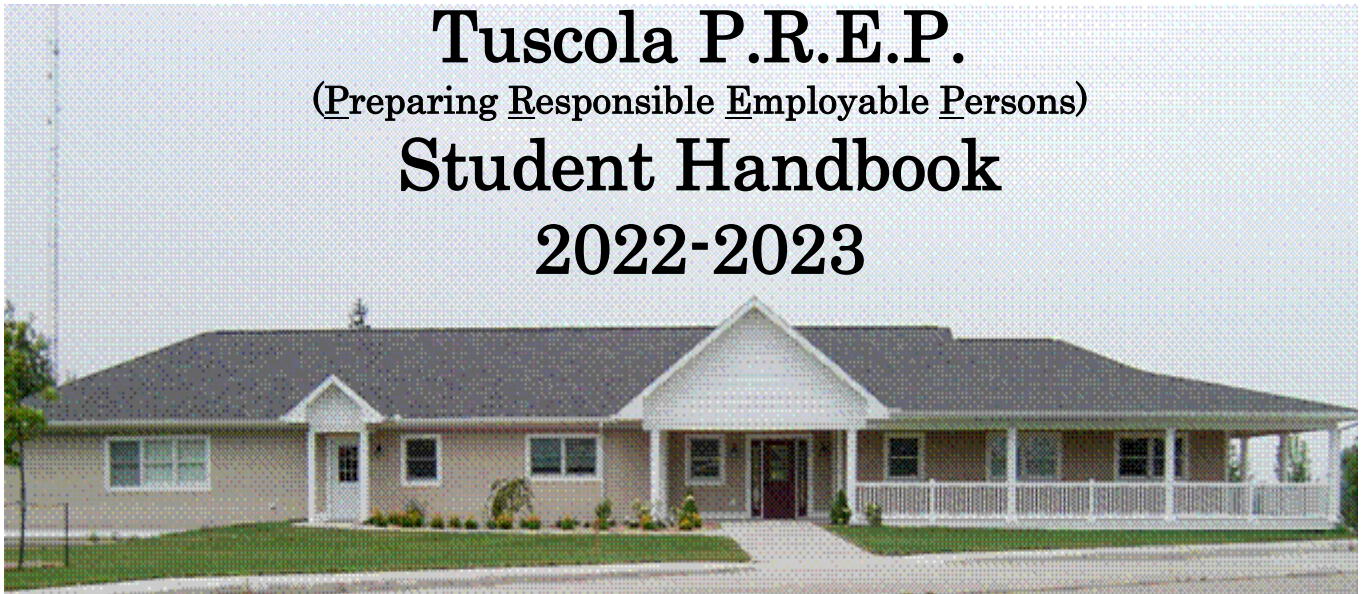


**Tuscola P.R.E.P.**  
(Preparing Responsible Employable Persons)  
**Student Handbook**  
**2022-2023**



**1383 Cleaver Road  
Caro, Michigan 48723  
(989) 672-6950 (Classroom)**

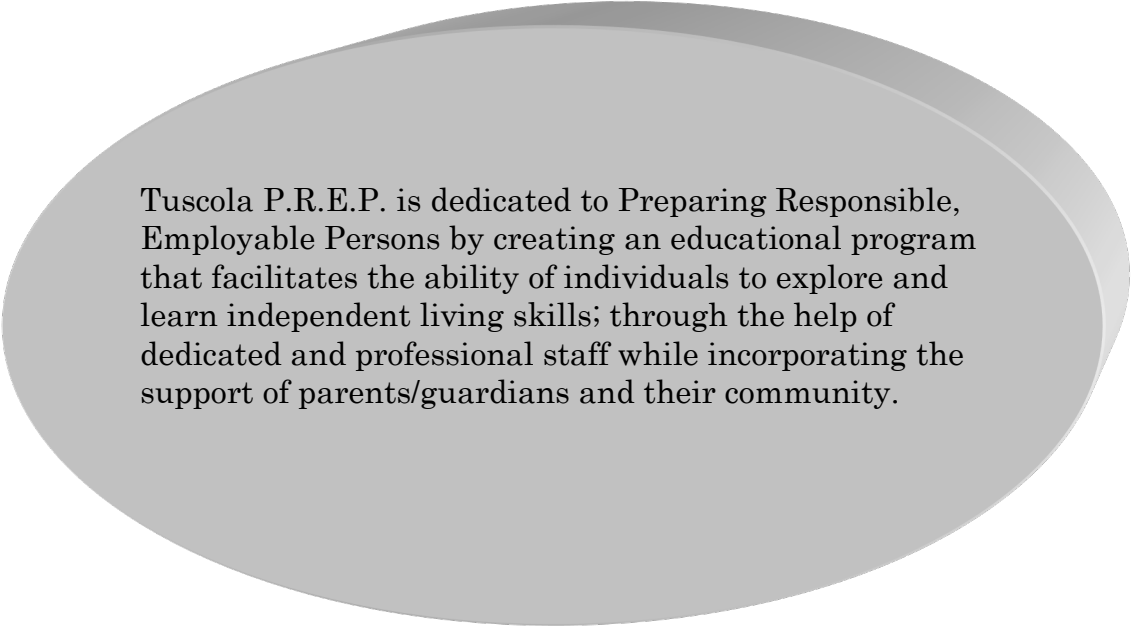
**<https://www.facebook.com/tuscolatransitioncenter>**

**The Tuscola PREP Program is a nine district cooperative program for secondary special education students held at the Tuscola Transition Center. The program is designed for those students who have demonstrated academic, vocational and behavioral skills as well as a personal commitment to live and work independently in the community. The focus of the PREP program is to provide students exposure to transitional activities to help them prepare for success after high school.**

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# I. TUSCOLA P.R.E.P. MISSION STATEMENT



Tuscola P.R.E.P. is dedicated to Preparing Responsible, Employable Persons by creating an educational program that facilitates the ability of individuals to explore and learn independent living skills; through the help of dedicated and professional staff while incorporating the support of parents/guardians and their community.

## A. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Research and practice experience indicates parent involvement has multiple benefits for students and school. Student benefits can include better attendance, more positive attitudes toward school and learning, less disciplinary actions, higher completion rates in the program, and increased success at reaching established goals.

School benefits can include improved teacher and staff morale, better ratings of teacher and staff by parents, improved community perceptions, and positive changes in student achievements.

### **TISD Board Policy:**

The Tuscola Intermediate School District supports parental involvement as both a valuable resource and ally in teaching and learning for our students. We consider parents/guardians essential partners in the educational and psycho-social development of their children.

The building teacher will act as the key liaison for parent involvement. The teacher will provide leadership for the development and implementation of a parent involvement plan. Parent involvement may include both school and home activities. The parent involvement plan for Tuscola P.R.E.P. is available through the Cass City School District.

## **B. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT STATEMENT**

The Tuscola Intermediate School District actively encourages parental participation in all of the programs it operates. Parents are involved in a wide variety of activities including, but not limited to: Parent Teacher Conferences and Individual Education Planning Team Meeting.

## **II. POLICIES**

### **A. SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

Tuscola P.R.E.P. has students enrolled from local school districts throughout Tuscola County. Therefore, the school year schedule is the same schedule that the Tuscola Technology Center follows during the school year and can be found

Due to staff involvement in other activities, *students will not be able to enter the Transition Center until 8:30 a.m.* Tuscola P.R.E.P. students riding local transportation will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. Students riding HPS Transportation will be dismissed at 2:55 p.m. The Transition Center is closed at 3:00 p.m.

### **TUSCOLA P.R.E.P. GENERAL ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

Students are expected to notify Tuscola P.R.E.P. if they are going to be absent before 8:30am. The phone number to the Tuscola PREP Classroom is: **989-672-6950**

Tuscola P.R.E.P. places a high priority on school attendance because it often sets a pattern for independent living, including employment. P.R.E.P. students who are going to be absent are expected to report the absence and make up the work. If a student is absent for an excessive amount of time, then the student will be met with to see how attendance can be improved. 8 or more absences in a semester is considered excessive. If a student is Tardy (late) by more than 30 minutes, then they will be considered absent.

### **TUSCOLA P.R.E.P. ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING THE TUSCOLA TECHNOLOGY CENTER (TTC)**

P.R.E.P. students attending TTC must also attend P.R.E.P. In the event that a student is absent from Tuscola P.R.E.P., the student may not attend TTC unless the absence was prearranged with the P.R.E.P. Teacher and TTC. TTC also has their own attendance policy for students to follow.

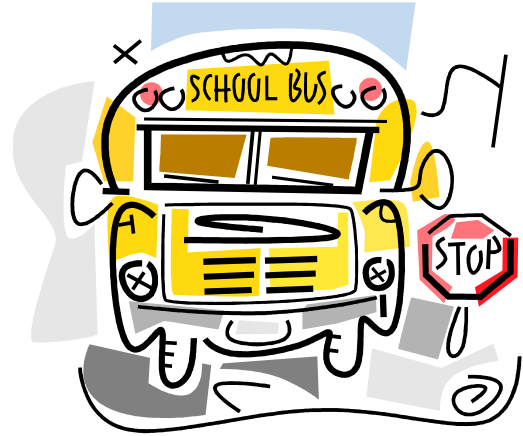
## B. LUNCH

Lunch must be provided by the student. The student will have access to refrigerators, microwaves, and a stove to prepare lunch.

## C. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation arrangements are made by the Transition Coordinator for the Tuscola Intermediate School District. Methods of transportation vary based on the individual needs of the students.

It is the policy of the TISD Board of Education to provide safe, economical transportation to those children affected by excessive distances, extraordinary or excessive hazards to pedestrian safety, and personal handicaps.



If transportation is arranged through a local school district, all rules and regulations of that school district apply to Tuscola P.R.E.P. students. Students are NOT allowed to enter into local school district or Highland Pines School buildings while waiting for transportation to or from the Transition Center.

## D. WEATHER AND TRANSPORTATION

For your convenience, we have several radio/TV stations that will be giving school closing information for the Tuscola Intermediate School District. Those radio/TV stations are as follows. For the Transition Center, check online at: <https://www.facebook.com/tuscolatransitioncenter>

WKYO-1360-AM-CARO  
WIDL-92.1-FM-CARO  
WHNN-96.1-FM-BAY CITY  
WMIC-97.7-FM-SANDUSKY  
WKCQ-98.1-FM-SAGINAW  
WLEW-102.1-FM-BAD AXE  
WIOG-102.5-FM-SAGINAW  
WNEM-TV5-SAGINAW  
WJRT-TV12-FLINT



Tuscola P.R.E.P. will be cancelled due to weather or other emergencies if the Tuscola Technology Center is cancelled. All students in P.R.E.P. will have an email from the Technology Center ([firstname.lastname@tuscolaisd.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@tuscolaisd.org)) and will be included in the automated notification system for cancelling school; including the phone number you provide. Also, transportation is provided by local school districts and Highland Pines School, if your local school or Highland Pines School is **delayed or closed**, then the Tuscola P.R.E.P. student is excused from class.

## **E. SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY**

Tuscola P.R.E.P. is dedicated to creating a healthy school environment that enhances the development of lifelong wellness practices to promote healthy eating and physical activities that support student achievement.

### Nutrition Education

Every year, students shall receive nutrition education that teaches the knowledge, skills, and values needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Nutrition education shall be integrated into the curriculum.

### Physical Education

Tuscola P.R.E.P. shall offer physical education and physical activity opportunities. The program shall equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for lifelong physical activity.

### Other School-Based Activities Promoting Student Wellness

Tuscola P.R.E.P. may implement other appropriate programs that help create a school environment that conveys consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and physical activity.

## **F. HEALTH POLICY**

Tuscola P.R.E.P. asks students to complete and return an Emergency Medical Information Form at the beginning of each semester. In the event of a medical emergency, the Highland Pines Nurse is available. She is a registered nurse with certification from the Dept. of Education to function as a school nurse. She works in conjunction with a Licensed Practical Nurse. An ambulance will be contacted if deemed necessary by the staff of the Tuscola P.R.E.P. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately in the event of an emergency medical situation if contact information is current.

Tuscola P.R.E.P. staff are trained in CPR, AED and CPI.

## Illnesses and Absences

Although regular attendance is important, there are times when illness interferes. Please be watchful of the following symptoms of communicable diseases such as:

Fever, Chills, Cough or Sore Throat  
Headache, Body Ache or Fatigue  
Congestion or Runny Nose  
Red or Watery Eyes  
Vomiting or Diarrhea  
Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing



The student should stay at home if there is any indication of illness. Any student showing symptoms of a communicable disease will be sent home until such time as they are healthy enough to return to school.

**Students are expected to notify Tuscola P.R.E.P. if they are going to be absent. The phone number to the Tuscola PREP Classroom is: 989-672-6950.**

## Medications

It is asked that students refrain from bringing prescription and non-prescription medications to school. However, if it becomes necessary, the medication must be in a properly labeled pharmacy bottle with the student's name, name of the drug, dosage and time to administer, doctor's name, and current date. The medication must be given to a Tuscola P.R.E.P. staff member for proper storage. No medications of any kind should be shared with other students.

## Grooming

Good personal hygiene and proper clothing are a necessary part of maintaining good health. We encourage the students to bathe regularly, wash hair (at least every other day); clothes should be clean, neat, and appropriate for the weather. Heavy coats, hats, gloves/mittens, and/or boots should be worn in the winter months.

## Dress Code

Clothing which contains offensive language/messages or gestures that causes a substantial disruption, is sexually suggestive in wording or sketches, or advertises or advocates illegal practice (drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms) is not allowed.

Tuscola P.R.E.P. requires students to dress in a manner appropriate to be employable. We follow the four "B's" – no butts, breasts, bellies, or baggies. Students will be asked to change their clothing if they are in violation of the dress code. If the violations become a habit, the parents/guardians will be contacted and/or disciplinary action will be taken.

## **G. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are guaranteed the rights of assembly, petition, symbolic speech, inquiry and expression. The Tuscola P.R.E.P. Program encourages each student to work toward independent living that is in line within our educational mission. In order to support our mission to education we expect that published materials and clothing be free of obscene language, libelous materials or disruptive materials. It is your responsibility to make sure that your speech, written materials, and clothing does not contain such statements. Students have the right to organize and petition and the responsibility to not trespass on the rights of other people. We expect that the distribution of literature be reviewed and approved of by the teacher or designee.

## **H. HOLIDAY PARTIES AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

All students may participate in school wide events such as parties and recreational activities. Students may be asked to pay for certain events and provide some form of transportation. The teacher will give students advanced notice if they need to arrange money or transportation.

## **I. VISITORS**

Parents/guardians are always welcome visitors. Please call ahead to ensure that the teacher can set aside time to meet with you.

## **J. PHONE CALLS**

The Transition Center phone number is 989-672-6950. If you wish to talk to one of the students, the best time to call is between 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. The teacher may be available throughout the day and will check messages on a regular basis.

## **K. INTERNET USAGE POLICY**

The use of the Transition Center computers supports learning and enhances classroom instruction. Students will utilize the computers in the building in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Failure to adhere to this guideline will lead to disciplinary action. Unacceptable uses of the computer network include but are not limited to the following:

1. Violating United States and/or local laws
2. Using and/or viewing profanity, obscenity, or other language which may be offensive to others
3. Copying commercial software in violation of copyright law
4. Viewing material on the internet which is violent, obscene, or degrading to persons, animals, or groups
5. Downloading games, programs, or any other downloads onto the computers



## **L. STUDENT CELL PHONE USE**

Students are prohibited in using electronic communication devices during classroom and work based learning hours. All electronic devices must be on silent and kept in their designated mailboxes in the classroom. However, at lunch time, 11:00-12:00, students will be allowed to use their electronic devices (ex. cell phones, iPods, tablets, iPads, MP3 players, etc). In the event of an emergency, students are allowed to use the phones at the Transition Center. If as student refuses adhere to the cell phone use rule during classroom or work based learning hours, then the phone may be confiscated and the student may be subject to discipline.

## **M. PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences take place at Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.) meetings and at other times as arranged. The purpose of the I.E.P. meeting is for the school staff, student, and the parent/guardian to develop an educational program designed to meet the needs of the individual student. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is written so that the parent and each person working with the student know the goals that have been set and how each service will help the student.

## **N. FIRE/STORM/CRISIS DRILL**

Fire and other evacuation drills are held during the school year with all students participating. Pupils and staff may need to leave the building during drills.



## **O. SMOKING / VAPING**

It is State Law and the policy of the Tuscola Intermediate School District to enforce and adhere to PA 198 of 1986, sometimes referred to as the “Clean Air Act.” These guidelines are established to ensure that proper steps are taken to protect the nonsmokers in the school community. Smoking is not permitted on the school campus during the day.

## **P. WEAPON-FREE SCHOOL ZONE**

The board of Education of Tuscola Intermediate School District, as both an employer and Public School District recognized that school buildings, facilities, vehicles, grounds, and other school property are best utilized in the educational process in the absence of threats to physical well-being and safety, by individuals possessing weapons, and/or dangerous weapons.

Accordingly, the Board of education of Tuscola Intermediate School District may permanently expel a pupil from attending school in the School District, if the pupil possesses a weapon in a weapon-free school zone.

**DEFINITION: “Weapon” or “dangerous weapon”** including but not limited to : firearm; gun; paint ball guns; revolver; pistol; dagger; dirk; stiletto; knife; pocket knife opened by mechanical device; iron bar; or brass knuckles. Tuscola P.R.E.P. includes as part of this definition any item used as a weapon.

**“Weapon-free School Zone”** means school property and/or vehicles used by the school to transport students to or from school property.

**“School Property”** means a building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children or used for functions and events sponsored by school, and includes the areas up to 1000 feet surrounding school property.

The School District shall immediately report any incident involving the possession of a weapon or dangerous weapon on school property to the pupil’s parent or legal guardian and to the local law enforcement agency.

## **Q. STUDENT DRIVING POLICY**

Students that have a valid driver’s license are permitted to drive to the Transition Center. It is the policy of Tuscola P.R.E.P. that only the student that owns the vehicle and has driven to the Transition Center is allowed to leave in the vehicle unless all parties that wish to leave in the vehicle provide the teacher or a staff member with a letter from a parent/guardian giving them permission. The letter must be signed and dated by a parent/guardian.

Students are not allowed to leave during class or for lunch if they drive themselves into the Transition Center unless they provide written permission from a parent/guardian prior to the departure time.

Students are not allowed to drive themselves to a work based learning experience during school hours. Transportation will be provided to this service.

## **R. ENROLLMENT**

Students interested in attending Tuscola P.R.E.P. should contact their district Individual Education Program Teacher, Education Coordinator and/or contact: Jason Davis, Transition Coordinator for the Tuscola Intermediate School District at: (989) 672-6952

### III. STUDENT CONDUCT

#### A. GENERAL RULES FOR BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY

The Tuscola PREP Program is a nine district cooperative program for secondary special education students. The program is designed for those students who have demonstrated academic, vocational and behavioral skills as well as a personal commitment to live and work independently in the community. The focus of the PREP program is to provide students exposure to transitional activities to help them prepare for success after high school. Students are expected to display behaviors conducive to their own and their classmates' ability to learn while in the program. The main behavioral expectation of PREP students is Responsibility. The following is a non-exhaustive list of responsible behaviors. If you are unsure if a behavior that is not listed here meets the criteria of being responsible, please discuss this with your teacher. If staff of the program learn of, or see displays of irresponsible behavior on the part of the student/s; it will be brought to the student/s attention with an expectation for learning and displaying appropriate and responsible behavior in the future. When necessary, appropriate supports will be provided to assist students in implementing responsible behaviors such as including your referring district IEP Team. Should a student choose not to be responsible then they may be dismissed from participation in the PREP program at the Tuscola Transition Center and return to the referring district to meet their transition needs.

The following items fall under the expectation of being a Responsible young adult:

- ❖ Have fun and respect yourself and others.
- ❖ Students are expected to attend, participate and try their best.
- ❖ Exhibit behaviors appropriate for work, education and independent living as determined by your Teacher. Examples would include taking off your shoes when entering the Transition Center or not laying down on the couch.
- ❖ Profane or obscene language/gestures are not allowed.
- ❖ Fighting, pushing, and screaming are not allowed.
- ❖ Any acts of aggression toward self, others or property is not allowed.
- ❖ Any acts of harassment toward others is not allowed.
- ❖ Any items that may be hazardous to the safety of others are not allowed.
- ❖ Anything not needed for class should be left at home.
- ❖ Electronic devices (cell phones, music players or any other device that disrupts learning) are not to be used during regular school hours.
- ❖ Students are to refrain from borrowing and lending to others.
- ❖ School personnel try to prevent losses, but are not responsible for any students' property (lost, stolen, or broken.) Large amounts of money or valuable items should not be brought to the Transition Center.
- ❖ Students will be responsible for breakage, theft, and destruction of others' personal property.
- ❖ Students are to keep their hands to themselves. Inappropriate displays of affection are not allowed.
- ❖ Students are adults and expected to act as lawful citizens.
- ❖ Students are not allowed to share any medication with other students.

## **B. STUDENT SUSPENSION BY TEACHER**

The teacher is authorized to immediately remove and suspend a student from class, subject, or activity if the teacher has good reason to believe the student's conduct interferes with the learning efforts of other students in the classroom and warrants suspension under this policy when the student commits a violation of law or engages in disruptive behavior which includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
2. Fighting
3. Directing profanity, vulgar language or obscene gestures toward the teacher or other students
4. Violating safety rules as written in the student handbook
5. Expressing racial or ethnic slurs toward the teacher or another student
6. Engaging in any misbehavior that gives the teacher reasonable belief that the conduct will incite violence
7. Destroying/defacing school property
8. Violating computer use policies, rules, and agreements
9. Sexual harassment toward the teacher, staff or another student

## **C. SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

A student's person and/or belongings (e.g. purse, book bag, athletic bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school official has a reasonable suspicion that the student has illegal or unauthorized substances or item(s).

## **IV. EXPECTATIONS**

Students that attend Tuscola P.R.E.P. Program at the Transition Center are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Act as an adult
2. Work toward IEP goals, Transition goals and personal goals.
3. Have excellent attendance and notify the Teacher when absent: (989) 672-6950
4. Follow and develop appropriate employee, independent and community skills.

## **V. SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

### Tuscola Intermediate School District

1385 Cleaver Road  
Caro, MI 48723  
(989) 673-2144

### Highland Pines School

1381 Cleaver Road  
Caro, MI 48723  
(989) 673-5200

### Tuscola Technology Center

1401 Cleaver Road  
Caro, MI 48723  
(989) 673-5300

### Tuscola P.R.E.P. Classroom

1383 Cleaver Road  
Caro, MI 48723  
(989) 672-6950



## VI. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 provides comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunication. Title II of the ADA protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in the programs, services or activities offered by state and local units of government, including school districts.

The Tuscola Intermediate School District has completed a self-evaluation of its programs, services, and activities in coordination with a review of the existing facilities to identify any areas in need of corrective measures. It is the district's understanding that corrective measure to existing buildings must only be made if an existing program, service, or activity is inaccessible to a person with a qualified disability. All new construction or renovations will comply with ADA requirements. Interested persons, including individuals with disabilities and organizations representing individuals with disabilities, were invited to participate in the self-evaluation process.

The district has appointed ADA coordinators, and all comments, inquires, and/or complaints should be directed to:

*Tracey Henry Highland Pines School, 1381 Cleaver Rd., Caro, MI 48723 / (989) 673-5200 ext. 30455*

*or*

*Eric Kunish Tuscola County ISD, 1385 Cleaver Rd., Caro, MI 48723 / (989) 673-3144 ext. 30367*

This district will provide, upon request with advance notice, appropriate auxiliary aids and/or services necessary to afford a qualified individual with a disability equal opportunity to participate in the programs, services, or activities conducted by the district. For more information or to request auxiliary aids and/or services, please contact the ADA coordinator.

The Tuscola Intermediate School District has every intention to comply with the ADA requirements. As a result of the self-evaluation process, the district has identified all areas and items in the facilities that are not in compliance with ADA. Upon review of current programs, services, and activities, the district has identified corrective measures that need to be completed to provide accessibility to existing facilities. All corrections are based upon current status of persons known to have disabilities and the assumption of the programs, services, and/or activities they would need or want to access. The district is prepared to provide reasonable accommodations to any qualified individual with a disability upon request and review by the ADA coordinator.

The transition plan identified all corrective measures for existing facilities based on the self-evaluation. There will be a separate page for each corrective measure that identifies the problem, correction, and estimated completion date. There will be a section for each facility. This transition plan will be available for review at the Central Administration Office during office hours.

## **VII. RELEASING STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

No Child Left Behind (Section 9528) requires student directory information to be made available to military recruiters and institutions of higher education. Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) a student or his/her parents may request information not be released without prior written consent. Here is the description of the FERPA requirements:

Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date, and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

**Updates, additions, and changes may be made at anytime to the Tuscola P.R.E.P. Student Handbook.  
Updated 10/28/2022/Transition Center/PREP**