or guardians, members of the public and employees of the name, office and telephone number of each Coordinator and this grievance procedure in writing via school publications and/or postings at each campus to which employees or students are assigned.

### **Outside Assistance**

Individuals may also file complaints alleging discrimination, harassment, or retaliation with the Office of Civil Rights. The OCR may be contacted by email: [OCRComplaints@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRComplaints@hhs.gov) or by OCR Complaint portal: <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/smartscreen/main.jsf>

Written complaints can be sent to Centralized Care Management Operations:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Ave, S.W.

Room 509 F, HHH Bldg.

Washington, DC. 20201

## **TITLE IX—SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (I433-B1)**

### **Policy and Purpose**

Meridian Technology Centers will address all incidents of sex discrimination and sexual harassment reported to the technology center's Title IX Coordinator in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. The Title IX Coordinator, Jeremy Zweacker is located at Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Road, in room A106-G, phone number 405-377-7500, or email [titleIX@meridiantech.edu](mailto:titleIX@meridiantech.edu).

This policy informs all students and all technology center employees of policies and procedures regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment to which all students, instructional staff, and non-instructional personnel are expected to adhere. In addition, comprehensive information is provided regarding the reporting of sex discrimination and sexual harassment and avenues to seek immediate assistance.

Meridian Technology Center seeks to create a positive educational environment on and off campus through our academic programs, services, activities, policies and procedures aimed at providing protection against sex discrimination and harassment. To that end, Meridian condemns discrimination in its education programs and activities based on sex or gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking. Notice of sex discrimination or a sexual harassment incident to Meridian's Title IX Coordinator charges the technology center with actual knowledge and triggers its response obligations.

### **Scope of the Policy**

Meridian must respond when sex discrimination and harassment occur in the district's education programs or activities. Education programs and activities include locations, events, or circumstances in which Meridian exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the discrimination or harassment occurred. Title IX applies to all of the technology center's education programs or activities, whether such programs or activities occur on-campus or off-campus, including online instruction.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex

discrimination or sexual harassment. Reports may be made in person, by USPS mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Individuals are responsible for immediately reporting any knowledge or information concerning sexual harassment to Meridian's Title IX Coordinator. Meridian encourages victims of sexual harassment to talk with a counselor. Different employees within the scope of the technology center's resources have different abilities to maintain a victim's confidentiality.

- Career Planning Center Counselors are required to maintain near complete confidentiality; talking to them is sometimes called a "privileged communication." Disclosures to these employees will not trigger an investigation into an incident against the complainant's wishes.
- Technology Center employees are required to report all the details of an incident (including the identities of both the complainant and respondent) to the Title IX Coordinator. A report to Meridian employees (called "responsible employees") constitutes a report to Meridian and places technology center on notice to take appropriate steps to address the situation.
- This policy also applies to retaliation by Meridian or any person against any other person for the purpose of interfering with Title IX rights, or because the person has participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under Title IX that is prohibited.

### **Assistance Following an Incident of Sexual Harassment**

#### **• Immediate Assistance:**

Persons who have complaints of sexual harassment may file their complaints with the Title IX Coordinator Jeremy Zweiacker located at Meridian Technology Center, 1312 South Sangre Rd, Stillwater, in room #A106-G, phone number 405-377-7500, or email [titleIX@meridiantech.edu](mailto:titleIX@meridiantech.edu). Victims of sexual violence should get to a place of safety and call Police. Obtain necessary medical treatment; time is a critical factor for evidence collection and preservation. An assault should be reported directly to a law enforcement officer, and technology center officials will assist in facilitating this process. Filing a police report will not obligate the complainant to prosecute, nor will it subject the reporting party to scrutiny or judgmental opinions from officers. Filing a police report will ensure that a victim of sexual violence receives the necessary medical treatment and tests, at no expense to the complainant to the extent provided for by Oklahoma law, and provide the opportunity for collection of evidence helpful in prosecution, which cannot be obtained later. **COMPLAINANT OR WITNESS: CALL POLICE (911) FOR IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE.**

#### **• Ongoing Assistance:**

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant, Meridian may take interim measures such as changing academic schedules, extracurricular activity modifications, addressing transportation issues, withdraw from/retake a class without penalty, academic support (e.g., tutoring), leave of absence, counseling, campus escort services, distance learning arrangements, work schedule modifications, or similar measures. In addition, while an investigation is pending, Meridian may initiate a "no contact order" between the parties that carries a sanction of short- or long-term suspension (for secondary students) or removal (for adult students) if violated. Meridian offers internal counseling options. Meridian officials and representatives are available to facilitate access to support services. Several service organizations in Oklahoma have provided telephone numbers and made available other services for students, staff and campus community

members. Meridian will assist any interested person, needing assistance, in contacting these agencies.

• Statewide Support Services:

- Oklahoma Safeline - 1-800-522-7233 (SAFE)
- Oklahoma Safeline - Oklahoma City Metro Area - 405-522-7233 (SAFE) National
- Domestic Violence Hotline - 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network Hotline - 1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)
- Communication Services for the Deaf (TTY) - 1-800-252-1017 (TTY)
- Communication Services for the Deaf (Voice) - 1-866-845-7445 (Voice)
- Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault 405-524-0700 (M-F/9-5)

• Local Support Services:

- The Saville Center – 405.377.5670
- Payne County Youth Services – 405.377.3380
- Wings of Hope Family Crisis Services – 405.372.9922

**Title IX Coordinator and Staff**

• Title IX Coordinator has primary responsibility for overseeing the process of coordinating Meridian’s compliance efforts, receiving complaints, investigations, hearing, sanctions, appeals, and education and training associated with this policy. To file a complaint or submit questions concerning actions governed by this policy contact the Title IX Coordinator.

• Deputy Title IX Officers have the secondary responsibility and assist with the duties of the Title IX Coordinator. Deputy Title IX Officers include Rebecca Eastham, 405-377-7500.

• Title IX Investigators may include but not be limited to Meridian Technology Center administration. The primary responsibility of the investigator relates to formal complaints. The investigator is to collect statements and any evidence directly related to any allegations of a Title IX policy violation as directed by the Title IX Coordinator. Investigators will receive appropriate Title IX training.

• Title IX Hearing Officer (decision-maker) may include a Meridian Technology Center administrator, legal counsel or specially designated officer. The primary responsibility of the hearing officer is to ensure both parties receive due process in the event allegations of a Title IX policy violation are directed to a hearing by the Title IX Coordinator. Hearing Officers will receive appropriate Title IX training.

**Definitions**

Meridian Technology Center defines sex discrimination and sexual harassment broadly to include any of three types of misconduct on the basis of sex (or gender), all of which jeopardize the equal access to education that Title IX is designed to protect:

1. Any instance of quid pro quo harassment by a district's employee
2. Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access
3. Any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined by Federal law

Offenses prohibited under the Meridian’s policy include, but are not limited to: sex discrimination (including sexual orientation discrimination and gender identity or gender expression discrimination), sexual harassment, sexual violence to include non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse, sexual coercion, domestic/dating violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

A. Sex Discrimination: includes sexual harassment and is defined as conduct directed at a specific individual or a group of identifiable individuals that subjects the individual or group to treatment that adversely affects their education or employment, or school-related benefits, on account of sex or gender (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression discrimination). It may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

B. Sexual Harassment: is unwelcome and discriminatory speech or conduct undertaken because of an individual’s gender or is sexual in nature and is so severe, pervasive, or persistent, objectively and subjectively offensive that it has the systematic effect of unreasonably interfering with or depriving someone of educational, institutional, or employment access, benefits, activities, or opportunities. Students, vendors and visitors who are subject to or who witness unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature are encouraged to report the incident(s) to the Title IX Coordinator or any Meridian employee. Technology center employees who witness or learn of such conduct are required to report it to the Title IX Coordinator.

1. Hostile Environment: Sexual harassment includes conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent, objectively and subjectively offensive that it alters the conditions of education or employment or institutional benefits of a reasonable person with the same characteristics of the victim of the harassing conduct. Whether conduct is harassing is based upon examining a totality of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- The frequency of the conduct
- The nature and severity of the conduct
- Whether the conduct was physically threatening
- Whether the conduct was deliberate, repeated humiliation based upon sex
- The effect of the conduct on the alleged victim’s mental or emotional state from the perspective of a reasonable person
- Whether the conduct was directed at more than one person
- Whether the conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct
- Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, such as gratuitous suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes
- Whether the speech or conduct deserves constitutional protections

2. Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment exists when individuals in positions of authority over the complainant engage in the following behaviors:

- Make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature
- Indicate, explicitly or implicitly, that failure to submit to or the rejection of such conduct will result in adverse educational or employment action or where participation in an educational program or technology center activity or benefit is conditioned upon the complainant’s submission to such activity

**Examples of Harassment:**

- An instructor insists that a student have sex or engage in sexual acts with him/her in exchange for a good grade. This is harassment regardless of whether the student agrees to the request.
- A student repeatedly sends sexually oriented jokes around in an email list that the student created, even when asked to stop, causing one recipient to avoid the sender on campus or in connection with classes or district sponsored events in which both are involved.
- An instructional assistant probes for explicit details, and demands that students respond to him or her, though the student is clearly uncomfortable and hesitant.
- An administrator asks a student for nude or semi-nude pictures to be sent via Snapchat or other social media.
- An adjunct instructor provides explicit details of his sexual past or describes his sexual relationship with his spouse or girlfriend.
- An ex-girlfriend widely spreads false stories about her sex life with her former boyfriend to his clear discomfort and embarrassment.

3. Sexual Violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. Sexual violence can be carried out by district employees, other students, or third parties.
4. Nonconsensual Sexual Contact is any intentional touching, however slight, whether clothed or unclothed, of the victim's intimate body parts (primarily genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttock or breast) with any object or body part, without consent and/or by force. It also includes the touching of any part of a victim's body using the perpetrator's genitalia and/or forcing the victim to touch the intimate areas of the perpetrator or any contact in a sexual manner even if not involving contact of or by breasts, buttocks, groin, genitals, mouth or other orifice. This definition includes sexual battery and sexual misconduct.
5. Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse is defined as any sexual intercourse or penetration of the anal, oral, vaginal, genital opening of the victim, including sexual intercourse or penetration by any part of a person's body or by the use of an object, however slight, by one person to another without consent or against the victim's will. This definition includes rape and sexual assault, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence.
  - a. Rape: Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. This definition includes any gender of victim or perpetrator. Sexual penetration means the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person. This definition also includes instances in which the victim is incapable of giving consent because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (including due to the influence of drugs or alcohol) or because of age. Physical resistance is not required on the part of the victim to demonstrate lack of consent.
6. Sexual Coercion is the act of using pressure (including physical pressure, verbal pressure or emotional pressure), alcohol, medications, drugs, or force to have sexual contact against

someone's will or with someone who has already refused. This includes rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and sexual misconduct.

7. Dating Violence is violence between individuals:

- The party is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim;
- The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
  - Length of the relationship
  - Type of relationship
  - Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship

8. Supportive measures - individualized services reasonably available that are non- punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment.

**Consent**

Consent is the act of willingly agreeing to engage in sexual contact or conduct. Individuals who consent to sex must be able to understand what they are doing. Under this policy, "No" always means "No," and the absence of "No" may not mean "Yes".

A. Consent is informed, knowing and voluntary. Consent is active, not passive. Silence, in and of itself, cannot be interpreted as consent. Consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create mutually understandable permission regarding the conditions of sexual activity.

B. Consent to one form of sexual activity cannot imply consent to other forms of sexual activity.

C. Previous relationships or consent does not imply consent to future sexual acts.

D. Consent cannot be procured by use of physical force, compelling threats, intimidating behavior, or coercion. Coercion is unreasonable pressure for sexual activity.

E. In order to give effective consent, one must be of legal age and have the capacity to consent. Incapacity may result from mental disability, intellectual disability, unconsciousness/sleep, age, or use of alcohol, drugs, medication, and/or other substances. Consent given by someone who one should know to be, or based on the circumstances, reasonably should have known to be, mentally or physically incapacitated, is not consent. Incapacitation is a state where someone cannot make rational, reasonable decisions because he or she lacks capacity to give knowing consent. Note: indications of consent are irrelevant if the initiator knows or should reasonably have known of the incapacity of the other person.

Examples of when a person should know that another is incapacitated include, but are not limited to the following:

- The amount of alcohol, medication or drugs consumed
- Imbalance or stumbling
- Slurred speech
- Lack of consciousness or inability to control bodily functions or movements, or vomiting, or
- Mental disability or incapacity

F. Use of alcohol, medications, or other drugs will not excuse behavior that violates this policy.

## **Reporting**

### **A. Mandatory Reporting:**

All Meridian Technology Center employees are responsible for taking all appropriate actions to prevent sex discrimination or sexual harassment, to correct it when it occurs, and must promptly report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. All Meridian employees are considered responsible employees with a duty to report any incident to the Title IX Coordinator. The only exception to the mandatory duty to report is a licensed counselor for whom the report is considered a privileged exchange.

### **B. Confidential Reporting:**

Resources are available through staff and counselors. Victims' advocates are available to speak with any person who wishes to report an incident and remain anonymous. All forms of sexual harassment should be reported, no matter the severity. In addition, Meridian should be made aware of possible threats to the campus community in order to issue timely warnings.

### **C. Reporting to the Police:**

Meridian strongly encourages anyone to report sexual violence and any other criminal offenses to the police. This does not commit a person to prosecution, but will allow the gathering of information and evidence. The information and evidence gathered preserve future options regarding criminal prosecution, technology center disciplinary actions and/or civil actions against the respondent.

- If the incident happened on campus, it can be reported to Meridian's SRO or SRO Officer at 405,377-3333, ext. 0236, or an officer of the Police Department at 911. If the incident happened anywhere else, it can be reported to the local law enforcement with jurisdiction in the location where it occurred. Please know that the information you report can be helpful in supporting other reports and/or preventing further incidents.
- Reporting for Faculty and Staff (Non-Student) Instances: Faculty and staff shall report any instances of sexual harassment by another faculty or staff member to the Title IX Coordinator. As stated above, Meridian also strongly encourages reporting any instances to the police.
- Employee Obligation to Report (Student Instances): In compliance with Title IX, employees who become aware of a student instance of sexual harassment shall immediately report such instance to the Title IX Coordinator, including the name(s) of the persons involved.

### **D. Student Reporting:**

Students shall report any instances of sex discrimination or sexual harassment to any Meridian employee and/or the Title IX Coordinator. Only victims or their parents or guardians can file a formal complaint of sexual harassment. A complaint should be filed as soon as possible. If either the complainant or the respondent is a student, the incident will be addressed through the Title IX process. The report can be made in person, by phone, mail, or email using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator or by any other means that result in the Coordinator receiving the report. The report can be made any time, even during non-business hours.

After receiving a report or notice of an incident, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant confidentially to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. A complainant's wishes with respect to whether Meridian investigates will be respected unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that

signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

Meridian will promptly take necessary steps to protect the complainant and ensure safety as necessary, including taking interim steps before the final outcome of any investigation once a report or knowledge of sexual harassment has occurred. In some instances, Meridian may implement an emergency removal of a student when a safety and risk analysis indicate that an imminent threat exists to the physical health or safety of a party. A party subject to an emergency removal shall have an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. An employee may be placed on administrative leave or suspended during the pendency of the grievance process. Periodic updates on the status of the investigation will be provided to the complainant. If the school determines that sexual violence occurred, Meridian will continue to take steps to protect the complainant and ensure safety at school or related activities. Meridian will provide the complainant with available resources, such as victim advocacy, academic support, counseling, disability services, health and mental health services, and assistance in reporting a crime to local law enforcement.

### **Written Notice of Complaint**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice to all known parties in sufficient time to give the respondent time to prepare a response before an initial interview.

#### Written notice includes:

- a. Notice of the grievance process, including any informal resolution process
- b. Notice of the allegations, including sufficient detail (i.e., names of known parties, the conduct alleged to be sexual harassment, and the date and location of the conduct, if known) to allow the respondent to prepare a response
- c. A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the conduct and that responsibility will be determined at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- d. Notice of the parties' right to have an advisor (who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney) and to inspect and review evidence
- e. Notice that knowingly making false statements or providing false information in the grievance process is a violation of the code of conduct of students or a violation of performance and conduct standards for employees

### **Investigation**

An investigator will be designated to investigate the allegations contained in the complaint or which are developed in the course of the investigation. The burden of gathering evidence and burden of proof must remain on the technology center—not on the parties.

#### An investigation will be conducted by a technology center Title IX official. This investigation will include:

- Meeting personally with the complainant (unless extraordinary circumstances prevent a personal meeting)
- Meeting personally with the respondent (unless extraordinary circumstances prevent a personal meeting)

- Presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made
- Collecting any physical evidence
- Meeting personally with any witnesses (unless extraordinary circumstances prevent a personal meeting with one or more witnesses)
- Reviewing any documentary evidence; and
- Preparing a report of the investigation

The investigation of complaints will be adequate, reliable and impartial. The investigation process can take up to 60 days.

When investigating a complaint and throughout the grievance process, Meridian must do the following:

1. Ensure that the burden of proof and of gathering evidence rests on technology center rather than the parties
2. Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses and evidence
3. Not restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations or gather and present evidence
4. Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during interviews or related proceedings, including an advisor
5. Provide, to a party who is invited or expected to attend, written notice of the date, time, participants, purpose, and location of any investigative interview, hearing or other meeting with enough time to allow the party to prepare and participate
6. Provide both parties and their advisors an equal opportunity to review all evidence directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint (both exculpatory and inculpatory) at least 10 days prior to the completion of the final investigation
7. Ensure that if Meridian obtains additional information from or about the respondent or complainant, during the course of the investigation, that was not included in the original notice to the parties—both parties will be provided written notice of additional allegations and a reasonable opportunity to respond in writing to the new information or documents
8. Prepare a written report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence and provide the report to both parties and their advisors for review and written response at least 10 days before a hearing or determination of responsibility
9. Ensure that parties will have at least 10 calendar days to respond to the investigator's report; any response will be considered in connection with any hearing that is conducted

The Title IX Coordinator will determine if a Title IX hearing is necessary. In making this determination, the Coordinator will consider whether both parties request or consent to a hearing and will agree to participate in a hearing. If it is determined that Meridian will proceed with a hearing, the complainant and the respondent will be notified in writing of the hearing.

### **Mandatory or Permissive Dismissal**

Mandatory dismissal must occur when it is determined in the course of the investigation that allegations in a formal complaint:

1. did not occur in the technology center's program or activity;
2. did not constitute sexual harassment as defined, or
3. did not occur against a person within the United States.

Both parties must receive written notice of a mandatory dismissal and reasons.

Permissive dismissal may occur at any time during the investigation or hearing when:

1. a complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that they would like to withdraw;
2. the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by Meridian; or
3. specific circumstances prevent the technology center from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination.

Both parties must receive written notice of a permissive dismissal and reasons.

Meridian Technology Center may still address allegations of misconduct under the Student Code of Conduct or employee disciplinary procedures.

## **Technology Center Action**

### ***Informal Resolution***

Informal resolution is available in some circumstances. Informal resolutions are unavailable unless a formal complaint of sexual harassment is filed. Informal resolution may include conflict resolution or a restorative agreement between the parties with a trained Title IX Officer presiding over the informal resolution conference. Participation in informal resolution is never mandatory, and will only take place with the full consent of both parties involved. Informal resolution may only be used:

1. When a formal complaint of sexual harassment is filed
2. Prior to a Notice of Hearing being issued
3. When a Title IX Officer determines this is a suitable option for resolving the concern, and both the complainant and respondent agree to use the process
4. When the complaint does not involve sexual violence as defined in the Title IX Policy; and
5. When both parties acknowledge receipt of written notice of their rights under this policy and both parties provide written, voluntary consent

Informal resolution is not available when the complaint alleges a technology center employee sexually harassed a student.

### ***Voluntary Resolution***

Because the outcomes of voluntary resolution conversations are mutually developed and agreed upon by parties involved, an appeal of the process and its result is not permitted. However, either the Complainant or the Respondent may withdraw from informal resolution at any time prior to the entry of a voluntary resolution agreement and proceed with the Title IX hearing. If the parties are unable to agree on a voluntary resolution, the matter will be referred by the Title IX Coordinator to a Title IX Hearing. No offers to resolve the conflict that were made or discussed during the informal voluntary resolution process may be introduced during the Title IX Hearing.

## **A. Title IX Hearing**

Meridian has determined that the hearing process will be conducted through a live hearing or written exchanges, if the parties are secondary students.

***The Title IX Hearing Officer's responsibilities include but are not limited to the following, regardless of whether a hearing is conducted through written exchanges or a live hearing:***

- Read and understand the Title IX Policy and Procedures, which include the hearing process
- Read and understand all of the information of the Title IX case provided by the Coordinator prior to the hearing as part of a hearing packet

- Read and understand the procedures of the Title IX hearing (live or non-live) provided by the Coordinator prior to the hearing as part of a hearing packet
- Have a clear understanding of the incident(s) in question before making a decision;
- Decide the outcome and sanctions if needed based on the information presented, hearing notes, and the Meridian Title IX Policy
- Maintain copies of all notes made. The hearing officer will inform the parties of the decision at the live hearing and send a letter as described in this policy
- Ensure that parties have had ample time and opportunity to ask questions and obtain responses before the hearing officer renders a decision (live or non-live)
- Ensure that the determination (decision) includes a statement of and rationale as to each allegation, a determination of responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions, and whether remedies to restore equal access to Meridian's educational programs or activities will be provided to the complainant

***Complainant's Rights:***

- Be given a written explanation of the allegations and the hearing process
- Have access to evidentiary material in advance of the hearing
- Be present during the entire live hearing or fully aware of the process used in a non-live hearing
- Be accompanied by an advisor during the hearing. The advisor is limited to advising the student and may not present the case, or make statements during the proceedings. Students should provide technology center with the name and contact information for the student's advisor as soon as practical but at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing
- Be given, as applicable, a timely live or non-live hearing
- Be assured of exclusion of evidence of the victim's past sexual history from discussion during the hearing. The past sexual history of the victim with persons other than the respondent shall be presumed irrelevant
- Be permitted to clarify that evidence of a prior consensual dating or sexual relationship between the parties by itself does not imply consent (remember secondary students cannot consent to sexual harassment) or preclude a finding of sexual harassment
- Be provided written notification of the outcome of the hearing including any sanctions, remedies/accommodations for the complainant, additional remedies for the school community
- Be provided written notification of any internal or external counseling services that may be available
- Be provided written notification of options for changing academic, extracurricular, transportation, school-site, or work-site situations, if reasonable
- Be provided written notification of an avenue for appeal

***Respondent's Rights:***

- Be given written notice of the allegations and the hearing process
- Be given access to evidentiary material in advance of the hearing
- Be present during the entire hearing if a live hearing is conducted or fully aware of the process utilized in a non-live hearing
- Have no violation presumed until found responsible
- Be given a timely hearing
- Be accompanied by an advisor during the hearing. The advisor is limited to advising the student and may not present the case, or make statements during the proceedings. Students should provide the technology center with the name and contact information for the student's advisor as soon as practical but at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing

- Be informed that evidence of the victim’s past sexual history will be excluded from discussion during the hearing or hearing process. Similarly, the past sexual history of the victim with persons other than the respondent shall be presumed irrelevant
- Be provided written notification of the outcome of the hearing including any sanctions, remedies/accommodations for the complainant or respondent, additional remedies for the school community
- Be provided written notification of internal or external counseling services that may be available
- Be provided written notification of options for changing academic, extracurricular, transportation, school-site, or work-site situations, if reasonable; and
- Be provided written notification of an avenue for appeal

### **Live Hearings**

A live hearing will not be conducted unless students who are parties to the complaint are at least 18 years of age, extraordinary circumstances are present, or adult program students are the parties. The complainant and respondent will be notified in writing of the hearing date, the alleged policy violation(s) and issued a notice to appear at the hearing. The Notice of Hearing will be hand-delivered or mailed to the physical or electronic addresses of the parties. Parties are responsible for ensuring that a current physical and electronic mail address is included in technology center records.

The live hearing will include opening statements, each party’s evidence and witnesses, cross-examination, and closing statements. Students are permitted to have an advisor accompany the student throughout the disciplinary hearing. Students should provide Meridian Technology Center with the name and contact information for the student’s advisor at least 3 business days prior to the hearing. Parties are present during the disciplinary hearing (except during deliberations of the hearing officer). Parties are permitted to make statements, present witnesses and present evidence during the hearing which evidence has been previously collected and approved for relevance during the investigative process.

### **Non-Live Hearings**

Non-live hearing parties will have similar rights and responsibilities, except that the hearing officer will conduct the hearing via written or oral exchanges and neither the complainant nor the respondent will confront one another, and no cross-examination will occur. However, both parties will be invited to submit questions, receive answers, and present relevant written arguments in connection with the parties’ claims and defenses. Parties will have at least 10 days to respond to the receipt of information or documents to which they wish to respond. The investigator’s report, all submissions by the parties, the exchange of information, documents and arguments will provide the basis for the hearing officer’s decision.

### **All Hearings**

Witnesses and evidence must be directly related to the claims. Parties will be notified in any instance in which responses, information or documents are not available because of a privilege (not waived by the party who asserts the privilege) or irrelevant information is involved (e.g., information involving prior sexual behavior or sexual predisposition is irrelevant; a privilege such as an attorney-client or doctor-patient or other privilege bars introduction of certain evidence). The standard of proof used in technology center Title IX Hearings is the preponderance of the evidence, which means the determination to be made is whether it is more likely than not a violation occurred. This is different than proof beyond a reasonable doubt, which is required for a criminal prosecution.

## **Outcomes**

If it is determined under the preponderance of evidence standard (more likely than not to have occurred) that the respondent is not responsible for a Sexual Harassment policy violation— the complaint will be dismissed.

If it is determined under the preponderance of evidence standard that the respondent is responsible for a Sexual Harassment policy violation the following sanctions will be considered. The listing of sanctions below is not intended to be exclusive; actions may be imposed singularly or in combination when a violation of this policy is found.

### ***Discrimination (includes gender discrimination) may include the following sanctions on the student(s) found responsible:***

- **Restriction** – A limitation on a student’s privileges for a period of time and may include but not be limited to, the denial of the use of facilities or access to parts of campus, denial of the right to represent the technology center, or denial of participation in extracurricular activities.
- **Service Project** – Community service or an education class or project beneficial to the individual and campus or community.
- **Probation** – A specified period of time during which the student is placed on formal notice that the student is not in good social standing with Meridian and that further violations of regulations will subject the student to suspension from the technology center.
- **Suspension** – If warranted by the severity of the incident, removal from classes or programs and other privileges or activities for a definite period of time not to exceed (for secondary students) the remainder of the semester in which the incident occurred and the following semester and until the conditions which are set forth in the hearing outcome letter are met. Students who are suspended from Meridian are not permitted on campus or in campus buildings, facilities or activities at any time for any reason during the period of suspension, unless otherwise directed by a Director of Instruction. Conditions to conclude a suspension and reinstatement process will be stated in the written notification. Notation on the student’s transcript will not be made; however, a permanent record of the action will be maintained in the student’s record.
- **Removal** – If warranted by the severity of the incident, adult students may be removed from Meridian with no right to return to classes or programs or a future right to apply to return. Conditions to which the adult student is subject will be stated in the written notification of outcome. Notation on the student’s transcript will not be made; however, a permanent record of the action will be maintained in the student’s record.

### ***Sexual Harassment may include the following sanctions on the student(s) found responsible:***

- **Restriction** – A limitation on a student’s privileges for a period of time and may include but not be limited to the denial of the use of facilities or access to parts of campus, denial of the right to represent technology center.
- **Service Project** – Community service or an education class or project beneficial to the individual and campus or community.

- **Behavioral Change Requirement** – Required activities including but not limited to, seeking academic counseling, substance abuse assessment, decision making class, writing a reflection paper, etc.
- **Probation** – Students are prohibited from participating in or holding leadership positions in any extracurricular activities not directly associated with academics (e.g., Skills USA, tech demonstration events, student organizations/clubs/associations, or other sanctioned events or competitions). Students must apply to be removed from probation by submitting documentation of their significant active efforts to become good citizens of the community and engage in responsible, productive behavior.
- **Suspension** – If warranted by the severity of the incident, removal from classes, programs, and other privileges or activities for a definite period of time not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which the incident occurred and the following semester, if a secondary student, and for a longer period of time, if an adult student, and until the conditions which are set forth in the hearing outcome letter are met. Students who are suspended or removed from technology center are not permitted on campus or in campus buildings, facilities or activities at any time for any reason during the period of suspension or removal, unless otherwise directed by a Director of Instruction. Conditions to conclude a suspension or removal and reinstatement process will be stated in the written notification. Notation on the student’s transcript will not be made; however, a permanent record of the action will be maintained in the student’s record.
- **Removal** – If warranted by the severity of the incident, adult students may be removed from Meridian with no right to return to classes or programs or a future right to apply to return. Conditions to which the adult student is subject will be stated in the written notification of outcome. Notation on the student’s transcript will not be made; however, a permanent record of the action will be maintained in the student’s record.

***Sexual Violence may include the following sanction on the student(s) found responsible:***

- **Long-term Suspension or removal** – Suspension of student status for an indefinite period not to exceed the maximum period permitted by law. Secondary students may only be suspended for the rest of the current semester and the succeeding semester; adult students may be suspended for a period to be determined or may be removed from the technology center with no right to return. The conditions for readmission, if any, shall be stated in the hearing outcome letter. In addition, a student, though readmitted to the district by operation of law, may be denied the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities for as long as the student is enrolled in the technology center. Notation on the student’s transcript will not be made; however, a permanent record of the action will be maintained in the student’s record. Removal should be reserved and used only in cases involving the most severe instances of misconduct.
  - Both parties will be notified of the outcome in writing at the same time by certified mail or other agreed upon form of notice within five business days after the hearing. Both parties have the right to appeal the decision reached through the hearing process within five days after receipt of the hearing decision.

**Appeal Procedures**

An appeal is not a new hearing, but is a review of the record of the original hearing. It serves as a procedural safeguard for the student or other party. The burden of proof shifts from Meridian to the party found responsible for the policy violation.

The appealing party must show one or more of the listed grounds for an appeal:

A. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within five (5) school days of receiving the decision. Failure to file an appeal within the prescribed time constitutes a waiver of any right to an appeal.

B. The appeal must cite at least one of the following criteria as the reason for appeal and include supporting argument(s):

1. The original hearing was not conducted in conformity with prescribed procedures and substantial prejudice to the complainant or the respondent resulted.
2. The evidence presented at the previous hearing was not “sufficient” to justify a decision against the student or group.
3. New evidence which could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing has been discovered since the hearing. The evidence must not have been available at the time of the original hearing. Failure to present information that was available is not grounds for an appeal.
4. The sanction is not appropriate for the violation. This provision is intended to be utilized when a determined sanction is inherently inconsistent with Meridian procedures or precedent. Simple dissatisfaction with a sanction is not grounds for overturning a sanction under this provision.

C. The Superintendent will review the record of the original hearing, including documentary evidence. It is the Superintendent’s discretion to convert any sanction imposed to a lesser sanction, to rescind any previous sanction, or to return a recommended sanction to the original hearing officer for review/or reconsideration. If there is new evidence (unavailable at the time of the hearing through no fault of the parties) which is believed to substantially affect the outcome, or evidence presented at the previous hearing was “insufficient” to justify a decision against the student or group, or a finding that a substantial procedural error resulting in prejudice occurred, the matter may be remanded to either a rehearing of the entire matter or reconsideration of specific issues. If remanded to the original hearing officer, either or both students may appeal the hearing officer’s decision to the Superintendent and the procedures set out above shall control the appeal.

D. The final decision will be communicated in writing by the Superintendent to both parties. The decision will be communicated within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the hearing officer’s decision.

E. The decision of the Superintendent on appeal shall be final.

### **Retaliation**

The Federal civil rights laws, including Title IX, make it unlawful to retaliate against an individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by these laws. This means that if an individual brings concerns about possible civil rights problems to a technology center’s attention, including publicly opposing sexual harassment or filing a sexual harassment complaint with Meridian Technology Center or any State or Federal agency, it is unlawful for Meridian to retaliate against that individual for doing so. It is also unlawful to retaliate against an individual because he or she testified, or participated in any manner, in an OCR or technology center’s investigation or proceeding. Therefore, if a student, parent, instructor, sponsor, administrator, or other individual complains formally or informally about sexual harassment or participates in an OCR or Meridian investigation or proceedings related to sexual harassment, the technology center is prohibited from retaliating (including intimidating, threatening, coercing, or in any way discriminating against the individual) because of the individual’s complaint or participation.

Individuals who, apart from official associations with Meridian, engage in retaliatory activities will also be subject to technology center's policies insofar as they are applicable to third party actions.

Meridian Technology Center will take steps to prevent retaliation against a student who filed a complaint on his or her own behalf or reported on behalf of another student, or against those who provided information as witnesses. Complaints of retaliation will follow the same process of investigation, hearing, and appeal.

If it is determined under the preponderance of evidentiary standard (more likely than not to have occurred) that a student is responsible for retaliation the following sanction will be imposed:

- Suspension or Removal:

Removal from classes and other privileges or activities for a definite period of time not to exceed the maximum period permitted by law and until the conditions which are set forth in the hearing outcome letter are met. Suspension of secondary students is limited to the current and succeeding semester; adult students may be suspended for a designated period of time or removed from the district with no right to return to a district program.

Students who are suspended or removed from Meridian are not permitted on campus or in campus buildings, facilities or activities at any time for any reason during the period of suspension, unless otherwise directed by a Director of Instruction. Conditions applicable to the suspension, removal or reinstatement process will be stated in the written notification. Notation on the transcript is not made; however, a permanent record of the action is maintained in the student's record.

### **Technology Center Officers and Designees**

The designation of a Meridian Technology Center official responsible for prescribed actions shall automatically include the official's designee in instances where an official is unable, unavailable or it appears that the official may have a conflict of interest that causes the official to recuse from involvement in the matter. The official's designee shall have the same authority as the official in matters involving this policy. In connection with an appeal the Superintendent may appoint a neutral individual, not employed by Meridian, to consider and decide the appeal.

### **Recordkeeping Protocol**

Meridian will document all reports and complaints of sex discrimination and provide copies of those reports to the Title IX Coordinator. The technology center Title IX Office will maintain a secured electronic file system of all Title IX cases, reports, and complaints by academic year. The cases will include all information related to the individual case, which includes but is not limited to the initial complaint, letters sent to all parties, response from the respondent, immediate or other assistance, investigation notes, informal resolution agreement (if applicable), notice of hearing, committee selection, hearing notes, hearing decision, written notice of the outcome, and any recordings made of the live hearing or in the course of the investigation. The time period to maintain the case records will be no less than 7 years from the date of Meridian's final action or decision (whether through report of the investigation, informal resolution, hearing, or appeal). The confidential reporting of the number of incidents and types will be sent to Meridian Security for the preparation of the Annual Crimes Report.

### **Prevention and Education**

#### **A. Education**

- Meridian Technology Center requires all employees to take sexual harassment educational training courses on an annual basis. Failure to have a confirmation of this required training may result in appropriate disciplinary action. Additional in-person trainings are also offered periodically and upon request.

## B. Bystander Intervention

- If you witness sexual harassment, or behaviors that may lead to sexual harassment (both of which are violations of technology center policy), there are a variety of things you can do as a bystander:

- Divert the intended victim (e.g., “help me—I am sick and need help fast—hurry!”)
- Distract the perpetrator (e.g., “looks like that car is being towed and a police officer is on the way”; “Those 3 guys are headed this way”; Yell, “over here—they are over here!”)
- Delegate to a person of authority (e.g., if at a party let a friend, parent, or other adult know of the situation in explicit terms; always have one of your group designated as a non-drinker for the evening, and trust that person to make good decisions)
- Direct, confront the perpetrator (e.g., “don’t speak to her in that voice; you are in big trouble; I saw you and so did that woman who is calling the police”)

## C. Risk Reduction Tips

- Risk reduction tips can often take a victim-blaming tone, even unintentionally. With no intention to blame victims, and with recognition that only those who commit sexual violence are responsible for those actions, these suggestions may nevertheless help you reduce your risk of experiencing a nonconsensual sexual act.
- Make your personal limits known as early as possible.
- Be aware of your alcohol or drug intake. Take affirmative responsibility for your alcohol intake/drug use and acknowledge that alcohol/drugs lower your sexual inhibitions and may make you vulnerable to someone who views a drunk or high person as a sexual opportunity.
- Never leave a party or event with a person you don’t know.
- Never consent to send another person a picture of any part of your body without clothing.
- Take care of your friends or colleagues and ask that they take care of you.
- Never leave a friend at a party or allow the friend to leave a party with someone not known to them. Contact trusted adults, friends or family members to intervene.
- If you suddenly feel very drunk, think about the possibility that you have been drugged and yell for help immediately.

## D. Potential Aggressor

- If you find yourself in the position of being the initiator of sexual behavior, you owe sexual respect to your potential partner. These suggestions may help you reduce your risk of being accused of sexual misconduct:
  - Clearly communicate your intentions to your sexual partner and give them a chance to clearly relate their intentions to you.
  - Understand and respect personal boundaries.
  - **DON’T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS** about consent; about age; about someone’s sexual availability; about whether they are attracted to you; about how far you can go; or about whether they are physically and/or mentally able to consent.
  - If there are any questions or ambiguity, then you **DO NOT** have consent.

- Remember that secondary students cannot consent to sexual behavior.

Mixed messages from your partner are a clear indication that you should stop, defuse any sexual tension, and communicate better. You may be misreading them. You must respect the boundaries for sexual behaviors.

- Don't take advantage of someone's drunkenness or drugged state, even if they did it to themselves.
- Realize that your potential partner could be intimidated by you, or fearful. You may have a power advantage simply because of your gender or size.
- Don't abuse that power. Understand that consent to one form of sexual behavior (e.g., kissing) does not automatically imply consent to other forms of sexual behavior.
- Silence and passivity cannot be interpreted as an indication of consent.
- Read your potential partner carefully, paying attention to verbal and non-verbal communication and body language.

### **Training**

Training on sexual misconduct: discrimination, harassment, and violence is included in Meridian's education program.

In-person training for student groups and students will be conducted through a variety of presentations, student orientation, and other means. In-person training for Active Bystander Intervention skills may include: on-going campus campaigns and information at a variety of events concerning this policy and appropriate behaviors, including specific intervention strategies. Informational websites and brochures devoted to educating students will be presented at prevention workshops.

Mandatory training for employees will be provided through in-person training on sexual misconduct: discrimination, harassment, and violence. Mandatory reporting will be emphasized through new employee orientations, periodic training opportunities and upon request. In-person training for Active Bystander Intervention skills may include: ongoing campus campaigns and information at a variety of events concerning the policy and appropriate behaviors; inclusion of information on the district's website; and brochures devoted to educating employees.

### Resources available to all of the technology center community:

Call Rape/Tulsa Rape Crisis-(918) 585-3143-provides confidential resources off-campus Tulsa Police Department-911 for emergencies; (918) 596-9222 for non-emergencies Tulsa 211 Helpline - (918) 836-4357

Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (405)524-0700-provides confidential resources off campus

Oklahoma Safeline - (800) 522-7233 – provides confidential resources off campus

### Local Support Services:

The Saville Center – 405.377.5670

Payne County Youth Services – 405.377.3380

Wings of Hope Family Crisis Services – 405.372.9922

## **Free Speech and Academic Freedom**

Members of the Meridian Technology Center community enjoy significant free speech protections guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. This policy is intended to protect members of the Meridian community from discrimination and is not designed to regulate protected speech. No provision of this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit conduct that is legitimately related to course content, teaching methods, scholarship, or public commentary of an individual faculty member or the educational, political, artistic or literary expression of students in classrooms and public forums. However, freedom of speech and academic freedom are not limitless and do not protect speech or expressive conduct that violates federal or state antidiscrimination laws.

## **Availability of other Complaint Procedures**

In addition to seeking criminal charges through local law enforcement, members of the technology center community may also file complaints with the following entities regardless of whether they choose to file a complaint under this procedure:

Office for Civil Rights

400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-1100

Customer Service Hotline: (800) 421-3481 Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Office for Civil Rights:

Kansas City Field Office: [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov), (816) 268-0550; Washington D.C.: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)  
1-800-421-3481

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Oklahoma City Field Office: 1-800-669-4000; Washington D.C.: 1-800-669-4000, [Eeoc.gov/contact](http://Eeoc.gov/contact)

## **Distribution**

The technology center shall: prominently display on its website the required contact information for the Title IX Coordinator; post training materials used to train Title IX Coordinators and related Title IX Officials, Investigators, and Hearing Officers on its website; and notify applicants for employment, parents or legal guardians of secondary school students, and employee organizations—of the name or title, office address, electronic mail address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (I-455-A)**

#### **(Secondary Students - Parent Bill of Rights)**

The board supports parents' efforts to be involved in Meridian's education programs. This policy outlines Meridian's efforts to educate parents and support parent involvement in response to the 2014 Parents' Bill of Rights.

Parents have the right be involved in their minor child's education, including directing that education. Parents are encouraged to exercise their rights in conjunction with Meridian's guidance so as not to inadvertently impede their minor child's compliance with federal and state mandated requirements – including requirements related to graduation or program completion. Parents also have the right to review school records related to their minor child.

Parents generally have the right to consent prior to an audio or video recording being made of their minor child. This right does not preempt Meridian's right to make recordings (without specific parental approval) related to:

- safety, general order and discipline
- academic or extracurricular activities
- classroom instruction
- security/surveillance of the buildings or grounds
- photo ID cards

Parents have the right to receive prompt notice if their minor child is believed to be the victim of a crime perpetrated by someone other than the parent, unless law enforcement or DHS officials have determined that parental notification would impede the related investigation. These notice provisions do not apply to matters that involve routine misconduct typically addressed through student discipline procedures.

School personnel will not attempt to encourage or coerce a child to withhold information from parents.

1. Meridian will promote parent participation with the goal of improving parent and teacher cooperation in areas such as homework, attendance and discipline. This will be accomplished through activities such as:

- Parent teacher conferences
- Back to school / meet the teacher nights
- School sponsored webpages.

2. Meridian will inform parents about their child's course of study by disseminating this information:

- During annual enrollment
- In student handbooks
- On the district's webpage

Parents may review learning materials affecting their minor children's course of study, including supplemental materials, by making a request through the campus director.

3. Parents who object to a learning material or activity may withdraw their minor child from the class or program in which the material is used. In order to withdraw a student, the parent must submit a written request, signed and dated by a parent, to the Career Planning Center, Executive Director. Parents who choose to withdraw their minor child from a class are responsible for making alternate arrangements for the child to earn credit for the work missed.

4. If a teacher is going to provide instruction or presentations regarding sexuality in a course, the teacher will send written notice home to parents five days in advance of the presentation. Parents who object to their minor child's participation in such instruction may send a written request to the Director of Instruction to have the student excused from the presentation. Any such student will be permitted to study in the office during the presentation. It should be noted, however, that curriculum in health-related programs includes instruction in human anatomy, reproduction, etc. Notices will not be sent to parents when these topics are a regular part of the course curriculum.

5. Parents may learn about the nature and purpose of clubs and activities which are part of Meridian’s curriculum by reviewing student handbooks and the technology center’s website. The school’s extracurricular clubs and activities are also published in student handbooks, the policy manual, and are available on the district’s website.
6. Parents have numerous rights and decision-making responsibilities concerning their minor children. To assist parents in meeting these responsibilities and to fulfill its obligations under the 2014 Parent Bill of Rights, the district has compiled the following information for parents:
- A. Meridian does not provide sex education but relies on sending schools to meet this requirement. Parents may opt their student out of the relevant program by following the procedures established by the sending district.
  - B. Parents who are not residents of the Meridian district may enroll their minor children in accordance with board policy. A copy of that policy is available in the superintendent’s office.
  - C. The district utilizes a number of resources to educate students. Parents who object to an assignment based on sex, morality or religion may opt their minor child out of the assignment by following the procedures established in item 3 above.
  - D. A minor students is are generally required to have (1) a current, up-to-date immunization record OR (2) a completed and signed state-approved exemption form. Either the up-to-date immunization record or a completed and signed state-approved exemption form must be on file with the district prior to the student’s admission to the district. The exemption form shall specify that the student has received or is in the process of receiving the immunizations currently required by Oklahoma State Department of Health regulations, unless the exemption has been granted from the immunizations on medical, religious, or personal grounds or as otherwise required by law. The immunization requirements shall be posted at the district’s website and in any notice or publication provided to parents/guardians regarding immunizations. The state-approved exemption form is available at the Oklahoma State Department of Health website, URL: <https://oklahoma.gov/health.html>.
  - E. Students are required to meet certain obligations in order to be promoted to a subsequent grade at their sending school, particularly with regard to learning to read. Parents can learn about those requirements – including efforts the sending district takes in order to help students become successful readers – by reviewing the sending district’s policies on Reading Sufficiency Act testing, and student promotion. Copies of those policies are available from the sending district.
  - F. Students are required to meet certain obligations in order to graduate from high school and/or complete Meridian’s course of study. Parents can learn about these requirements each year during course enrollment or by talking with a Meridian enrollment counselor.
  - G. Meridian does not provide AIDS education but instead relies on the sending school to complete this task. Parents may opt their minor student out of this education by following the procedures established by their child’s sending school.
  - H. Parents have the right to review student test results related to their minor student. Parents may review the results of classroom exams by contacting their child’s teacher. Parents may review the results of statewide testing at the child’s sending school by following the procedures established by their child’s sending school.
  - I. Qualifying students have the right to participate in their sending school’s gifted and talented program in accordance with the sending district’s policy regarding the program. A copy of the policy is available through the sending district.
  - J. Parents have the right to review teachers’ manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary instructional material if the materials are being used in connection with a research or

experimentation program or project. In order to review these materials, the parent should contact the Director of Instruction.

K. Parents have the right to receive a school report card related to their child's sending school. Information regarding these report cards will be provided through the sending district.

L. Students are required to attend school regularly, and Meridian will notify parents of any student absence unless the parent has already contacted the technology center to report the absence. Meridian will send a written notice to parents if their minor student appears to be in danger of exceeding the maximum allowable number of absences. Parents may contact the Career Planning Center for additional information regarding student absences.

M. Parents have the right to review Meridian's courses of study and textbooks. Arrangements for this review can be made through the Director of Instruction.

N. Students may be excused from school for religious purposes provided the parent contacts the Career Planning Center to request such an absence.

O. Parents have the right to review all Meridian's policies, including parental involvement policies. Copies of these policies are available through the superintendent's office.

P. Parents have the right to participate in parent-teacher organizations through their child's sending school. Information regarding these groups will be made available through the sending school.

Q. Parents may opt out of selected data collection related to state longitudinal student data system reporting. Parents may not opt out of necessary and essential record collecting. Parents may file an opt-out request through the superintendent's office.

R. Meridian will not procure, solicit to perform, arrange for the performance of, perform surgical procedures or perform a physical examination upon a minor student or prescribe any prescription drugs to a minor student without first obtaining a written consent for the proposed assessment or treatment. The written consent will be effective for the school year for which it was granted, and must be renewed each subsequent school year. If the assessment or treatment for which the written consent is provided is performed through telemedicine at a school site, and if the written consent is provided by the Parent and is currently effective, the health professional shall not be required to verify that the parent is at the school site.

S. Meridian will not procure, solicit to perform, arrange of the performance of or perform an assessment for mental health therapy on a minor student without first obtaining consent of a parent or legal guardian of the minor. The written consent will be effective for the school year for which it was granted, and must be renewed each subsequent school year. If the assessment or treatment for which the written consent is provided is performed through telemedicine at a school site, and if the written consent is provided by the Parent and is currently effective, the health professional shall not be required to verify that the parent is at the school site. However, a student shall not be seen without consent.

T. A student shall not be vaccinated at school or on school grounds or receive a vaccine as part of the mobile vaccination effort without prior written authorization, including the signature of the parent or legal guardian of the student for the vaccine or group of vaccines to be administered during a single visit.

Parents requesting information outlined in this policy should submit written requests for information through the Director of Instruction, Executive Director, Career Planning Center or Superintendent, as noted in the respective section. Appropriate school personnel will either make the information available or provide a written explanation of why the information is being withheld within ten (10) days of the request. Any parent whose request is denied or who does not receive a response within fifteen (15) days may submit a written request for the information

to the board of education. The board will include an item on its next public meeting agenda (or the following meeting, if time does not permit inclusion of the item on the agenda) to allow the board to formally consider the parent's request.

## **REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL (I-455-B)**

In order to promote transparency in the education process, Meridian Technology Center's instructional materials will be available for review by parents of minor children. Instructional materials include items such as teacher manuals, films, tapes and other supplementary materials regardless of format.

In order to review these materials, a parent should submit a written request to the campus director. The request must specify the class/subject, teacher, student's name, and the types of items being requested for review. Within ten (10) days the campus director will arrange for a mutually convenient time for the review or will notify the parent that a review cannot be permitted. If the campus director declines to allow a parent to review the materials, the director will provide the parent with an explanation of why the material is not available. All reviews will be conducted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the superintendent's office. Instructional materials may not be removed from the superintendent's office.

In the event the requested review is denied or after 15 days with no response from the campus director, the parent may request this information through the board of education in accordance with the technology center's policy regarding parent rights.

## **USE OF COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (I-423-B)**

Meridian Technology Center encourages the use of electronic communication equipment and services, such as the Internet, for instructional, education, research, and administrative purposes. Meridian Technology Center owns and operates the computing and electronic communication equipment and software and is therefore responsible for its proper use and maintenance.

### ***Personal Responsibility***

Persons using Meridian Technology Center computing and electronic communication facilities and services bear the primary responsibility for the material that they choose to access, send or display. Meridian Technology Center cannot protect individuals against the existence or receipt of material that may offend them. Persons who make use of the facilities and services are warned that they may unwillingly come across, or be recipients of, material that they may find offensive.

### ***Acceptable Use***

Persons using Meridian Technology Center computing and electronic facilities and services are expected to demonstrate good taste and sensitivity to others in their communications. Employees must not use profanity, obscenities, or derogatory remarks in electronic mail messages discussing employees, students, patrons, clients, competitors, or others. Such remarks should not even be made in jest. Meridian Technology Center's computer and communications systems are not intended to be used for, and must not be used for, the exercise of the employee's right to free speech. Sexual, ethnic, and racial harassment, including unwanted telephone calls, electronic mail, and internal mail, is strictly prohibited and cause for disciplinary action.

Meridian Technology Center employees are encouraged not to respond directly to the originator of offensive electronic mail messages, telephone calls, and/or other communications and to report such communications to their supervisor. Students also should refrain from responding to offensive messages and should report questionable communications to their instructor. If for any reason the recipient of harassing or offensive material is uncomfortable reporting the incident to his or her supervisor, or is (for any reason) precluded from doing so, it should be promptly reported to the Director of Human Resources or to the Superintendent/CEO or designee ("Superintendent"). It is also a violation of policy to access and view materials in a manner which would create a hostile working and/or educational environment.

### ***Business Use / Permitted Personal Use - Limited***

Generally, electronic communication equipment and services must be used only for business activities. Incidental personal use is permissible as long as it:

- a. does not consume more than a trivial amount of resources,
- b. does not interfere with employee productivity, and
- c. does not preempt any business activity.

An example of limited permissible personal use would be to confirm an appointment, acknowledge receipt of an invitation, or to advise a sender that you are not permitted to use Meridian Technology Center's electronic and computing resources for personal matters. Users are forbidden from using Meridian Technology Center's electronic communication equipment and services for charitable endeavors, private business activity, or amusement/entertainment purposes. Furthermore, employees are reminded that the use of Meridian Technology Center's technology resources, including electronic mail and Internet, should never create the appearance of inappropriate use.

### ***Privilege of Use***

Use of the Internet is a privilege, which may be revoked for inappropriate use or conduct. Persons who violate applicable federal or state law, or Meridian Technology Center policy, shall be required to cease those activities and will also be subject to the suspension or revocation of use privileges, or any other Meridian Technology Center disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.

### ***Inappropriate Conduct***

Inappropriate conduct in using the Internet shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Unlawful or malicious activities
2. Proprietary purposes
3. Misrepresentation of any kind
4. Chain letters or overly broad mass mailings or postings not approved by the Technology Center
5. Using abusive or harassing language or symbols
6. Congesting or disrupting networks and systems
7. Embarrassing, denigrating, or libeling any individual or organization
8. Implying Technology Center endorsement of commercial products not its own
9. Viewing, allowing to be viewed, or transmitting pictures or word descriptions of an erotic, sexual, sadistic, or masochistic nature, or providing information on where such can be accessed.

### ***Supervisory Responsibility***

Any supervisor who condones or allows any of the above conduct, whether willfully, intentionally, or through negligence shall be considered to have violated this policy and shall be subject to the same discipline as authorized above.

### ***No Right of Privacy***

Employees do not have a right of privacy with respect to the use of electronic communications. The content of electronic mail may be monitored and the usage may be monitored to support operational, maintenance, auditing, security, investigative activities, and otherwise to ensure proper use of electronic communications. Employees should structure their communications in recognition of the fact that Meridian Technology Center will, from time to time, examine the content of electronic communications. No employee should have any expectation of privacy with respect to the use of Meridian Technology Center's electronic communication systems.

### ***Limitation of Liability***

Meridian Technology Center will not be responsible for any damages suffered through the use of the Internet, or any other electronic communication facility or service. Meridian Technology Center specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its facilities and services, due to the nature of and range of accessible sites and materials.

## **INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY SAFETY (I-423)**

It is the policy of Meridian Technology Center to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic or digital communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 U.S.C. §254(h)] and Oklahoma law [Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 11-202].

### **Access to Inappropriate Material**

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet Filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet (or other forms of electronic or digital communications) access to inappropriate information. Specifically, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

### **Inappropriate Network Usage**

Any individual who uses Meridian Technology Center's resources to access the Internet or engage in any electronic or digital communication is required to participate in Meridian's education efforts (undertaken pursuant to the Children's Internet Protection Act) and comply with Meridian's acceptable use policy.

### **Supervision and Monitoring**

All employees are responsible for supervising and monitoring minor student's use of the Internet in accordance with Meridian's policies, the Children's Internet Protection Act, and Oklahoma law. Meridian's IT director shall establish and implement procedures regarding technology protection measures. No individual will be permitted to use Meridian's resources in a manner inconsistent with Meridian's policies.

### Personal Safety

Employees and students shall not use the school's technology resources in any manner that jeopardizes personal safety. Students and employees must follow Meridian Technology Center's policies, including the acceptable use policy which details Meridian's safe use standards.

### Certification and Verification

Meridian shall provide certification, pursuant to the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act, to document the technology center's adoption and enforcement of its Internet and Technology Safety Policy, including the operation and enforcement of technology protection measures for all technology center computers with Internet access. Meridian shall also obtain verification from any provider of digital or online library database resources that all the resources they provide to the technology center are in compliance with Oklahoma law and the technology center's Internet and Technology Safety Policy. If any provider of digital or online library resources fails to comply, Meridian shall withhold payment, pending verification of compliance. If any provider of digital or online library resources fails to timely verify compliance, Meridian shall consider the provider's act of noncompliance a breach of contract.

### Reporting

No later than December 1 of each year, Oklahoma law provides that libraries shall submit to the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives and President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate an aggregate written report on any issues related to provider compliance with Internet technology measures as required under Oklahoma law.

### Employee Liability

Employees of Meridian Technology Center shall not be exempt from prosecution for willful violations of state law prohibiting indecent exposure to obscene material or child pornography as provided under Oklahoma law [Okla. Stat. tit. 21, § 1021].

## **INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS SAFETY AND APPROPRIATE USE (I-423-C)**

### ***STUDENT COMPUTER INTERNET ACCESS AGREEMENT (I-423-C8)***

For students, this means any action permitted by Meridian's policy on student behavior. For employees, this means any action permitted by law, including termination of employment.

### ***Education of Students Regarding Appropriate Online Behavior***

In compliance with the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Section 254(h)(5), Meridian provides education to minors about the appropriate use of Meridian's electronic resources, including interacting with others on social networking and chat sites, and cyber bullying. As a part of that education, guidelines on cyber bullying and Internet safety for students are attached to this policy.

### ***Cyber Bullying and Internet Safety Fact Sheet***

People can be bullied in lots of ways, including through cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is when someone sends or posts things (words, pictures, recordings) that are mean, embarrassing or make people feel scared, embarrassed or uncomfortable. Even if they don't do this at school sometimes cyber bullying makes things at school hard. No student is allowed to disrupt school through cyber bullying.

Cyber bullies work in lots of ways, but here's some of their most common:

- Send or post mean messages
- Make up websites or accounts with stories, cartoons, pictures or "jokes" that are mean to others
- Take embarrassing pictures or recordings (without asking first)
- Send or post stuff to embarrass others
- Hack into other people's accounts or read their stuff
- Hack into other people's accounts and send or post their private stuff
- Pretend to be somebody else to get someone to give them private info
- Send threats
- If you're a cyber bully knock it off! Ask your principal/counselor how you can make things right.
- If someone is cyber bullying you, there's something you can do about it:
- Don't respond to and don't ignore a cyber bully. Instead, tell an adult you trust. If cyber bullying follows you to school, tell your teacher or counselor.
- Even if what the bully does is embarrassing, don't delete it. Instead, get a copy so you can prove what happened.
- You can't always stop people from being mean, but there are ways to help yourself:
  - Don't give out your personal info in electronic or digital communications
  - Don't tell anyone but your parents what your login name, password or PIN number is
  - Don't post or send embarrassing pics or recordings (even on your own sites) - bullies love to copy your stuff
- Suggestions for Parents:
  - Talk to your child about understanding, preventing and responding to cyber bullying
  - Contact your student's school for help if you suspect your child is being cyber bullied – or if you suspect your child is engaging in cyber bullying

## **PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY (I-431-A)**

The Board of Education of Meridian Technology Center adopts this Policy Statement in connection with the Oklahoma Open Records Act (the "Act").

### ***Meridian Technology Center's Philosophy***

Meridian Technology Center (MTC), as a tax supported institution, recognizes that the public has a right to be fully informed concerning its operations. The board strongly believes that informed citizens are vital to the successful functioning of the democratic government process, which MTC desires to exemplify to its students.

In order to achieve these goals, the Board of Education hereby states that all records of MTC, except those records designated as confidential in this policy, or otherwise, as required by federal or state law, shall be open to any person for inspection, copying and/or mechanical reproduction during regular business hours. All persons requesting the right to inspect non-confidential records of MTC shall be accorded prompt access to those records.

### ***Request for records***

Requests for public records shall be made to the attention of the Superintendent or the records custodian. The request shall identify with specificity the record or records sought. Where the request for records is unclear or confusing, the records custodian may request that the requestor provide a more precise explanation or description of the records requested. MTC shall produce records requested promptly, taking into consideration the accessibility of the record, the number and type of records requested, and the press of Technology Center business.

A full copy of the Production of Public Records Policy, including a list of confidential records not available for inspection and a list of fees for records and search of records, is available at the Career Planning Center.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF FILE SHARING TECHNOLOGY (I-423-D)**

Employees and students may choose to use file sharing/storing technology (Google Docs, Ever Note, etc.) in connection with school learning or business. Individuals who choose to use such technology are required to follow all other district technology and acceptable use protocols, as well as adhere to the specific guidelines in this policy.

Individuals using file sharing/storing technology in connection with their association with Meridian Technology Center are expressly prohibited from using the technology in a malicious manner or in any way which violates this or other district policies.

Meridian Technology Center does not have agreements with any file sharing/storing technology providers. Individual users who utilize such technology in connection with the district specifically agree not to share or store files which contain:

- Malware, viruses, worms, etc.
- Information which is protected by FERPA or HIPAA
- Confidential information such as home addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, license numbers, dates of birth, and banking account numbers
- Disciplinary or grievance information
- Information about criminal investigations, including SRO records and notes
- Safety sensitive information, including building layouts, evacuation routes, crisis response plans, etc.
- Confidential or attorney client privileged information

Questions regarding whether information is acceptable for file sharing/storing technology should be directed to the Information System's Manager at SystemsStaff@meridiantech.edu. Any individual who discovers that information has been improperly shared or stored is required to promptly notify the Information Systems Manager of the violation. Individuals who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in district policies. (I-423-D2)

## **WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES—STUDENTS (I-354-A)**

It is Meridian Technology Center policy that students may possess wireless telecommunication devices while on technology center premises and while in transit under the authority of the technology center. The term wireless communication device includes but is not limited to cellular phones, mobile phones, VoIP, iPhones, smart phones, Internet phones or similar devices. Students will keep such devices turned off and out of sight during class time and during all technology center or technology center related activities unless authorized by a technology center staff member for educationally related uses. Students may only use wireless telecommunication services for non-instructional purposes before and after school and at lunch or during break periods. Likewise, students may have wireless telecommunication devices while attending a function sponsored or authorized by the technology center, subject to the same restrictions applicable to instructional periods.

Telecommunication devices shall be turned off and out-of-sight in locations deemed "private areas." "Private areas" include but are not limited to restrooms, changing rooms, and locker

rooms or similar areas. The use of audio/video recording and camera features is strictly prohibited in these areas. A student who witnesses a cell phone or other telecommunication device out in a "private area" shall immediately report this behavior to a teacher or administrator.

Meridian Technology Center has adopted policies regarding appropriate contact between staff and students via telecommunication devices and social networking sites. These policies are found at P353-A1, Wireless Telecommunication Devices (Employees). Students shall only engage in approved and authorized contact with technology center employees and shall report any inappropriate contact immediately.

Students found to be using any electronic communications device for any illegal purpose, in a manner violative of privacy, or to in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on tests or examinations, or to harass or intimidate students or staff members shall be subject to discipline and the device shall be confiscated and not returned until a parent conference has been held in the case of a secondary student or a student conference is held in the instance of an adult student. Using a phone for harassment purposes includes using a phone's features such as text or picture messaging, Internet uploading and downloading, camera, and/or audio/ visual recording features. Acts such as "upskirting" or "downblousing" are prohibited and are considered harassment of an individual. Students violating this policy will not be allowed to carry any personal communication device following the incident unless a genuine health emergency exists and may also be subject to removal from the technology center.

**WARNING: The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (commonly called texting, sexting, emailing, and other modes of electronic communication) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and inclusion on sexual offender registries.**

### ***SERVICE ANIMALS (I-457-A)***

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the use of service animals at Meridian Technology Center, including school buildings, school vehicles and other school property. Meridian acknowledges its responsibility to permit students and/or adults with disabilities to be accompanied by a service animal in its facilities and programs and intends to comply with all state and federal laws, rules and regulations regarding the use of service animals by technology center employees and students with disabilities.

#### ***Procedures/Requirements for Employees and Students***

The use of service animals by employees and students with disabilities is subject to the following procedures and requirements:

A. The employee or student will submit a notification of the intent to use a service animal to Meridian Technology Center's Executive Director of Career Planning and Career Development. The notification will identify whether the service animal is required because of the person's disability, and, if so, identify and describe the manner in which the service animal will meet the individual's particular need(s).

- B. Notifications for the use of service animals on Meridian’s property by an employee or student will, whenever possible, be made at least one week prior to the proposed use of the service animal.
- C. As part of Meridian’s consideration of the use of a service animal, Meridian may require certification of proper vaccinations verified by a veterinarian.
- D. Meridian’s review of use of a service animal may include consideration of a student’s IEP or Section 504 records. Meridian may also request a meeting with the employee or student.
- E. The use of a service animal on Meridian property may be subject to a plan that introduces the service animal to the school environment, any appropriate training for staff and students regarding interaction with the service animal, and other activities or conditions deemed necessary by Meridian. Meridian’s approval of the use of a service animal on Meridian property is subject to periodic review, revision, or revocation by Meridian administration.
- F. It is the responsibility of the employee or student who uses a service animal pursuant to this policy to serve as the handler or arrange for a third-party handler to provide proper handling of the service animal. Any cost incurred to handle the service animal will be the responsibility of the employee or student who uses the service animal.
- G. Service animals will be allowed in Meridian vehicles when:
1. The inclusion of the service animal is documented as required on Meridian Technology Center transportation forms; and
  2. The service animal is under the control of the handler at all times, including entering and exiting the vehicle.

### ***Liability***

An employee, visitor or service animal trainer accompanied by a service animal or service animal in training will be responsible for any damage to Meridian or personal property and any injuries to individuals caused by the animal. Individuals who uses a service animal on Meridian property will hold Meridian Technology Center harmless and indemnify Meridian from any such damages.

**For more information about the service animals’ policy, a full copy is available at the Career Planning Center.**

## **INCLEMENT AND SEVERE WEATHER**

The Superintendent will determine school closing due to inclement weather. Local radio and television stations will be notified as well as district high schools. Students will be informed of school closing via the automated notification system; this message will be sent per phone numbers currently in the student records.

## **EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES**

Instructors will review these procedures during class.

NOTE: If Meridian is in a lockdown situation, parents will not be allowed on campus.

## **SECURE CAMPUS PROCEDURES**

Instructors will review these procedures during class.

NOTE: If Meridian is in a secure situation, parents will not be able to enter campus buildings and students will not be allowed to leave campus buildings until the situation has been cleared.

## **FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Procedures can be found posted in the classroom, and instructors will review these procedures during class.

## **TORNADO SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Instructors will review these procedures during class.

NOTE: If Meridian is in a shelter situation due to a tornado warning, parents will not be allowed to check out their student(s).

## **CAMPUS SECURITY**

Campus crime statistics for Meridian Technology Center can be found at the US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education ([ope.ed.gov/security](http://ope.ed.gov/security)). From the home page: Click Get data for one institution/campus; Enter Meridian Technology; Click Main campus

## **INSURANCE (I-424-A)**

While the school will make every effort to prevent accidents and injuries, the nature of the training is such that the possibility of injury is greater than in a regular academic program. Students are requested to have personal insurance; Meridian Technology Center has information available for students to consider, from an independent company, regarding various levels of student accident insurance, which are offered for a nominal cost. Meridian Technology Center does not endorse any individual policy or company.

Meridian Technology Center has selected a student insurance plan from K&K Insurance so that we can make reliable coverage available to parents. Coverage may be purchased at any time during the school year by visiting [studentinsurance-kk.com](http://studentinsurance-kk.com).

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are provided for students in some areas of the school. It is the student's responsibility to see that his/her locker is kept locked and in order at all times. School combination locks are to be used.

## **MEDIA/MODEL RELEASE**

A student enrolled at Meridian Technology Center gives the school permission to utilize the student's photograph in promotional materials, media and informational publications, including requests from media outlets or outside organizations such as CareerTech, unless written notice is given to the Career Planning Center each school year that permission is withheld.

## **MOMENT OF SILENCE (I-450)**

The Oklahoma Legislature has directed that the Board of Education of each school district shall ensure that the public schools within the district shall observe approximately one minute of silence each day. The moment of silence shall be for the purpose of allowing each student, in the exercise of his or her individual choice, to reflect, meditate, pray, engage in any other silent activity that does not interfere with, distract, or impede other students in the exercise of their individual choices. Instructors shall neither encourage students to use nor discourage students

from using the moment of silence for any particular purpose, such as reflection, meditation, prayer, or other silent activity.

## **SEARCHES**

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to detain and search any student and any property in the student's possession while on school premises, at school activities, or in transit under the authority of the school, for any item in possession of the student which is illegal or prohibited by school rules, or for property believed to have been stolen from another student, an employee, or the school. A student who refuses to peaceably submit to a search based on reasonable suspicion or who refuses to turn over items discovered as a result of a search may be suspended for such refusals.

Students shall have no reasonable expectation of privacy from school administrators or instructors in regard to the contents of a school locker, desk, or other school property. School officials shall have access to (allowing for opening and examining) school lockers, desks, and other school property in order to properly supervise the welfare of pupils. The search may be conducted at any time and no reason shall be necessary for such search.

## **CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (I-419-A)**

An integral part of instruction in the courses offered at Meridian Technology Center is provided through membership in Business Professionals of America (BPA), SkillsUSA, Students of Radiologic Technology (SORT), HOSA-Future Health Professionals, and Family Career & Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). The student organization dues, applicable to the program for which a student is enrolled, will be paid by Meridian for the terms during which a student is enrolled. Therefore, students are encouraged to participate in the co-curricular activities in their program which provide an opportunity to develop leadership skills, as well as social experiences including teambuilding, fund-raising, project management and community service. Members will also have the opportunity to participate in local, district/regional, state, and national skill contests.

## **STUDENT CONTESTS (I-418-A)**

To provide students with the opportunity to exhibit skills, Meridian Technology Center holds a local competition during which students in each program compete to determine the most skilled in various aspects of the curriculum.

The highest placing students in the local contest, if they are a member of a CareerTech Student Organization (CTSO), will be sponsored by Meridian Technology Center to advance to district (when available) and/or state level competitions if they are provided by the CareerTech Student Organization they are a member of. For national-level competitions, only students placing FIRST in the state level competition will be sponsored by Meridian Technology Center to participate regardless of whether the state or national guidelines provide for students earning lesser places to compete. Any exception requires approval of the Superintendent/CEO. For the purpose of this policy, "sponsored by" means both the ability to register for the competition and financial support to participate.

Students who have qualified for competitions and are sponsored by Meridian Technology Center, even though they have graduated from Meridian Technology Center, will be considered a student for sponsored competitions and therefore required to adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the student handbook.

## **STUDENT DIVERSITY**

Information regarding Meridian Technology Center's diversity, including the percentage of enrolled and full-time students in the following categories: male, female, self-identified members of a major racial or ethnic group and Federal Grant recipients can be found at [https://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/col\\_info\\_popup.asp?ID=365480](https://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/col_info_popup.asp?ID=365480).

## **MISCELLANEOUS STUDENT POLICIES**

### ***TELEPHONE POLICY***

Each program simulates the workplace expectations for their training industry. Please reference class syllabus for specific guidelines related to cell phone use during class hours. Students will not be called out of class for phone calls or visitors unless there is an emergency.

### ***CLASS BREAKS***

Each class is provided with a 10-minute break both in the morning and the afternoon and as deemed appropriate for evening classes. This policy will remain in force as long as it is not abused. Since all classes are not on break simultaneously, students shall conduct themselves in a manner which is not disruptive.

### ***PERSONAL PROPERTY***

It is the responsibility of each individual to care for and safeguard personal belongings, and at no time is the school responsible for items lost or stolen.

### ***FOOD AND DRINKS***

Food and drinks are permitted in the common area but should be appropriately covered in the hallways. Each person is responsible for their part in disposing of litter. Each program simulates the workplace expectations for their training industry. Please reference class syllabus for specific guidelines related to food and drinks in the classrooms and shop areas.

### ***TEXTBOOK AND EQUIPMENT CARE (I-415-A)***

Students are responsible for the care of all school-owned property that has been assigned to their custody. If items are stolen, lost, or destroyed through irresponsible action, students will be charged the purchase price for replacement. Normal wear, tear, and damage are understandable in the educational process.

### ***TRANSPORTATION (I-435-A)***

While traveling in school transportation or in an individual vehicle (if permitted), each individual is expected to behave according to the rules and regulations of both the school and the state. Passengers who do not abide by these rules and regulations will be denied the opportunity to ride.

In the event that the administration of the school allows students to drive individual vehicles, all regulations must be followed pertaining to the safety and welfare of all concerned. Driving on campus is a privilege and your privileges can be revoked if you are found driving reckless, speeding, or putting other lives at risk. Objects displayed on a vehicle that impair the sight of the driver, such as flags, are not allowed.

The speed limit on campus is 20 miles per hour.

All vehicles should be locked after arriving. Damage and losses to personal vehicles will be at the risk of the owner. Students are not to remain in vehicles after parking on campus, return to their vehicle during breaks or move the vehicle after arriving on campus. Failure to abide by any rules set forth will result in the loss of driving privileges.

### ***MERIDIAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER POLICY UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT LAW (I-453-A)***

Meridian does not condone, and will not allow, violations of the United States copyright laws. Employees are expected to ensure that their actions comply with copyright law and to impress upon students the importance of compliance with copyright law.

#### ***Ownership of Copyrighted Works***

Copyright protection applies to original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression, from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated. Examples of copyrighted works include books, pictures, drawings, sound recordings, motion pictures, television shows, sheet music and scripts. In general, the copyright protections that apply to printed materials also apply to visual and digital formats.

#### ***Exclusive Rights of Copyright Holders***

Subject to certain specific exceptions, the owner of a copyright to a work has the exclusive right to reproduce, adapt, distribute, perform, or display the copyrighted work or to authorize such reproduction, adaptation, distribution, performance, or display.

#### ***Exceptions to Exclusive Rights***

The following exceptions may authorize the use of a copyright work without violating the exclusive rights of the copyright holder. Employees that reproduce, distribute, perform or display copyrighted works are responsible for ensuring that their planned use of a copyrighted work falls under one or more of the exceptions set forth below:

##### **A. Fair Use:**

The fair use of a copyrighted work for purposes of teaching, scholarship, or research is not an infringement of copyright.

The following factors shall be considered in determining fair use:

1. Purpose and nature of the use; whether the use is of a commercial nature or for non-profit educational purposes.
2. The nature of the copyrighted work.
3. The amount and importance of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted works as a whole.
4. The effect of the use upon the potential market for, or the value of, the copyrighted work.

The United States Copyright Office has published a regulatory guidance document entitled "Reproduction of Copyrighted Works by Educators," also known as "Circular 21," which sets forth a series of "safe harbor" rules providing that certain specific uses of copyrighted works are considered fair use. Circular 21 is available at the Copyright Office's website (<https://www.copyright.gov/circs/>). Employees should familiarize themselves with these rules and, to the extent doing so is feasible, use copyrighted works in ways that are consistent with the safe harbor requirements.

## B. Face-to-Face Teaching Activities:

- A further exception to the copyright law includes the performance or display of a work by instructors or students in the course of face-to-face teaching activities in a classroom or other place devoted to instruction.
- This exception does not apply to the performance/display of a copy of a motion picture or other audiovisual work that the person responsible for the performance/display knew or had reason to know was not lawfully made.

## C. Electronic Transmission During Distance Learning Class Sessions:

A further exception applies to the performance or display of a copyrighted work as a regular part of a class session conducted via distance learning if the following conditions are met:

1. The copyrighted material is directly related to and of material assistance to the teaching content of the class.
2. The amount of material provided is comparable to that typically displayed in a live classroom session. A performance of an entire nondramatic literary or musical work may also satisfy this requirement.
3. Students are provided with notice that materials distributed in the course may be subject to copyright protection.
4. The transmission of copyrighted material is limited to students enrolled in the class to the extent technologically feasible.
5. Copyrighted works are made available to students for a limited duration no longer than the class session. Students may not be permitted to retain a permanent copy of the material or to further disseminate it.
6. The instructor does not interfere with technological measures used by copyright owners to prevent unauthorized retention/dissemination of copyrighted works.
7. The technology center provides appropriate informational materials to faculty, students, and relevant staff members that accurately describe, and promote compliance with, the laws of the United States relating to copyright.

This exception does not apply to the conversion of print or other analog versions of works into digital formats unless: (1) no digital version of the work is available, or (2) the digital version employs technological protection measures that prevent its use.

This exception does not apply to the performance/display of a copy of a motion picture or other audiovisual work that the instructor knew or had reason to know was not lawfully made.

## D. Public Domain:

Works that are in the public domain are no longer under copyright protection or do not meet the requirements for copyright protection.

### ***Use of Copyrighted Works with Permission***

In order to obtain authorization to make use of a copyrighted work in a way that is not permitted by one or more of the exceptions detailed above, technology center employees may also seek to obtain permission for such use from the copyright holder.

A request for permission should include detailed information about the nature of the permission sought, including:

1. a specific description of the item to be copied (title, author, edition, page numbers, frames, excerpts, etc.),
2. the type of duplication and number of copies, and
3. plans for usage and distribution of copies and the frequency of use. Any permission received from a copyright owner for use of a work must be in writing.

### ***Copyright Infringement***

Unless an exception applies or appropriate permission has been obtained from the copyright holder, engaging in the reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of a copyrighted work constitutes unlawful copyright infringement, which may carry civil and/or criminal penalties.

Employees who engage in copyright infringement do so at their own risk, and assume all liabilities and responsibilities associated with such conduct, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***VACCINATIONS***

Meridian Technology Center does not have a vaccination policy. Secondary students from partner schools are required to follow the vaccination policy of their respective school districts. Students enrolled in Health Career majors or any other career major that requires vaccinations will be required to follow those guidelines to participate in the major.

### ***SAFETY DATA SHEETS/SDS***

Safety Data Sheets, or SDS, are readily available to students, guest, and employees. SDS includes information such as the properties of a chemical; the physical, health, and environmental health hazards; protective measures; and safety precautions for handling, storing, and transporting the chemical. It provides guidance for each specific chemical on things such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), first aid procedures and spill clean-up procedures. Access to SDS information through a central repository is available several ways on campus. Students may scan QR codes located throughout classrooms and shop areas, download the SDS/Chemical Management App by MSDS Online or click on the SDS icon located on the desktop of MTC computing equipment. Each way will allow immediate access to the user.

### ***ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO MINOR STUDENTS (I-445-A)***

#### ***Purpose***

The purpose of this policy is to identify when Meridian Technology Center personnel are authorized to administer medication to minor students, when minor students are authorized to self-medicate and how Meridian personnel will maintain, administer, monitor and dispose of minor student medication.

#### ***Policy***

Under Oklahoma law, a school nurse, an administrator or a designated district employee may administer prescription and nonprescription medications and assist in applying sunscreen to minor students. Only designated employees who have successfully completed specific training in the administration of nonprescription and prescription medications may administer medication to minor students with legitimate health needs.

Except as provided in this policy minor students may not retain possession of or self-administer any medicine. Violation of this rule will be reported to the minor student's parent and may result in discipline, including out-of-school suspension.

As further set out below, Meridian retains the discretion to reject requests for the administration of medication or application of sunscreen and to discontinue the administration of medication or application of sunscreen.

The parent must deliver the minor student's medicine to the technology center administrator in its original container with the parent's written authorization for administration of the medicine. Sunscreen for application by a school nurse must be delivered to the school nurse or technology center administrator in its original container with the parent's written authorization for application of sunscreen. The parent's authorization for either medicine or sunscreen must identify the minor student, the medicine or sunscreen, and include or refer to the label for instructions on administration of the medicine. The administrator or a designated employee will administer the medicine to the minor student or assist the minor student in applying sunscreen pursuant to the parent's instructions and the directions for use on the label or in the physician's prescription. The parent must complete a new authorization form annually and for each change of medication or sunscreen. Meridian will maintain the authorization form as a part of the minor student's health record. Authorization forms will be available in the Career Planning Center. A parent who chooses to do so may come to Meridian and personally dispense medication or apply sunscreen to the minor student.

The administration of each campus will keep a record of the minor students to whom medicine is administered or sunscreen is applied, the date of administration or application, the person who administered the medicine or applied the sunscreen and the name or type of medicine or sunscreen administered.

Medications and sunscreen will be stored in a separate locked drawer or cabinet that is readily accessible only to the persons who will administer the medication or sunscreen. Medications requiring refrigeration will be refrigerated in a secure area.

Any person administering medicine or applying sunscreen to a minor student will participate in training by October 1 of each year conducted by a school nurse or other health care professional. The training will include:

- Review of state statutes and technology center rules and regulations (including this policy) regarding administration of medication by technology center personnel
- Procedures for administration, documentation, handling and storage of medication and sunscreen
- Medication needs of specific minor students, desired effects, potential side effects, adverse reactions and other observations

Only those persons who successfully complete the training are authorized to administer medication or apply sunscreen. Each campus site will maintain a current list of those authorized to administer medication and apply sunscreen at that site.

Minor students who are able to self-administer specific medications, such as inhaled asthma medication, anaphylaxis medication, replacement pancreatic enzymes, or use specialized equipment, such as an inhaler or Epinephrine injector, may do so provided such medication and specialized equipment are transported and maintained under the minor students' control in compliance with the following rules:

- A licensed physician or dentist must provide a written order that the minor student has a particular medical condition (asthma, anaphylaxis, cystic fibrosis, etc.), is capable of and has been instructed in the proper method of self-administration of medication. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the physician and have the physician complete and return the required order.
- The parent must provide a written authorization for self-administration of medication.
- Parents who elect self-administration understand and agree that Meridian, its agents and employees, shall incur no liability for any adverse reaction or injury the minor student suffers as a result of self-administration of medication and/or use of specialized equipment.
- The written authorization will terminate at the end of the technology center year and must be renewed annually.
- If the parent and physician authorize self-medication, Meridian is not responsible for safeguarding the minor students' medications or specialized equipment.
- Minor students who self-medicate are prohibited from sharing or playing with their medication or special equipment. If a minor student engages in these activities the parent will be contacted and a conference will be scheduled with the parent, minor student, nurse and other appropriate persons.
- Minor students will not be allowed to self-administer:
  - Narcotics
  - Prescription pain killers
  - Medication used to treat ADD/ADHD or other psychological or behavior disorders
  - Other medication hereafter designated in writing by the technology center
- Except as otherwise provided by an individual minor student's technology center health plan, minor students may self-administer non-diabetes and non-anaphylaxis-related injectables only in the Career Planning Center in the presence of authorized technology center personnel.
- Minor students who self-medicate are encouraged to wear Medic Alert bracelets or necklaces.
- The parent will provide an emergency supply of a minor student's inhaled asthma medication or anaphylaxis medication or replacement pancreatic enzymes to be administered by technology center personnel, as required by state law.

Minor students who are able to self-apply sunscreen may do so provided such sunscreen is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. Minor students may self-apply sunscreen without the written authorization of a parent, legal guardian or physician. All students are permitted to possess sunscreen that is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.

### ***Nonprescription Medication***

Meridian Technology Center staff will only administer nonprescription medication with the parent's written authorization and according to label directions or written instructions from the minor student's physician.

The medication must be in the original container that indicates:

- Minor student name (affixed to the container)
- Ingredients
- Expiration date
- Dosage and frequency
- Administration route, i.e., oral, drops, etc.
- Other directions as appropriate

Meridian staff will only administer aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) and products containing salicylic acid with written instructions from the minor student's physician. The parent must provide and maintain a supply of nonprescription medication for the minor student.

### ***Prescription Medication***

Meridian Technology Center staff will only administer prescription medication with written authorization and instructions.

Prescription medication must be in the original container that indicates:

- Minor student name
- Name and strength of medication and expiration date
- Dosage and directions for administration
- Name of the licensed physician or dentist
- Date, name, address and phone number of the pharmacy

The parent must provide and maintain the supply of prescription medication for the minor student.

The parent must reclaim any remaining medication by the last official day of the technology center closing or within seven days after the prescribing physician discontinues the medication. The designated employee will destroy in a nonrecoverable fashion in the presence of a witness any medication not timely reclaimed.

The person who destroys the medication will record the following information:

- Date of destruction
- Time of destruction
- Name and quantity of medication destroyed
- Manner of destruction of medication

Any and all controlled substances will be destroyed according to state law.

The designated employee will advise the Executive Director, Career Planning Center if discontinuance of medication to a minor student is appropriate and assist in informing the parent.

Legitimate reasons for discontinuing administration of medication include, but are not limited to the following:

- A legitimate lack of space or facility to adequately store specific medication
- Lack of cooperation by the minor student, parent and/or prescribing doctor
- An unexpected and/or adverse medical reaction to the medication at technology center, i.e., mood change, allergic reaction, etc., considered to be harmful to the health and well-being of the minor student
- Any apparent change in the medication's appearance, odor, or other characteristics that raise reasonable doubts about the quality of the medication
- The medication expiration date has passed

### ***Seizure-Rescue Medication (Seizure-Safe Schools Act)***

Beginning January 1, 2022, every technology center site that has a student enrolled who (1) has a seizure disorder and (2) has a seizure rescue medication or other medication prescribed to treat seizure disorder symptoms approved by the Food and Drug Administration and any successor agency that is prescribed by the student's health care provider, the technology center shall have at least one employee who has met the training requirements necessary to (1) administer or assist with the self-administration of seizure medication, and (2) recognize the signs and symptoms of

seizures and the appropriate steps to be taken to respond to these symptoms. For purposes of this training, the technology center is permitted by law to use any adequate and appropriate training programs or guidelines for training of technology center personnel in the seizure disorder care tasks covered under this policy.

Before a seizure rescue medication can be administered to a student to treat seizure disorder symptoms, the student's parent or legal guardian shall do the following:

A. Provide the technology center with **written authorization** to administer the medication at the technology center

B. Provide a **written statement** from the student's health care provider that shall contain the following information:

- the student's name
- the name and purpose of the medication
- the prescribed dosage
- the route of administration
- the frequency that the medication may be administered
- the circumstances under which the medication may be administered

C. Provide the **prescribed medication** to the technology center in its unopened, sealed package with the label affixed by the dispensing pharmacy; and

D. Collaborate with technology center personnel to create a "**seizure action plan**," which means a written, individualized health plan designed to acknowledge and prepare for the health care needs of a student diagnosed with a seizure disorder.

The written authorization and seizure action plan shall be kept on file in the office of the technology center nurse or technology center administrator, and it shall be distributed to any technology center personnel or volunteers responsible for the supervision or care of the student. The written authorization and seizure action plan shall be effective only for the school year in which written authorization is granted and may be renewed each following school year upon fulfilling requirements A–D above. The technology center shall follow all administrative rules promulgated by the State Board of Education for the development and implementation of the seizure education program and the procedures for the development and content of seizure action plans.

Pursuant to state law, a technology center employee may not be subject to any disciplinary proceedings resulting from an action taken in compliance with *Seizure-Safe Schools Act*, and any employee acting in accordance with the provisions of that act shall be immune from civil liability unless the actions of the employee rise to the level of reckless or intentional misconduct. Any technology center-employed nurse shall not be responsible for and shall not be subject to disciplinary action for actions performed by a volunteer.

#### ***Administration of Emergency Opioid (e.g., Naloxone) by Meridian Technology Center Personnel***

Meridian Technology Center medical personnel (certified school nurse or any other nurse employed by or under contract with the technology center) or any other person designated by the Superintendent may administer, regardless of whether there is a prescription or standing order in place, an emergency opioid antagonist for a suspected opioid overdose by a student or other individual exhibiting signs of an opiate overdose.

The Superintendent may authorize one or more Meridian employees to receive training offered by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, a law enforcement agency or

any other entity in recognizing the signs of an opioid overdose and administering an emergency opioid. The Superintendent may designate persons to receive this training who have been required to receive annual training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the Heimlich maneuver (70 Okla. Stat. §1210.199). Furthermore, if a person or persons designated and trained to administer an emergency opioid antagonist are absent, the Superintendent or designee may authorize any person, regardless of whether there is a prescription or standing order in place, to administer an emergency opiate antagonist to a student or other individual exhibiting signs of an overdose.

Any person administering an opiate opioid to a student or other individual at a Meridian site or Meridian-sponsored event, in a manner consistent with addressing opioid overdose, shall be covered by Oklahoma's Good Samaritan Act. In the event of a suspected overdose, the technology center and its employees or designees shall be immune from civil liability in relation to the administration of an emergency opioid.

As used in this section "emergency opioid antagonist" means a drug including, but not limited to, naloxone that blocks the effects of opioids and that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of an opioid overdose.

Reference: Okla. Stat. tit. 70 § 1-116.2, 70 § 1-116.3; Okla. Stat. tit. 70 § 1210.199; Okla. Stat. tit. 70 §1210.242; Okla. Stat. tit. 63 §1-2506.1; Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 1210.183

## **MEDICAL MARIJUANA, HEMP & CANNABIDIOL (CBD) (I-458-A)**

Regardless of a student, employee, parent or any individual's status as a medical marijuana license holder, marijuana is not allowed on the premises of Meridian Technology Center or in any school vehicle or in any personal vehicle transporting a student under any circumstances. While the use of medical marijuana in conjunction with the possession of a medical marijuana license is legal in the State of Oklahoma, marijuana is a prohibited controlled substance under federal law regardless of the use being for medical purposes.

Accordingly, possession of marijuana by a student, employee, parent or any individual, notwithstanding the possession of a medical marijuana license, is strictly prohibited while on the premises of Meridian Technology Center and in school vehicles; going to and from and attending Meridian sponsored functions and events including those technology center sponsored functions and/or events which occur in a location other than the premises of the technology center; utilizing the district's equipment or transportation; and in any other instance in connection with Meridian Technology Center where Meridian reasonably deems the possession of marijuana to be illegal.

In the event that a student, employee, parent or any individual is found to possess or to have possessed marijuana in any of the instances stated above, the district will proceed with all actions and consequences that are afforded to Meridian Technology Center under any state or federal law, employment contract, technology center policy, student handbook provision, or any other authority applicable to or adopted by the technology center.

### ***Nondiscrimination***

There will be no discrimination in the technology center because of an individual's status as a medical marijuana license holder.

## ***Hemp and Hemp Cannabidiol (Hemp CBD)***

**1. Regulation:** Hemp CBD is regulated differently than marijuana under both state and federal law. Possession and administration of Hemp CBD shall be treated differently based on the concentration of THC in the Hemp CBD. In no instance will this section be construed to apply to a substance that (1) is not made from hemp or (2) contains more than 0.3% THC.

### a. Hemp CBD Containing 0.0% THC

- (1) Employees and other Non-Student Individuals: Employees and individuals who are not students of Meridian Technology Center may possess and self-administer Hemp CBD containing 0.0% THC on the premises of the technology center. However, employees or non-student individuals must be able to certify, upon request, that the Hemp CBD contains 0.0% THC at the time of possession and/or self-administration via a reliable product label. Employees and non-student individuals are not permitted to self-administer Hemp CBD in the presence of students.
- (2) Students: A parent or legal guardian of a student may administer Hemp CBD containing 0.0% THC to the student in accordance with this policy. Hemp CBD containing 0.0% THC may only be administered to a student in an area designated by Meridian personnel. The parent, legal guardian must certify that the Hemp CBD contains 0.0% THC via a declaration given under penalty of perjury prior to administering such Hemp CBD to the student in the technology center's designated administration area. Such declaration shall be effective for the semester in which it is given. A new declaration must be provided by a parent or legal guardian each semester. After the parent or legal guardian of the student has administered the Hemp CBD containing 0.0% THC to the student, the parent or legal guardian must remove the Hemp CBD from Meridian's premises.

### b. Hemp CBD Containing 0.3% THC

- (1) Employees and other Non-Student Individuals: Employees and individuals who are not students of Meridian Technology Center may possess and self-administer Hemp CBD containing up to a maximum of three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) THC on the premises of the technology center provided they meet one of the following:
  - (a) The employee or individual who is not a student is a medical marijuana license holder; or
  - (b) The employee or individual who is not a student has a written certification from a physician licensed in Oklahoma that the employee or individual that is not a student has been diagnosed by a licensed physician as having one of the following:
    - i. Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome;
    - ii. Dravet Syndrome, also known as Sever Myoclonic Epilepsy of Infancy;
    - iii. Any other severe form of epilepsy that is not adequately treated by traditional medical therapies;
    - iv. Spasticity due to multiple sclerosis or due to paraplegia;

- v. Intractable nausea and vomiting; or
- vi. Appetite stimulation with chronic wasting diseases.

Employees or non-student individuals must be able to verify, upon request, (1) that they meet an exception listed above, and (2) that the Hemp CBD contains no more than 0.3% THC at the time of possession and/or self-administration, via a reliable product label or a physician's certification. Employees and non-student individuals are not permitted to self-administer Hemp CBD in the presence of students.

(2) Students: Students of the Meridian Technology Center may not possess and/or self-administer Hemp CBD containing THC in an amount no greater than 0.3%. However, the parent, legal guardian or caregiver (as defined in 63 O.S. § 420A) of the student may administer Hemp CBD containing THC in an amount no greater than 0.3% on Meridian's premises in accordance with this policy if the student meets one of the following exceptions:

- (a) The student is a medical marijuana license holder; or
- (b) The parent, legal guardian, or caregiver of the student has a written certification from a physician licensed in Oklahoma that the student has been diagnosed by a licensed physician as having one of the following:
  - i. Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome
  - ii. Dravet Syndrome, also known as Sever Myoclonic Epilepsy of Infancy
  - iii. Any other severe form of epilepsy that is not adequately treated by traditional medical therapies
  - iv. Spasticity due to multiple sclerosis or due to paraplegia;
  - v. Intractable nausea and vomiting
  - vi. Appetite stimulation with chronic wasting diseases

The physician's written certification must also provide that the Hemp CBD being administered to the student has a THC level of not more than 0.3% and the Hemp CBD was delivered to the student, parent, or legal guardian in a liquid form.

The parent, legal guardian, or caregiver may administer Hemp CBD containing THC in an amount no greater than 0.3% to the student in an area designated by the technology center's personnel. The parent, legal guardian, or caregiver must certify that the Hemp CBD contains THC in an amount no greater than 0.3% via a declaration given under penalty of perjury prior to administering such Hemp CBD to the student in the technology center's designated administration area. Such declaration shall be effective for the semester in which it is given. A new declaration must be provided by the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver each semester. After the parent, legal guardian or caregiver of the student has administered the Hemp CBD to the student, the parent, legal guardian or caregiver must remove the Hemp CBD from the Meridian's premises.

**2. Administration by School Personnel and Storage:** In no instance will a Meridian Technology Center employee administer Hemp CBD to a student, unless they are the parent, legal guardian, or caretaker for that student. The technology center will not maintain or store a student's Hemp CBD for any length of time.

**3. Violations:** In the event that a student, employee, parent, or any individual is found to have violated the district’s policy regarding Hemp CBD possession and/or self-administration, Meridian will proceed with all actions and consequences that are afforded to the technology center under any state or federal law, employment contract, technology center policy, student handbook provision, or any other authority applicable to or adopted by the technology center.

### ***Overlap with Other District Policies***

Meridian Technology Center recognizes that the legal aspects and consequences of medical marijuana, cannabidiol, and hemp are new and possibly subject to change. These legal aspects and consequences of medical marijuana, cannabidiol, and hemp effect many areas of Meridian’s current policies regarding employees, students, parents and individuals on technology center premises or attending technology center events. Meridian will continue to enforce its current adopted policies. As the need arises with changes in state and/or federal law, the district will consider and/or examine technology center policies in order to assess whether revisions, if any, may be needed to a Meridian Technology Center policy in order to comply with state and federal law.

### ***Employees***

Employees of Meridian Technology Center are expected to comply with state and federal law at all times as a term of their continued employment with the district. In that regard, employees are hereby notified that any person who uses or is addicted to marijuana, regardless of whether his or her state has passed legislation authorizing marijuana use for medicinal or recreational purposes, is an unlawful user of or addicted to a controlled substance and is prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms or ammunition. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3); *see also* Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) open letter to all federal firearms licensees (<https://www.atf.gov/file/60211/download>). Employees are expected to adhere to any and all open letters, formal opinions, directives, or any other instruction provided by federal or state agencies regarding state and/or federal law.

### ***Prescription Medications***

This policy does not apply to any federal Food and Drug Administration-approved cannabidiol medication. Such medication may not be possessed or self-administered by students. These medications must be stored in Meridian Technology Center offices and may be administered by the school nurse or other designated technology center personnel in accordance with the district’s policy on Administration of Medicine.

## **SUICIDE AWARENESS, TRAINING, AND PREVENTION (I-461-A)**

### ***PURPOSE:***

Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people. The health and well-being of students is of utmost importance to Meridian Technology Center, and the Meridian is committed to actively preventing suicide through awareness, effective training, outreach, and prevention. This policy outlines strategies, procedures, and resources for preventing suicide, identifying potentially-suicidal students and high-risk behavior, as well as intervention and postvention mechanisms.

### ***SCOPE:***

This policy is applicable to actions that occur in technology center buildings, premises, or property, including vehicles, at technology center-sponsored functions and activities, and governs the entire technology center community, including, but not limited to, staff, students, parents and guardians, and volunteers

**SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING:**

Meridian shall provide training and education to all staff members on suicide awareness and prevention on a biennial basis. The training will include evidence-based approaches to suicide prevention or curriculum made available or approved by the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, including how to recognize changes in behavior that may be indicative of distress, how to approach students to discuss concerns, and how to refer a parent or student to appropriate resources.

**Publication and Distribution:**

The course outline for the training curriculum shall be made available on Meridian's website.

**NOTIFYING PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS:**

Teachers, counselors, principals, administrators, and other technology center personnel, upon determining a student is at risk for attempting suicide, shall notify the parents or legal guardians of the student immediately upon determining such risk exists.

**IMMUNITY FROM EMPLOYMENT DISCIPLINE AND CIVIL LIABILITY:**

Teachers, counselors, principals, administrators, and other technology center personnel shall be immune from employment discipline and any civil liability with respect to the following actions:

1. Calling 911, law enforcement, or the Department of Human Services if they believe a student poses a threat to themselves or others or if a student has committed or been the victim of a violent act or threat of a violent act
2. Providing referral, emergency medical care or other assistance offered in good faith to a student or other youth
3. Communicating information in good faith concerning drug or alcohol abuse or potential safety threat by or to any student to the parents or legal guardians of the student, law enforcement officers or health care providers

**NO SPECIFIC DUTY OF CARE OR CAUSE OF ACTION:**

The training required by this policy, or lack thereof, shall not be construed to impose any specific duty of care. No person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of this policy or resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by this policy, unless the loss or damage was caused by willful or wanton misconduct.

**Community Intervention and Prevention Services:**

The technology center may enter into agreements with designated Youth Services Agencies for the provision of intervention and prevention services.

**AWARENESS, TRAINING AND PREVENTION PROCEDURES:**

The Executive Director, Career Planning Center shall establish procedures for identifying and suicidal tendencies and high-risk behavior, including behavior that poses an immediate threat of serious harm to the student or others, and intervention and postvention measures such as when to assess a suicide risk, offer counseling, contact parents or legal guardians, and to call law enforcement, health care providers, or the Department of Human Services

Reference: Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 24-100.7

## **STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS PROTOCOL**

As required by Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 24-159, Meridian Technology Center will develop and maintain a protocol for responding to students in mental health crisis with the goal of preventing student suicide, self-harm, and harm to others.

### **Provider Partners**

Meridian Technology Center shall develop, maintain and implement its student mental health crisis protocol (the “Protocol”) in partnership with one or more local mental health treatment providers certified by the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (“Provider Partner(s)"). At least one Provider Partner that participates in the Protocol shall meet the following criteria:

- A. The provider must have the ability to serve all school-aged children regardless of insurance status; and
- B. The provider must have the ability and certification to provide mental health crisis services in the region where students attend school

### **Contents of Protocol**

Meridian’s Protocol shall:

- A. Provide a definition of mental health crisis involving potential for harm to self or others.
- B. Document how mental health crises may be identified by school administrators, instructors, support employees, and school-based mental health professionals.
- C. Provide a definition of mental health crisis involving potential for harm to self or others.
- D. Document how mental health crises may be identified by school administrators, instructors, support employees, and school-based mental health professionals.
- E. Outline nonpunitive steps to safeguard student health and safety in response to an immediate or potential mental health crisis.
- F. Identify local treatment providers and resources available to support students and families in mental health crisis and ensure appropriate referrals to treatment.
- G. Outline a process for ensuring parent and caregiver notification and involvement during an actual or potential mental health crisis. In the event that a student who is under eighteen years of age is identified as being in or at risk of a mental health crisis, the Protocol shall call for Meridian employees to inform the student’s parent or legal guardian and offer the treatment referral information contained in the Protocol. The Protocol shall further provide that parent or legal guardian consent shall be required for any subsequent action taken by Meridian as part of the protocol except in cases of immediate and life-threatening danger to self or others.
- H. Document how student privacy will be protected in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including, but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).

### Working Agreement

The Board of Education and each of the Technology Center's Provider Partner(s) shall enter into a working agreement establishing all obligations of the parties under the established Protocol and a strategy for regularly reviewing its effectiveness using anonymous, nonidentifiable data (the "Working Agreement).

### Review and Updates

Not less than every two years, Meridian and its Provider Partner(s) shall jointly review the Protocol and Working Agreement and consider whether updates to the Protocol are necessary to better meet the needs of students. This process shall include a review of information gathered from the Oklahoma Prevention Needs Assessment Survey or an alternative survey conducted by Meridian as provided for in Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 24-158, to the extent Meridian has participated in such a survey and such information is available.

### State Agency Review

Meridian will submit the most recent version of its Protocol and Working Agreement to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, which will in turn submit those documents to the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. These agencies may require revisions to the Protocol in order to ensure compliance with applicable laws/regulations and/or established evidence-based practices.

### Access/Training

Meridian Technology Center will provide administrators, instructors, support employees and school-based mental health providers with ready access to the Protocol and regular training regarding the Protocol. In addition to regular training regarding the Protocol, the Technology Center shall require a training program for instructors which shall emphasize the importance of recognizing and addressing the mental health needs of students. This program shall be completed the first year a certified instructor is employed by the Technology Center, and then once every fifth academic year.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (I-437-B)**

Many communicable diseases, including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and/or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), require special consideration in the school environment. The board of education seeks to provide an environment which is safe for all students and employees, while maintaining the dignity and privacy of individuals infected with communicable diseases.

Current research indicates that the risk of transmitting HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases is low in the school setting when appropriate procedures are followed. All school employees are required to follow the district's Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan at all times when there is a potential for exposure to any bodily fluid. Parents/guardians will be notified in the event a minor student has been exposed to a potentially infectious agent.

Information regarding an individual's communicable disease status will be maintained in a separate confidential file and will only be disclosed:

- in compliance with Oklahoma law
- with the express approval of the superintendent

Information about an individual's communicable disease status will not be included in the individual's regular school or health records. Any individual who discloses another person's communicable disease status without the superintendent's express authorization will face disciplinary action.

### ***Communicable Diseases for Which Isolation or Quarantine is Required***

No student having a communicable disease, requiring a period of isolation or quarantine, shall enter or remain at a technology center site. This shall be in effect until the order for quarantine or isolation has expired or permission for entry and return to the technology center site and activities has been given by the local county health department or State Department of Health. It shall be the responsibility of the student's parent(s) or legal guardians and technology center administration—not the student's instructor—to exclude the student. In the event a student known to be infected arrives at a technology center site or, after their arrival, is discovered to be infected—a technology center site administrator shall discretely remove the student from the class or activity, place the student in a monitored room where the student will not come into close contact with non-infected persons, and contact the student's parent or legal guardian to make arrangements to send the student home.

### ***Student Admission***

No student will be denied an education or participation in the activities of the district based solely on his/her status as a student infected with a communicable disease. In the event the school administration learns that a student may have a communicable disease, the superintendent or designee will consult with the Oklahoma State Department of Health regarding an appropriate educational environment for the student. All decisions regarding an appropriate educational setting for the student will be made on a case-by-case basis following established policies and procedures for students with chronic health problems or other disabilities. The placement decision will be periodically reviewed, and will be reviewed at any time a staff member observes behavior which might pose a reasonable risk of transmitting the communicable disease.

### ***Employment***

No individual will be denied employment or have his/her contract nonrenewed based solely on his/her status as an individual infected with a communicable disease.

Reference: Okla. Stat. tit. 63, § 1-507 (2021)

## **USE OF MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY RESTROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS (1463A)**

Pursuant to SB615 (2022), each multioccupancy restroom and changing area located in public schools serving students in prekindergarten through twelfth grades shall be designated as either for the exclusive use of the male sex or for the exclusive use of the female sex. The Technology Center has, therefore, designated its restrooms for use as follows: "males," "men," or "boys"; "females," "women," or "girls"; and "single-occupancy."

"Sex," for the purposes of this policy is defined as the physical condition of being male or female based on genetics and physiology, as identified on the individual's original birth certificate.

"Multiple occupancy restroom or changing area" is defined as an area in a public school or public charter school building designed or designated to be used by more than one individual at a time, where individuals may be in various stages of undress in the presence of other individuals. The term may include but is not limited to a school restroom, locker room, changing room, or shower room.

“School” means any public school and public charter school that serves students in prekindergarten through twelfth grades in this state.

“Individual,” for the purposes of this policy is defined as any student, teacher, staff member, or other person on the premises of a School.

“Coach,” for the purposes of this policy is defined as a person employed by the technology center who is involved in the teaching or training of students participating in a school-sponsored athletic activity.

“School-sponsored athletic activity” for the purposes of this policy is defined as a sporting event that is supported and affiliated with the technology center such as games, matches and tournaments.

If an individual does not wish to comply by using the appropriate restroom or changing room based on sex as defined herein, the Technology Center shall provide a reasonable accommodation by providing access to a single-occupancy/single use restroom or changing room.

An individual shall be disciplined by the Technology Center for refusing to (a) use the appropriate multiple occupancy restroom or changing area designated for their sex as defined herein, (b) designate multiple occupancy restrooms or changing areas for the exclusive use of one sex as defined herein, or (c) provide access to a single-occupancy restroom or changing room to an individual who does not wish to utilize the multiple occupancy restroom or changing area designated for their sex, provided that such individual is authorized to be on Technology Center premises. Students shall be disciplined pursuant to the Technology Center’s student behavior policy. Employees shall be disciplined pursuant to the appropriate Technology Center policy and Oklahoma law based on the employee’s position within the Technology Center. Other persons on the premises of the Technology Center shall be disciplined pursuant to the appropriate Technology Center policy and Oklahoma law.

This policy does not apply to individuals entering the multioccupancy restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex under the following circumstances:

1. For custodial, maintenance, or inspection purposes;
2. To render emergency medical assistance; or
3. If a suitable meeting room or area is not available, a coach may enter a locker room before, during, or after a school-sponsored athletic activity, provided:
  - All students present are fully clothed;
  - The coach shall be accompanied by at least one additional adult at all times; and
  - If the coach is the opposite sex of the students present, the coach shall be accompanied by at least one adult of the same sex as the students present,

The adult accompanying the coach shall not be a current high school student.

## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (I-459-A)**

Meridian Technology Center respects and values student activism. The technology center takes pride in our students’ interactions with social and political issues, viewing it as a desirable, if not essential, component of civic engagement and, therefore, adopts the following policy.

## **Policy**

The outdoor areas of any campus of the Meridian Technology Center are deemed public forums for the campus community, and Meridian will not create "free speech zones" or other designated areas of campus outside of which expressive activities are prohibited. The technology center may maintain and enforce reasonable time, place and manner restrictions narrowly tailored in service of a significant institutional interest when the restrictions employ clear, published, content and viewpoint neutral criteria and provide for ample alternative means of expression. Any such restrictions shall allow for members of the campus community to spontaneously and contemporaneously assemble and distribute literature. Nothing in this paragraph shall be interpreted as applying to student expression taking place elsewhere on campus.

Any person who wishes to engage in noncommercial expressive activity on campus shall be permitted to do so freely, as long as the person's conduct is not unlawful and does not materially and substantially disrupt the functioning of the technology center.

- Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as preventing the technology center from prohibiting, limiting or restricting expression that the First Amendment does not protect or prohibiting harassment as defined in this policy.

- Nothing in this policy shall enable individuals to engage in conduct that intentionally, materially and substantially disrupts another person's expressive activity if that activity is occurring in a campus space reserved for that activity under the exclusive use or control of a particular group.

- Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the technology center from maintaining and enforcing reasonable time, place and manner restrictions that are narrowly tailored to serve a significant institutional interest only when such restrictions employ clear, published, content- and viewpoint-neutral criteria. Any such restrictions shall allow for members of the campus community to spontaneously and contemporaneously assemble, speak and distribute literature.

Meridian will make public in its Student Handbook, on its websites and through its orientation programs for students the policies, regulations and expectations of students regarding free expression on campus consistent with this policy.

Meridian will develop materials, programs and procedures to ensure that those persons who have responsibility for discipline or education of students, including but not limited to administrators, campus police officers, and instructors, understand the policies, regulations and duties of the technology center regarding free expression on campus.

### ***Reporting Requirement***

By December 31st each year, Meridian will publicly post on its website and submit to the Governor and Legislature a report that details the course of action implemented to comply with the requirements of Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 2120. A report shall also be submitted in the instance of any changes or updates to the chosen course of action.

#### The report provided on the website shall be:

- A. Accessible from the technology center's website home page by use of not more than three links
- B. Searchable by key words and phrases
- C. Accessible to the public without requiring registration or use of a username, password, or another user identification

The technology center's report will include the following information:

A. A description of any barriers to or incidents of disruption of free expression occurring on campus, including but not limited to attempts to block or prohibit speakers and investigations into students or student organizations for their speech. The description shall include the nature of each barrier or incident, as well as what disciplinary action, if any, was taken against members of the campus community determined to be responsible for those specific barriers or incidents involving students without revealing those students' personally identifiable information, and

B. Any other information the technology center deems valuable for the public to evaluate whether free expression rights for all members of the campus community have been equally protected and enforced.

In the event the technology center is sued for an alleged violation of First Amendment rights, a supplementary report, with a copy of the complaint or amended complaint, will be submitted to the Governor and the Legislature within 30 days.

## **ANNUAL NOTICE OF REQUIRED DISCLOSURES OF STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION**

Meridian Technology Center is required to disclose Consumer Information to all prospective and current students annually. Please visit our Consumer Information webpage for further up-to-date information on the following and more: Institutional information, financial assistance information, student records, completion/graduation rates, drug and alcohol abuse and prevention, and campus security report. Information can be found at [meridiantech.edu/admissions/consumer-information](http://meridiantech.edu/admissions/consumer-information). Paper copies of Disclosure Information is available in the Career Planning Center.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANNUAL NOTIFICATION FOR PARENTS, INSTRUCTORS AND EMPLOYEES**

Date: March 25, 2024

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA) requires the inspection of all buildings in the school district for asbestos. The district has complied with this act. A Management Plan documenting these inspections is on file for public review. Upon request, you may view the plan which is located at the Assistant Superintendent's office.

Meridian Technology Center annually notifies all parents, instructors and other employees by posting this notice. Additionally, information regarding any asbestos related activities, planned or in progress, will be disseminated by posting a notice, or using handout bulletins, flyers and/ or using newspaper public notice statements.

The asbestos identified in our Management Plan will be checked regularly by a licensed asbestos company and by our staff to scrutinize any changes in the material that could cause a health hazard. We will continue to monitor the asbestos as defined by EPA guidelines. If changes occur, our asbestos coordinator will notify the appropriate people as prescribed by law.



Douglas R. Major  
Superintendent/CEO