WEST MICHIGAN ACADEMY OF
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

2026-2027 Family Handbook & Student Code of Conduct

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Welcome to West Michigan Academy of Environmental Science!

When you join our community, you become part of our family. At West Michigan Academy of Environmental Science, we believe learning should spark curiosity, foster growth, and connect students to something greater than themselves, and we're honored to walk alongside our students in that journey.

WMAES proudly serves a diverse group of students with a mission to foster creativity, promote academic achievement, and instill strong character and environmental responsibility. Our goal is to help each child grow in confidence while developing a deep respect for the world around them.

From kindergarten through 12th grade, our students are encouraged to learn both inside and outside the classroom. Our 62-acre campus, featuring five different ecosystems, gives students daily opportunities to explore, observe, and reflect in peaceful outdoor spaces. Whether they're seated on carpet squares or beneath the birch trees, students connect what they learn to the natural world.

Our dedicated team of teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, and administrators works together to create a safe, engaging, and inspiring environment for all learners. Every lesson is a chance to grow not just academically, but also as citizens of a sustainable future.

Thank you for trusting us with your student. We're grateful to be in partnership with you and excited to welcome your family to the WMAES community.

In partnership with you,

Nathan VanDuinen
Elementary Principal

Kevin Maitner
Secondary Principal

This handbook is an administrative guideline developed under Board Policy 1230.01. It supports Board policy and aligns with law and the charter contract.

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1. Introduction and Overview

1.1 School Calendar

WMAES 2026-2027 Calendar List

August 5	Popsicles on the Playground (5:30-6:30)
August 10-14	New Teacher training
August 17-21	Teachers report for professional development
August 18	Pig Roast/Open House (5-7)
August 24	First day of school
August 24	KCTC Starts
September 4	No school - Labor Day
September 7	No school - Labor Day
September 9	GSRP Preschool Begins
October 7	Fall Count Day
October 7-8	Fall Conferences
October 9	No school- Conference give back day
October 29	Treats on the Trail (5:00-6:30)
October 30	No school - Staff professional development (Data Dig)
November 25-27	No school - Thanksgiving Break
December 18	Half day- End of 2nd Quarter
December 21-January 1	No school - Winter Break
January 18	No school - Martin Luther King Day
February 1-February 28	Re-enrollment period
February 12	No School - Staff professional development (Data Dig)
February 15-16	No school - Mid-winter break
March 1-April 12	Open Enrollment period
March 3-4	Winter Conferences
March 5	No school- Conference give back day
March 11	Open House and Lit Night (5:00-7:00)
March 12	Half day- Staff PD (State Assessment Prep)
March 19	End of 3rd Quarter
April 2-9	No school - Spring Break
April 13	Lottery @ 4pm (if needed)
April 22	Earth Week Celebration (5:00-6:30)
May 27	High School Graduation (6:30)
May 26	GSRP ends
May 31	No school-Memorial Day weekend
June 10	Half day- Last day of school

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June 11 Staff PD

This calendar complies with Board Policy 8210 and MCL 388.1701, requiring 1,098 instructional hours over a minimum of 180 days.

1.2 School Hours and Attendance Reporting

ELEMENTARY GRADES (K-5)

The regular daily school schedule **begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 3:05 PM**.
Please call this number to report absences: 616-791-7454 option 2

Classrooms are open at 7:45 AM for all students. Students arriving in the classroom after 8:00 AM will be considered tardy. Class activities begin promptly at 8:00 AM.

SECONDARY GRADES (6-12)
The regular daily school schedule will be staggered for Secondary Grades.
Middle and High School classes begin at 8:00 AM and end at 2:50 PM.
Please call this number to report absences: 616-791-7454 option 3

Classrooms are open at 7:45 AM for all students. Students arriving in the classroom after their start time will be considered tardy.

1.3 Attendance and Truancy Policy

Regular school attendance is essential to academic success. In accordance with Board Policy 5200 and state law, all students are expected to attend school each scheduled day and arrive on time. Absences should be reported to the school office by a parent or guardian on the day of the absence. Excused absences include personal illness, medical appointments, religious observances, family emergencies, mandated court appearances, and other situations approved by the school administrator. Documentation may be required for certain excused absences.

To address unexcused absences, the school follows a tiered intervention system by Kent ISD that can be found here. When counted, unexcused absences meet or exceed ten percent of scheduled school days to date, the school will notify the parent/guardian and may request a meeting. A required meeting with school leadership will be scheduled to discuss attendance concerns and supports.

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1.3.1 Kent ISD – Attendance Definitions & Process

Chronic Absenteeism

- Attendance is **90% or less** of scheduled days to date (includes all absences, excused or unexcused).
- Measured at any point in the year (e.g., count day, semester end, or when concerns arise).
- If interventions fail, may result in legal action for parent/guardian or student.

Truancy

- **10 unexcused absences** in a school year (generally skipping school).
- Focuses on absences *not* approved by a parent/guardian.
- May lead to juvenile charges if interventions are unsuccessful.

1.3.2 Absences Counted Toward Intervention

- All absences (excused and unexcused) and partial lost learning time:
    - 0.5 day absence = 0.5 day lost learning
    - Tardy (≤25 min) = 0.1 day lost learning
    - 1 class period of 5-class day = 0.2 day lost learning

1.3.3 Absences Not Counted

- Snow days or unscheduled closures
- Serious, documented medical events (hospitalization, major trauma) approved by school
- Required court appearances with documentation
- Suspensions/expulsions
- Preplanned, approved absences with required learning completed

1.3.4 Referral Process

First Referral to Truancy Office

- Truancy Notice sent home; parent/guardian must meet with school to create an **Individual Attendance Improvement Plan (IAIP)**.

Second Referral (if attendance does not improve)

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- Attendance below 91% for two+ weeks after IAIP, or student not attending
- At least **5 documented interventions** by staff from different disciplines, meeting statutory requirements (IAIP meeting, outside agency support, educational counseling).
- Truancy Action Letter drafted; IAIP updated.

Third Referral (if still no improvement)

- May result in petition to prosecutor's office.
- Students over age 10 may be referred to Crisis Intervention Program before prosecution.

Continuing Pattern

- If referred in the last third of one school year and absenteeism returns in the first third of the next, the process resumes where it left off.

1.4 Make up Work for Absence from School

Students are responsible for getting and completing any work they have missed due to absence from class. Makeup work should be completed within three days of return to school for short-term absence of 1-2 days and within five days of return for absence of 3-5 days as agreed upon with the classroom teacher. In cases of extended absence of more than five days due to illness, a student may request special consideration for additional time to make up work. Parents/guardians may request this in writing.

1.5 School Cancellation and Communication Channels

Notice of school cancellation is given by announcements on local tv (WOODTV, WZZM 13) and by phone through our automated School Messenger family contact program The school website and front office will also provide important updates. Families are responsible for keeping contact information up to date at all times.

Messages to students and or staff must be dropped off or called into the school office. Messages will not be delivered when it will disrupt classroom activities. Parents are encouraged to communicate the message as early as possible to ensure timely delivery to the proper person. All staff members have email accounts that parents can communicate through. Safe, secure classrooms and disruption-free instruction require us to seek total cooperation of parents in not going directly to the classroom.

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1.6 School Newsletter

The Academy will periodically distribute a newsletter or bulletin. The newsletter contains information about school activities and programs as well as an updated calendar for the month. For the good of the environment, we will send newsletters through email unless a paper copy is specifically requested.

1.7 Student Privacy and Media Consent

The school is committed to protecting the privacy and safety of all students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and internal policy. Too honor this commitment, staff and volunteers will not photograph, video record, or audio record students whose parents or guardians have submitted written notice opting out of media permissions.

Upon enrollment, families are asked to complete a media consent form indicating their preferences regarding photography, video, and audio recordings of their student. These images or recordings may be used in newsletters, social media, classroom apps, marketing materials, or news stories that promote the school's mission and culture. If a parent or guardian chooses to opt out, the school will make every effort to exclude the student from any public-facing content.

Classroom- or teacher-directed use of digital platforms (such as communication apps or learning portfolios) that include student photos or videos will not occur if parent or guardian chooses to opt out. This includes apps like ClassDojo, Seesaw, or Google Classroom. Staff will not privately share media content that features students and will only post content through approved school communication channels.

Parents and guardians may update their media consent preferences at any time by contacting the school office in writing. The school will honor all opt-out requests promptly and respectfully.

1.8 Verbal and Written Communication Policy

To promote effective, respectful, and timely communication among families, staff, and school leadership, all concerns or questions should be routed to the appropriate person as soon as possible. Prompt, direct communication fosters collaborative problem-solving, helps avoid misunderstandings, and ensures that each concern is addressed at the right level.

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All communications should reflect our shared commitment to respectful dialogue and mutual problem-solving. For urgent concerns that impact a child's immediate health or safety, please call the school office directly.

The Academy is committed to effective communication with all families. If a parent or guardian has limited English proficiency or requires information in a different language or format, please notify the school office. We will provide translated materials or interpretation services for important school communications and meetings, in accordance with federal and state laws.

1.9 Channels of Communication

To ensure inquiries and concerns reach the appropriate staff member, please reference the chart below:

Topic	Initial Contact
Academic progress, classroom behavior, daily schedule, assignments, class procedures, field trips, student-to-student conflict, classroom expectations	**Classroom Teacher**
Student check-ins, social-emotional support, problem solving, peer relationships, and minor behavior concerns	**Student Advocate**
Significant or repeated behavior concerns, disciplinary actions, bullying or safety concerns, assigned behavioral supports, and concerns unresolved through the teacher of Student Advocate	**Dean of Students**
School policies, curriculum questions, special education services, behavior support programs, school-wide events, instructional methods, unresolved classroom concerns	**School Leader**
Attendance, dismissal changes, arrival procedures, school calendar, lost and found,	**Front Office Staff**

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registration/enrollment documents, billing and accounts, schoolwide communications, McKinney-Vento homeless liaison support, parent involvement, and facilities questions	

1.10 Communication Chain of Command

If a concern is not resolved at the initial level, the following communication chain should be followed in order to ensure the issue is addressed appropriately:

- Classroom Teacher
- Student Advocate and/or Assistant School Leader *(if applicable)*
- School Leader
- Superintendent
- Chief of Staff
- Chief Executive Officer
- Academy Board of Directors – *For concerns that remain unresolved after all prior steps have been followed or that relate directly to board governance.*

Please note: Unless a matter involves an immediate safety concern, legal issue, or regulatory violation, each step should be followed in sequence. Skipping steps may delay resolution or prevent the appropriate context from being considered.

Parents and guardians are always welcome to address the Academy Board of Directors during the public comment portion of their monthly board meetings. While the Board does not respond to public comment during the meeting, all remarks are documented and taken into consideration.

1.11 Communication Expectations

Teachers and administrators strive to maintain strong, respectful communication with families. To support this, the following expectations apply:

- Response Time: Staff will respond to emails and voicemails within one school day, excluding weekends, holidays, and scheduled breaks.
- Urgent Messages: Urgent changes (such as end-of-day transportation) must be communicated by phone to the school office. Staff may not see emails or other messages during instructional hours.

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- Personal Contact: Calling or texting a staff member's personal phone is discouraged, unless previously agreed upon and contextually appropriate (e.g., field trip emergency). Respecting personal boundaries helps staff maintain focus and balance.
- Tone and Purpose: All communication should be courteous, student-centered, and focused on partnership. Constructive, solutions-oriented dialogue is essential to supporting students' growth and wellbeing.

By following these guidelines, we ensure communication is efficient, professional, and respectful of everyone's time and role.

2. Governance and Leadership

2.1 Mission Statement

West Michigan Academy of Environmental Science strives to provide an environment that will foster creativity, promote academic achievement and develop sound character and citizenship principles emphasizing responsibility to the environment and society while maintaining and improving each child's self-esteem and self-concept.

2.2 Vision Statement

The Academy is a family of parents, their children, educators and service providers. Our purpose is learning, and the center of learning is each child. We share a sacred trust to work together (1) to empower each child with the knowledge and skills required for academic success, (2) to model the behaviors for each child to learn civic responsibility, civility, and sense of community, (3) to embrace our children through love and honor to help them work out problems in a nonviolent way, and (4) to cooperate with one another to make sure each child is ready for the next step in education, in the family, and in the community. Together, our children will find security and sensibility in being a member of the Academy's family.

2.3 Core Values

We value…

- Children becoming responsible citizens
- Learning as an essence of the human experience
- Fellowship through meaning, dignity, and sense of community

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- Leading with honor, integrity, respect, and trust
- Ownership of excellence, service, and results

2.4 Board of Directors, Authorizer, and Management Company

The Board of Directors is the governing body for the Academy. The Academy's Authorizer, Central Michigan University, appoints our board members. Meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 PM at the Academy. Special meetings are scheduled when needed. All Board meeting notices are posted at the main entrance of the Academy and are open to the public. Academy Board of Directors contact information is listed on the school website.

The Academy Board contracts with Choice Schools Associates, LLC for management and employment services.

5251 Clyde Park Avenue Southwest
Wyoming, MI 49509
Phone: 616-785-8440
Fax: 616-785-8455

2.5 School Administration

Elementary Principal: Nathan VanDuinen

Email: nathanvanduinen@choiceschools.com

Secondary Principal: Kevin Maitner

Email: kevinmaitner@choiceschools.com

2.6 Title IX Coordinator

Elementary Title IX Coordinator: Nathan VanDuinen
Email: nathanvanduinen@choiceschools.com
Secondary Title IX Coordinator: Kevin Maitner
Email: kevinmaitner@choiceschools.com
Phone: 616- 791-7454

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In accordance with federal law, the Title IX Coordinator oversees complaints involving discrimination based on sex. Please see section 12.11 for additional Title IX processes and procedures.

2.7 Governance and Accountability

In alignment with Board Policy 2700, the Academy publishes an annual P.A. 25 Report containing student achievement data, teacher qualifications, and school improvement status. It is available online and upon request.

2.8 Student Rights and Responsibilities

The Academy believes that student growth is best supported in a school environment rooted in safety, dignity, and mutual respect. We are committed to fostering a culture where every student, regardless of age, is valued, guided, and held to high expectations. Students are entitled to protections and privileges guaranteed by state and federal law. With those rights come important responsibilities to their school community.

The following rights and responsibilities form the foundation for how we learn, grow, and relate to one another:

The Right to Civil Dignity
All students have the right to be treated with kindness and respect and to learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination. With this right comes the responsibility to treat others with dignity and to avoid behavior that harms or excludes.

The Right to Education
Students have the right to attend a tuition-free public school and access a high-quality academic program. They are responsible for attending regularly, engaging fully, and following rules that support a productive learning environment.

The Right to Due Process
Students have the right to fair and respectful discipline, including the right to be heard and to appeal major decisions. They are expected to cooperate with school processes that promote learning and well-being.

The Right to Expression
Students may respectfully express ideas and beliefs, provided their expression does not disrupt learning, compromise safety, or violate community standards for respectful communication.

The Right to Privacy
Students have the right to reasonable privacy in personal matters and educational records. This right is balanced with the school's obligation to ensure safety and comply with the law.

The Right to Support and Belonging
Especially for our younger learners, students have the right to be nurtured, guided, and encouraged by trusted adults. They are responsible for doing their best, following directions, and helping their peers feel safe and included.

Expectations for student behavior, academic integrity, and community responsibility are further detailed in the school's Code of Student Conduct. This document is shared annually and is available at the end of this handbook. Parents and guardians are asked to review it with their children and return a signed acknowledgment form confirming their understanding.

3. Educational Program and Academic Policies

3.1 Educational Philosophy & Curriculum Overview

The Board of Directors for WMAES believes that student achievement is the primary focus of our instructional staff. Teachers will communicate a student's progress on PowerSchool weekly and at conferences once each trimester. Academic interventions are given if a student is not performing at grade level. Information about these interventions and the indicators used to determine need for them can be found below. The partnership between parents and instructional staff is very important. Communication must occur consistently to ensure all are aware of a student's progress.

3.2 Additional Instructional Programs

The following classes are an integral part of our curriculum. All students are expected to participate in these classes.

Art: Students are introduced to a variety of media and art appreciation.

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Spanish: Students are introduced to basic grammar, language skills, and different customs.

Technology: Instruction is offered in each learning environment and in the technology lab. Students will apply their technology learning throughout each of the classes/activities.

Physical Education: All students are required to participate in Physical Education. Students must have a note from home to be excused from Physical Education for one class period. Extended non-participation requires a physician's note. Suitable clothing and tennis shoes must be worn during class. (Suitable clothing: gym wear or dress code pants/shorts and shirt.)

3.3 Before and After School Care

Criteria for Admission/Withdrawal: Pre-registration is required for Green Kids 2024-25. Registration can be done on our WMAES website and is available for students Pre-K to 5th grade. A Child Information Record as well as signing the documents in the Green Kids handbook are required before admittance. Paperwork must be completed yearly.

Children may be withdrawn from the program at the discretion of a parent or legal guardian at any time. Please notify the Programs Coordinator in writing, on or before the date of withdrawal. Any changes made to your student's scheduled days must also be in writing to the Programs Coordinator.

West Michigan of Environmental Science may terminate service if any of the following occurs:

- Failure to pay childcare bill in a reasonable time (7 days after due date).
- Parents repeated failure to pick up their child before 6:00pm.
- Repeated misbehaviors causing harm to staff, students, or themselves.
- Any behavior or action of your child that threatens the well-being of another child, a staff member, or themselves that creates unsafe or threatening conditions for another child.
- Parent(s) disrespectful, threatening, or argumentative actions toward childcare staff, supervisor or toward another parent or child.

Before and After Care Program Hours: Green Kids can be used before or after school, Monday through Friday or Monday through Thursday for GSRP families. Green Kids availability and daily schedule will be determined based on staffing and will be communicated with families utilizing before and after care.

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Fees and Billing: Green Kids is $7.00 for morning care and $15.00 for afternoon care for a total of $22.00 a day if both are used. To ensure licensing ratios, adequate staffing, and easy tracking, Green Kids pre-registration will continue. If you'd like to change your schedule from your original registration or know of days your student will not need care, please contact the childcare director with those changes. If these changes are made at least two weeks prior to your billing cycle, we should be able to accommodate. We are not able to issue refunds for days already paid for unless absences are COVID related.

Childcare payments are required in advance. Payments can be made in person with cash or check, or online through an emailed invoice with credit card or bank account. Invoices will be billed based on your preferred billing cycle you choose on your registration form. If you'd like to change this at any time, please let us know.

Late Payments: All remaining balances from previous school years must be paid before attending Green Kids. If balances are not paid within 7 days of their due date, childcare services will be withheld until the balance is paid.

Late Fees: There will be a late fee for any pickups past the closing time of evening care. The charge will be $1.00 per minute per child. These late fees will be charged through an emailed invoice.

3.4 Summer Enrichment

WMAES offers a summer enrichment program to continue learning through the summer to maintain or increase a student's understanding. The goal is to allow the student to progress toward grade level or complete a course to receive credit lost during the school year. Your student could be recommended for the Summer Enrichment Program if he/she:

- Is below a 70% in a subject
- Failed a unit assessment
- Is reading below grade level
- Is below the 40th percentile on NWEA
- Is not showing full understanding of a concept taught in class
- Is not proficient on the most recent M-STEP
- High School students will automatically be registered for summer school if a class if failed to help keep them on track to earn the number of credits required for graduation

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Our instructional staff uses multiple factors to determine if a student needs this intervention.

3.5 High School Grade Classification

Each high school course, other than Environmental Leadership, has a credit value of 0.5 credits per semester. A student will earn credit for the course if their grade is a D (63%) or higher.

Each student's grade level will be determined at the beginning of the school year. Notification of student deficiency will occur at the end of each school year.

To be promoted to the next grade level, a student must earn a minimum number of credits. Students will be classified based on the number of credits they have earned:

- Freshman (9th Grade) - A student who has earned five and one-half (5.5) credits or fewer. Sophomore (10th Grade) 6 credits - To be promoted to 10th grade, a student must earn a minimum of six (6) credits.
- Junior (11th Grade) 12 credits - To be promoted to 11th grade, a student must earn a minimum of eleven and one-half (11.5) credits.
- Senior (12th Grade) 18 credits - To be promoted to 12th grade, a student must earn a minimum of seventeen and one-half (17.5) credits.

3.5.1 Early Graduation

Students who wish to graduate before their designated graduating class may submit an application for early graduation to the Principal. The Principal may approve the request if the student has fulfilled all graduation requirements and met all conditions for graduation established by the school and the Board.

3.6 Field Trips

The Academy supports field trips as meaningful extensions of classroom learning, aligned to curriculum and designed to enrich students' educational experience. All field trips must be approved in advance by school leadership. In accordance with Board Policy 2340, any trip that involves overnight travel, crosses state lines, or exceeds 100 miles requires prior approval from the Academy Board of Directors. All other trips must be approved by the Educational Service Provider.

Permission and Medical Forms
Written parental or legal guardian permission is required for a student to participate in

any field trip off school grounds. Parents may sign a blanket permission form for walking-distance field trips. For all other trips involving travel, a separate permission slip will be sent home prior to the trip. Teachers will provide parents with relevant trip information, including destination, departure and arrival times, lunch arrangements, spending money guidance, transportation details, and any special expectations. Emergency Medical Authorization forms must be on file and will be carried by staff on all trips.

Supervision and Chaperone Requirements
The Academy requires a minimum of one adult chaperone for every ten students, with adjustments made based on the age of students and the nature of the trip. Chaperones must meet the school's volunteer requirements and follow all school policies while supervising students.

Student Expectations and Participation
Students are expected to follow all school rules and the Code of Student Conduct while on field trips. Field trips are considered an extension of the school day, and appropriate behavior is expected at all times.

Students who have disobeyed school rules, defied teacher authority, or engaged in documented behavior that is aggressive, harassing, or intimidating at any point during the school year may be excluded from participation in field trips, including overnight trips. The decision to exclude a student will be made by the School Leader in consultation with the teacher(s) organizing the trip.

Students are responsible for following all field trip expectations and for paying any costs associated with participation. However, no student will be denied access to a field trip due to financial hardship. Families who are unable to cover trip costs are encouraged to contact the School Leader in advance to discuss accommodations.

Alternate Learning Arrangements
Students who do not attend a field trip are required to attend school on that day. Alternative learning activities will be provided to ensure continued instructional engagement during the school day.

3.7 Report Cards / Progress Reports / Conferences

Twice each school year, parents must meet with the child's teacher to receive a progress report on the child's academic, behavioral, and citizenship progress. Parents

are encouraged to discuss the information on the report card with their child and to encourage excellence in achievement and behavior. The purpose of report cards is to communicate to parents and students the child's progress on the knowledge and skills the student is working on in class and to provide insight into the child's behavior.

3.7.1 Report Cards

STANDARDS BASED GRADING:

Report cards are issued at the end of each grading period and provide a clear picture of how your child is progressing toward grade-level expectations. Our school uses standards-based grading, which means student performance is measured against specific learning goals rather than being compared to other students. This approach helps families understand exactly what their child knows and can do, and where they may need more support. Instead of receiving a single overall grade, students are rated on their progress toward mastering individual skills and concepts in each subject area. This allows for a more accurate and meaningful reflection of your child's learning and growth.

3.7.2 Progress Reports

Academic reports for all students are distributed after each quarter and semesters end.

3.7.3 Parent Teacher Conferences

Every elementary learning environment educator will arrange at least one planned conference with each child's parent(s)/guardian per year. It is understood that educators shall, if necessary, arrange additional conferences with parents. Conferences with educators must be scheduled during non-instructional time.

3.8 Retention

3.8.1 Retention

Retention may also be suggested if your student: 1.) Has excessive absences and tardies that are having a negative impact in the student's academic progress; 2.) Is not making necessary academic gains as defined by the school staff. If a teacher suggests retention, summer school will be mandatory. Summer school will stress academic content (Math/ELA). In recommending retention, the student's well-being, emotional maturity, social skills and other factors will all be considered. The school will notify

parents, as early in the school year as possible, that retention is a possibility in order to develop an intervention plan.

3.8.2 K-12 Literacy and Dyslexia Law

At our school, students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade take state-approved reading assessments three times a year to track their literacy growth. These assessments help us identify students who may need additional support. If your child is not meeting grade-level expectations, you will be notified in writing. When a reading concern is identified, your child will receive an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). This personalized plan outlines the specific support your child will receive during the school day and includes activities and strategies you can use at home. You will be involved in developing the IRIP and kept informed of your child's progress through regular updates. Reading support is tailored to your child's needs and may include small group or one-on-one instruction using proven, evidence-based methods. We value partnership with families and encourage open communication. You are welcome to request a meeting at any time to discuss your child's reading progress or the interventions in place.

Starting in the 2027–2028 school year, all Michigan schools will screen students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade for signs of dyslexia. If characteristics of dyslexia are identified, your child will receive reading intervention that is explicit, systematic, multisensory, and aligned with the science of reading. For students in grades 4 through 12, screening will occur when there is evidence of characteristics of dyslexia or a dyslexia diagnosis. If screening confirms characteristics of dyslexia, students will receive targeted intervention using structured literacy approaches. Instruction will be adapted to meet each student's needs to ensure reading success.

Families play a vital role in supporting literacy development. If your child has been evaluated for dyslexia or a learning disability outside of school, please share that information with us. That information can help guide how we support your child. Additionally, students who qualify may receive services under federal special education law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

3.9 Homework

Homework is a necessary and integral part of a child's education. The purpose of homework is to reinforce those skills and concepts taught in the learning environment.

Homework also includes work not finished during class time. Parental support and cooperation are very important in this area. Helping students with their homework shows you are interested in their education. A request for homework for a child that is ill should be made the first morning the child is absent. This will allow time for the educator to organize the materials. Homework may be picked up in the office the following school day morning.

3.10 Testing and Assessment

The Academy administers state mandated assessments at grades 3rd-8th. The Academy also administers a computer based adaptive assessment in math and reading three times a year in grades K-8. This enables us to more effectively and accurately monitor the growth and identify the needs of our students. The results of the state assessment test, and the computer-based test, are used to guide instruction, target individual student needs, and assist in the improvement of curriculum and instruction. Parents will be sent individual scores of their children when they are available. Test scores will be included in the child's cumulative folder. Testing out of High School Courses will be available per office policy.

3.11 Social Emotional Learning Program

Our school is committed to fostering the social and emotional well-being of all students. We believe that developing strong social and emotional skills is crucial for academic success, healthy relationships, and overall well-being. Our comprehensive SEL curriculum focuses on building self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. We integrate SEL into our daily learning environment through dedicated lessons, activities, and by incorporating SEL concepts into various subjects. We believe that a positive and supportive learning environment is essential for students to thrive, and we encourage open communication and collaboration between students, teachers, and families to ensure that all students have the tools and support they need to succeed.

3.12 Character Choices Program

We believe strong character is essential to student success. Our Character Choices program focuses on nine core traits: Respect, Responsibility, Cooperation, Compassion, Good Judgment, Integrity, Perseverance, Courage, and Citizenship.

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These traits are modeled, taught, and reinforced throughout the school day and embedded in classroom routines, academic instruction, and school culture. Families are encouraged to support these values at home to strengthen consistency and impact.

Whether through direct lessons, restorative practices, or daily interactions, Character Choices helps students grow into thoughtful, responsible individuals, prepared for school, life, and leadership.

4. Student Support Services

4.1 Special Education and 504 Plans

The Academy to provide appropriate educational programs for children who are identified with disabilities and who have an approved Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The Academy embraces the instructional practice known as inclusion. When the IEP calls for pullout services, the student will be permitted to leave the classroom to work with a properly trained professional special educator. The goal of special education programming is to provide students with an educational program that best meets their individual needs in the least restrictive environment. This means that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students will be provided programs and/or within the regular education classroom with the necessary support.

The Academy enjoys an excellent working relationship with the local intermediate school district , Kent ISD. The ISD provides a parent resource center which provides parents with comprehensive resources on rights of the disabled, responsibilities of the school, support systems for parents and children, and educational programs available.

If you have concerns about your child's progress, arrange to speak with your child's teacher. For further information on all special education services and programming, contact the school leader.

4.2 Academic Interventions

Students who are not on grade level will be given opportunities for in school and after school tutorials during the school year and for summer school to make sure they satisfy promotion requirements. Parents will be notified when their child is receiving interventions to establish support at home.

4.2 Child Find

The objective of the Academy is to ensure that the child receives the instruction, support, and services needed to succeed in school. It is the Academy's intention to:

- Engage first in preventative and targeted instruction and intervention
- Design and conduct comprehensive evaluations that identify each student's individual learning needs, ensure proper implementation of Child Find, and determine the most appropriate instructional programs and accommodations based on the student's performance, educational opportunities, and response to high-quality instruction over time.
- Select every component of the evaluation based on its relevance for creating the student's instructional program.

Consistent with the mandates in IDEA 2004, a comprehensive evaluation includes:

- A variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child (Sec. 300.304(b)(1))
- An observation of the student in the learning environment, including the regular classroom setting (Sec. 300.305(a)(1))
- Determination that underperformance is not primarily the result of a visual, hearing, or motor disability; intellectual disability; emotional disturbance; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency (Sec. 300.309(a)(3)(i-vi))
- Determination that underperformance is not primarily the result of a lack of instruction, i.e., student performance data indicating that the student (a) was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings delivered by qualified personnel (Sec. 300.309(b)(1)), and (b) received repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals (Sec. 300.309(b)(2)), to ensure that underachievement is not due to lack of appropriate instruction. Additionally, consideration should be given to whether the student's attendance has significantly limited their access to instruction, as chronic absenteeism is strongly correlated with reduced academic achievement.

Also consistent with IDEA 2004, the Academy believes that:

- The determination of a specific learning disability must be made by the child's parents and a team of qualified professionals (Sec. 300.308)

- Parents must be provided with the results of repeated assessments of achievement (Sec. 300.309(b)(2))
- For students participating in a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) program, parents must be notified about their state's policies about the collection of student performance data, strategies for increasing the child's rate of learning, and their right to request an evaluation (Sec. 300.311(a)(7)(ii))
- The MTSS process must not be used to delay or deny an evaluation but should offer data, both academic and behavioral, to help problem solve and analyze issues regarding learning and help inform the development of effective instructional plans for students found to have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
- Evidence of a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement or both should be included, and must be designed to help guide the development of the child's instructional program.

MTSS records can indicate whether or not the child (a) achieves adequately for age or grade level when provided with appropriate instruction, and (b) makes sufficient progress to meet age or grade level standards based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention. Evidence that the student is improving when provided with general education interventions indicates that the student is not in need of special education services, a requirement for placement in special education.

4.3 English Language Learner (ELL) Services

The school is committed to supporting English Learners (ELs) as they develop proficiency in English while accessing grade-level academic content. In accordance with federal Title III guidelines and the Michigan Department of Education's English Learner policies, the following procedures and supports are in place:

All students enrolling in the school complete a Home Language Survey (HLS) as required by the State of Michigan. If a language other than English is indicated, students are screened for English language proficiency using the WIDA Screener (Grades 1–12) or WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten.

Students identified as English Learners receive instructional support based on their English Language Proficiency (ELP) level. Services may include:

- Designated English Language Development (ELD) instruction

- Push-in or pull-out support from an ELL specialist or trained staff
- Use of appropriate language accommodations and instructional technologies
- Ongoing collaboration between general education and ELL staff

The amount and type of support is determined by each student's ELP level, academic needs, and classroom context.

The school reviews ELL program implementation annually and ensures compliance with Civil Rights obligations, Title I and Title III funding requirements, and MDE guidelines.

4.5 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance

The Academy is committed to supporting all students, including those experiencing homelessness. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence have the right to:

- Immediate enrollment, even if records are unavailable at the time of registration.
- Attend their school of origin or the school nearest to their temporary home.
- Receive support services, including access to free school meals and school supplies.
- Full participation in all school programs and activities.

If your family is experiencing housing instability, please contact the school's Homeless Liaison, Samantha Henry, for support and assistance. All information shared will remain confidential.

5. Dress Code and Appearance

5.1 General Dress Code Guidelines

All students are expected to wear the approved uniform shirt and pants. Students may be asked to wear special clothing for unique outdoor activities as well as for special curricular activities. All clothing must be free of writing and adornments and rips/tears/holes.

Appropriate School Uniform

- WMAES Polo, Sweatshirt, Zip Up or T-shirt
    - WMAES top must be the outermost layer
- Solid Color Pants/Shorts, or WMAES Uniform Bottoms
- Closed-Toe Shoes (No sandals)

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5.2 Spirit Day / **Non-Uniform Days**

While our standard policy requires all students to wear the approved uniform, there may be occasions when students are permitted to be out of uniform for special events or activities.

Guidelines for Non-Uniform Days

- **School Appropriateness:** All clothing must be appropriate for the school setting. Clothing must not display references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, violence, or any other inappropriate themes.
- **Condition of Clothing:** Clothing must be free of rips, tears, holes, or frayed edges. Garments with adornments (such as studs, sequins, or excessive decorations) are not permitted.
- **Coverage:** Overly revealing clothing is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, crop tops, midriff-baring shirts, low-cut tops, short shorts/skirts, or clothing that exposes undergarments.
- **Pajamas:** Pajamas and sleepwear are not permitted, unless explicitly noted for a such as in the event of a spirit day.
- **Footwear:** Closed-toe shoes are required at all times for safety. Sandals, slippers, or flip-flops are not allowed.
- **Writing/Logos:** Clothing with writing or graphics must not contain inappropriate content as described above. Large logos, slogans, or advertising are discouraged.

5.3 Personal Property

The Academy will work with parents to protect personal property. Reasonable guidelines will contribute to our success.

School Materials: Students are responsible for taking care of school owned materials and are expected to pay replacement or damage costs if applicable.

Clothing: The Academy recognizes that all clothing is very expensive and must be cared for. Proper care includes labeling articles that the child will most likely remove upon arrival at school. Items such as coats/jackets, hats, gloves, and boots should be labeled. The Academy does not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged articles of clothing.

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Water Bottles: Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day. Water bottles must be made of safe, non-glass materials and should be clearly labeled with the student's name. Glass containers are not permitted for safety reasons. Students may refill their water bottles at designated bottle-filling stations throughout the building.

Money: Parents are encouraged to be sure the child has properly secured any money brought to school. If a large sum of money is required, parents are encouraged to see the teacher before or after school and make payment or the teacher will collect money upon the child's arrival at school. Parents are encouraged to place money sent to school in an envelope with a note stating the reason the money is being sent. The child's name and teacher's name should be clearly written on the outside of the envelope. Parents are encouraged not to allow children to bring large amounts of money to school. The Academy does not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged money.

Electronic Equipment: Cellular phones, or other personal electronic devices, not school related, shall not be turned on at any time during school hours. If these devices are found to be powered on or in view, they will be confiscated until the end of the day. A second offense will necessitate a parent meeting to retrieve the device. Further offenses will be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct and subject to disciplinary action. The Academy does not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices.

6. Health and Safety

The health and wellness of our students is a top priority. Families are expected to partner with the school to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all students.

6.1 Illness and Injury Guidelines

Students who are ill must remain at home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication. This includes fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or any contagious condition. Parents and guardians should notify the school office when a student is absent due to illness. The school may require a doctor's note for return in cases of communicable diseases.

The school does not have facilities to care for the children when they are sick. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified using the information you provided on your Child Information Card. Please have a plan so that you, or

your emergency person, will be able to pick your child up promptly if necessary. Children should not attend school when the following conditions are present:

- Temperature above 100 degrees.
- Unusual drowsiness, excessive sleep or the child appears ill.
- Vomiting two or more times in a 24-hour period.
- Three or more loose or watery bowel movements in a 24-hour period.
- Body rash with fever.
- Severe cough or difficulty breathing.
- Red swollen eyes or pus draining from eyes.
- Open areas on the skin
- Ringworm, lice, or pinworm.
- Any other confirmed communicable illnesses

6.2 Medications at School

Medications will only be administered at school with written authorization from a parent or guardian and, where applicable, a physician, in accordance with Board Policy 5330. Emergency medications (e.g., EpiPens, inhalers) must be provided directly to the school office in their original containers, accompanied by all required medical documentation. Students are not permitted to self carry prescription medications.

6.3 Immunization Requirements

In accordance with Board Policy 5320 and state law (MCL 333.9201 et seq.), all students must provide documentation of up-to-date immunizations or an authorized waiver prior to enrollment or by the first day of school. Acceptable documentation includes an official immunization record, a physician-certified medical contraindication form, or a certified nonmedical waiver issued by the local health department following a vaccine education session. Students without proper documentation may not attend school until requirements are met. When providing health information to families in grades 6, 9, or 12, schools will also include information about the meningococcal and HPV vaccines.

6.4 Physical & Mental Well-being

Our school is committed to supporting the physical and mental wellness of every student. In alignment with Board Policy 8510, we provide age-appropriate opportunities

for physical activity throughout the day, including physical education, recess, and movement-based classroom activities. Students are encouraged to develop healthy habits that support lifelong wellness, such as regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and responsible screen use. Our physical education program emphasizes fitness, motor skill development, teamwork, and a positive attitude toward physical activity. We also promote nutrition education and provide clean, safe eating environments with access to fresh drinking water. Families are vital partners in reinforcing these wellness habits outside of school. Together, we aim to support the whole child physically, mentally, and emotionally.

To further support student wellness, we offer access to the School Assistance Program (SAP) through a partnership with Pine Rest Mental Health Services. This program provides free, confidential counseling with up to five sessions per episode of care for students and their household members. Counseling is available for a wide range of challenges including academic stress, anxiety, grief, and family transitions.
In-the-moment phone support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In addition to counseling, SAP offers families access to:

- Personal Advantage, an online library of articles and tools on health, wellness, legal, and financial topics.
- Wallet Wisdom, a financial wellness resource with calculators, webinars, and planning tools.
- Free consultations on elder care, financial planning, legal concerns, infant feeding, and real estate questions.

All SAP services are voluntary and confidential. The school is not notified when students or families use the program. Participation in SAP does not affect a student's school record or academic standing.

To access SAP,

- Call 800.442.0809
- press 1, and follow the prompts.
- When prompted, say: "I have a SAP with [Insert School Name]."

You can also visit www.pinerest.org/PAL and enter your school-specific username.

We encourage families to use this resource to promote mental well-being, strengthen family resilience, and support student success.

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6.5 Concussion Awareness

In accordance with Michigan law, the Academy provides annual concussion awareness education to families of students participating in any school-sponsored athletic activity.

Before participating, students and their parent/guardian must review a concussion information sheet and sign an acknowledgment form. These forms are kept on file with the school. Coaches and school staff are trained to recognize concussion symptoms and follow proper return-to-play procedures.

If your child is injured during a school activity, we are committed to their health and recovery and will follow all return-to-learn and return-to-play protocols.

6.6 Emergency Contacts / Child Information Card

Each year, families must complete and return an Emergency Medical Authorization Form and Child Information Record. These documents provide critical contact information and medical directives in the event of illness, injury, or emergency. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to keep this information accurate and up to date throughout the school year. A copy of the form will be maintained in an accessible file in the school office. Staff accompanying students on off-site events, such as field trips, athletic events, and competitions, are required to carry these emergency forms. Please notify the school immediately of any changes in phone numbers, emergency contacts, or medical conditions. Failure to provide updated information may delay emergency care.

6.7 Student Accident Insurance

The Academy cares deeply about the safety and well-being of all students. At the start of each school year, families are given the option to enroll in a group student accident insurance plan offered through an outside provider. This insurance is voluntary and paid for by the parent or guardian.

Participation in certain school-sponsored athletic, co-curricular, or other higher-risk activities may require families to confirm that the student is covered under an existing insurance policy or to purchase supplemental accident insurance. A signed statement of coverage may be required before a student is allowed to participate in those activities.

Information about available student accident insurance options, including how to enroll, is available in the school office.

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6.8 Pesticide Use & Prior Notification

The Academy utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that utilizes all available and appropriate techniques to attain the goal of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize pest exclusion and biological controls. However, as with most pest control programs, chemical controls may also be utilized at our facility.

This notice has been provided in compliance with MCL324.8316. We are also required to notify you of your right to review the IPM Plan and IPM records. View the Prior Notification Request form here.

6.9 Asbestos Management Plan

As per AHERA (40CFR 763.80) Rule, the Academy is required to notify all students, staff, guardians, outside contractors, and community members of the availability of the AHERA Management Plan for their inspection and review. A copy of this plan is available at the school office for your review during normal business hours or on the schools transparency website located on their school website. At this time there are no planned asbestos abatement activities for the upcoming year. Should the need for abatement arise, all building occupants and their guardians will be notified in writing in advance.

6.10 School Safety and Emergency Procedures

The Academy places safety as a high priority. We have many proactive strategies in place that are not only aligned with the law, but are also nationally known best practices.

6.10.1 Standard Emergency Response Plan

To protect the safety of students and staff during emergencies, our school uses the Standard Response Protocol (SRP), a nationally recognized framework developed by the “I Love U Guys” Foundation. SRP is a clear, action-based emergency response model designed to equip schools with consistent terminology and procedures for addressing a range of incidents, including weather events, accidents, intruders, and hazardous conditions.

The SRP provides five specific directives that guide our response to different types of emergencies. These actions are easy to learn, simple to follow, and universally

understood within the school community. They are reinforced through routine training and drills throughout the school year.

These five (5) actions are used when SRP is initiated:

HOLD - In your classroom or area
Protocol used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.

SECURE - Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors
Protocol used to safeguard people within the building.

LOCKDOWN - Locks, Lights, Out of Sight
Protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.

EVACUATE - Evacuate may be followed by a location, and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.

SHELTER - State the hazard and the safety strategy for group and self-protection.

All staff receive annual SRP and Emergency Operations Plan training. Students participate in required safety drills including lockdown, evacuation, and severe weather scenarios, in full compliance with state law and Board Policy. These efforts ensure that everyone on campus knows how to respond appropriately in various situations.

In the event of an emergency, families will be notified promptly through our automated messaging system by phone, text, and email as quickly as it is safe and practicable to do so. Should relocation or extended response procedures be necessary, instructions will be shared clearly and promptly. The SRP strengthens the school's overall emergency preparedness by providing a reliable and unified language and approach to safety for staff, students, and families. See 6.10.4 for specific lockdown drill information.

6.10.2 Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire and tornado drills are regularly scheduled to educate students in safe practice in case of an emergency. The teacher will review rules of safety and evacuation routes with students. Evacuation routes and tornado watch locations are posted in each classroom and area of the Academy. The teacher or person responsible for a group of students will take attendance to determine the presence of all students who are in

attendance on that day. Students and staff will return to class when the teacher is given approval via verbal or hand signaling by the School Leader or school secretary.

6.10.3 Tornado Emergencies

Students will not be dismissed from school when there is a tornado watch, warning, or actual tornado. During a tornado watch, students will remain inside the building in designated areas, local radio stations will be monitored, and staff will take safety precautions. Students will be released to their parents or guardians, or designated adults as requested. During a tornado warning or tornado, all students and staff members will remain in the building. Everyone will take shelter in designated areas and will follow outlined safety precautions. Students may be detained beyond the usual dismissal time. Parents and guardians who have come to the school to pick up students are encouraged to stay at school until the tornado warning or tornado has passed and safe conditions prevail. Out of respect for parental responsibility for their children, a student will be released to parents and guardians only.

6.10.4 Lock Down Drills

In compliance with Michigan law and in partnership with local law enforcement, the school conducts a minimum of three (3) lockdown drills each school year to prepare students and staff for emergency situations that may involve an intruder or other threat to building security.

Lockdown drills are designed to practice procedures that help keep students and staff safe in the unlikely event of a real emergency. These drills focus on:

- Securing classroom doors and limiting visibility
- Remaining silent and out of sight
- Following directions from school personnel and first responders
- Practicing calm, orderly behavior under stress

Drills are age-appropriate and developmentally sensitive. Teachers are trained to communicate the seriousness of the drill while helping students feel safe and supported. Staff are encouraged to review and practice safety procedures in advance with students.

We understand that lockdown drills can be unsettling for some students. Teachers and support staff are available to answer questions and provide reassurance. If your child

experiences anxiety related to safety drills, please contact the school so that additional support can be offered.

If a real lockdown occurs, parents and guardians will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so through official communication channels. In such events, parents and guardians should not attempt to enter the building or call staff directly. The safety and accountability of all students depend on uninterrupted emergency protocols.

7. Nutrition and Wellness

7.1 School Meals Program

Our school participates in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program which ensures access to nutritious meals for all students. Our schools participate in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), which allows us to offer free meals to each student.

- Breakfast and lunch are available daily, free of charge to all enrolled students.
- Menus are shared available in the front office and may be shared electronically.
- Students with food allergies or medical dietary restrictions must have a completed and physician-signed dietary accommodations form on file with the school office. Accommodations cannot be made without this documentation.
- Outside food deliveries (such as DoorDash, Uber Eats, or fast food) are not permitted for students during the school day, including lunchtime. This policy exists to support food safety and minimize classroom disruption.
- Meal times are structured to build student independence and foster respectful, community-centered behavior. Students are expected to clean up after themselves, practice good manners, and follow staff directions at all times.

Please contact the front office with any questions regarding meal service, accommodations, or application assistance. We are committed to ensuring all students have access to safe, healthy meals in a welcoming environment.

Non-Discrimination Statement (USDA Required)

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete the Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, available online at: USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a description of the alleged discriminatory action.

The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. **Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

7.2 Snacks

The Academy is committed to promoting student wellness and supporting healthy eating habits during the school day. Students may bring a small, nutritious snack from home to eat during designated times. Snacks should be manageable in portion and promote focus and learning. Water is the preferred beverage; non-carbonated drinks are permitted. Soda and energy drinks are not allowed. In accordance with Board Policy 8510, all food and beverages that are provided on campus during the school day, including those brought for classroom snacks, birthday treats, or holiday celebrations, must comply with the food and beverage standards approved by the Educational Service Provider. Students are not permitted to share food, as this helps protect students with food allergies and sensitivities. Families should follow any posted classroom allergy guidelines. If your child has food allergies or dietary restrictions, please notify the school and ensure this information is recorded on the Child Information

Card. These practices help support a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment for all students.

7.3 Birthday Snacks and Holiday Celebrations

Sometimes families like to provide a special treat on a child's birthday. We welcome the opportunity to celebrate. Please speak to your child's teacher about birthday treats. Classes may have holiday parties throughout the year. Parties must comply with the section 7.2.

7.4 School Wellness Policy

The Academy promotes student health and wellness in accordance with Board Policy 8510 – School Wellness Policy. This Board-approved policy supports healthy eating, nutrition education, and regular physical activity through measurable goals and school-wide practices. All foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day, including classroom celebrations, must meet the nutrition standards established by the Board and aligned with USDA guidelines. The policy also encourages parent, guardian, and community participation in the development, implementation, and periodic review of wellness practices.

8. Arrival, Dismissal, and Transportation

8.1 Student Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

The Academy's arrival and dismissal procedures are designed to ensure the safety and efficiency of student transitions to and from school each day. All students, parents, and staff are expected to follow the established guidelines, including designated drop-off and pick-up locations, traffic flow patterns, and supervision requirements. Families are responsible for ensuring that students arrive on time, prepared for learning, and are promptly picked up at the end of the day. Courteous and respectful behavior is expected from all individuals during these times to maintain a positive and orderly environment. Specific details regarding arrival and dismissal expectations, along with any disciplinary consequences for repeated violations, can be found in the Code of Student Conduct.

8.2 Early Dismissal and Vacation Requests

The student may need to leave school during the school day. The parent is to receive approval of the Principal in advance by written or personal request for a justifiable

reason, including such early dismissals for doctor's appointments, religious observations, family funerals, and other prearranged events. Students will only be released to parents and designated adults. In child custody situations, the custodial parent must properly inform the Principal of any limitations.

Excessive early dismissals will be viewed similarly to tardies.

The school discourages the practice of taking family vacations on school days or during times other than regular school vacation periods. If a student will be out of school for a family vacation, they will be responsible for making up any work upon returning. When you must schedule a family trip during Academy time, contact your Principal at least one (1) week in advance to discuss how your child will complete missed assignments. Time given for completion of make up work is (1) day for every day absent.

8.3 Transportation

Parents are responsible for transportation of their children to and from school if the school does not provide transportation. Parents dropping off or picking up their children are reminded to pay close attention to movement of students and vehicles in the parking area. The Handbook and Code of Conduct rules extend to the bus and any school sanctioned event on or off campus. Students are under the authority of the bus driver while they are on the bus. The driver is to enforce this Handbook and Code of Conduct and report all student behavior problems to the Principal who will be responsible for disciplinary action. Failure to follow this Handbook and Code of Conduct while on the bus may result in termination of the privilege of riding the school bus, in addition to other appropriate disciplinary actions.

9. Technology and Internet Use

9.1 Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy

Students are encouraged to use the Academy's computers, network, devices, applications, and internet access for educational purposes under staff supervision. Students must complete a mandatory training session/program before using Academy Information & Technology Resources and/or being assigned a school email address, in accordance with AG 7540.03 and 7540A. Before being granted access to Academy technology resources or a school-issued email account, students and their parent or guardian must also sign the Academy's Acceptable Use Agreement. These tools support learning, creativity, communication, and

research. Use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and students are expected to act responsibly, ethically, and legally at all times.

Unauthorized or inappropriate use, including violations of this policy, may result in loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Handbook, and/or legal consequences. Students will receive instruction on the responsible use of Academy technology resources and must sign the Academy's Acceptable Use Agreement before accessing Academy technology resources or receiving a school-issued email account. Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss responsible technology use with their children and reinforce the expectations outlined in this policy. Students should make choices that reflect both their family's values and the Academy's standards.

The Academy's technology systems, including student use of personal communication devices (PCDs) when on school property, at school events, or connected to school systems, rely on users following the guidelines below.

Students must comply with all Academy-established cybersecurity and acceptable use procedures.

A. GENERAL TECHNOLOGY USE GUIDELINES

- Students must use Academy technology for academic purposes only.
- Internet use must relate to learning, assignments, or approved educational activities.
- Recreational use—such as gaming, streaming, or social media browsing—is not allowed.
- Students may only use their own accounts. Sharing or using another person's username or password is prohibited.
- Students are responsible for the physical condition of devices issued to them. Devices must be returned in good condition, and any damage or loss must be reported immediately. Devices may not be repaired independently.
- Accessing, changing, or deleting others' files or impersonating other users is not permitted.
- Students may not use school devices or networks for illegal actions, including:
    - Hacking or bypassing security systems
    - Piracy or copyright infringement
    - Harassment, threats, or stalking
    - Distributing obscene or explicit content (including sexting)

    - Selling drugs or other illegal goods
- Students may only access social media platforms for educational purposes as part of a documented lesson plan or written teacher assignment. Any use outside of these parameters will result in the suspension of privileges.
- Content or activities that violate state/federal laws or school policy are prohibited.
- Using school technology for personal gain, product sales, or political campaigning (unless directly tied to coursework) is not allowed.
- Students with disabilities who qualify for a Section 504 or Individualized Education Program (IEP) will receive accommodations in accordance with their Section 504 plan or IEP. Accommodations are determined by the student's IEP or Section 504 team in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- All technology platforms used must be vetted for SOPPA compliance, including verification that vendors do not sell student data, use it for targeted advertising, or build student profiles beyond educational purposes.
- Parents/guardians may request activity summaries, content filtering categories, or opt out of well-being AI monitoring. Requests should be submitted in writing to the school administrator.

B. NETWORK ETIQUETTE

- All digital communication must be polite, respectful, and school-appropriate.
- Offensive, obscene, or abusive language is strictly prohibited.
- Students may not share personal information (e.g., phone numbers, addresses, passwords) without parent and teacher approval.
- Never agree to meet anyone contacted online without guardian permission.
- Students should manage their inboxes by deleting unneeded messages regularly.
- Any message that is inappropriate, threatening, or uncomfortable, especially with sexually explicit content, must be reported immediately.
- Students and staff are discouraged from accessing school systems from personal home devices due to security risks.
- Use of school systems must comply with all district content filtering and monitoring protocols, and students may not attempt to bypass them.

C. PROHIBITED CONTENT

Students may not use Academy networks or devices to view, send, post, or share content that includes:

- Cyberbullying — repeated and hostile online behavior such as:

    - Spreading rumors or insults online
    - Sending harassing or threatening messages
    - Sharing embarrassing or explicit photos/videos
    - Posting misleading or altered images to cause harm
- Inappropriate material — including:
    - Pornographic, explicit, or obscene content
    - Hate speech or discriminatory messages
    - Graphic violence not related to schoolwork
    - Content promoting illegal activity or self-harm
    - False or defamatory claims about others
    - Commercial or for-profit advertisements (exceptions may apply for class projects)
    - Political lobbying not connected to academic assignments
        - *Note: Expressing views to elected officials is allowed and not restricted.*
- The Educational Service Provider may temporarily or permanently unblock educational content that was mistakenly filtered. All unblocking requests must be submitted using the designated form, include a documented educational purpose, and be approved by the supervising teacher and the Web Accessibility Coordinator. All decisions will be logged and reviewed quarterly. If a request is denied, the requesting staff member may appeal to the School Leader, whose decision is final.
- All filtering decisions must comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and requests to unblock content must include a documented educational purpose.
- Temporary access to blocked educational content may be requested by submitting a justification form. Access requires approval by a teacher and administrator, with all requests logged and reviewed quarterly.
- Instructional content that includes sensitive or mature material must have a clear academic purpose, be appropriate for the students' age and developmental level, and receive prior written approval from the Superintendent.

D. COPYRIGHT AND DOWNLOADING

- Students must respect copyrights and cite all sources appropriately.
- Plagiarism, including copying online content without credit, is prohibited.
- Downloading to school hard drives is not allowed. Files may be downloaded to approved storage devices only with teacher supervision.
- All downloaded files must be scanned for viruses.

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- Students who create innovative tech projects should share them with the School Leader for possible recognition and to address ownership rights when hosted on school servers.
- All student use of copyrighted materials must follow fair use guidelines.
- Copyright violations or unauthorized use of subscription-based platforms will result in consequences aligned with academic dishonesty policies.

E. ONLINE COMMUNICATION

- Students must have staff approval to use group emails, forums, chats, or similar platforms.
- Unauthorized use of private messaging apps or chat rooms is prohibited.
- All communication through school platforms must follow school policies.
- Personal emails cannot be sent or received using school accounts or systems.
- Students are expected to use communication platforms that are accessible and compliant with district accessibility standards.

F. PRIVACY AND MONITORING

- Students have no expectation of privacy when using Academy devices or networks. All activity may be monitored. Parents/guardians may request activity summaries with reasonable notice, which will be provided in redacted form to protect other users' confidentiality.
- The Academy may monitor all files, emails, websites, and communications for compliance purposes; however, all data collection, use, and disclosure must align with SOPPA and be limited to what is educationally necessary.
- Illegal or threatening behavior will be reported to law enforcement or other appropriate authorities.
- The Academy designates a Web Accessibility Coordinator to oversee digital accessibility, content filtering, and compliance with CIPA, COPPA, and ADA. This individual coordinates training and responds to content access requests or alerts.
- Digital content used in instruction or communication will meet accessibility standards. In cases where monitoring software interferes with a student's disability-related needs or accommodations, alternative methods of access and supervision will be developed in consultation with the student's support team.
- Vendors with access to student data must have written agreements with the Academy that include provisions for data breach notifications, data destruction timelines, and restrictions on further data sharing, consistent with SOPPA requirements.

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- Parents/guardians have the right to inspect, review, and correct information maintained by third-party vendors and may request a list of all operators and platforms with whom their child's data is shared.

G. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS

- Only Academy-approved AI tools may be used during school hours or on school devices.
- AI tools may support learning and creativity, but may not be used to create or complete assignments unless explicitly directed by a teacher. Students are prohibited from using AI/NLP tools to generate original work for submission unless authorized, consistent with AG 7540.03.
- AI may not be used to cheat, impersonate others, or generate harmful, misleading, or false content.
- Students may not enter personal information into AI systems without consent from a parent/guardian and teacher.
- AI-generated work must be reviewed critically and cited if used; students must not present AI content as their original work.
- Misusing AI, including trying to bypass controls or create inappropriate material, may lead to loss of access or disciplinary action.
- All AI use is monitored and subject to the same rules and appeal processes as other technologies.
- AI use must comply with FERPA, COPPA, SOPPA, and all applicable privacy laws.
- AI use must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA).
- AI tools must be SOPPA-compliant, meaning any student data shared with AI vendors must be necessary for educational purposes, protected under a data sharing agreement, and not used for commercial purposes.
- Parents and guardians may opt out of student use of AI tools if they raise concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, or age-appropriateness. A written notice is required for this opt-out. In such cases, the Academy will provide an alternative assignment that fulfills the same academic objectives, subject to teacher approval.

H. STUDENT APPEAL PROCESS

If a student feels that a technology restriction or disciplinary action is unfair:

1. Submit a written appeal to the School Leader within 5 school days of the incident. During the appeal, temporary supervised access may be granted at the discretion of the School Leader and must be documented in writing.
2. The School Leader will respond in writing within 10 school days.
3. If unresolved, the student may request a hearing with the Technology Committee, which will issue a final decision within 15 school days.
4. During the appeal, temporary supervised access may be granted unless it poses a safety or legal concern.

J. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR PERMISSIBLE USE

- To ensure fairness and transparency, a standing Technology Committee will meet at least twice per year to review educational platforms and AI tools, recommend which tools are allowed, and address new digital trends and concerns.
- The committee uses clear criteria to evaluate tools, including compliance with SOPPA, data privacy standards, educational value, safety, age-appropriateness, legality, and alignment with community standards.
- Appeals of committee decisions must be submitted within 10 school days to the school leader and will be reviewed by an independent panel with representatives from staff, parents, and administration.

K. LEGAL REFERENCES

This policy complies with the following laws and regulations:

- Board Policies 7000s (view on school website)
- H.R. 4577, P.L. 106-554 – Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000
- 47 U.S.C. 254(h), (l) – Communications Act of 1934, as amended
- 20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq. – Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- 18 U.S.C. 2256, 1460, 2246 – Federal laws on child safety and explicit content
- 29 U.S.C. § 794 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- 42 U.S.C. § 12101 – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- 20 U.S.C. § 1232g – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501–6506 – Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
- 105 ILCS 85 – Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA)

9.2 Technology Equipment Checkout

Contact for support.

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9.3 COPPA Acknowledgment

In accordance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Academy does not permit websites or online applications to collect personal information from students under 13 without prior verifiable parental consent. Only COPPA-compliant digital platforms that have entered into school-approved agreements may be used with students in this age group. Parents and guardians may request a full list of approved operators and opt out of specific tools.

9.4 Student Wireless Communication Device Policy

Students may use the school office phone to contact a parent or designated caregiver for school-related reasons with permission from a staff member. Families are encouraged to make transportation and after-school arrangements in advance to minimize the need for student phone use during the school day.

For purposes of this policy, wireless communication devices (WCDs) include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, earbuds with communication capabilities, smart glasses (including Meta or similar devices), and any other electronic device capable of sending, receiving, recording, storing, or accessing electronic communications, audio, images, video, or internet content.

In accordance with Michigan law, students may not use wireless communication devices during instructional time unless:

- the use is required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or other documented accommodation;
- the device is needed to monitor or manage a documented medical condition;
- a teacher or administrator authorizes its use for an instructional purpose;
- the student is using a school-issued device for educational purposes; or
- its use is authorized by school administration during an emergency or other exceptional circumstance.

Schools may establish additional restrictions on the possession or use of wireless communication devices during the school day or at school-sponsored activities to support student learning, safety, and an orderly educational environment.

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Unauthorized use of a wireless communication device may result in confiscation of the device, parent or guardian retrieval, progressive disciplinary action, or other appropriate interventions in accordance with the Academy's Code of Conduct.

Students may not use any wireless communication device to photograph, record, livestream, or transmit audio, images, or video of another individual without the express permission of a teacher or administrator, except as required by an approved accommodation. Students also may not use wireless communication devices to harass, intimidate, threaten, bully, discriminate against, or otherwise harm another person, including through the creation or transmission of obscene or sexually explicit material. Such conduct may result in school discipline and, when required by law, referral to law enforcement or Child Protective Services.

Students who bring wireless communication devices to school do so at their own risk. The Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.

This policy is intended to comply with applicable Michigan law regarding student wireless communication devices and Board Policy 5136. Where Academy expectations are more restrictive than State law, the Academy's expectations shall apply.

10. Enrollment and Student Records

10.1 Enrollment and Re-enrollment Procedures

Families who do not submit completed enrollment paperwork by the stated deadline will forfeit their current seat. If seats become available after the enrollment period, they will be offered to waitlisted students in the order determined by the lottery. Any remaining seats will then be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

10.2 Lottery Policy

If the number of applicants exceeds the available seats in any grade, a random lottery will be conducted to determine admission. In accordance with the school’s Charter Contract and applicable law, priority will be given to designated applicant groups, such as currently enrolled students’ siblings. The lottery will also establish the order of the waitlist.

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10.3 Entry Age for Elementary

A child is eligible to enroll in kindergarten if he or she is at least five years of age on or before September 1 of the school year of enrollment. A child becoming six years of age before December 1 must be enrolled in school on the first day of the school year in which the child's sixth birthday occurs or must satisfy one of the exceptions stated in law. A child must remain in school until their sixteenth birthday.

10.4 FERPA Rights and Student Records

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents and guardians and eligible students have the following rights:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school.
- The right to request the amendment of records believed to be inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except where FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with FERPA requirements.

FERPA rights transfer from the parent to the student once the student turns 18 or enters a postsecondary institution (eligible student). Requests to inspect or amend records should be submitted in writing to the school administration

10.5 Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Academy values transparency and respects the rights of families. Under the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), parents and guardians and eligible students (18 years or older) have the right to:

- Inspect instructional materials and surveys before they are administered.
- Opt their child out of participation in surveys that include sensitive information, such as political beliefs, mental health, sexual behavior, illegal behavior, or family income (other than as required by law).
- Be notified of any physical exams or screenings not required by state law.

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- Review and decline the sharing of student information with third-party marketers or surveyors.

Questions or concerns may be directed to the school office or school leader.

10.6 Directory Information and Opt-Out Form

According to Board Policy 8330, the Academy may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless the parent or adult student advises the School to the contrary by filling out, signing, and returning the Directory Information Opt-Out Form to the Academy. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this information in certain school publications.

The following list of uses are those the Academy would commonly disclose a student's directory information.

Common Uses of Directory Information

- Playbill /Event Program
- Annual Yearbook
- Honor roll or other recognition
- Graduation Programs
- Sports and Activity Sheets
- Colleges or post-high school institutions

Directory information, generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or adult student's prior written consent. Two (2) Federal laws require the Board to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three (3) directory information categories, names, addresses, and telephone listings unless parents and guardians or adult students have advised the Academy that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Directory Information

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized extra-curricular activities/sports
- Height and weight, if a member of an athletic team
- Date of graduation
- Achievement awards or honors received; honor rolls
- Scholarships

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- Photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events, or programs

The Board will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student has opted out of the provision of this information by returning the Opt-Out Form to the School Office within 14 days of receipt. Directory information will not be provided to any organization for profit-making purposes. If you do not wish to opt out of any of the above common uses, you do not need to take any action.

11. Family Partnership

At the heart of our academy's success is a strong partnership between home and school. We believe that families are more than just supporters of their child's education; they are essential partners in shaping a thriving school community. When schools and families work together, students are more motivated, confident, and successful.

We invite and encourage every family to be actively engaged in their child's academic, social, and character development. Whether through volunteering, attending events, or participating in classroom and school-wide activities, your involvement makes a meaningful impact. Together, we create a culture where every child is known, supported, and inspired to reach their fullest potential.

11.1 Partnership in Responsibility Statement

The Code of Student Conduct is titled "Partnership in Responsibility" in anticipation of parents, students, teachers, administration, support staff, and the Board of Directors forging a strong bond on behalf of the children of the Academy. The Partnership is based on mutual respect, responsibility, and results. Families are encouraged to embrace the partnership philosophy and translate it into action.

11.2 Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

At our academy, we believe in the foundational role families play in a child's education. We recognize that parents and guardians have a constitutionally protected right to direct the upbringing, education, and care of their children, and we strive to work in full partnership with families while upholding our responsibility to provide a safe, inclusive, and academically rigorous environment for every student.

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Our school is committed to transparency, open communication, and meaningful collaboration with parents. We value feedback, encourage involvement, and expect that all interactions between families and staff remain courteous and constructive.

Families have the right:

- To know that their child is cared for in a safe, supportive environment.
- To access their children (unless prohibited by a court order).
- To review curriculum and request that their child be excused from instructional content that conflicts with their sincerely held religious beliefs, in accordance with applicable law.
- To receive timely communication about behavioral, health, safety, or academic concerns affecting their child.
- To access school staff during normal school hours, by appointment.
- To review teacher credentials in alignment with Board Policy 2261.02 BP.
- To review their child's educational records in accordance with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).
- To participate in public comment at board meetings and engage in school governance as permitted by law.

Parents and Guardians Have the Responsibility To:

- Provide accurate and up-to-date emergency and contact information to the school.
- Notify the office promptly when their child will be absent or late.
- Follow school procedures for drop-off, pick-up, early dismissals, and other attendance-related matters.
- Cooperate with staff to support their child's academic, behavioral, and social-emotional development.
- Communicate respectfully with teachers, administrators, and school staff.
- Stay informed by reading school communications and reviewing school policies outlined in this handbook.
- Inform the school of significant changes at home (e.g., custody arrangements, family transitions, trauma) that may affect the student's behavior or wellbeing at school.
- Model positive engagement by attending parent-teacher conferences, school events, and educational workshops when possible.

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We ask all parents and guardians to view themselves as active partners in our school community. When home and school work together in trust and transparency, children thrive.

11.3 Helping Your Child Succeed

Parents and guardians play a critical role in a child's academic, emotional, and behavioral success. When families create consistent, supportive routines and maintain a positive attitude toward learning, students are more confident, motivated, and prepared to thrive.

To help contribute to a strong foundation for your child's success at school, consider the following:

- Begin each day calmly. A peaceful start helps your child feel ready to learn.
- Ensure adequate sleep. Well-rested students are more focused, emotionally regulated, and better equipped to meet academic challenges.
- Promote healthy eating habits. A balanced breakfast and nutritious meals support energy, mood, and brain function.
- Establish consistent routines at home. Predictable mealtimes, screen time limits, bedtimes, and dedicated study time create a secure environment and reduce stress.
- Support regular school attendance. Every day of instruction matters. If your child is healthy, send them to school ready to learn. If they are sick, allow them to rest and recover at home.
- Celebrate effort and growth. Praise your child's hard work, progress, and perseverance, not just high grades or outcomes.
- Stay in communication with teachers. Share information about family situations or changes that may affect your child's mood, focus, or behavior.
- Designate a home base for school materials. Create a special place for backpacks, school papers, and communication from teachers so nothing gets lost in the shuffle.
- Encourage daily reading. Read to your child, listen to them read, or talk about what they're reading independently. Model lifelong learning by reading for pleasure yourself.
- Promote independence. Teach your child to take responsibility for their belongings, complete tasks on their own, and ask for help when needed.

- Practice school skills at home. Reinforce what your child is learning by reviewing concepts, playing educational games, or completing short review activities together.

Your encouragement, consistency, and involvement send a powerful message to your child that learning is valuable and worth the effort. A strong partnership between home and school lays the groundwork for lifelong success.

11.4 Student-Parent-Teacher Compact

The Student-Parent-Teacher Compact outlines the shared responsibilities of families, school staff, and students to support academic achievement and a positive school environment. It includes specific commitments from students, parents or guardians, teachers, and the principal. This compact is an important part of the Academy's family engagement efforts and is included in the Code of Conduct to ensure all stakeholders understand their role in fostering student success.

11.5 Volunteer Guidelines and Background Checks

The Academy relies on parents for active involvement in their child's education, growth, and development. It is the hope of the academy that all families will devote time to volunteer. Parents are children's first and most effective teachers and are encouraged to become active partners with their children's teachers. Research clearly reports that a student's success is closely tied to a significant adult in his or her life.

The Academy welcomes and encourages volunteers to support our school community. All volunteers must undergo a national background check conducted through Navigate360, the Academy's visitor management system. This check ensures individuals have not been charged with child abuse, neglect, or serious criminal offenses.

The Academy reserves the right to approve or deny volunteer service based on the results of the background check and the individual's fitness to work with children. Providing false or misleading information, or discrepancies between submitted information and background check results, may result in immediate denial or revocation of volunteer privileges.

All volunteers must sign in at the front office using Navigate360 upon arrival. A visitor badge will be printed and must be worn visibly at all times while on school grounds.

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Volunteers are expected to comply with all Academy policies and maintain confidentiality regarding any student information seen or heard during their service.

Volunteers may be asked to attend an orientation session prior to working directly with students. All volunteers will serve under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher or assigned staff member while on campus or during school-sponsored events.

Volunteer opportunities may include tutoring, mentoring, classroom assistance, chaperoning, or speaking engagements. Parents, grandparents, and friends are invited to become involved. Please notify the school office if you are interested in volunteering.

To support student safety, volunteers should avoid using cell phones while working with students. Volunteers may not bring younger siblings to school or on field trips without prior approval from the School Leader.

In accordance with Board Policy 9150, the School Leader may deny or revoke visitor access if necessary to protect school safety or minimize disruption.

11.6 Parent Education Meetings

Parent education evenings will be scheduled throughout the year. Different topics will be discussed to give you the opportunity to learn more about the Academy. The Academy's parent and educator organization works together for the education and enrichment of the children. This is a voluntary organization that holds monthly meetings. For more information on this organization, see the front office.

11.7 Visitors

The Academy welcomes parents, guardians, and approved guests to visit the school. All visitors must report directly to the front office upon arrival, present a valid photo ID if not known to staff, and sign in using the school's visitor management system. A visitor badge will be issued and must be worn visibly at all times while on school grounds.

Visits to classrooms or other instructional spaces must be pre-arranged with the teacher and approved by the School Leader to avoid disruption to learning. Visitors may not bring younger children during school hours without prior approval. Individuals who fail to follow visitor procedures or pose a safety concern may be denied access in accordance with Board Policy 9150.

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11.8 Fundraising

Students may solicit only for Academy-sponsored activities. The Principal, or Board of Directors, when appropriate, must approve fundraisers in writing prior to announcement of fundraising activities, placing orders, or making commitments. Academy students are prohibited by Board Policy from door-to-door solicitation of any type in the community. There will be no exchange of money among students for any purpose unless authorized by the Principal.

12. Student Life and Conduct

12.1 School Wide Behavior

12.1.1 Student Behavior Philosophy and PBIS Framework

Students at the Academy have the right to be treated with respect and dignity by both staff and classmates. All students should be included and made to feel welcome in school activities. Teachers promote internal discipline, and staff act as coaches to help students reflect on their choices and grow.

The Academy fosters a college-prep culture by promoting personal responsibility, respect for others, and the pursuit of challenging work. Staff encourage students to develop habits of persistence, appropriate communication (such as “college voice”), and positive engagement. These habits support students' long-term academic and personal success.

The Academy uses Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a research-based, schoolwide framework to teach and reinforce positive behavior, much like academic subjects are taught. PBIS does not eliminate consequences or discipline. Instead, it ensures expectations are clear, consistently taught, and fairly applied so students understand how to meet them.

PBIS strengthens the school culture by:

- Providing clear behavior expectations across all settings
- Modeling and practicing these expectations regularly
- Teaching students what to do, not just what not to do
- Offering consistent consequences when rules are broken, ranging from redirection to formal discipline

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- Supporting students with the tools to succeed before behaviors escalate

PBIS supports student accountability and protects instructional time while creating a positive, respectful environment where all students can learn and thrive.

12.1.2 Consequences and Disciplinary Actions

While our priority is to help students recognize disruptive behavior and develop self-control out of respect for self and others, there are times when consequences are necessary. Disruptive students may be removed from the classroom temporarily until the teacher or School Leader determines the student is ready to return as a responsible participant. A parent conference will be called for any student who repeatedly interferes with a teacher's ability to teach, another student's right to learn, or demonstrates an inability to improve behavior.

Students and parents should understand that, in accordance with board policy, a classroom teacher is authorized to suspend a student for one day for good cause. Behaviors considered major infractions are listed in the Code of Student Conduct, and consequences for those behaviors are determined by the School Leader. If improvement is not observed, the parent may be asked to shadow the student in class to observe the learning environment firsthand.

12.1.3 Risk and Suicide Assessment Protocol

The Academy maintains an evidence-based protocol for responding to threats of violence or concerning behaviors that may compromise school safety. When a student makes an explicit or implicit threat or demonstrates behaviors that pose a risk to themselves or others, a multidisciplinary school team will conduct a risk or suicide assessment, as appropriate. This team may include an administrator, school counselor, social worker, psychologist, and other relevant staff.

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- Support the student of concern
- Protect potential victims
- Take preventive or corrective action to maintain a safe and secure school environment

Assessment procedures are followed regardless of disciplinary action. Families will be notified if an assessment involves their child, and parent collaboration is a critical part of this process. For questions about the assessment protocol, please contact the school

12.2 Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

Students who exhibit disobedient, disruptive, violent, disrespectful, threatening, or otherwise harmful behavior may face disciplinary consequences, including detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, or expulsion. Any student suspended during the school year may be ineligible to participate in overnight field trips.

A student whose behavior poses a risk to the safety or well-being of the school community may be removed from the learning environment. Suspensions of 10 days or fewer may be assigned by the School Leader or designee following an investigation and opportunity for the student to be heard. Suspensions longer than 10 days, or expulsions, require a formal process and written notice to families, including a hearing and opportunity to present evidence.

Before issuing a suspension over 10 days or recommending expulsion, the school will consider the seven required factors under Michigan law (MCL 380.1310d), including the student's age, disciplinary history, disability status, seriousness of the behavior, and the use of restorative practices or other alternatives.

The school may use restorative practices as an alternative to, or in addition to, suspension or expulsion when appropriate. Additional details and procedural rights are outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

12.3 Seclusion and Restraint

The Academy complies with Michigan's policy prohibiting seclusion and restraint except in cases where a student's behavior poses an imminent risk to the safety of the student or others. All interventions used are in accordance with state law and staff are trained annually in approved techniques. A written report will be provided to the student's parent or guardian if such an incident occurs.

12.4 OK2Say Student Safety Reporting

The safety and well-being of our school is a shared responsibility. We utilize OK2SAY as our confidential student safety reporting program. OK2SAY is for students to report concerns such as threats of violence, bullying, self-harm, abuse, or other behaviors that may place someone at risk. The Academy encourages students to see something, say something.

Reports are received and evaluated by the Michigan State Police OK2Say program and then reported to school officials for follow-up. Every report is taken seriously. Students

are encouraged to report concerns to a trusted adult whenever possible, and OK2SAY is available 24/7 as a confidential reporting option.

In accordance with Michigan law, OK2SAY information is available on the Academy's website.

12.5 Threat Assessment and Management Policy

Our school uses the Michigan K-12 Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (Mi-BTAM) model as part of a proactive and student-centered approach to promoting safety and well-being. BTAM is an evidence-based process designed to identify, assess, and manage threatening or concerning behaviors before they escalate. It is not a disciplinary tool or criminal investigation, but rather a compassionate intervention process focused on violence prevention and student support.

When behaviors arise that could pose a threat to school safety, a multidisciplinary team composed of school administrators, mental health professionals, special education staff, and others trained in BTAM protocols collaborates to assess the situation. The team uses a fact-based, case-specific process to gather information, evaluate concerns, and develop an individualized support and intervention plan that addresses both student needs and school safety. Information may be gathered through interviews with students, staff, parents or guardians, review of relevant school records, and other lawful sources to develop a complete understanding of the situation and identify appropriate interventions.The process respects the rights of students under applicable laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In situations where a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan is involved, the BTAM team works closely with the student's special education team to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to develop supports tailored to the student's unique needs. The emphasis is on early identification and positive intervention, not punishment or exclusion. BTAM is not zero tolerance, profiling, or adversarial in nature. It is a thoughtful, student-focused practice designed to foster a safe and inclusive school culture.

Parents and guardians are important partners in the BTAM process. School leaders may speak with students during the school day as part of the BTAM process when necessary to evaluate and address potential safety concerns. While parental permission is not required for these conversations, the Academy is committed to involving parents

and guardians as early as appropriate in the process, unless immediate notification would compromise student safety or the integrity of the assessment. Families will be informed of concerns, the steps being taken to support the student, and opportunities to participate in developing intervention and support plans. The school is committed to handling all matters with discretion and respect while protecting the privacy of those involved and fulfilling its responsibility to maintain a safe school environment.

12.5.1 Digital Safety

The Academy takes digital safety seriously. We reserve the right to monitor student use of district networks and internet access. Students should report security concerns to staff immediately. All students should use technology responsibly and safely, all users must follow the Acceptable Usage Policy. See section 9.1 for more information.

12.5.2 Digital Threat Prevention

Protecting students extends beyond the school building. When the Academy becomes aware of credible concerns involving threats of violence, suicide, self-harm, exploitation, or other behaviors that may jeopardize school safety, trained personnel may review publicly available online information as part of the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) process. Reviews are conducted only when there is a legitimate safety concern, follow applicable laws and Board policy and are intended to identify students who may need intervention or support before a crisis occurs. The Academy does not require students to provide passwords to personal social media accounts.

12.6 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect

All staff members at the Academy are considered mandated reporters under Michigan's Child Protection Law. This means they are legally required to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Reports are made to protect the safety and well-being of all students and are kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

12.7 Playground and Lunchroom Behavior

Students are provided with the opportunity to engage in unstructured, open-ended, social interaction during recesses. Recess time is supervised by a classroom teacher who is responsible for student safety. Equipment appropriate for use at recess time is available through classroom teachers. Consult with your child's teacher to find out if equipment from home is appropriate for use on the school playground. Equipment

brought to school should be appropriate for group activity and should be shared with other students. Equipment such as skateboards and scooters are not allowed at school.

Children are expected to maintain the same level of respect on the playground as in the classroom. Respect for self, others and materials is essential. Students who disregard this will lose the privilege of recess until the next day where they have a chance to make a different choice. Recess is an important part of the total curriculum. When recess is held outside, ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO GO OUTSIDE. A student may be excused from recess for one day with a note from the parent/guardian. Extended excuses will be honored upon receipt of a physician's note. Parents are responsible to see that their child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

While on the playground, students are expected to:

- Use playground equipment and structures carefully
- Play within the designated areas and boundaries
- Share equipment and follow the rules of the game

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- Leave all personal items at home that may be damaged or endanger the safety of others. (The building Principal is authorized to make judgments on these items.)

12.8 Breakfast and Lunch Behavior

Breakfast and lunchtime provide students with another opportunity to practice social skills in an informally structured environment. During this time students are expected to: speak softly and be considerate of classmates, remain seated while eating, clean up after themselves, and be courteous to the people in charge.

Cafeteria Rules

- Students are expected to follow the Code of Student Conduct.
- Students are expected to sit while eating.
- Students are to use quiet voices when conversing with other students.
- Students are expected to use good table manners and to clean up after eating.

12.9 Interrogations and Searches

12.9.1 Student Searches by School Staff and Privacy

In accordance with Board Policy 5771 and to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment, school administrators may search student belongings when there is reasonable suspicion that a school rule or law has been violated. This includes backpacks, bags, lockers, desks, cubbies, electronic devices, vehicles on school property, and other personal belongings.

Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in school-owned property, including lockers, desks, and other school-issued storage areas. These areas may be inspected at any time and are subject to routine checks.

Searches of a student's person or intimate personal belongings will occur only in exceptional circumstances when the health or safety of the student or others is immediately threatened. Such searches will be conducted by a staff member of the same gender, with another adult present whenever practical, unless immediate action is necessary to protect health or safety.

When practical, the student will be informed of the reason for the search and the items the school is seeking. Items prohibited by law or Board policy may be confiscated and turned over to law enforcement or other appropriate authorities when required. Parents or guardians will be notified as appropriate.

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The school may coordinate with law enforcement to conduct canine searches of lockers, vehicles, or common areas when appropriate. These searches do not include the search of an individual student without the legal authority required by law.

All searches will be conducted respectfully, privately, and in accordance with Board Policy 5771. Written documentation of the search and any items confiscated will be maintained by the School Leader.

12.9.2 Interrogations by Law Enforcement or Outside Agencies

The school has legal custody of students during the school day and at school-sponsored events. It is the responsibility of school leadership to protect students' rights during any interaction with law enforcement or outside agencies. When a student must be questioned at school by law enforcement or agency officials:

1. A school administrator or designee will be present during the interview. If no school representative is immediately available, questioning will be delayed until one can be present, unless there is an immediate safety concern.
2. The school will make every effort to notify a parent or guardian. This includes calling all emergency contact numbers, leaving voicemails when possible, and sending emails to all addresses on file. Unless there is an imminent threat, questioning will be delayed up to one hour to allow for parent response.
3. If the student is taken into custody, the school will request that law enforcement officials follow all applicable legal procedures, including informing the student of their rights.
4. As required by law, the school permits child protective services investigators (e.g., from the Department of Health and Human Services) to interview students without parent notification in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

12.10 Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

The Academy does not discriminate against applicants, employees, or students on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, age, national origin, political belief, marital status, sex, age, height, or weight in its programs or activities. In addition, students and families who believe they have experienced discrimination based on race, color, or national origin may file a complaint under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Complaints may be submitted through the school's internal grievance process or directly to the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, or the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated in Academy employment practices and/or educational programs or activities.

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Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, or any other federal or state regulations, may be directed to the School Leader, the Michigan Department of Education, or the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

Sexual Harassment

The Academy is committed to providing a working and learning environment based on dignity and respect, free of harassment or intimidation. All those associated with the Academy are expected to foster a climate that is supportive, respectful, and conducive to teaching and learning. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and the Department of Education's implementing regulations prohibit discrimination based on sex in federally assisted education programs and activities.

"Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment of a student can deny or limit, based on sex, the student's ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities in the school's program. Sexual harassment of students is, therefore, a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX under the circumstances provided in this guidance" ("Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, January 2001).

Sexual harassment is among the behaviors that are destructive to a positive working and learning climate, and as such is prohibited by state law, federal law, and school board policy. Any member of the school community who engages in sexual harassment as defined below will be in violation of this policy. The Employee Manual is explicit in its discussion of sexual harassment and consequences of inappropriate behavior by employees.

This policy encompasses behavior of adults towards adults or students, and students towards students or adults.

DEFINITION:

It is a violation of this policy when a person makes any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejections of advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of benefits, privileges, employment or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education or career by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational or employment environment.

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Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal or written harassment or abuse,
- Pressure for sexual activity,
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications,
- Unwelcome touching,
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats including, but not limited to, one's grades, and job.
- Display of lewd or sexually explicit materials, inappropriate jokes, or language of a sexual nature.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

All persons associated with the Academy are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that his/her behavior does not sexually harass any other person associated with the schools.
2. Reporting any observed or experienced harassment or mistreatment immediately to the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer and cooperating fully in the investigation of alleged sexual harassment; and
3. Actively participating in the Academy's effort to prevent sexual harassment in the schools.

Retaliation of any form, including threats, intimidation, reprisal or harassment, towards any person who makes a sexual harassment complaint, or who assists in or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing is unlawful and will not be tolerated and can be considered grounds for dismissal of staff and/or removal of a student from school.

FALSE REPORTS:

False (fabricated) claims of sexual harassment can cause permanent damage to the victim of such claims and must therefore be treated as a very serious matter. A false claim may be considered grounds for dismissal of staff, or discipline including the removal from the educational setting for a student, who makes a false claim.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Reports and complaints of sexual harassment will be kept as confidential as possible consistent with the rights of all parties.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE OFFICER:

The Board of Directors has appointed the Chief Administrative Officer, or their designee, as the Grievance Officer who will be responsible for processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

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COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:

1. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as sexual harassment by another person. Therefore, the victim should make clear to the harasser that the behavior is offensive and must stop. If the victim is uncomfortable in addressing the harasser they should be made to feel comfortable talking to a trusted adult or a member of the school leadership team. If the harasser does not stop the behavior or the victim is uncomfortable confronting the harasser, or if the behavior warrants further action in the opinion of the victim, the victim should lodge a complaint with the School Leader/Title IX officer/contact.
2. Upon receipt of a written formal complaint submitted by the complainant, their parent or guardian, or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, the school will initiate the Title IX grievance procedure in accordance with 34 CFR §106.45. The respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a final determination is made following a thorough and impartial investigation. The complaint should be as specific as possible, including names, dates, times, places, witnesses, and specific words or actions which were experienced as offensive. In cases involving students, the student's parents and guardians will be notified immediately of the complaint, the steps to be followed, and the ways in which they will be involved in the process.
3. All complaints of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated. Depending on the circumstances, the investigation may encompass any or all of the following:
    a. The alleged victim may write a letter to the alleged harasser describing the offensive behavior, the circumstances under which it took place, the way the behavior made the victim feel, and requesting that the harasser apologize and promise not to repeat the behavior. The School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator will then meet with the alleged harasser, hear the harasser's account of the situation, present the victim's letter, and discuss the matter.
    b. Where appropriate in the opinion of the School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator a meeting will be held between the alleged victim and the alleged harasser to clarify the facts and to attempt to mediate a resolution.
    c. The School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator may interview all parties and witnesses to the alleged harassment.
4. In cases of alleged student harassers, the School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator will determine if these facts constitute harassment. Disciplinary consequences such as detention, suspension, or expulsion consistent with school rules may be implemented. In cases of alleged adult harassers, the School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator will report the facts of the alleged harassment and will determine if these facts constitute harassment The School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator will recommend to the Board of Directors appropriate action, which could include disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment by Choice Schools Associates, LLC.

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5. If disciplinary steps are taken, copies of the reports of facts and the written decision will go to the harasser, the personnel file in cases of adult harassers, and to the parents and guardians in cases of student harassers. The victim, and his or her parents, if the victim is a student, will also be informed of the determination as to whether harassment occurred.
6. Repeated or extreme forms of harassment, violence, or civil rights infringements will result in a recommendation for expulsion or termination from the Academy.

The School Leader/Title IX officer or assigned investigator will make complete records of all sexual complaints, facts, steps taken, determinations, and resolutions, and those records will be securely maintained in the School Leader's office for a minimum of seven years, or longer if required due to ongoing litigation, appeals, or state/federal audit requirements.

The Academy follows a Title IX grievance procedure consistent with 34 CFR §106.45. This includes a clear standard of evidence (preponderance of the evidence), offering supportive measures regardless of whether a formal complaint is filed, and ensuring equitable treatment of complainants and respondents. In accordance with Title IX regulations, K–12 schools are not required to hold live hearings as part of the grievance process. Instead, a trained, impartial decision-maker will objectively review all evidence gathered during the investigation and make a final determination based on the preponderance of the evidence standard. Both parties will have equal opportunity to submit and review relevant documentation and to appeal the final outcome.

The school does not presume the respondent responsible prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

STATE and FEDERAL REMEDIES:

In addition to the above, if someone believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment, he/she may file a formal complaint with either or both governing agencies set forth below. The complaint process does not prohibit filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC - 180 days: MCAD - 6 months).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
2. State of Michigan

12.11 Title VI Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin in the administration of its educational programs or activities, including those that receive federal financial assistance.

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Any student or parent/guardian who believes they have been subject to discrimination under Title VI may contact the School Leader or designated Title VI Coordinator to file a concern or complaint. The Academy will respond promptly and equitably to all reports.

12.12 Tobacco/Vape Including E-Cigarette/Smoke-Free School Zone Policy

In accordance with Michigan law and the Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act, the use or possession of tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes, vapes), and any nicotine-delivery device, is strictly prohibited at all times in school buildings, on school grounds, in school vehicles, and at school-sponsored events, regardless of location.

This policy applies to all individuals: students, staff, volunteers, and visitors. Violations by students will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined in the Code of Conduct. Violations by staff or visitors may result in removal from the premises and referral to appropriate authorities.

12.13 Drug and Alcohol Use Policy

The use, possession, distribution, sale, manufacture, or being under the influence of illegal drugs, controlled substances, look-alike substances, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited on school property, during school hours, and at any school-sponsored event or activity, whether on or off campus.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, as well as notification to law enforcement and parents or guardians. The school retains the right to require medical evaluation or drug testing when there is reasonable suspicion of substance use.

In accordance with Michigan law and school board policy, students may be referred for educational or rehabilitative services when appropriate.

12.14 Weapons and Dangerous Objects Policy

In accordance with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act and Michigan state law, students shall not possess, use, transport, handle, or conceal any dangerous weapons or look-alike weapons on school property, in school vehicles, or at school-related functions.

A dangerous weapon includes, but is not limited to: firearms, knives, stun guns, explosives, air guns, and martial arts weapons. “Look-alike” weapons that appear to be real or are used in a threatening manner will be treated as actual weapons.

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Possession of a firearm on school property, in a school vehicle, or at a school-sponsored event will result in a mandatory expulsion of at least one school year, as required under the Gun-Free Schools Act and MCL 380.1311. The expulsion may be modified by the Board of Directors on a case-by-case basis. All dangerous weapon incidents will be reported to law enforcement in accordance with MCL 380.1313.

This policy applies to all students and is enforced without exception.

12.15 Annual Firearm Safety Notice

In compliance with state law (Public Acts 257 and 258 of 2024), we are providing families with a firearm safety notice developed by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The notice includes legal requirements, safe storage practices, and access to free or low-cost gun safety devices.

This notice is available on the transparency page of our school website, in the school office, and on the Michigan Department of Education webpage. This information is shared with all families as part of our legal obligations and commitment to student safety.

12.16 Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy

Code of Student Conduct
Positive Discipline Support Plan

"A Partnership in Responsibility"

Revised August 2026

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Introduction

Character Education
Code of Student
Conduct

The Code of Student Conduct provides behavior guidelines for development of good social skills, students as responsible citizens, and accelerated learning school culture. All stakeholders—students, parents, administration, faculty, and support staff—enter a partnership in responsibility to build positive character in our students that prepares them for college, work, military, parenthood, and community service.

Our Character Choices program empowers students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and opportunities to become responsible members of the home, school, and community. The nine character traits are the following:

Respect
Responsibility
Cooperation
Compassion
Good
Judgment
Integrity
Perseverance
Courage
Citizenship

The nine character traits represent values of responsible citizenship and empower students with the discipline to be lifelong learners and enlightened citizens in a diverse society.

Everyone has rights and responsibilities. The Code of Student Conduct attempts to preserve individual rights in the school community and deliver academic excellence in a safe, emotionally secure community of learners. Diversity is our strength, and we pursue productive classrooms where all students find meaning, dignity, and sense of community.

The overarching goal of the Code of Student Conduct is to teach students self-discipline and good social skills. We want to keep students in school. Our Positive Discipline Support Plan provides a framework for progressive and constructive discipline practices and in-school

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interventions for minor misbehaviors. Out of school suspension is reserved for serious infractions of the Code of Student Conduct.

Parents are our most valuable partners. We seek your cooperation and participation in the ongoing development of your child's academic knowledge, skills, and attitudes and social skills. We encourage you to read and review the Code of Student Conduct with your child and encourage acceptable behavior at school.

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STUDENT RIGHTS

EDUCATION

The rights of all students are ensured by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Michigan and by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes. These rights, including the right to an education, shall be recognized without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disabling condition, or intellectual ability. Students have a right to a public education beginning with pre-kindergarten and extending through the twelfth grade.

Students, in all their diversity, are to be educated in a safe and supportive environment that fosters academic success and healthy development and that prioritizes keeping students in school.

ENVIRONMENT

Students have the right to expect a safe school environment in which to learn and a climate within the school that is conducive to learning.

RESPECT

Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of the school staff and other students.

PROPERTY

Students have a right to expect that other students and school personnel will respect their personal property.

PARTICIPATION

Students have a right to participate in school activities, subject to qualification requirements and compliance with Board of Directors policies and administrative guidelines.

EXPRESSION

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Students have the right to address policies both publicly and privately, in writing and orally. Students may advocate change in any law, policy, or regulation.

APPEAL

Students have the right to seek a review and change in policies and decisions concerning student conduct. A parent has the right to seek a change in a school policy or decision concerning his or her child.

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SECTION A: A PARTNERSHIP IN RESPONSIBILITY

The Academy is committed to respect for the rights of others. Rules governing discipline and conduct are written so that parents, students, teachers, and the Principal know what is expected of students. By working together under clearly stated and consistently enforced regulations, we can administer firm, fair and consistent discipline practices as called for by the US Department of Justice.

Parents, teachers, staff, the Principal, and the Board of Directors are responsible for helping students develop self-discipline and learn social skills required for work and college. The Code of Student Conduct delineates the partnership that the school and the larger-community share across several broad concepts.

Environment, which includes the climate of the school. Education, which includes preparation and work habits. Respect, which includes treatment of others. Participation, which includes involvement in school activities; and Expression, which includes dress and verbal and nonverbal issues.

These broad concepts appear in each statement of responsibilities contained in this handbook.

Beliefs

The following beliefs guided the development of the Code of Student Conduct:

1. That schools must be safe and secure for students and staff.
2. That students have rights and responsibilities in the learning environment.
3. That the school is for instruction and learning, and anything that distracts from the learning process must be dealt with by the Principal, faculty, and staff within progressive and positive discipline practices.
4. That students and their parents should be knowledgeable of school and classroom rules.
5. That students have a responsibility to exercise self-control over their own behavior and that teachers and support staff have the responsibility to teach students good social skills and acceptable behaviors.
6. That the responsibility for discipline is shared among students, school personnel, the Board of Directors, and parents.
7. That the school respects differences in discipline practices at home as long as they are within parameters of the law.

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8. That students who violate school and classroom rules must be afforded their rights to due process, which are procedurally, morally, and legally fair and correct.
9. That students, when they violate school and classroom rules, should be assigned corrective measures with the purpose of teaching good social behaviors.
10. That disciplinary measures should be progressive, corrective, and preventive, unless the safety of students is an issue.
11. That disciplinary measures should be firm, consistent, and fair.
12. That the disciplinary measures of the school should be a problem-solving process and should focus on the causes of the infraction and learning acceptable behaviors.
13. That the assigning of disciplinary measures should be reasonable.
14. That students who commit criminal acts should be administered measures that are severe and swift when the safety of the general school population is at issue.

School Jurisdiction

The authority of the school over the conduct of students extends to the following locations:

1. On the school grounds during, before, and after school hours.
2. On school sponsored transportation for all school-related activities and the regular school day.
3. On the school grounds, as either a spectator or a participant at any other time when a school group is using the school.
4. Off the school grounds at any school-related activity, function, or event as a participant or a spectator.
5. When a student's conduct at any other time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline, or on protecting the safety and welfare of students or school/staff; and
6. When a student is using school telecommunications networks, accounts, school-issued electronic devices, or other school services.

Student Expression

The Principal will maintain open channels of communication through which students may express their individual or group concerns and suggestions that will be formally and informally deliberated.

We sincerely believe that continued recognition of students' rights and responsibilities will develop within our youth a student philosophy that will nurture their internal strengths, will deter the influence, and spread of degrading attitudes, and will perpetuate the American ideal of a responsible, democratic system of government.

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SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Responsibilities

Environment

1. Assist the Principal and his/her staff in the operation of a safe and orderly school, where all students can learn and develop socially.
2. Respect and care for Academy property, materials, technology, equipment, and the belongings of others. Use school resources responsibly and help maintain a clean, safe, and orderly learning environment.
3. Be clean and dress in compliance with school rules of sanitation and safety in a fashion that will not disrupt classroom procedures and in a manner, which conforms to Academy's, dress guidelines.
4. Obey school rules and/or the law concerning use, possession, distribution or sale of tobacco, marijuana, or controlled substances as defined under the Drug Control Act, drug paraphernalia as defined by the State of Michigan, imitation controlled substances, nonprescription or prescription drugs, or alcohol on school property, on the way to and from school, or while attending
    a. school-sponsored activities.
5. Obey laws and regulations, which forbid supplying, handling, using, transmitting, or possessing any type of weapon on school property, on the way to and from school, or at any school-sponsored event.
6. Report to the Principal or her staff incidents when your safety or the safety of others may be jeopardized.

Education

1. Support all students' right and opportunity for a free appropriate public education as provided by applicable federal, state, and local statutes, without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disability, or intellectual ability.
2. Take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school.
3. Complete all assigned work, study, and read.
4. Attend school regularly and punctually to achieve maximum learning.
5. Be prepared for learning by bringing materials and supplies to classes.

Respect

1. Be self-controlled and non-disruptive on school property and/or at school activities.

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2. Be reasonable, modest, self-controlled, non-suggestive, non-intimidating, and considerate in your relationships with other students and with school employees.
3. Keep your language and gestures respectful and free of profanity or obscenities.
4. Respect private, public, and school property.
5. Be informed of laws and school rules regarding students' rights and responsibilities.

Participation

1. Support and participate in school activities, co-curricular and extra-curricular.
2. Remain on the school campus during the school day; be punctual in carrying out your schedule and take part in classroom activities.

Expression

1. Support the right to freedom of expression.
2. Ensure that your expressions do not interfere with the educational program or activities or with the rights of others.
3. Be sensitive to others in your choice of expressive clothing that you wear or carry, ensuring that it does not express obscene, racist, or sexist language or gestures or slanderous, libelous, racist, or sexist statements.
4. Be sensitive to others in your choice of expressive words that you say or write, ensuring that they are not obscene, slanderous, libelous, racist, or sexist.
5. Ensure that your expressions do not contribute to bullying or cyber-bullying of another student.
6. NOTE: The right to freedom of expression does NOT include threats toward other students, staff or the school.

Parent Responsibilities

Environment

1. Insist that your child is clean and dressed in compliance with school rules of sanitation and safety and within the school dress guidelines.
2. Ensure that your child is free of communicable disease and in good health.
3. Support school officials in maintaining a safe and orderly school environment, free of disruptions, which interfere with teaching, learning, and safety.
4. Ensure that you and your child(ren) understand school rules and/or the law concerning students' use, possession, distribution, or sale of tobacco,

marijuana, or controlled substances as defined under the Drug Control Act, drug paraphernalia as defined by the School Code of Michigan, imitation controlled substances, nonprescription or prescription drugs, or alcohol on school property, on the way to or from school, or while attending school-sponsored activities.

5. Ensure that your child understands that supplying, handling, using, transmitting, or possessing any type of weapon on school property, on the way to or from school, or at any school-sponsored event is prohibited.

Education

1. Help support education for children as provided by applicable federal, state, and local statutes, without regard to race, religion, sex, creed, ability to pay, national origin, disabling condition, or intellectual ability.
2. Make certain your child's attendance at school is regular and punctual and all absences are properly excused.
3. Instill in your child the desire to learn.
4. Become acquainted with your child's school, staff, curriculum, and activities.
5. Ensure that your child has the necessary materials and supplies needed for classes and activities.
6. Ensure that your child has a quiet and proper place to study at home.

Respect

1. Guide your child, from the earliest years of his or her life, to develop socially acceptable standards of behavior, to exercise self-control, and to be accountable for his or her actions.
2. Teach your child, by word and example, respect for law, for the authority of the school, and for the rights and property of others.
3. Know and understand the rules your child is expected to observe at school; be aware of the consequences for violations of these rules and accept legal responsibility for your child's actions.
4. Encourage your child to respect honest work and to develop an interest in exploring broader fields of knowledge.
5. Accept the right of the Board of Directors to require respectable behavior of all students and nonstudents at all activities involving the school.
6. Help your child understand and respect the purposes of schooling, learning, and teaching.

Participation

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1. Send your child to school as required by The Michigan School Code, on time, every day, ready to learn.
2. Request and attend parent-teacher conferences.
3. Attend school functions and activities with your child.
4. Volunteer for school functions or assist when possible.

Expression

1. Encourage your child to conduct him or herself in an acceptable manner.
2. Encourage your child not to make obscene gestures or libelous, racist, or sexist statements or to use intimidating tactics toward others.
3. Help your child understand when free expression steps over the line and becomes bullying, threats, or sexual harassment. None of these behaviors are protected and will result in disciplinary action.
4. Encourage your child not to interfere with the educational progress of others or the educational program by using inappropriate verbal or nonverbal expressions.
5. Encourage your child to dress appropriately in the school uniform so that his or her appearance will not disrupt the educational process or activities.

Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

Environment

1. Reflect personal enthusiasm for teaching and learning and genuine concern for the individual student.
2. Express positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior.
3. Provide clear, reasonable classroom rules consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.
4. Project the image of your profession, your school, and education for everyone in a positive manner.
5. Be professional and be a role model for students.
6. Refer to the student's teacher or Principal any student whose behavior requires special attention.
7. Report all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect to your Principal as required by Michigan Law.

Education

1. Guide differentiated learning activities so students learn to think and reason.
2. Provide opportunities for students to develop socially acceptable skills,

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attitudes, and behaviors.

3. Provide meaningful schoolwork for students with the expectation that all students will be successful.
4. Inform parents regarding student achievement and behavior and consult with parents whenever necessary.
5. Teach each student as an individual on his/her own level.
6. Communicate with Principal regarding academic achievement.

Respect

1. Guide students to assume responsibility for their actions and to respect the rights of others.
2. Be firm, consistent, and fair in enforcing school rules on school property and at all school-sponsored activities.
3. Demonstrate by word and personal example self-discipline and respect for law.
4. Develop positive relationships with parents and students.
5. Respect the dignity of everyone.

Participation

1. Assume the rights and responsibilities of collaborative culture and shared decision making.
2. Participate in the establishment of school rules and regulations regarding student behavior: explain these rules to students and require observance of them.
3. Assist the Principal in developing the school philosophy, objectives, and procedures for the efficient and orderly operation of the school.
4. Participate in school activities and sponsor co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Expression

1. Ensure that expressions by anyone do not interfere with meaningful instruction.
2. Encourage students to express themselves appropriately and respectfully.
3. Do not use language that is obscene, slanderous, racist, sexist, or sarcastic.
4. Encourage students, parents, other teachers, and other staff to use language that is not obscene, slanderous, racist, or sexist.
5. Represent your profession positively through your appearance and conduct at school and at school-sponsored events.
6. Refrain from initiation of or participation in sexual harassment activities.
7. Help educate students on the nature of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment.

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Environment

1. Create the best teaching-learning conditions possible for student learning.
2. Create a safe, caring school environment for everyone.
3. Take the lead in establishing reasonable rules and regulations for the orderly operation of the school.
4 Make rules and regulations known and understood by students, parents, teachers, and staff.
5. Report all incidents of suspected child abuse or child neglect as required by Michigan Law.

Education

1. Organize school schedules and teaching assignments and require effective classroom management and instruction.
2. Maintain open lines of communication between school and home and between staff and administration.
3. Offer a complement of student activities, which provide interesting activities for all students.
4. Encourage the recognition of students' accomplishments.
5. Protect instructional time and ensure the best possible conditions for learning.
6. Ensure that discipline practices are progressive, constructive, and focused on developing self-discipline and social skills for career and college success.
7. Ensure that all students are encouraged to achieve high academic standards.

Respect

1. Be firm, fair, courteous, and consistent in all decisions affecting students, parents, and staff.
2. Demonstrate by word and personal example respect for law, self-discipline, and genuine concern for all persons.
3. Recognize that parents are a child's first teachers and listen to the concerns and suggestions of parents.

Participation

1. Provide leadership by creating a school culture where a collaborative culture can flourish, shared decision making is encouraged, and unity of purpose is achieved.
2. Become acquainted with students and parents by visiting classrooms, attending school activities and events, accepting opportunities to take

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part in community events, and inviting the community into the school.

3. Receive teacher or staff referrals of students with behavior problems, confer with these students, communicate with parents, and set up cooperative procedures for correcting student behavior and teaching good social skills.

Expression

1. Do not use language that is obscene, racist, sexist, libelous or sarcastic.
2. Encourage and ensure that students, parents, teachers, and other staff use appropriate expressions which are not obscene, racist, sexist, slanderous, disruptive, libelous, intimidating, or sarcastic.
3. Exemplify leadership qualities and represent your profession positively through your appearance and conduct at school, and at school-sponsored events, and in the community.
4. Ensure that students, parents, teachers, and staff members follow the appropriate dress guidelines for the school and for common decency and that guidelines are consistently and fairly enforced.
5. Be aware of and follow guidelines prohibiting bullying and sexual harassment.
6. Ensure that the school provides students and staff with education regarding appropriate online behavior and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Board of Directors and Management Responsibilities

Environment

1. Inform the community of what is expected of students and what the consequences are when rules are violated.
2. Give full support to school staff and others charged with the responsibility for managing the schools.

Education

1. Maintain a well-trained staff at all levels.
2. Develop programs and activities, which provide for all students, including those with special needs.
3. Provide vision for the school, which includes curricular programs and activities designed to provide students with opportunities to learn and develop.

Respect

Be fair, courteous, and consistent in making decisions regarding those students

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whose behavior problems have been appealed to the Board of Directors in accordance with state law.

Participation

1. Become acquainted with the Academy, its staff, and students by visiting buildings regularly and by attending school activities.
2. Encourage and support participatory decision-making.

Expression

1. Provide Policies regarding appropriate expressions by students, parents, teachers, and other staff members consistent with federal, state, and local laws.
2. Ensure and protect freedom of expression for all students, parents and caretakers, publics, and constituencies.

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SECTION C: GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

School leadership, teachers, and support staff are responsible for ensuring that meaningful and engaging instruction takes place and that students who want a high-quality education, receive it. Educators share responsibility to teach students the social and emotional skills required to achieve success in school, including interventions to monitor and change behavior until the individual student demonstrates acceptable behavior as a student and member of the school community.

Attendance

Michigan law places responsibility on each student to attend school on time, every day regularly and on each parent/guardian to send their child to school every day. The Board of Directors requires that all students attend school during the days and hours that the Academy is in session. Students are expected to be at school every possible day because they miss valuable instructional time and fall behind in their studies. Attendance is also an important habit to learn in preparation for work. Each student is expected to receive a minimum of 1,098 hours of instruction to be promoted to the next grade or receive credit in coursework.

Parents are asked to call the school office to notify the school of their child's absence or to leave a message on the answering machine whenever their child will be absent from school. Parents are encouraged to notify the office manager prior to 9:00 AM. Parents are to provide valid written documentation stating the cause of absence for the absence to be excused; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Absences

Time away from school, just like time away from work for adults, is a precious and limited resource that must be actively and judiciously managed. Regular attendance is important both to preserve valuable instructional time, and to teach an essential life skill. All lost instructional time affects learning, which declines rapidly when ten percent lost learning time is approached. Total lost learning time (TLLT) includes full and part-day absences, late arrivals and early dismissals. Routine illness and appointments will be counted towards students' attendance. It is important to notify the attendance clerk of any absence to confirm the time away from school. All absences count and are calculated as follows:

Elementary

Full day absent = 1

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Tardy up to 35 minutes = .10

Late 36 minutes to 90 minutes= .25

91 minutes or more = .50

Early dismissal 35 minutes or less = .10
Extra early dismissal 36-90 minutes = .25

Secondary

Full day absent= 1

Each Class period absent= 0.17
Each hour tardy= 0.09
Each Day Early Departure= 0.09

WMAES expects an attendance rate of 90% or higher. This adds up to about 4 absences per quarter.

If a student accumulates 3 counted absences within the first 30 school days, or their attendance rate falls below 90% at any given point in the school year, our attendance team will send a first notice via email on file. This email will include resources for attendance improvement. Additional resources and support can be provided after determining the specific needs of families. Failure to comply and work to improve student attendance will result in a referral to the Kent ISD Truancy department. After the first referral is made, families are responsible to contact the attendance team and set up a time to create an attendance improvement plan together.

When a student is absent from school for ten consecutive days without knowledge of the Principal, the student will be withdrawn from the Academy and the student's directory information will be reported to the truancy office of the intermediate school district and other state and local agencies. During the period of consecutive absences, the Principal and other support staff will attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian.

Absences not counted for attendance intervention: The following five categories should not be included in "days possible" when reporting:

- Snow days and other non-scheduled school closings.
- Medical absences. **Not intended for routine illness**, even if under a provider's care, but rather for very serious medical events, such as hospitalizations, these are absences ordered and documented, with hand signature, by a licensed health care doctor, with specific dates school must be missed for medical necessity. (This also includes significant

life trauma, such as an immediate family member death, as confirmed and approved by appropriate school staff.) Blanket or “under the care of” excuses are not accepted as “medically absent” unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan specifically addressing the medical issue and approval of appropriate school staff. Routine illnesses are, just like for adults at work, counted absences. These are subject to review and approval by school professionals.

- Communicable diseases: follow the guidelines given by the Kent County Health Department.
- Court dates: required court appearances for the student with court documentation, and related detention.
- Suspensions and expulsions.
- Preplanned absences that would not negatively affect the student’s learning and educational performance as determined by the student’s teacher(s) and building administrator in consultation, **may be uncounted at the school’s discretion**. *This would include assigned and required learning activities completed before and/or during the absence*. It often may also include a report and/or presentation to the class, with a grading rubric established at the planning stage.

Student Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival and dismissal of students will be supervised by staff during designated times prior to school starting and after school dismisses. Supervision is not available outside of these designated times. Parents may utilize the elementary or secondary drop off lane or park and walk their child to the appropriate entrance. Upon arriving, students should immediately proceed to the designated entrance. If you need to enter the building, you may park in the designated parking area. Students who are leaving school at the end of the school day are to be picked-up at the end of last regular class time. Students are to be picked-up by a parent/caretaker or person designated by the parent/caretaker and approved by the Principal immediately after school or report to after school childcare (when available).

Late Arrival

Students are tardy to school if they arrive after the school day begins for all students. Teachers are expected to begin opening exercises promptly and transition smoothly into instruction. A tardy student must report to the office upon arrival and provide written or oral reason from the student’s parent. The Principal, or his/her designee, will provide the student with a tardy pass to admit him or her to the class that is in session at the time.

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A student who is tardy three times will receive a warning letter sent home to the parents for the parent's signature. If a student receives 6 unexcused tardies, an attendance intervention plan will be developed with the student, parent, and Principal. Tardy students interrupt learning for other students.

There are times when a deviation from a student's normal school schedule is necessary. Tardiness will be excused under the following circumstances:

1) Serious illness (accompanied by a parent's note or written doctor's notice)
2) Death in the family
3) Legally required presence at a court proceeding
4) School sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
5) Religious observations
6) Severe weather, fires, family tragedies
7) Pre-arranged late arrival approved by the Principal

When a child is tardy between classes, it is the responsibility of the student to receive a pass from the previous teacher. Teachers are encouraged to assist students in transition to the next class. Students arriving in the classroom after the start of class will be considered tardy. State guidelines require that all attendance must be documented and reported to the local Intermediate School District, including late arrivals.

Early Dismissal

The student may need to leave school during the school day. The parent is to receive approval of the Principal in advance by written or personal request for a justifiable reason, including early dismissals for doctor's appointments, religious observations, family funerals, and other pre- arranged events. Students will only be released to parents and adults designated by the parent/caretaker and approved by the Principal. In child custody situations, the custodial parent must properly inform the Principal of any limitations. Michigan law calls for students to receive 1,098 hours of instruction.

Expressions and Limitations

Students may exercise the right to freedom of expression through speech, assembly, petition, and other lawful means and have the right to advocate change of any law, policy, or administrative guideline. The exercise of this right may not interfere with the rights of others, nor may oral or written student opinions be used to present material that falls into one or more of the following categories:

Material that reasonably leads the Principal or teacher to forecast substantial disruption of, or interference with, school activities or that endangers the health or safety of students.

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1. Material that is libelous or slanderous - statements that are inaccurate or false statements that injure the person as to his or her reputation, cause personal humiliation, mental anguish, and suffering or other injuries.
2. Material that advocates the commission of a criminal act or is a criminal act as defined by the Criminal Code of the United States, the State of Michigan, the County, or the City of residence.
3. Material that is obscene as defined in the Michigan School Code, as amended.
4. Material, communications, and or actions that are considered to be bullying as defined in the Michigan School Code, as amended, and in Board Policy and administrative guidelines.

Distribution of Literature by Students and Nonstudents

The Principal or his/her designee shall coordinate distribution or display of literature by students enrolled in the school. The material must be approved by the Principal, must not be in violation of applicable Board of Directors Policy, and must bear the name of the sponsoring individuals or school organizations.

Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Hazing

The Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and orderly learning environment and will not tolerate harassment, intimidation, bullying (including cyberbullying), or hazing of any kind.

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited on school property, in school-related vehicles, at school-sponsored activities or events, and through the use of electronic communication or telecommunications devices owned or controlled by the Academy. Bullying or cyberbullying that occurs off school grounds but causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment may also result in disciplinary action.

Bullying includes any written, verbal, physical, or electronic communication, including cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more students, either directly or indirectly. Any reference to bullying includes cyberbullying.

Hazing is strictly prohibited. Hazing includes any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any group, team, or activity, regardless of the student's willingness to participate. Hazing is prohibited under Michigan law (MCL 750.411t) and may result in school disciplinary action and referral to law enforcement.

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The Academy implements Board Policy 5517.01, which establishes reporting and investigation procedures and provides for education and appropriate disciplinary action to prevent future incidents. Students and families are encouraged to review the policy, discuss it together, and promptly report any observed or suspected incidents to a teacher, administrator, or other trusted school employee. Academy employees are required to report suspected incidents in accordance with Board policy.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reference: The Matt Epling Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011, as amended by Public Act 478 of 2014 (MCL § 380.1310b).

The Board believes that a safe and nurturing educational environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Therefore, it is the policy of the Academy to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of its students. Appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of students, as well as administrators, faculty, staff, visitors, and volunteers.

Bullying and Cyberbullying are Prohibited

Bullying and cyberbullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is prohibited. All pupils are protected under this policy and, bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying” means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

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"Cyberbullying" means any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school districts or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health.
D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Since "bullying" also includes "cyberbullying," any reference in this policy to "bullying" shall also be deemed to refer to "cyberbullying."

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at school. "At school" is defined as on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or events, in a school-related vehicle, or using telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district. "Telecommunications access device" and "telecommunications service provider" mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying and cyberbullying that does not occur "at school," as defined above, but that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

Reporting and Investigating Reports of Bullying

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that he or she believes to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to a teacher, a counselor, administrator, or other staff member. Staff members shall report any reports made by students or situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the ESP. Complaints against the ESP shall be reported to the Board. The school shall ensure the confidentiality for any individual who reports an act of bullying

Under state law, a school employee, school volunteer, student, or parent or guardian who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in this policy and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set

forth in this policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. This immunity does not apply to a school official responsible for implementing this policy or for remedying the bullying, when acting in that capacity.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior. Making intentionally false accusations of bullying is likewise prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All complaints about bullying that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The ESP or designee is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, and up to and including exclusion from school property for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The Academy may utilize restorative practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community in the correction of bullying behavior, which may include victim-offender conferences that:

A. Are initiated by the victim.
B. Are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least 15, by the victim.
C. Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team"); and
D. Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, both the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified promptly in writing. In addition, administrators investigating alleged

bullying may notify parents of the victim or perpetrator of bullying sooner than the conclusion of the investigation if circumstances dictate such earlier notification.

The Academy shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including the required notification of parents or guardians and any discipline and referrals.

The Principal is the school official responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

Confidentiality
The Academy will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information within education records. In addition, the identity of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying shall be and remain confidential. The Principal, or the Principal's designee, shall ensure that the name of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying is withheld from the alleged perpetrator and the perpetrator's parent(s), legal guardian(s) and representative(s), and is redacted from any report of bullying or cyberbullying that is publicly disclosed. Please note, however, that if the person reporting the act of bullying is the victim or his/her parent/legal guardian, it may not be possible to address the behavior without disclosing the victim to the alleged perpetrator. The school will discuss this with the victim and victim's parent/legal guardian prior to any such disclosure. Such disclosure must occur prior to any victim-offender conference.

Notification
This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students and shall be posted on the Academy website.

Reporting
As required by state statute, the Academy shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and other required information to the Michigan Department of Education on an annual basis, according to the form and procedures established by the Department.

As required by state statute, the Academy's procedures with respect to bullying are contained within this policy. No administrative guidelines accompany this policy.

This handbook is an administrative guideline developed under Board Policy 1230.01. It supports Board policy and aligns with law and the charter contract.

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Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities is a privilege. Students who choose to participate represent the school and are expected to demonstrate good character, responsibility, and respect at all times.

Student Expectations

Students participating in extracurricular activities are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for teammates, sponsors, coaches, staff, officials, opponents, and spectators.
- Display good sportsmanship, integrity, and self-control during all school-sponsored activities.
- Follow all school rules, policies, and behavioral expectations.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress and classroom behavior as determined by school administration.
- Attend practices, meetings, rehearsals, and events regularly, arriving on time and communicating any absences in advance.
- Care for all school-issued equipment, materials, or uniforms and return them in good condition.
- Refrain from the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs, or other prohibited substances.
- Use social media responsibly and in a manner that reflects positively on themselves and the school.
- Treat fellow participants with dignity and respect. Bullying, hazing, harassment, or intimidation will not be tolerated.

Performance-Enhancing Drugs and Compounds

The use of performance-enhancing substances is prohibited and may affect a student's eligibility to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities. The current list of prohibited substances published annually by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is included in the Athletics and Extracurricular Code of Conduct and is incorporated into this handbook by reference.

Parent Expectations

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting extracurricular programs. Families are expected to:

- Encourage respectful behavior and positive sportsmanship.
- Support attendance and punctuality.

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- Communicate concerns respectfully with the program sponsor or coach.
- Allow students to take primary responsibility for communicating with sponsors or coaches whenever appropriate.
- Follow the school's chain of communication if concerns arise.

Participation

Participation in extracurricular activities may be limited or suspended when a student:

- Violates the Student Code of Conduct.
- Fails to meet academic or behavioral expectations.
- Repeatedly misses required practices, meetings, or events without approval.
- Engages in conduct that negatively reflects on the school or the extracurricular program.

The school administration reserves the right to determine appropriate consequences based on the nature and severity of the violation.

Acknowledgement

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities indicates that students and parents have read, understand, and agree to follow this Code of Conduct.

SECTION D: DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Definition of Discipline

Discipline is the positive direction of behavior toward established standards of conduct, fully understood and based upon reason, judgment, and consideration of rights of others. Ideal discipline is self-directed and self-controlled. Schools, community, and parents share the responsibility for helping students develop self-discipline. When self-control falters and self-discipline fails, disciplinary action will be used to protect the rights of others and to ensure uninterrupted instruction by teachers for students.

The Principal will carry out a positive behavior intervention program to help children and families, teachers and support staff, reflect upon their actions and be proactive instead of reactive to teach students self-discipline and acceptable social skills for school and career and college readiness. Positive discipline can be a powerful tool for teaching students to succeed. Intervention options need to consider disciplinary referrals as opportunities for learning, with exclusion reserved for the most serious offenses. The consequence must be reasonable in direct relationship to the seriousness of the misconduct or the pattern of misconduct.

Certain rules and procedures are established to guide students through constructive

growth and readiness for careers and college. Parents, teachers, and others responsible for the welfare and education of these students need to cooperate to interpret and enforce these rules.

Mitigating Factors to be Considered

Except as otherwise noted below with respect to possession of a firearm in a weapon free school zone, if suspension or expulsion is considered, the Academy shall consider the following factors:

A. the student's age
B. the student's disciplinary history
C. whether the student has a disability
D. the seriousness of the violation or behavior
E. whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
F. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
G. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

Restorative Practices

If the Academy determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community caused by the student's misconduct.

Restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that:

A. Are initiated by the victim.
B. Are approved by the victim’s parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least 15, by the victim.
C. Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the “restorative practices team”); and
D. Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

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Mandatory Permanent Expulsion by Michigan Law

Michigan law requires the Board of Directors to permanently expel a student who possesses a firearm, unless the student provides clear and convincing evidence that one of the following exceptions apply:

(a) The firearm was not possessed by the pupil for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another individual for use as a weapon.
(b) The firearm was not knowingly possessed by the pupil.
(c) The pupil did not know or have reason to know that the firearm possessed by the pupil constituted a dangerous weapon.
(d) The firearm was possessed by the pupil at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of, school or police authorities.

The law provides a process for parents/guardians to petition the Board for reinstatement of the student. The Principal will provide the parent/guardian with procedures to petition for the student to return to school. Parents/guardians should anticipate conditions for reinstatement being established.

Potential Permanent Expulsions

Michigan law requires the Board of Directors to remove a student who:

1. possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon free school zone, unless the student meets an exception in the law as identified above for firearms,
2. commits arson in a school building or on school grounds, or
3. criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school grounds, or pleads to, is convicted of, is adjudicated for criminal sexual conduct against another pupil enrolled in the school.
4. For students in grades 6 and above, Michigan law also requires the Board of Directors to remove a student who engages in physical assault against a school employee or volunteer.

The removal for these violations may be a permanent expulsion from all Michigan schools but does not have to be. The Board of Directors will consider the mitigating factors to determine what the appropriate discipline should be.

If a student is permanently expelled, s/he may not attend any public school in the state of Michigan for a specified minimum duration of time. The law provides a process and timeline for parents/guardians to petition the Board for reinstatement of the student. The Principal will provide the parent/guardian with procedures to petition for the student to return to school.

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Parents/guardians should anticipate conditions for reinstatement being established.

Additional Mandatory Discipline

For students in grades 6 and above, Michigan law also requires the Board of Directors to remove a student who engages in physical assault against another student, bomb threat or similar threat. The removal may be either a suspension or expulsion but will not be a permanent expulsion. PLEASE NOTE: While an expulsion for one of these offenses is not technically a permanent expulsion from all Michigan public schools, please understand that the local school district may choose not to allow the student to enroll for the duration of the expulsion.

Behaviors Warranting Disciplinary Action

Students are expected to meet classroom and school rules and are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, as set forth in the Michigan School Code. The purpose of disciplinary decisions is to develop self-discipline and social skills required for success in college and work. The positive discipline system is based on behavior intervention supports. Behaviors that interfere with the rights of students to achieve academic success and to be educated in a safe, secure environment are categorized into three groupings, with exclusion from school reserved for most serious infractions and repeated and habitual behaviors that deter teaching and learning.

If a student feels unsafe or threatened, the student or the student's parent/guardian is encouraged to contact the Principal immediately. Individual rights include individual responsibility within the bounds of reasonable behavior expected of all members of the school community. This applies especially to the freedom of fellow students to receive instruction.

Educators must prioritize keeping students engaged in meaningful learning.

Various types of student misconduct are listed. The list is not all-inclusive, and a student who commits an act of misconduct not listed is still subject to disciplinary action.

1. Absenteeism
2. Appropriate Dress and Grooming
3. Appropriate Use of Electronic Communication Devices
4. Alcohol and Drugs
5. Arson or attempted arson
6. Assault (or attempted assault) and Battery
7. Bullying/Cyber-bullying
8. Cheating/Academic Misconduct

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9. Defacement of Property
10. Destruction of Property
11. Disorderly Conduct
12. Extortion
13. Failure to Serve Assigned Detention
14. False Fire Alarm or Bomb Threat
15. False Identification
16. Felony
17. Fighting
18. Fireworks
19. Forgery
20. Fraud
21. Gambling
22. Gang Activity
23. Harassment/Intimidation
24. Hazing
25. Improper, Negligent, or Reckless Operation of a Motor Vehicle
26. Insubordination/Unruly Conduct
27. Interference with School Authorities
28. Public Display of Affection
29. Leaving school without Permission
30. Loitering
31. Micro-aggressions that are commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults.
32. Possession of Inappropriate Personal Property
33. Physical Assault
34. Profanity and/or Obscenity toward Students
35. Profanity and/or Obscenity toward Staff
36. Robbery
37. Sexual Assault and Battery or Other Illegal Behavior
38. Sexual Misconduct that is indecent/consensual, amorous kissing or similar displays of affection, indecent exposure, or of a sexual nature
39. Sexual harassment (Level 1)
40. Sexual Harassment (Level 2)
41. Smoking or Use of Tobacco Products, or Electronic Cigarettes
42. Tardiness
43. Technology Abuse
44. Theft or Possession of Stolen Property

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45. Threat/Coercion
46. Trespassing
47. Truancy
48. Weapons: Dangerous Instruments
49. Weapons: Dangerous Weapons
50. Weapons: Use of Legitimate Tools as Weapons (including, but not limited to, pens, pencils, compasses, and combs)
    Weapons: Look-a-Likes
51. Any violation of this code, policies of the Board of Directors, administrative guidelines, or local, state, or federal law
52. Any other conduct considered by the Principal or teachers to be disruptive, disrespectful, or disobedient.

In the following six cases, discipline referrals must be made immediately to the Principal:

1. Fighting
2. Assault and or battery toward a teacher or another student
3. Student actions that disrupt the class to the extent that the teacher's authority is being challenged and the teacher is losing control of the class
4. Student actions which indicate the use of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other behavior-altering substances
5. Student actions that present a danger to the safety and well-being of anyone in the school
6. Other criminal acts in violation of local, state, or federal laws.

The Principal is to recommend long term suspension of more than ten days or expulsion for the following first-time offenses occurring on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or for school-related reasons:

1. Threats against the school
2. Arson or attempted arson, including setting fire to anything on school property
3. Assault and/or battery of an employee or student
4. Possession, use, or sale of a firearm or dangerous weapon
5. Manufacturing, growing, distribution, and/or sale of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, including all edibles containing controlled substances
6. Extortion, attempted extortion, robbery, and/or larceny
7. Immoral conduct
8. Hazing
9. Unlawful assembly and/or riot
10. Possession, use, distribution, sale, lighting, or discharge of explosive devices

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11. Students found guilty or not innocent of a crime that resulted in or could have resulted in injuries to others, regardless of where the crime occurred.

Discipline Procedures

At all times when students are under school authority, they are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectable manner. In an effort to maintain an orderly atmosphere in the school and on the school grounds, the teacher's authority extends to all students, whether or not the teacher teaches the student in class.

Disciplinary Actions

Disruptive student behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the teacher and/or Principal. Principal and staff are expected to use respectful and accountable intervention strategies, such as staff and student/parent conferences, auxiliary staff intervention and counseling programs, student programs for conflict resolution, peer mediation, anger management, anger prevention, and social skills. Intervention strategies may include anger management and conflict resolution programs for parents. Community based services may be called upon when appropriate. Actions taken by teachers may include but are not limited to:

1. Daily/weekly progress reports for students and parents
2. Time out in the classroom or other secure, supervised area
3. Conference with the student
4. Oral and/or written reprimand
5. Detention during, before and after school
6. In school alternative with another teacher
7. Relocation to another classroom for a brief period of time
8. Relocation to blended learning environment
9. Conference with a parent
10. Consultation with a behavior specialist
11. School service assignment
12. Denial of participation in school activities
13. Give students a choice of consequences
14. One-day suspension until a satisfactory conference with a parent is held.

A discipline referral should be sent to the Principal when the teacher has exhausted in-classroom actions and feels that the student's improper behavior cannot be corrected through classroom management practices without sacrificing safety and/or learning for other students.

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After consultation with the student and the teacher (if needed), the Principal will determine the course of action required to provide a safe, secure school. Action taken by a Principal toward students who are disruptive may include but is not limited to:

1. A conference with the student and/or the parents
2. A verbal and or written reprimand
3. Consultation with behavior interventionist, social worker, counselor, and outside agencies
4. Entering into Individual Student Behavior Plan between student, parent, and Principal
5. Academy appointed advisor to cooperate with parent/guardian to ensure follow-through of ISBP
6. Detention during, before, and after school and on Saturday
7. Focused in school academic alternatives
8. Counseling and psychological services
9. Saturday school
10. School service assignment
11. Removal from co-curricular and extra-curricular programs until ISBP satisfied
12. Referral of student and parent/guardian to a parent program
13. Out-of-school suspension (OSS) (up to five days and up to ten days with approval of the Principal's supervisor);
14. Recommendation for long-term suspension (more than ten days) with approval of the Principal's supervisor and Board of Directors
15. Recommendation for expulsion with approval of the Principal's supervisor.

The Principal, with approval of his/her supervisor, may request an emotional, behavioral, and/or chemical dependency evaluation and treatment and/or counseling recommendation with attention to applicable special education rights afforded children with disabilities.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by Michigan law and is not to be used in any situation.

Incorrigible Behavior:
A child is incorrigible when the child repeatedly or habitually engages in unacceptable behavior as defined in the Code of Student Conduct and disrupts the school and or classroom to the extent that the School Leader's and or teacher's authority is being challenged. Incorrigible behavior, and other patterns of behavior, may result in long-term suspension (more than ten school days) of a student from the Academy. Parents and adult caregivers enter a partnership in responsibility with the Board of Directors to cooperate with the School Leader, faculty and staff to demonstrate responsible behavior in situations involving their child. The School Leader and faculty expect

parents/caretakers to share responsibility for each student's responsible actions, academically and behaviorally and to enter a partnership in responsibility.

Patterns of Behavior:

1. Parents send and do not support their children at school.
    a. Parent's low expectations: academic and behavior
    b. Parent's reluctant to take responsibility for their own actions
    c. Parent's bad-mouthing school and staff
    d. Parent's being disrespectful to staff
    e. Parent's failure to check in properly, disruption of classrooms, and assaulting employees
    f. Parent's not volunteering and not having school's interests at heart
    g. Failure of parents to cooperate with school in behavior improvement plan
2. Students not accepting academic responsibility for being on grade level and above.
3. Student failure to attend school responsibly (absences, tardies, and not responsible).
4. Student discipline problems.
    a. Bringing community issues to school and trying to solve them at school.
    b. Students having low expectations: academic and behavior.
    c. Students reluctant to take responsibility for their own actions.
    d. Students talking back to teachers.
    e. Rude, disrespectful behavior that escalates into overly aggressive behavior.
    f. Not following teacher directions.
    g. Leaving classroom without teacher's permission.
    h. Lying about situations.
5. Attitude of Learned Helplessness.

Definitions. Out-of-school suspensions are considered in the following classifications:

- **Short-Term:** Short-term suspensions occur when a student is suspended for one school day, up to and including ten (10) school days. The student's rights and privileges of attending school, including extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, are suspended. The child's teacher may suspend him or her for one day or until a parent comes to school and holds a satisfactory conference with the teacher. The Principal can suspend a student for up to five days and for up to ten days with approval of the Principal's supervisor.

  The Principal or designee must provide the student and the parent/guardian with

oral or written notice of the misbehavior and an explanation of the situation. The student will be given the opportunity to tell the Principal his/her version of the event(s). The Principal's decision is final and not subject to appeal. The parent shall be notified in writing of the action taken.

- **Long-Term:** A student can be suspended for more than ten (10) days but less than sixty (60) days following approval of the Principal's recommendation by the Board of Directors or its appointed representative. Long Term Suspension from school excludes the student from regular school attendance and participation in academy activities until readmitted by the Board. The Standard of review is the preponderance of the evidence, and the school is required by law to do what is in the best interests of the school. While a student's individual situation will be considered, the decision must reflect what is best for all students and staff.

- **Expulsion:** A student can be expelled only by action of the Board of Directors based upon recommendation of the Principal or his/her designee. Expulsion from school excludes the student from regular school attendance and participation in academy activities for the duration of the expulsion. An expulsion can be from sixty (60) schools days up to one hundred eighty (180) school days.

- **Notification:** A letter from the Principal or his/her designee will be sent to the student's parent(s) when the student is assigned detention or out-of-school suspension or is recommended for long-term suspension or expulsion.

The suspension notice for *out-of-school suspension (ten or fewer days)* shall include at least the following information:

1. Reason(s) for the suspension and date(s) of suspension are to be clearly stated
2. A parent will be contacted to establish a date and time for a readmission conference with the Principal
3. The student will not be allowed to participate in classroom and school activities during the suspension period
4. The student is not to go on school property
5. Appeal procedures shall be clearly stated in detail.

The suspension notice for long-term suspension/expulsion (greater than 10 days) shall include at least the following information:

First Notice and Invitation to Meet

1. The reason(s) for a long-term suspension or expulsion are to be clearly stated
2. A parent should be informed that an investigation is being conducted by the Principal and what the most severe recommendation might be
3. A date and time for a conference is given when a parent, accompanied by the student, are invited to come to school for a conference with the Principal or designee and/or other advisors to present and hear information
4. The student will not be allowed to participate in classroom and school activities during the suspension; and
5. The student is not to go on school property or attend school activities.
6. Information about whether the student will be able to continue to complete homework during the suspension. This is never an option for an expulsion.

Following the conference, the Principal will review the facts with his/her supervisor, and they may decide to recommend long-term suspension or expulsion to the Board of Directors. The Principal or his/her supervisor will inform the parent(s) and student of the recommendation to reinstate with conditions, long-term suspension, or expulsion. If the Principal recommends long-term suspension or expulsion, the Principal or his/her supervisor will write to the President of the Board and send a copy of the notice to the parent(s) including at least the following information:

Second Notice to the Parent/Guardian of Recommendation to the Board of Directors

1. The recommended action and reason(s) for the recommendation are clearly stated
2. The right of the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian to a hearing before the Board of Directors or its designees for long-term suspension and for expulsion recommendations, including the time, date, and location of the hearing
3. The right to inspect the student's school records and related documents
4. List of all witnesses that may testify
5. The right to an adult advocate, including parents, other adult advisors up to and including legal counsel
6. Copy of Board Policy 5610 Emergency Removal, Suspension and Expulsion of Students, including discipline hearing processes and appeal procedures.

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Subsequently, the Principal will follow-up with the student and his or her parent or guardian of the time, place, and location of the hearing with the Board of Directors or its designee to ensure delivery of the notice and to respond to questions.

Students with Disabilities. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are responsible for following the Code of Student Conduct. Students with disabilities may be suspended or expelled for inappropriate behavior. In making decisions concerning inappropriate behavior by students in Special Education, the teacher and the Principal are to consult with the student's Special Education resource room teacher to ensure consistency with the student's IEP. Principal is responsible for consistency with specific special education procedures.

Principal may recommend a student with disabilities for long-term suspension or expulsion (greater than ten days) by following these procedures:

1. The Principal will follow regular procedures for long-term suspension or expulsion as described above.
2. Once the Principal has made a recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion of a student with disabilities, he or she shall hold the Manifestation Determination Review to determine:
    (1) if the student is eligible for special education services
    (2) if the student is appropriately placed in a special education program; and
    (3) if there is a causal relationship between the student's disabling condition and the conduct for which he or she is to be disciplined.
3. The parent will be notified in writing of the time and place of the hearing and its purpose.
4. If a student with a disability is suspended or expelled, the school shall offer free and appropriate public educational services for the duration of the suspension/expulsion or until the student enrolls in another school.

Appeal Procedures

In-school Disciplinary Actions and Out-of-School Suspensions of Ten (10) School Days or Less There is no right of appeal for discipline decisions of ten (10) school days or less. Nonetheless, should a parent disagree with disciplinary action of the school in these situations, the parent is encouraged to make an appointment with the Principal to discuss the decision. If the parent is still dissatisfied after meeting with the Principal, the parent may contact the Principal's supervisor in writing within three school days of the meeting with the Principal to provide the reasons the parent believes the disciplinary action is not warranted.

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The Principal's Supervisor's decision is final.

Expulsions and Long-Term Suspensions (more than ten days)

Long-term suspension of more than ten days and expulsion occur when the Board of Directors or a designee terminates the student's rights and privileges to attend school, including extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Long-term suspension is for eleven (11) to fifty-nine (59) school days, while expulsion is for sixty (60) to one hundred eighty (180) school days. A permanent expulsion is for an indefinite period of time, the minimum of which is set by Michigan law. Reinstatement processes for permanently expelled students are outlined in Board Policy.

Following the Principal's recommendation for long term suspension of more than ten days or expulsion, the Board of Directors, or its designated representative, will hold a hearing within the ten days suspension period to determine whether to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion. The student and parent/guardian must be notified of the allegation, the recommended disciplinary action, the time, date, and location of the hearing, and of their right to attend and participate in the hearing. Prior to the hearing, families will be given an opportunity to review all evidence as well as a list of all persons scheduled to testify.

If the hearing is conducted by the Board of Directors, the decision is final and not subject to appeal. If it is held by a designee or hearing panel of 2 Board members, the parent may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors as follows:

Appeal requests must be made in writing by the parents to the Principal within five calendar days of receipt of the suspension decision, or the right to appeal is waived. The petition to appeal the designee's decision shall be in writing and contain the reason the designee's decision should be reviewed or reconsidered. The parent/guardian is encouraged to provide the Board of Directors with any information that supports the parent/guardian's position.

All appeals of decisions by Board designated representatives shall be considered by the Board of Directors at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board shall make a final decision on the disciplinary action that is appropriate, and its decision shall be final.

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INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities is a privilege. Students who choose to participate represent the school and are expected to demonstrate good character, responsibility, and respect at all times.

Student Expectations

Students participating in extracurricular activities are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for teammates, sponsors, coaches, staff, officials, opponents, and spectators.
- Display good sportsmanship, integrity, and self-control during all school-sponsored activities.
- Follow all school rules, policies, and behavioral expectations.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress and classroom behavior as determined by school administration.
- Attend practices, meetings, rehearsals, and events regularly, arriving on time and communicating any absences in advance.
- Care for all school-issued equipment, materials, or uniforms and return them in good condition.
- Refrain from the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs, or other prohibited substances.
- Use social media responsibly and in a manner that reflects positively on themselves and the school.
- Treat fellow participants with dignity and respect. Bullying, hazing, harassment, or intimidation will not be tolerated.

Parent Expectations

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting extracurricular programs. Families are expected to:

- Encourage respectful behavior and positive sportsmanship.
- Support attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate concerns respectfully with the program sponsor or coach.
- Allow students to take primary responsibility for communicating with sponsors or coaches whenever appropriate.
- Follow the school's chain of communication if concerns arise.

Participation

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Participation in extracurricular activities may be limited or suspended when a student:

- Violates the Student Code of Conduct.
- Fails to meet academic or behavioral expectations.
- Repeatedly misses required practices, meetings, or events without approval.
- Engages in conduct that negatively reflects on the school or the extracurricular program.

The school administration reserves the right to determine appropriate consequences based on the nature and severity of the violation.

Acknowledgement

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities indicates that students and parents have read, understand, and agree to follow this Code of Conduct.

CLOSING

“The Code of Student Conduct—A Partnership in Responsibility” has been developed to communicate the responsibilities that all stakeholders share in ensuring every student a safe, secure place for learning. Our Partnership relies on promises kept, trust, good faith, and a commitment to the well-being of all students.

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SECTION E: CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT CHECKLIST

A parent or adult caretaker is expected to read this Code of Student Conduct carefully and review each section of this handbook with his or her child. The student and the parent are expected to sign the verification form and return the entire checklist to the school.

1. THE SCHOOL HAS AUTHORITY OVER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.
   - The school has authority over the school grounds before, during, and after school hours.
   - The school has authority off the school grounds at school-related events.
   - The school has authority over school-sponsored transportation.
   - The school has authority over activities on school-owned electronic devices regardless of where they are used.
2. LEARNING IS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF SCHOOL.
   - Students will be expected to behave in a way that provides for uninterrupted learning.
   - Come prepared with materials and assignments.
3. STUDENT ATTITUDES ARE IMPORTANT TO THE SCHOOL.
   - Students are expected to display positive attitudes, such as honesty, respect, tolerance, and courtesy.
4. STUDENTS ARE TO WEAR THE SCHOOL APPROVED UNIFORM.
   - Clothing must be clean and modest and consistent with dress guidelines.
   - Clothing should be free of profanity, obscenity, vulgarity, racist language, tobacco, substance or alcohol abuse.
5. STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT A SAFE SCHOOL.
   - School staff in cooperation with parents and students must ensure safe and secure places for teaching, learning, and school-related events.
   - Weapons and acts of violence will not be tolerated.
6. STUDENTS MUST LEARN TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS.
   - Students can expect courtesy, fairness, and respect.
   - Students must offer courtesy, fairness, and respect.
   - Bullying, harassment, and intimidation will not be tolerated.
7. STUDENTS MAY EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS.
   - Use suitable methods of expression and wait for an appropriate time.
   - Use of profanity or obscenity in language, gestures, and clothing will not be tolerated.
   - Threats are not protected expressions of student speech.
8. ATTENDING SCHOOL EACH DAY IS VERY IMPORTANT.
   - Students should be in school, on time, every day prepared for instruction.

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9. VANDALISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
    - Personal and school property must be respected and cared for by everybody.
    - Damage or destruction of school property will not be tolerated.
    - Damage of the property of others will not be tolerated.
10. CHOICE SCHOOLS CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT IS FOR ALL STUDENTS.
    - Parents, students, and staff are responsible for knowing the contents of this booklet.
11. THE PRINCIPAL IS THE SCHOOL'S LEADER.
    - The Principal has the right to make a final decision when rules have been broken.
12. SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOR CAN RESULT IN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.
    - Suspension means that the student is not allowed to attend class for one or more days.
    - Long Term Suspension and Expulsion means that a student may not attend school or be present on school property.

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STUDENT AND PARENT AGREEMENTS FOR SIGNATURE

VERIFICATION OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Students and Parents

Each student and his or her parents or adult caretaker are expected to enter into the Partnership in Responsibility outlined in the Code of Student Conduct as a condition of enrollment at the Academy. To verify that you have received the *Code of Student Conduct* and this checklist, please sign the following statement, and return it to the Academy immediately:

STUDENT: I have received and attempted to review the Family and Student Handbook & Code of Student Conduct with my parents or guardian and accept my responsibilities.

Student Signature:_____Date: _____

Print Name:_____ Grade: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN: I have received the Family and Student Handbook & Code of Student Conduct and have or will review it with my child and understand my responsibilities in the partnership.

Parent Signature: _____Date: _____

Print Name: _____

TEACHER & PRINCIPAL: I have reviewed the Family and Student Handbook &Code of Student Conduct, understand its contents, and will work to fulfill my responsibilities in the partnership with parents and students.

Teacher Signature: _____Date: _____

Principal Signature: _____Date: _____

Failure of a student and his or her parents or guardian to sign this verification form does not relieve the student and his/her parent(s)/caretaker of their

responsibilities to demonstrate appropriate behavior at the Academy at all times.

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OPT IN Agreement for Regular School Communications

I understand my contact information will be used for regular school communication including emails and automated phone calls and texts to my mobile device. I understand that I may not Opt In or Out of school closing or crisis communications.

Parent Signature: Date: Print Name:

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FERPA Notice of Directory Information and Opt Out Form (Revised)

The School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent or adult student advises the School to the contrary by filling out, signing and returning this form to the Academy. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information in certain school publications.

The following list of uses are those that the Academy would commonly disclose a student's directory information. Please check the ones in which you do NOT give the Academy permission to use your student's directory information:
__Playbill – showing student's role in a play or music production
__Annual Yearbook
__Honor roll or other recognition
__Graduation Programs
__Sports and Activity Sheets
__Sharing my student's directory information with colleges or post high school institutions.
_____(Academy specific)
_____(Academy specific)
_____(Academy specific)

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's or adult student's prior written consent. Two (2) Federal laws require the Board to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three (3) directory information categories, names, addresses, and telephone listings - unless parents or adult students have advised the Academy that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. Please indicate which **Directory Information items** that you do NOT give permission for release to third parties:

Student Information	Opt Out – "X"
Student's names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses	
Parents' names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses	
Student's date and place of birth	
Participation in officially-recognized extra-curricular	

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activities/sports	
Height and weight, if a member of an athletic team	
Dates of attendance and grade designation	
Date of graduation	
Current and previous educational institutions attended	
Achievement awards or honors received; honor rolls	
Scholarships	
Photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs, their artwork on webpages, or school social media accounts.	

The Board will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student has opted-out of provision of this information by returning this Opt-Out Form to the School Office within 14 days of receipt. Directory information will not be provided to any organization for any profit-making purposes***. If you do not wish to opt-out of any of the above common uses, you do not need to return this form or take any other action.***

Print Name of Student: _____
Print Name of Person Signing and State Relationship: _____
Or state if student is an adult and signing on his/her own behalf
Signature of parent/guardian/adult student: _____

Date Received by School: _____Staff Signature: _____

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Student, Parent, Teacher, and Principal Compact

Student Agreement

I will work to the best of my ability. Therefore, I will strive to do the following:

- Coming to school ready to learn.
- Completing assignments and homework on time and to the best of my ability.
- Following school rules and expectations.
- Helping keep my school clean and safe.
- Setting aside a regular time and space to complete homework.
- Sharing school communications and important papers with my parent or guardian.
- Attending school regularly and arriving on time.
- Bringing necessary supplies for class.
- Showing respect for myself, my school, and others.
- Embracing challenges as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Using technology responsibly and following school rules for online behavior.
- Believing in my ability to learn and grow.

Signature:_____Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I want and accept the responsibility of helping my child to reach his full potential. Therefore, I will encourage him or her by doing the following:

- Ensuring my child attends school regularly and on time.
- Ensuring my child has access to a nourishing breakfast, healthy lunch, and snacks each day, whether provided by the school or from home.
- Supporting school staff in maintaining a positive and respectful learning environment.
- Encouraging respect for diverse perspectives and cultures.
- Providing a consistent time and space for homework and assisting when needed.
- Staying aware of what my child is learning and maintaining regular communication with teachers and school staff.
- Communicating promptly with the school regarding absences or any challenges impacting attendance.
- Familiarizing myself with the school policies and procedures to support a consistent approach at home and school.
- Supporting my child's emotional well-being by fostering resilience and helping them manage challenges.
- Attending parent-teacher conferences and school functions.
- Staying actively involved by participating in school events, volunteering, and remaining informed about opportunities to contribute.

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- Providing access to reading materials and fostering a love for reading.
- Monitoring my child's use of technology and ensuring it is used appropriately for educational purposes.
- Modeling and encouraging respect and maintaining respectful interactions at all times with staff, students, and community members.

Signature:_____Date: _____

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Teacher Agreement

In order to succeed, students must have the opportunity. I am committed to outstanding achievement by my students and will strive to do the following:

- Provide an environment conducive to learning
- Have high expectations for my students
- Use methods and techniques that work best for the students in my classroom
- Support student learning that encourages students to try for even higher goals
- Maintain open lines of effective communication with my students and their parents
- Involve parents in learning activities in the classroom
- Respect the students, their parents, and the diverse culture of the school
- Show the care and concern that I have for all of my students
- Make efficient and effective use of academic learning time.
- Provide a safe, secure, and caring environment for learning and developing.
- Provide an enriched and challenging curriculum utilizing the school's approved curriculum, aligned to state and national standards.

Signature:_____Date: _____

Principal Agreement

I support high expectations across all programs and activities of the Academy and will do the following:

- Provide a safe, secure, positive atmosphere for learning.
- Provide an environment that allows for open communication among teachers, parents, and students.
- Support school functions.
- I have reviewed the Code of Student Conduct, understand its contents, and will work to fulfill my responsibilities in the partnership with parents and student.

Signature:_____Date: _____

This Compact should be signed at the beginning of each school year: The Compact content should be reviewed annually, at the Title I Review Meeting.

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Acceptable Use Policy of Technology Resources

Student and Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment

The Academy provides students with access to technology resources, including computers, devices, software, networks, internet access, electronic communication systems, and other digital learning tools, to support teaching and learning.

Use of Academy technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and all users are expected to use these resources safely, responsibly, ethically, and in accordance with Academy policies.

Before a student is granted access to Academy technology resources or a school-issued email account, this agreement must be reviewed and signed by both the student and a parent or guardian.

Student Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have read, understand, and agree to follow the Academy's Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy contained in the Student Handbook.
- I understand that use of Academy technology resources is a privilege that may be suspended or revoked if I violate Academy policies or applicable laws.
- I understand that I have no expectation of privacy when using Academy-owned devices, networks, internet services, email, or other technology resources. My activity may be monitored, reviewed, and retained in accordance with Board policy and applicable law.
- I understand that I must use Academy technology for educational purposes and in a safe, respectful, ethical, and legal manner.
- I understand that misuse of Academy technology, including cyberbullying, harassment, unauthorized access, plagiarism, copyright violations, inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI), attempts to bypass security measures, or other violations of the Student Handbook, may result in disciplinary action, loss of technology privileges, financial responsibility for damages, referral to law enforcement when appropriate, or other consequences permitted by law.
- I understand that I am responsible for protecting my username, password, and Academy-issued devices and for reporting any damage, loss, security concern, or suspected misuse immediately to a staff member.

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Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have read and understand the Academy's Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy contained in the Student Handbook.
- I understand that the Academy monitors student use of Academy technology resources in accordance with Board policy and applicable law.
- I understand that my child has no expectation of privacy when using Academy technology resources.
- I understand that Academy technology resources are provided for educational purposes and that misuse may result in disciplinary action or loss of technology privileges.
- I understand that the Academy utilizes online educational services and technology platforms that comply with applicable federal and state student data privacy laws, including the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA), when applicable.
- I authorize the Academy, when necessary for educational purposes, to provide the limited student information required for my child to participate in approved educational technology services.
- I understand that I may exercise any parent rights described in the Student Handbook regarding student educational records, student data privacy, approved technology platforms, artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and technology monitoring.

Student Agreement

I have read and understand this Acceptable Use Agreement and agree to comply with the Academy's Student Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and all applicable Academy rules governing the use of technology resources.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I have read and understand this Acceptable Use Agreement and acknowledge my responsibilities as outlined above. I understand that my child's access to Academy technology resources is contingent upon compliance with Academy policies.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

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Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

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