



**MILLENNIUM CHARTER ACADEMY**

# **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

## **2024-2025**

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**The school presumes that you have read and agree to the current Family Handbook, including the honor codes, but if you have not, you can access the honor codes and handbook at anytime on our website <http://www.mccademy.com/family-handbook>, and we have hard copies in either office.**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Foundational Information</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Administrative and Operational Information</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Academic and Educational Information</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Character Development</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Athletics</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Acknowledgement of the Family Handbook</b>	<b>51</b>



# **FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION**

## OUR MISSION

The Mission of Millennium Charter Academy is to form intelligent, virtuous citizens through classical education.

## OUR VISION

As a natural advancement of our stated Mission and Goals, Millennium Charter Academy will develop citizens of virtuous character who think well and, as leaders, contribute to our communities, our nation, and the world. Our students will understand that a good citizen rules and is ruled; is independent, yet simultaneously in relation to others; and is grounded in an honest search for knowable, universal truth, goodness, and beauty. To foster this model of citizenship, we will maintain our delivery of a robust, liberal arts curriculum, deepen our implementation of classical education, and continue our principle-based discipline grounded in love for the individual and a respect for the corporate good, as well as a belief in redemption and growth. Through these means, we will increase our attention to developing the following characteristics of citizenship in our students: 1) an awareness of themselves as members of a community, from local to national to global; 2) a devotion to intellectual and moral integrity, including an ability to fashion credible ideas and to argue logically; 3) an appreciation for the rule of law; and 4) an understanding of American constitutional democracy.





## OUR EDUCATIONAL GOALS

### Scholarship

1. To inspire students so that they leave MCA loving to learn.
2. To foster the values and benefits of reading.
3. To teach children to think analytically in the upper level thinking skills, such as generalizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating.
4. To teach children to act and think independently and to make sound evaluations of situations, information, and ideas.
5. To follow a child's progress through teacher observation, communicating well with parents.
6. To deliver well the entire NC Standard Course of Study and Core Knowledge curriculum to every child.
7. To maximize instructional time during the school day.
8. Utilize small group instruction.

### Character

9. To develop within each student a solid moral character.
10. To respect the child, to discipline wisely, and to teach the child how to live under authority.
11. To develop leaders.

### Community

12. To utilize the community as an educational resource.
13. To assist and uphold parents in their responsibility to educate their children.
14. To encourage and provide opportunities for parents and other people in the community to share their unique gifts and talents with Millennium Charter Academy.
15. To foster appreciation for our country

## **MCA Pledge**

Because I am a person endowed with worth and value, I pledge to work hard and think well. I will respect others and myself. I will courageously pursue what is true, do what is good, and love what is beautiful.

## **“Habits”**

Classroom teachers assess ten Habits: obedience, courtesy, truthfulness, integrity, service, awareness, thinking, excellence, perseverance and leading. These are evaluated on a scale of “rarely,” “sometimes,” “often,” and “consistently.” Students maybe excluded from special school events such as field trips and assemblies due to their comportment.

### *Expectations and Habits*

The school expects a high standard of being from all our students. Specifically, we expect students to:

- Be Respectful of yourself, others, and proper authority, obeying the first time with a good attitude;
- Be Honest with yourself and others;
- Be Compassionate toward people and humane toward other living things;
- Be Responsible personally, privately, and publicly;
- Be Courageous doing the right thing, even when it is difficult or unpopular.

Directly supporting these five Expectations of being, we have ten Habits of behaving:

- obedience (doing what I am told the first time with a good attitude)
- courtesy (being polite and showing good manners)
- truthfulness (being honest in all matters, even when it is not easy)
- integrity (doing what is morally right)
- service (doing for others)
- awareness (recognizing the thoughts and feelings of others)
- thinking (using my mind and all that I know, diligently and creatively)
- excellence (unwilling to do less than my best)
- perseverance (continuing to work through difficulties)
- leading (showing the way by going first)

# **ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Age Requirements**

Children may attend kindergarten if they are five years old on or before August 31 of the present school year. Valid birth certificates are required. Kindergarteners must also have completed their immunizations and have a physical examination by the thirtieth day of the school year. The headmaster must see your child's birth certificate. The form for the required health assessment for the child is available at the school.

### **AHERA**

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), this notice serves to inform you that no known asbestos containing materials were used in the construction of this facility. You are welcome to view MCA's management plan, which are housed in the school office.

### **Attendance**

Millennium Charter Academy provides a great education aimed at helping our students to flourish as good citizens who build strong families and communities. We appreciate your cooperation in promoting consistent attendance for the sake of our students' growth and improvement.

### **School Day Schedule**

- **Lower School:** 8:00 AM - 2:45 PM
- **Upper School:** 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
- **Drop-off Time:** After 7:30 AM (Do not drop-off children before 7:30 because school employees cannot be responsible for children until that time. Students will be supervised and seated until released to classrooms at 7:55 AM)
- **Pick-up Time:** Immediately upon school dismissal unless participating in a school activity. Students remaining on campus after 3:15 PM without a school-sponsored activity will be sent to Lion's Watch, our after-school care program, and parents will be charged a daily fee.

### **Attendance Requirements**

- **Half-Day Attendance:** A student must be in attendance for at least half of the school day (8:00 AM - 11:30 AM) to be considered present.
- **Tardiness:** Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 AM. Students arriving after 8:00 AM are considered tardy. Lower school students must be signed in by a parent at the office; upper school students must provide a written note for the tardy to be excused. It is extremely important for your child to be on time every day!

## Absence Reporting

- **Excuse Submission:** Parents/guardians must submit an excuse for any student absence to the classroom teacher and school (registrar@mcacademy.com) within two days of the student's return to school, or the absence will be recorded as unlawful. (GS 115C-379)
- **Doctor's Excuse/Documentation:** After five unexcused absences, a doctor's excuse or relevant documentation is required for any further excused absences. The headmaster or designee may grant exceptions.
- **Valid Reasons for Absence:**
  1. Illness or injury
  2. Quarantine
  3. Death in the immediate family
  4. Medical or dental appointment
  5. Court or administrative proceedings
  6. Religious observances
  7. Educational opportunity

## Consequences for Unexcused Absences and Tardies

1. **3 Unexcused Absences:**
  - Parents/guardians receive a truancy letter.
  - Phone call with administration and parents/guardians to develop a plan to improve attendance.
2. **6 Unexcused Absences:**
  - Parents/guardians receive a second truancy letter that they may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State and the Board of Education.
  - Mandatory meeting with parents/guardians, student, and administration to review plan to improve attendance.
3. **10 Unexcused Absences:**
  - Parents/guardians receive a third truancy letter.
  - Mandatory meeting with parents/guardians, student, and administration to discuss excessive absences.
  - The administration shall confer with the student and the student's parent, guardian, or custodian, if possible, to determine whether the parent, guardian, or custodian has received notification and made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the administration determines that the

parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the administration shall notify the district attorney and the director of social services of the county where the child resides. If the administration determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the administration may file a complaint with the juvenile court counselor pursuant to Chapter 7B of the General Statutes that the child is habitually absent from school without a valid excuse. Upon receiving notification by the administration, the director of social services shall determine whether to undertake an investigation under G.S. 7B-302.

**4. For Grades K-6:**

- Students with 20 or more unexcused absences may be retained in their present grade or fail the course, as determined appropriate by the administration. Unexcused tardies or early pick-ups will be considered in promotion and retention decisions.

**5. For Grades 7-12:**

- Students with 10 or more unexcused absences may be retained in their present grade or fail the course, as determined appropriate by the administration. Unexcused tardies or early pick-ups will be considered in promotion and retention decisions.

**Tardies and Early Pick-Ups**

- **Unexcused Tardies and Early Pick-Ups:** Excessive unexcused tardies and early pick-ups will be monitored. Five or more unexcused tardies or early pick-ups in one quarter will be considered excessive. Parents will be notified, and the administration will work with the student's parents to develop an improvement plan. If a student is absent for more than half of a class period, they will be counted absent from that class period.
- **Leaving Early:** Discouraged except for unavoidable circumstances. Written permission is required for early pick-ups. Students leaving early without valid reasons will not be allowed to make up missed work.

**Compulsory Attendance Law**

- **NC General Statute 115C-378:** The State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between the ages of 7 (or younger if enrolled) and 16 attend school. Unlawful absences will be reported to proper authorities.

- **Communication:** The school will communicate with parents through phone calls, letters, and emails to address accumulating unexcused absences and tardies.

### **Family/Educational Trips**

- **Written Arrangements:** Must be made with the headmaster and teacher(s) at least three days prior to the trip. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing all classwork. Only five days per school year may be excused for family/educational trips.
- **Avoid Absences During Testing:** End of Grade and End of Course testing periods should be avoided for absences.

### **Contacting Teachers**

Our faculty and staff will be glad to speak with you about your child; however, please be mindful that beginning at 7:45 each morning until 3:30 each afternoon, they are fully engaged and typically cannot speak at length with you. Every teacher has a voice mailbox and email, so to arrange a conversation you are welcome to leave a message, send an email, or leave word with the office manager or receptionist. You may also send a note by your child.

### **Damaged or Lost School Books**

To avoid a misunderstanding about damaged, lost or stolen books, the following is offered for your information. Students who attend North Carolina public schools are issued textbooks free of charge. This means the students have borrowed the books for use during the year. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to take care of them. If a book is damaged, the student who is issued the book will pay for the damage. In case a book is stolen or lost, the student is required to pay for the book.

### **Grievance**

A parent shall have an appeal of right to MCA's Board of Directors regarding allegations of a violation of specified federal or state law, federal or state regulation or State Board of Education policy or procedure. The aggrieved parent shall submit his/her grievance to the headmaster in writing within 30 days of the activity/event giving rise to the violation or federal/state law or State Board of Education policy or procedure. The headmaster shall respond to the grievance in writing within 10 days. Should the grievance remain unresolved, it shall be calendared for the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors as new business.

### **Immunization Requirements**

Those who do not have both the immunizations and examination completed by the thirtieth day of school will be suspended from school until they have been completed unless the child is exempted by North Carolina law. (G.S. 11 5C-364) Vaccination requirements for K-12 school children can be found using the link below:

<https://immunization.dph.ncdhhs.gov/schools/k-12.htm>

### **Inclement Weather**

The primary concern when inclement weather strikes is the safety of students and staff traveling on roads and entering the building. In the event of inclement weather, the school 1) emails notification to all email addresses that have been submitted for inclusion in the distribution lists; 2) initiates an auto-call to all numbers submitted for inclusion in the One Call Now system; 3) MCA Facebook post 4) posts notification on WXII. Parents may also sign up for email notifications through WXII.

Weather and road conditions may vary widely in our area, so the ultimate decision to keep your child at home or to send him/her to school resides with you, our parents. If no announcement of delay or cancellation of school is heard, you should assume school is scheduled as normal.

In some cases, school may be cancelled after students arrive. This will also be announced on the same radio and television stations. You need to make arrangements beforehand concerning where your child is to go if school is dismissed. (*Note: Childcare will also be closed when school is delayed or closes early due to inclement weather.*) Make sure your child knows your “emergency bad weather plan” before inclement weather arrives!

### **Lunch**

Students may bring bag lunches from home, or they may purchase meals by ordering online in advance. To provide a healthy, balanced, and enjoyable menu, MCA contracts with several area restaurants to cater lunches daily. All families requesting will receive forms to apply for free lunch. If during the school year you feel you may qualify for this program, contact the school office, and request an application.

### **Medication**

Designated school employees are allowed to administer medications during school hours. To insure safe and accurate administration, you, the parent/guardian, complete an Authorization for Medication Administration form, signed by both you and the physician. This form gives instructions for administering the medicine, including the time and method of administration, the dosage, the possible side effects, and the termination date for administering the medicine. The medicine prescribed must be in its original container with the child’s name, the drug name, the physician’s name, and the dosage information printed on it.

You, the parent/guardian, are responsible for supplying and retrieving the medication. For your convenience, you can download the authorization form from our web site or pick it up from either school office. The school retains the right to reject the request for administration of medicine. For safety reasons, the school will not accept telephoned permission.

Unless we have a form on file, your child may not bring medications of any kind to school. This includes all prescription and over the counter medicines.



### **Moment of Silence**

To afford students and teachers a moment of quiet reflection at the beginning of each day in the public schools, to create a boundary between school time and non-school time, and to set a tone of decorum in the classroom that will be conducive to discipline and learning, the MCA Board of Directors authorizes the observance of a moment of silence at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades. The school shall observe a period of silence, not to exceed one minute in duration, and that during that period silence shall be maintained and no one may engage in any other activities. Such period of silence shall be totally and completely unstructured and free of guidance or influence of any kind from any sources.

### **MPACT (Millennium Parents and Concerned Teachers)**

Our school also has a very active parent-teacher organization, Millennium Parents and Concerned Teachers (MPACT). Please become a member and show support for MCA by attending meetings and sponsored events. As you show that you value school, your child will more fully realize its importance.

### **Organization**

MCA is an independent, public school and is governed by its Board of Directors, which delegates the overall management of the school to the school's Headmaster. The primary function of the Board of Directors is the establishment of philosophy, broad goals, and overarching policies of the Academy. The Board and Headmaster work in partnership for the preservation and enhancement of the educational and financial assets of the school. Once local policy has been established, the headmaster maintains full control of the daily operations. All inquiries, including personnel, community relations and student/parent relations are directed to the headmaster and his staff for response.

### **Privacy Rights**

According to the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies. Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions: school officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and

safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

MCA may disclose, without written consent, appropriately designated “directory information,” including student’s name, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, address, weight and height of members of athletic teams, telephone listing, degrees, honors, and awards received, photograph, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information from your child’s educational records in certain publications. Directory information is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. If you do not want MCA to disclose directory information, please notify the Academy in writing.

### **Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying**

The Board of Directors of Millennium Charter Academy (MCA) believes that all employees and students should be free of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying as a part of a safe, orderly, caring and inviting working and learning environment. The Board commits itself to nondiscrimination in all its educational and employment activities. The Board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying, based on race, color, national origin, gender, pregnancy, religion, age, or disability.

The Board also prohibits retaliation against an employee or student who has exercised any rights made available through state or federal law, including prohibiting retaliation for reporting violations of this policy.

Any violation of this policy is considered a serious violation and appropriate action will be taken in response to a violation, including the possibility of suspension or expulsion.

#### **A. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

All persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district must comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination. Visitors also are expected to comply with applicable laws, including the prohibition against harassment and bullying of students or harassment of employees. MCA is also sensitive to the needs of children who come from homes where domestic violence is present.

This policy will apply in the following circumstances:

1. while in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours;
2. while on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity;
3. during any school function, extracurricular activity, or other activity or event;
4. when subject to the authority of school personnel; and
5. any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the school, including the internet.

## B. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply.

1. *Discrimination* means any act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on their membership in a socially distinct group or category, such as race, ethnicity, sex, religion, age, or disability. Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.
2. *Harassment* can be a type of unlawful discrimination. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcomed, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. The hostile environment can be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior or a single incident, if sufficiently severe. Harassing behavior may include but is not limited to epithets, derogatory comments or slurs and lewd propositions, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassing behavior.

It is possible for harassment to occur at various levels; between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or imposed by non-employees, including visitors, on employees and/or students.

3. *Bullying* may take several forms in the effort to harass, intimidate, or discriminate against others. It is a form of harassment. Bullying means the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or emotional abuse or through attacks on the property of another. Bullying may include, but is not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, and exclusion from peer groups. More specifically:

Physical Bullying – punching, hitting, poking, kicking, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, excessive tickling, pushing

Verbal Bullying – name-calling, teasing, gossip, starting/spreading rumors, taunting, threatening

Emotional Bullying – rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, intentionally excluding, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation, manipulating friendships/relationships, isolating, ostracizing, peer pressure

Sexual Bullying – includes many actions listed previously, as well as voyeurism, exhibitionism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment, abuse involving actual physical contact, sexual assault

*(Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities. US Department of Education: March 2003)*

Cyberbullying - bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

(Stopbullying.gov)

**C. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Students, parents, and MCA employees are encouraged to submit any complaints of discrimination, harassment or bullying through the established complaint procedure. For purposes of investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment or bullying, the terms “discrimination,” “harassment” or “bullying” will be substituted for the term “sexual harassment,” as appropriate.

**D. NON-RETALIATION**

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the principal, after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with applicable federal, state or local laws, policies and regulations.

**E. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS**

The headmaster shall designate an employee(s) to participate in training by the Department of Public Instruction pertaining to anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-bullying. The designee will provide leadership and training in the school district regarding this policy and state requirements.

As funds are available, the Board will provide additional training for students and staff regarding the Board’s policy on discrimination, harassment and bullying and will create programs to address these issues. The headmaster will ensure that any training or programs provided will include identifying groups that may be the target of discrimination, harassment, or bullying; identifying places at which such behavior may occur including within school buildings, via the Internet, etc.; and providing clear examples of behavior that constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

**F. NOTICE**

The headmaster is responsible for providing effective notice to students, parents, and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. MCA will investigate complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying and will take reasonable steps to eliminate the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

**G. HEADMASTER**

To register a complaint, contact the Academy’s headmaster. The headmaster either must (1) implement a resolution to a discrimination, harassment or bullying complaint, to the extent a resolution can be reached, and the headmaster has the authority to implement corrective action or (2) notify other school officials that intervention is required to resolve the situation.

**H. RECORDS AND REPORTING**

The headmaster or his or her designee shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of discrimination that identify the names of any individuals accused of discrimination and the resolution of such reports or complaints. The headmaster also shall maintain records of training, corrective action or other steps taken by the district to help provide an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

The headmaster shall report to the State Board of Education all verified cases of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. The report will be made through the Discipline Data Collection Report or through other means required by the State Board.

**I. DIVERSITY PROGRAMS**

The Board is committed to promoting the worth and dignity of all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, or disability. The Board directs the headmaster to foster such an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.

**J. EVALUATION**

The headmaster is required to evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying and will share these evaluations periodically with the Board.

**Property**

All educational materials and furniture, including laptops, desks, and lockers, remain the property of the school. Students are responsible for the care of all school-issued materials. Any book damaged beyond normal wear will be charged to the student on a pro-rated value. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss or damage of a student’s personal property.

**Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. §1232h, requires MCA to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parents;

2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical exams and screenings.

### **Search and Seizure**

Searches are conducted according to the Fourth Amendment. The school has the right to search and monitor students' use of any school-owned property (e.g., lockers, school email accounts, etc.), and therefore students have no expectation of privacy regarding such uses. When there is "reasonable suspicion" that a particular student has violated school rules or a law, a search of a student's person or property can be initiated. Only administrators or their designees may conduct searches.

### **Services**

#### **Exceptional Children**

The Exceptional Children (EC) Program is a federal regulated and funded service whose mission is to ensure that students with disabilities develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, and vocationally through the provision of an appropriate individualized education program in the least restrictive environment. The recognized disabilities are autism, behavioral-emotional, deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities, mental, orthopedic, other health impaired, speech/language, traumatic brain injury, developmental delay, and visual impairment. With compassion and to the degree possible MCA helps children deal honestly and effectively with a bonafide disability within the context of normal life. In certain cases, determined by the EC Coordinator, the Challenge Center Program will provide short-term academic monitoring and limited assistance to students exiting the EC Program to help insure a smooth transition. MCA follows state and federal regulations related to EC enrollment and withdrawal.

#### **After School Academy**

As the title denotes, MCA offers after school classes geared to encourage students in a variety of enriching activities. Our offerings change according to demand and availability of quality instructors. These programs are fee-based and open to the entire community.

#### **Pictures**

Millennium Charter Academy will arrange for students' pictures to be taken in the fall and in the spring as a service to parents. Contact the office for the guidelines on prepayment, proofs, etc.

## **Summer Camps**

MCA may offer a variety of camps, which may include sports camps, a fine arts camp, and others. These programs are fee-based and open to the entire community.

## **Sickness**

- Sick students are not allowed to remain at school.
- MCA will call you to pick up your child should he/she feel sick or have a fever.
- If your child's temperature is 100° F or higher, his/her body is fighting an illness and should remain out of school until he/she has been fever-free for twenty-four hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- If your child has been vomiting or has had diarrhea in the past twenty-four hours, staying at home helps prevent the spread of germs and allows your child the chance to drink more fluids to prevent dehydration.
- If your child has body aches, severe head congestion, sore throat, cough, upset stomach, or the like, it would be beneficial for your child to stay home, to rest, and to allow his/her body to use its natural defenses to fight the illness.
- You will also find helpful information regarding the flu and meningitis on the MCA website.

## **Solicitation and Distribution**

For the safety, convenience, and integrity of this school, MCA does not advertise items, events, or programs, unless generated by the school's parent organization, Millennium Education Foundation, Inc., the Academy itself, or a school affiliated organization, such as the Booster Club, the Fine Arts Team, MPACT, or the like. The Academy only announces or advertises for city government related organizations, and then so only if the program is not in competition with or in conflict with the school's mission, philosophy, or programs as determined by the headmaster.

## **Student Parking and Permits**

Parking permits are assigned in order first to seniors then to juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. Display the parking permit prominently in the front windshield and park in the designated student parking spaces. Obey all school practices regarding traffic and safety, as well as all government regulations.

## **Tobacco Free Campus Policy**

Pursuant to SL2007-236 1086, students, staff, and visitors are strictly prohibited from using tobacco and smokeless tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, in school buildings, on school grounds, at facilities owned by Millennium Education Foundation, Inc., and at all school-sponsored events.

## **Visitors**

We welcome visitors to Millennium Charter Academy. Whenever you come into the building, please check in at the school office first and let the receptionist know the purpose of your visit. You are especially encouraged to volunteer, to share your experiences and expertise that fit within the broad goals of the school. You are welcome to eat lunch with your child, too.

Schedule conferences in advance with teachers or the headmaster. Please schedule time to talk with a teacher during her/his planning time or after school, so as not to disrupt the teaching environment. Pre-school age children must always remain in your company.

Because MCA realizes the importance of community, we recognize volunteers, parents, and business partners are helpful in a successful educational program. We encourage you to consider being a grade parent, field trip driver, tutor, a mentor, lunch buddy, speaker, project judge, clerical helper, or any other asset to the school. Please call the office or talk with your child's teacher if you wish to volunteer. To minimize distractions, other children may not accompany you to school when you volunteer.

Prospective students and graduates of MCA are welcome to visit campus. Please make arrangements by contacting the school or at the front desk.

**Yearbook**

The school yearbook is usually reserved in the fall and distributed before the last day of school.



# **ACADEMIC AND EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION**

## **Report Cards**

Hard copies of report cards are issued for grades K-2 at the end of each quarter. Report cards in grades 3-12 are available online twenty-four hours a day. Measurements of academic growth and mastery of skills, content and concepts are based on periodic assessments using various methods and strategies.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Teachers schedule parent conferences as needed. Certain days are reserved for parent/teacher conferences and can be found on the school calendar.

## **Communication to Parents**

To serve you, our students and parents, we strive to maintain good communication. The information below outlines our guidelines for communication. The school's online grade book provides continuous grade access and homework information for third-twelfth graders.

### **Lower School:**

- *A Monthly Newsletter* that gives a brief overview of the material to be covered for the upcoming month, highlights events, special activities, and an occasional human-interest story about students.
- *A Monthly Calendar* that dates special days, "major" assignments, tests & quizzes, projects, field trips, interim due dates for long assignments, and other significant events.
- *Bi-Weekly Progress Reports* that note academic growth and personal growth (social, emotional, and moral development) for all kindergarten - second grade students.

### **Upper School:**

- *Monday Memo* outlines academic work, special events and notices.
- *Teacher websites* contain detailed information and handouts.

## **Retention**

The decision to promote or retain is made carefully. Consideration includes input from educators, parents/guardians, and the student. The final decision rests with the headmaster.

- Retention in kindergarten is based on the developmental level of the child measured by progress reports, screenings, teacher observations, and/or readiness assessments.
- Before a second retention in the Lower School (K-5), careful consideration will be given to numerous factors, including chronological age, maturity, self-image, and academic growth. Social promotion and/or transferring of students to another grade should not occur in the primary grades (K-3), except in cases of second-time retention or grossly extenuating circumstances.
- In the middle school, a student who fails two or more core courses may be retained.
- In the high school, a student who fails a course may be required to retake the course.

By the end of January, the teacher submits to the headmaster an initial list of students whose promotion is in question, with a brief explanation of the reasons. The Headmaster and Lower School Director or the Upper School Director (as appropriate) review all necessary records. By the middle of March, you will be notified and invited to a conference if retention is a possibility. Teachers file documented records of their efforts to contact and involve parents/guardians.

During the last grading period, grade level conferences will be held to discuss possible retentions. By the end of the eighth school month, the headmaster will make a final decision. If the decision is to retain, the school will conference with you before the end of the school year.

Promotion/retention of students who transfer during the school year is made after all the student's records are reviewed.

Parents' input is valuable when considering promotion and retention, but the headmaster makes the final decision. (G.S. 115-228)

### **State Proficiency Guidelines**

Students scoring below state proficiency guidelines receive remedial interventions and/or are retained in the same grade. If a student with disabilities is being considered for retention, the headmaster makes the decision in consultation with the Student Services Team. If the student is making satisfactory progress toward the achievement of the educational goals in the IEP, the student is promoted. If the student is retained, the student's IEP will include a notation indicating the reason for retention and changes in the IEP.

### **Academic Assignments**

Student work is due on the date assigned, regardless of grade level. In grades K-2, as students are formally initiated to this responsibility, late work is accounted for in the character marks and comments. In grades 3-5, ten points are deducted per day for late work. In grades 6-12, late work and missing work typically receive a grade of zero; however, teachers may offer a grace period up to three days depending on the circumstances and the nature of the assignment. Work handed in during the grace period receives a ten-point deduction. However, to help the transition from Lower School (K-5) to Upper School (6-12), sixth grade students are given a twenty-four-hour grace period for late work through December with only a ten-point deduction. Beginning in January, unexcused late work is no longer accepted for a grade.

Still, should an Upper School student need an extension due to extenuating difficulties, he/she may submit a formal "Due Date Extension Request" to the teacher to whom the assignment is due. That teacher considers the merit of the request and decides. If permission is granted, no points are deducted for a late submission. It is, furthermore,

highly recommended that a student make this formal request as soon as the need for the extra time is anticipated. This student appeals process is intended to promote personal integrity, including responsibility, time management, diligence, obedience, attention to detail, courtesy, and excellence in everything. Should an Upper School student have an excused absence on an assignment's due date, the work is to be submitted the first day back, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

## **MAKE THIS CONSISTENT AND PLACE A SUMMARY IN THE ATTENDANCE SECTION**

### **Homework**

#### *Purpose*

At Millennium Charter Academy we assign homework to teach diligence, independent learning, and to memorize or practice concepts that are taught in school, to provide opportunities to problem solve, to encourage creativity, and to expound on topics already covered in the classroom. Homework also helps develop a sense of personal responsibility, and to communicate to students that learning takes place at home as well as at school. Daily practice in reading develops fluency, comprehension, and increased content knowledge. It also has a positive impact on writing skills. Homework should always be clearly understood and have sufficient directions during class. Homework time is not viewed as an extension of school hours, but rather the opportunity for purpose-driven assignments that cannot be reasonably completed during regular school hours. Unless the homework assignment is for extra credit, the assignment should always be meaningful and necessary, and, therefore, not optional.

Families are encouraged to provide an environment with few distractions (like a desk in the child's room) and parents are encouraged to check work, but otherwise allow the child to work alone. This can take some coaching and discipline at first, but it should eventually lead to excellent study habits.

#### *Quantity*

Believing that an essential part of growing up requires that children have time with their families and time to engage in non-academic activities, we endeavor to maintain high time on task here at school and then to send students home with minimal work. This load is set based on the average diligent student. Most new families can adjust to this load within two to three months of enrolling.

Because each student requires varying amounts of time for any given assignment, the following is only a general guideline.

<u>Grade Levels</u>	<u>Amount of time per day</u>
K-2	0-30 minutes
3-5	0-45 minutes
6-8	0-20 minutes per core class
9-12	0-30 minutes per core class

### *Family Night*

The first Tuesday of each month is designated as “Family Night.” On that evening, there is no homework assigned and often there are social events such as skate nights planned for families to enjoy.

### *Parent Involvement*

Parents are expected to monitor their child’s progress and make sure that homework is completed and delivered on time. Parents provide a consistent time and place for their child to work on their assignments. This is a place where the child can concentrate, free from unnecessary distractions. Parents should also encourage children to correct their own mistakes. In other words, parents should come along side, leading and encouraging the child to think for him/herself. Most often, homework is the child’s work; however, it occasionally provides a vehicle through which family members work together.

### *Structure*

Homework can be hands-on projects, research work, worksheets, etc. Most, if not every, day there will be reading assignments. On the rare occasion when a group project is assigned, special care will be taken to prevent difficulties in transportation and scheduling.

### *Making Up Homework and Tests*

Students are expected to have homework completed to the best of their ability and turned in on time. Should a student be out because of illness, the teacher would decide a reasonable time for the work to be made up. Ultimately, it is the students’ responsibility to secure his/her make-up work from individual teachers. This is particularly true for 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Should a student have an excused absence on the day of an announced test or quiz, the teacher will administer the test or quiz on the day the student returns to class. Pop quizzes or unannounced quizzes will be made up at the discretion of the teacher. Students absent due to school-related activities (field trips, athletics, robotics, chorus, rehearsals, etc.) must contact each teacher prior to the scheduled event to submit assignments due, schedule make-up tests, and gather any special instructions.

At the same time parents are encouraged to provide enriching experiences for their children, families must weigh the value of taking children out of school. If the child is absent by parental choice for such reasons as vacation or the family’s personal needs, the parents are required to inform the teacher at least three days in advance. The teacher will provide topics and reading assignments that will be covered during the student’s upcoming absence. The teacher is not expected to provide worksheets as a substitute or a detailed lesson plan. The parents are expected to work with their child, so that their child will not be behind when he/she returns.

### Lower School (grades K-5)

Should a student be delinquent in completing assignments, the student will complete the homework for the following day, unless this is a repeating pattern of late assignments, in

which case the student will do the work during the school day, e.g., during recess, a portion of lunch, or library. In case of an unexcused absence, the student will complete all missed work and his/her grade will be lowered one letter grade for each day late.

### Upper School (grades 6-12)

In keeping with the Academy's expectations and hopes for all MCA students, all assignments in the Upper School are due on the assigned dates. Typically, late work and missing work receive a grade of zero; however, teachers may offer a grace period up to three days depending on the circumstances and the nature of the assignment. Work handed in during the grace period receives a ten-point deduction.

To provide a transition for sixth graders entering upper school, from August through December assignments will be accepted one day late with a ten-point deduction. After December, the upper school policy of no late work will apply.

Furthermore, should a student need an extension, he/she may submit a formal "Due Date Extension Request" to the teacher to whom the assignment is due. That teacher will consider the merit of the request and make a determination. If permission is granted, no points are deducted for a late submission. It is highly recommended that a student make this formal request as soon as he/she anticipates the need for the extra time. This student appeals process is intended to promote personal integrity, including responsibility, time management, diligence, obedience, attention to detail, courtesy, and excellence in everything.

Students who have an excused absence for a family trip should return to school with their work completed. Students who have an excused absence for illness are granted two days for every day of absence to turn in missed assignments. Again, a teacher may decide to extend that period due to extenuating circumstances.

### **Formal Assessments**

- End of Grade (EOG) Tests for Grades 3-8
- End of Grade (EOG) Science Test for Grades 5,8
- End of Course (EOC) Test for Algebra I, English II, Biology, Algebra II
- Pre-ACT for Grade 10 and ACT for Grade 11

Additional standardized testing may be administered to better determine how much a child has progressed during the year. It is imperative that your child be in attendance for these.

### **Academic Assistance**

Each grade level in lower school and each core subject in upper school provides tutorials after school as needed or on a designated day of the week. Your child's teacher may contact you or you may contact him/her, if you believe a tutorial would be of value to your child.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are fundamentally educational and fit within the stated mission, focus, and curricular goals of the school. They are one form of experiential education. Lower School classes are encouraged to take one field trip per month.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to field trips. More specifics are given under “Homework.”

Parents generally bear the costs of field trips. MCA also requires written parental consent for a child to participate.

Safety and decorum are of the utmost concern when off campus! Students are to comport themselves honorably and responsibly. Their behavior and the chaperones’ standards should match the high expectations of MCA.

To maintain the integrity and safety of a school trip, only students in the participating classes may participate in the field trip. Furthermore, only family members cleared and assigned as chaperones may attend.

Chaperones must follow the guidelines put in place by the teachers and educational sites for that trip and must accompany the group for the entirety of the trip. In order to maintain focus on your assigned group, other children may not accompany you on a field trip when you chaperone.

Each school year, parent drivers must sign two forms (“Driver Qualifications for Field Trips” and “Policy Disclosure and Agreement”) and submit a photocopy of their drivers license before transporting students to any destination.

## **Summer Reading**

Reading high quality literature has a high value at MCA. Reading can feed the mind with worthwhile information, encouraging creativity and thinking. Every student is expected to complete the assigned summer reading and to be prepared to work with it, at his/her appropriate grade level, on the first day of school.





# **CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

## **Honor Codes**

MCA is built on three pillars, scholarship, character, and community. To promote, instill, and maintain the highest levels of each of these concepts, we have high expectations of all our students. We, therefore, have established an Honor Code for students and a corollary Honor Code for parents. An atmosphere of challenge, love, and respect is essential to reach our goals and sustain our integrity. Every student in grade five and above will write the honor pledge and sign their names on all tests submitted for grading. All parents and students are required annually to sign their respective Honor Codes. These are located at the end of this Handbook.

For the benefit of all those associated with MCA, it is everyone's responsibility to uphold the Honor Code and to report violations. Fulfilling these expectations strengthens the individual character of all those involved, as well as the environment that we all enjoy. Should someone observe a violation, it is appropriate to lovingly speak with the offender, allow him/her to verbally process the incident and suggest that the offender talk with a teacher, an administrator, or a parent. The ultimate decision of innocence, guilt, discipline, and counsel rests with the school's Headmaster or his designee.

## **MCA Pledge**

Because I am a person endowed with worth and value, I pledge to work hard and think well. I will respect others and myself. I will courageously pursue what is true, do what is good, and love what is beautiful.

## **Expectations & Guidelines for Student Discipline**

In general, student discipline is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Nevertheless, with faculty and staff serving *en loco parentis*, every member of the faculty and staff shares the responsibility for the nurture and discipline of every student anywhere in the school. Discipline should be fair, consistent, and administered in love. Teachers will discuss a student's personal problems privately with the student.

### *Corporal Punishment*

Employees of Millennium Education Foundation will not employ corporal punishment.

### *Behavior*

Behavior is always a reflection of what a child believes about him/herself, others, and life in general. In other words, behavior belies the fundamental nature of a person and is, therefore, a window into the character of an individual. The goal of every instance of discipline is to form within the student solid, moral fiber. According to the mission statement, moral development is one of the three highest goals of Millennium Charter Academy.

### *Authority*

Standing in the place of parents, teachers tell the students what is expected. These expectations hold true whether or not an adult is with them. With grace and humility, teachers stand confidently in authority and do not expect or accept less than a good

attitude and obedience the first time. The children, of course, must understand and be able to comply with the expectations.

### *Expectations and Habits*

The school expects a high standard of being from all our students. Specifically, we expect students to:

- Be Respectful of yourself, others, and proper authority, obeying the first time with a good attitude;
- Be Honest with yourself and others;
- Be Compassionate toward people and humane toward other living things;
- Be Responsible personally, privately, and publicly;
- Be Courageous doing the right thing, even when it is difficult or unpopular.

Directly supporting these five Expectations of being, we have ten Habits of behaving:

- obedience (doing what I am told the first time with a good attitude)
- courtesy (being polite and showing good manners)
- truthfulness (being honest in all matters, even when it is not easy)
- integrity (doing what is morally right)
- service (doing for others)
- awareness (recognizing the thoughts and feelings of others)
- thinking (using my mind and all that I know, diligently and creatively)
- excellence (unwilling to do less than my best)
- perseverance (continuing to work through difficulties)
- leading (showing the way by going first)

### *Refocus*

To continually reinforce our expectations and habits, MCA teachers may employ principle-based strategies drawn from the Time to Teach® program. Once students have been taught and have practiced the expected behaviors, they are then held accountable for those behaviors without repeated warnings from teachers. Students who do not meet an expectation in some way may be asked to Refocus®. Refocus® is a non-punitive opportunity for a student to reflect on his/her behavior and make the necessary adjustments. This practice takes a student out of class for just a few moments, after which he or she is invited back into the flow of classroom instruction. The teacher will then decide if further action is warranted. Should a pattern of misbehavior become apparent, parents are contacted. Refocus is intended to eliminate low-level distractions in the classroom, giving teachers more time for instruction. More serious misbehaviors will be addressed differently, as outlined below. In some cases, several steps may be followed simultaneously.

### *Procedural Steps*

1. Ask student to refocus.
2. Talk/ conference with the student, i.e., appeal to his/her conscience through
  - encouragement- to inspire and fill with hope and courage,
  - correction- remedies something wrong,

- rebuke- censures behavior,
- entreaty- involves, soliciting, urging,
- instruction- the process of providing a lesson, a precept, or information that will help your student understand their world,
- warning- informs of probable danger,
- teaching- process of imparting knowledge

3. Use natural/logical consequence, such as, but not limited to

- removal from the activity
- time in the office
- prohibition from participating in a similar future activity
- fixing up/ cleaning up the physical damage
- completing work at less desirable time (recess, center time, at home)
- stopping the activity
- losing privileges
- asking forgiveness, offering apology (public or private; only as appropriate and truly heartfelt)
- restitution

Note: Teachers will tailor the disciplinary action to the offense and will attempt to be as consistent as possible. Teachers will not use schoolwork as punishment (assigning additional homework, for example). Teachers will not punish the entire class for the actions of a few nor will they use isolation as a punishment.

4. Send note home to parents. If age appropriate, the child writes the note, explaining what he/she did. The note must request a response from the parents.

5. Call home. Should the severity of the issue warrant, this step might supersede a note home.

6. Involve the Lower School/Upper School Director or Headmaster. If the severity of the issue warrants, the headmaster may be involved at the outset of a situation.

In summary, when discipline is necessary

1. Talk/Conference
2. Use natural/logical consequences
3. Record the offense
4. Send note home
5. Call home
6. Involve L/S Director or U/S Director or Headmaster

For repeated or serious infractions, the headmaster or his designee may impose an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The timeframe of the student's suspension shall be established at the onset of the suspension. A parent may appeal a student's out of school suspension if made in writing and within twenty-four hours of notice to parent of the suspension. Appeal shall be made to the headmaster and a meeting scheduled on the next

school day. The headmaster shall consistently enforce school policy and shall have complete discretion to uphold the suspension or, for good cause, defer, or reverse the suspension. For an in-school suspension, the student will be supervised and will complete the regularly assigned work, which will be graded. Likewise, during an out-of-school suspension, the student must complete all assignments for grades. He/she may not participate in any school related activities during the period of suspension. All suspensions are part of a child's permanent record.

### *Rewards*

Rewards do not make deep, lasting changes because they are aimed at affecting only what we *do*. We also believe they typically have adverse affects on fundamental character issues. Because rewards do not promote virtuous, lasting changes in behavior or character, the faculty and staff refrain from using rewards/bribes to manipulate behavior or promote character development. Special treats may be provided as an honest attempt to celebrate a particular milestone or accomplishment by an individual student or a class.

### *General Guidelines of Conduct*

Each student has a right to attend public school and must accept the consequences for his actions. Each student is responsible for knowing all rules, regulations, and policies that affect him/her. Students share with school personnel the responsibility of maintaining order at school through compliance with all ethical directions of the headmaster, teachers, substitute teachers, teacher assistants, and other personnel authorized to give direction. Students must refrain from:

- disruptive behavior, profanity, open defiance of authority, willful disobedience,
- fighting, stealing, gambling, plagiarizing,
- Dishonesty and disrespect,
- bringing or possessing any object that has little or no educational purpose and that may distract from teaching and learning. (All items will be confiscated.)
- damaging or defacing school property,
- apart from the gym, running inside any school building,
- threats or physical harm to students or staff,
- inappropriate behavior on trips or during school activities, and
- claiming to have possession of a weapon or actual possession of a weapon on school property

Any violation of these rules could result in in-school or out-of-school suspension from school from between one to ten days, long-term suspension, or expulsion, depending on the infraction and may require reporting to appropriate law enforcement personnel. The type of punishment is determined in context by the offense and the past behavior record of the student.

Furthermore, to reinforce responsible behavior, all students are expected to abide by the following:

- Students may not bring toys, video game consoles, radios, etc. with which to play.
- Students may not gamble on campus or on school-sponsored events.
- Hats are not to be worn inside school buildings.

- Students are expected to be always attentive and courteous and use appropriate manners.
- Students will refrain from entering school utility rooms, staff work rooms, or lounges.
- Students are not permitted to sell items on school grounds.
- Students are to dress appropriately each day.
- On school sponsored field trips students may be asked to wear specified attire.
- Students should bring specified money for the field trip expenses.

It is the student's responsibility to follow all school-related rules.

### **Guests at High School Social Events**

Beginning in ninth grade, with prior approval of the MCA Upper School Director (or designee), each student may invite one guest to a social event. The guest must be within one year of the age of the MCA student who must vouch for the guest's good character. The guest is expected to adhere to MCA's dress code and expectations. Any guests (or MCA student) not adhering to MCA's expectations will be asked to leave. Contact information for the guest must be provided. The MCA student is to introduce his/her guest to at least one of the chaperones.

### **Public Displays of Affection**

Public displays of romantic affection are not allowed on campus and during school-related activities

### **Student Dress Code**

MCA's dress code establishes an atmosphere of pride and dignity in the school and a seriousness about the important work in which students engage themselves. Think of an environment where every person's attire is subdued so that something else can be the primary focus. In our case, that primary focus would be academic studies. The stipulations in our dress code are predicated on this notion. As comfortable as are tattered jeans, as fun as are ballcaps, and as refreshing as are tank tops, we exclude them for the sake of an environment that fosters an academic mindset. Our guidelines for student attire, as well as our guidelines for faculty attire, help maintain a school culture preoccupied with education, a culture that shifts the attention away from the individual to our common task of classical learning. If your child's clothing does not adhere to the intent of the dress code, you may be called.

Students may not wear:

- Sunglasses
- Tank tops
- Muscle shirts
- Hats, bandannas, hoods, and the like (inside the building)
- See-through/sheer or skin-tight clothing
- Fishnet stockings
- Unnecessarily tattered, threadbare clothing or clothing with holes that expose skin
- Facial and/or body ornaments (e.g., tongue rings, eye studs, belly studs, etc.) except for modest-size earrings or a single, small nose stud.
- Excessive makeup
- Symbols that may disrupt the orderly operation of the school and/or activities including racial and gang related clothing

- Any article of clothing which advertises alcohol, drugs, sex or which contains inflammatory, vulgar, lewd or suggestive writing, pictures or emblems
- Any object that is distracting or is capable of being used as a weapon
- Pajamas

#### *Perfume, Cologne, Body Spray*

The use of perfumes, oils, and body sprays by students should not inhibit the learning environment and smells should not be detectable in the course of a normal school routine. Smells of this nature that saturate a room often cause headaches, exacerbate allergies, and cause a disruption to the learning environment. Should this occur, students will be excused to the front office to call home.

#### *Pants, Jeans, Slacks*

Pants, jeans, and slacks must be properly fitted, no extremely loose or baggy pants. Pants are to be worn at the natural waistline. The cuff or end of the pant leg shall be such length that cannot be walked upon by the wearer, creating a slip and fall hazard. Form-fitting leggings, pants, and similar apparel are to be covered by a top that extends to the fingertip length.

#### *Athletic Wear*

Athletic wear and “sweat gear” are appropriate for K-5, but not for students in 6-12, except as athletic wear pertains to physical education classes and organized sports with the coach’s sanction.

*Spirit Wear Exception:* Athletic shorts and pants may be worn to class by students in grades 6-12 only if they are part of school-branded spirit attire or official school sports uniforms. This promotes school spirit while maintaining a cohesive and respectful dress standard.

#### *Skirts, Skorts*

Girls may wear skirts that clearly extend to the fingertip length. Splits or slits may be no higher than the same measurement.

#### *Shirts, Blouses, and Tops*

Undershirts, customarily worn as undergarments, may not be worn without shirts or blouses. Clothing must not show skin of the mid section during normal activities of the school day. Students may not wear see-through, backless, racer-backed, strapless, or tops with straps narrower than three-fingers wide. Girls may not show cleavage.

#### *Shorts*

Students in grades K-5 may wear shorts, either athletic or walking shorts, such as “cargo,” plaid, khaki, denim, or twill shorts. Students in grades 6-12 may wear walking shorts longer than fingertip length; however, Upper School students may wear athletic shorts only during a team practice, a physical education class, or an activity period. Cut offs may not be worn.

#### *Undergarments*

Items traditionally worn as undergarments, including but not limited to briefs, boxer shorts, undershirts, slippers, camisoles, panties, brassieres, and other intimate apparel shall be concealed beneath outerwear and not visible during normal activities of the school day.

### *Shoes*

Shoes designed for laces must have laces and be fully tied. Students must wear tennis shoes on scheduled P.E. day, and because of OSHA requirements, shoes that cover the toes must be worn during science labs.

### *Makeup*

Girls may wear light makeup. Light makeup involves a more natural application of cosmetics, blending colors and lines with the natural distinctiveness of facial features. In contrast, heavy makeup involves a greater physical manipulation of the natural face so that the impression of the makeup style itself becomes prominent. In short, light makeup highlights the natural face, while heavy makeup highlights the makeup itself.

### *Hair*

Hair must be neat, clean, a natural color, and well groomed and out from in front of the eyes. For gentlemen in the high school, facial hair must be kept neatly trimmed.

## **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

### **Importance of a Phone-Free School for Childhood Development**

Research indicates that the presence and use of cell phones can significantly impede childhood development and the learning process. The “phone-based childhood” in which students are addicted to their screens is replacing the “play-based childhood” in which students play, learn, and grow in-person and together with their peers, teachers, coaches, parents, and siblings. Our policy is designed to:

1. **Enhance Focus and Concentration:** Even when not in use, cell phones can be a major distraction in the classroom, diverting attention away from instructional activities. By removing this distraction, we aim to help students develop better focus and concentration.
2. **Promote Face-to-Face Interaction:** Social skills are a critical part of childhood development. By banning cell phones during the school day, we encourage students to engage in face-to-face interactions, fostering communication skills, empathy, and meaningful relationships.
3. **Encourage Active Participation:** Without the distraction of cell phones and social media, students are more likely to participate actively in class discussions and activities, which enhances their learning experience.

## **Dangers of Smartphones for Children and Teens**

Smartphones and other smart devices pose several risks to children and teenagers, including but not limited to:



1. **Mental Health Issues:** Excessive use of smartphones and social media has been linked to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues, particularly in children and teenagers.
2. **Cyberbullying:** Smartphones provide a platform for cyberbullying, which can have severe emotional and psychological consequences.
3. **Exposure to Inappropriate Content:** The internet is rife with content that is not suitable for children and teenagers.
4. **Addiction and Dependency:** Smartphones are addictive, and social media apps train the brain to crave constant digital stimulation. Our policy aims to help students develop healthy tech habits and reduce their daily screen time.

### **Encouragement for K-8 Parents**

We STRONGLY encourage parents of students in grades K-8 to refrain from purchasing smartphones for their children until they are at least high school age or later. If you must purchase a cell phone for your child, [basic phones](#) are a safer alternative once your child is mature enough to handle one responsibly.

There are significant issues associated with smartphone use by children going through puberty, including:

- Increased susceptibility to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.
- Greater risk of exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online predators.
- The potential for smartphone addiction, which can interfere with healthy development academically, socially, and physically.

We urge parents to consider signing the "[Wait Until 8th](#)" pledge, a collective commitment among families to delay the introduction of smartphones to their children. By banding together with other families, you can help preserve the childhood of your boys and girls, ensuring they are not prematurely exposed to the pressures and dangers of smartphone use.

To learn more about the research supporting this pledge and explore options for basic phones, please visit the "[Wait Until 8th](#)" initiative website.

### **Parental Support**

We ask for parental support in enforcing the following cell phone policies. Your cooperation is essential in creating a learning environment that promotes academic excellence and personal growth. Together, we can ensure that our students receive the best possible education in a safe, focused, and supportive environment.

### **Phone-Free School Policy Overview**

At Millennium Charter Academy, we are committed to fostering an environment conducive to learning and personal growth. To support this goal, we have implemented a strict policy regarding the use of cell phones and electronic devices on campus. Without

an educationally valid reason and the approval of the school's administration, or for specific teacher-directed activities, cell phones are banned from 8 AM and 3 PM. Cell phones must be turned off and stored in the student's locker for the entirety of the school day. Wherever possible, we strongly discourage students from bringing phones with them to campus at all.

**Banned electronic devices include but are not limited to:**

- Cell phones
- Smartwatches
- Airpods/Headphones
- Video game consoles
- Cameras
- Recording devices
- MP3 players

To ensure clarity and consistency in the enforcement of this policy, all cell phones and banned electronic devices must be off and stored in the student's locker for the entirety of the school day.

- Devices should not be placed face down on tables or desks.
- Devices should not be in clothing pockets
- Devices must be stored in lockers during school hours i.e., zipped up in backpacks which are to remain in lockers during school hours.

**Compliance and Consequences**

Students are expected to comply with this policy without exception. If a student is found using a cell phone or having it visible during school hours, the following steps will be taken:

1. **“See it, take it”:** If a cell phone or other banned electronic device is seen, it will be immediately confiscated by the staff member who observes the infraction and taken to the front office.
2. **Warning Sent Home:** On the first infraction, the student's cell phone will be stored in the front office until the end of the day, and a warning will be sent home to the student's parents or guardians, notifying them of the infraction and the consequences of the next infraction.
3. **Parent Retrieval:** On the second infraction, the cell phone must be retrieved by a parent or guardian. A meeting may be scheduled to discuss the student's adherence to school policies and potential further disciplinary actions if necessary. If a parent or guardian is unable to retrieve the phone by 3:30, it will be kept secured until the next school day but still must be retrieved by a parent/guardian.

Repeated misuse of a cell phone will result in additional disciplinary consequences such as suspension and further loss of privileges with regard to technology on campus.

### **Before & After School, Carline, and Lion's Watch**

- Even before and after school, students must use their phones in an appropriate and responsible manner. Faculty, staff, coaches, and sponsors maintain the ability to confiscate a student's phone if it is deemed that he or she is using it inappropriately before or after school.
- During carline, students should be focused on safety, listening for their names, or watching for their vehicles. They should not need their phones unless there is an urgent logistical need. They should not be playing on their phones or listening to music. Faculty maintain the ability to tell a student to put their phone away or confiscate a student's phone if it is deemed that he or she is misusing it during carline.
- Students in Lion's Watch after school care should not be playing on their cell phones or electronic devices. They should be completing homework, playing outside, or enjoying board games and cards with their peers. Lion's Watch personnel maintain the ability to tell a student to put their phone away or confiscate a student's phone if it is deemed that he or she is using it inappropriately during Lion's Watch.

### **Bomb Threat or Hoax**

No student shall communicate or publish in any manner whatsoever any report, threat, or other statement, knowing the same to be false, that presently located or to be placed on any school property is a device designed to cause damage, destruction, or injury by explosion, blasting, or combustion. No student shall communicate or publish in any manner whatsoever his/her intent that another student, teacher, or faculty member shall be injured by explosion, blasting or combustion. Such action will be considered a threat and law enforcement notified and the legal process undertaken.

No student shall place or display on any school premises with or without the intent of perpetuating a hoax, any device which would appear to a reasonable person to be an explosive device or similar instrument capable of causing injury or damage.

Any such action will result in immediate expulsion and be deemed factual and will constitute a clear and present danger to individuals and property. Law enforcement will be notified immediately, and criminal process will be initiated against the persons whether minor or adult, responsible for such conduct.

### **Weapons and Dangerous Instruments**

No student shall knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any weapon as defined by North Carolina General Statute 14-269.2 or other object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument.

A student's first violation of this policy during a school year may result in a suspension for a designated period of time up to and including the remainder of the year. The second violation of this policy during a school year by a student shall result in suspension for the remainder of the school year.

If the first violation of this policy involves the possession of a pistol, rifle, shotgun, pellet gun, handgun, any other firearm, or an explosive device, the student shall receive a long-term suspension from the Academy for one year. An official complaint will be filed with the appropriate law enforcement agency. However, the Headmaster may modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Parents are reminded that North Carolina G.S. 14-269.2 amended by Chapter 558 (H 1008) makes it illegal to carry a firearm or explosive onto educational property. "Educational property" includes any public-school building; any property owned, used, or operated by Millennium Charter Academy. Furthermore, it is a misdemeanor for any person to possess or carry onto school grounds any BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, bowie knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, leaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razor, and razor blades, and any sharp-pointed or edged instrument, except as approved instructional supplies.

The "Act to Amend State Firearm Laws," passed in 2016, permits any individual with a valid concealed handgun permit provided the weapon is a handgun, is in a closed compartment or container within the person's locked vehicle, and the vehicle is in a parking area that is owned or leased by state government.

### **Prohibited Substances**

The possession, use, sale, exchange, or distribution of any prohibited substance on educational property will not be tolerated. "Prohibited Substances" include, but are not limited to, the following: tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs and controlled substances, medicines for which your child does not have a valid prescription, and any substance which reasonably appears to be a counterfeit or facsimile of any prohibited substance. "Possession" includes in a locker, book-bag, desk, vehicle, or on a student's person at school or any school-related activity.

The first violation of this policy during a school year will result in notification of parents/guardians and the appropriate law enforcement agency. The school may impose an out-of-school suspension of five days or more. In the case of alcohol or illegal drugs, the student and parent may be required to obtain an alcohol and drug assessment provided by Surry-Yadkin Mental Health or similar agency and comply with a specific number of treatments or educational sessions; and the student may be prosecuted under applicable juvenile or criminal law.

The second violation of this policy during a school year will involve the same notification of parent/guardians and the appropriate law enforcement agency; the student will be suspended out-of-school for two – ten days and a recommendation may be made that the student be suspended for the remainder of the school year. The student may be prosecuted under the applicable juvenile or criminal law; and the student will be encouraged to seek substance abuse treatment services.



# **ATHLETICS**

## **Overview of MCA Athletics**

As a school committed to the growth of its students in mind, body, and heart, as well as to the student's understanding of self and his/her relationship to others in community, Millennium Charter Academy's athletic program is a natural and necessary outgrowth of the school's philosophy and understanding of humanity. Furthermore, MCA student-athletes are to be fierce competitors with first-class sportsmanship. MCA is committed to excellence in athletics as part of a larger commitment to excellence in education.

The Athletic Department is dedicated to providing opportunities that enhance the intellectual, physical, social, and moral development of the student-athlete, conducting all activities in accordance with good sportsmanship and ethical conduct, specifically the principles of MCA's Expectations and Habits. While safeguarding their physical welfare, MCA provides Upper School student-athletes with enriching opportunities to develop their athletic abilities to full potential through local, conference, and state level competition. MCA athletics also promote high academic standards, teamwork, self-discipline, and leadership development.

As an outgrowth of MCA's physical education program, the Academy provides two levels of athletic participation for students. Both are designed to address athletic skills and character development.

One is club-level athletics, which offers kindergarten to twelfth grade students, the opportunity to engage in various types of activities from a low to a high level of personal involvement and competitiveness. Although the concept of teamwork is important at this level, club sports allow the individual's needs to prevail. Club athletics tend to meet weekly but may be seasonal or year-round.

The second level is interscholastic athletics. Teams at this level are fiercely competitive and equally mannerly. Interscholastic athletics requires individual commitment to the greater good of the team. Hence, teammates support one another, even at the cost of their personal desires. To meet the competitive demands of a first-class interscholastic program some athletic teams will find it necessary to have a limited roster or selected travel team.

Intentionally avoiding generic or *en masse* instruction, MCA coaches strive to develop smart players, focusing on the apparent athletic potential and strengths of individual players and teams. Practice is typically five days a week during the season.

Regardless of the level of athletics, superior sportsmanship before, during, and after an athletic event is essential and mandatory. All MCA athletes, their parents, and fans are to uphold the high ideals of this institution, respecting the officials, coaches, and opposing team with their supporters. This school community is dedicated to exemplary conduct and interactions with all in attendance, cheering any noteworthy demonstrations of skill and avoiding profanity, derogatory remarks, and demeaning cheers.

Because students have the opportunity to grow physically, emotionally, socially, mentally, and morally, MCA is committed to acquiring and supporting coaches and sponsors that are, not only skilled in their particular sport, but that are also able to convey those skills and concepts to young students in a meaningful and fun way. Furthermore, MCA retains coaches that embody admirable and virtuous character.

### **Athletic Participation Requirements**

A student-athlete must:

1. Adhere to MCA's Expectations and Habits;
2. Sign and adhere to the Athlete's Honor Code;
3. Maintain an average of "C" (70) or higher in each subject. For the first two weeks of the sports season, a student's cumulative grade for the year is checked, after that there is a biweekly check;
4. Have no more than three unexcused absences in the school year;
5. Have no more than three days of suspensions in the school year;
6. Be present for a minimum of 50% of the school day on the day of an athletic contest to participate in the event;
7. Have received a medical examination by a licensed physician within the past 365 days. The physical form must be submitted to the Athletic Director yearly. (If you miss five or more days due to illness or injury, you must receive a medical release before practicing or playing.);
8. Be in 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades and no more than fifteen years old on or before September 1 to participate on sixth –eighth grade competitive teams and not have turned 19 years old on or prior to September 1 to participate on high school competitive teams;
9. Be within the stated age parameters for all sports and club level activities, e.g., in grades 6-12 to participate in cheerleading or in grades K-5 to participate in spirit squad, etc.;
10. Be within the stated grade or age parameters, determined at the foundation of each club, to participate in athletic club activities.

### **Athletic Conduct**

Participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics, is a privilege, not a right. Millennium Charter Academy expects all student-athletes to represent MCA portray the ten Habits and always embody the five Expectations. Student-athletes should speak, act, dress, and generally conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on MCA. Each student-athlete is expected to be a good citizen at all times.

Any student-athlete who fails to conduct himself or herself appropriately may have the privilege of participation limited or revoked. Taunting, poor sportsmanship, rudeness, dishonesty, mean-spiritedness, bad language, cruelty, insubordination, insolence, defiance of proper authority are examples of misconduct. A student-athlete in in-school suspension will not be allowed to practice, participate, or attend their athletic event on that day. He/she will be allowed to resume activities the day after the suspension ends. If a student has more than three three days of suspension in an academic year, he/she will not be allowed to participate in athletics until the start of the next school year.



Discipline is designed to fit each situation, depending upon numerous factors, including but not limited to severity, number of previous offenses, motivation, and student response. Coaches, the athletic director, and/or school administration will follow Millennium Charter Academy policies, the Family Handbook, and the Athletic Handbook to handle individual instances in a manner that seems best suited for the discipline of the student. Student-athletes and parents should note that appropriate responses by coaches, athletic director, or school administration ranges from a verbal reprimand to suspension or dismissal from the team and or the school.

### **Athlete's Honor Code**

As an MCA athlete, I will uphold the high ideals of this institution with integrity by honoring teammates, coaches, parents, and opponents on and off the field of competition. I will strive to demonstrate the MCA's Expectations that I am respectful, honest, compassionate, responsible, and courageous in my duties to my coaches and my team. As a member of a club-level activity, I will participate with enthusiasm. In Upper School interscholastic athletics, I will compete fiercely and be committed to the greater good of the team. I realize that failure to comply may mean suspension or dismissal from the team.

### **Parents' Honor Code**

As a parent of a Millennium Charter Academy athlete, I agree

- ✓ To hold my child to the Athlete's Honor Code at and away from school
- ✓ To foster in my child, as will the Academy, the Expectations of respect, honesty, compassion, responsibility, and courage
- ✓ To treat all players (both MCA and opponents), coaches, and fellow parents with the utmost respect
- ✓ To uphold and adhere to the school's established values, policies, procedures, and expectations
- ✓ To refrain from profanity, derogatory remarks, demeaning cheers in reference to my child's athletic events
- ✓ To support my child and his/her teammates
- ✓ To have my child at designated practices and games

I realize that failure to comply may mean suspension or expulsion from one or more games.

### **Transportation**

The school transports athletes by activity bus or arranges transportation through parents that meet the transportation standards set by the school. Only parents or legal guardians, after contacting the coach, may pick up their child(ren) from an athletic event. Only with written permission may another individual pick up the athlete.

### **Homeschool Participation in Athletics**

A homeschooler that is currently enrolled in four or more contact hours per week is considered a full-time student for purposes of athletic participation.

# APPENDIX

### **Tips for Good Study Habits**

1. Keep an assignment notebook. List what, when it's due, and estimate how long it will take to do. Tip: Don't leave assignments until the last minute.
2. Make a place to study. Face away from distractions like windows or televisions. Keep regular study hours. Have good light, a comfortable place to sit, and a place to write, and have what you need to work right there.
3. Develop your skills. Read your directions carefully. Learn how to take notes, use the media center at school for resources you need, and learn how to write papers and take tests. Your teachers will help you. Review and practice are important.
4. Stay well. Every day get plenty of sleep, exercise, take time to have fun, and eat good, nutritious meals. Make sure you can see well; so, get your eyes checked.

### **Reading Tips**

Reading is a joy and a key to success. We use it not only at school, but also at work, at home, while we shop and go from place to place. It is one of the best ways to gain information or develop new ideas. Children become better readers when they read with a parent.

How can you help your children become interested in reading and enjoy doing it? Here are some suggestions:

- Give books as gifts. Show them you think books are important.
- Set an example. Your children will model what you do. Read!
- Show your children everyday examples of why reading is important. Look up names in the phone book, read traffic signs, follow recipes, or read maps and the newspaper. Ask them for reading help sometimes, too, so they can practice their skills.
- Limit screen time (TV, video, etc.) every day.
- Set aside time when your whole family reads.
- Read aloud to your children. For new readers, point to words as you read. Choose books you'll both enjoy.
- Because most children are proud of their reading skills, have them read to you. Don't focus on mistakes and offer lots of praise.
- Encourage your child to keep learning new words. Set a goal of one new word a day. Make flash cards with new or "difficult" words for your children and make it a game.
- Make regular visits to the libraries in your area. Check out books for yourself while you're there.
- Reading is a skill that gets better with practice.



**HONOR CODES  
MILLENNIUM CHARTER ACADEMY**

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***STUDENT HONOR CODE***

**As an individual with endowed worth and value, I will honor others with the same respect that I am due. I will uphold the high ideals of this institution with integrity by being respectful, honest, compassionate, responsible, and courageous.** *To be signed annually by every student 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and above.*

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*Student's Signature*

*Date*

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*Student's Signature (line provided in case multiple siblings enrolled)*

*Date*

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*Student's Signature (line provided in case multiple siblings enrolled)*

*Date*

***TESTING PLEDGE***

**“On my honor, I have neither given nor received any assistance on this examination.”**

*To be written and signed on every test by every student 5<sup>th</sup> grade and above.*

Failure to comply with the Student Honor Code may result in:

1. The process and consequences as listed in the Family Handbook
2. Parent Conference with any others pertinent to the circumstances
3. Detention (in school)
4. Suspension
5. Academic/Behavioral Probation up to one quarter, which limits the student’s ability to participate in school activities (field trips, athletics, after school programs, special activities, etc.). At the end of such time, a parent / school conference is convened, and a determination made whether the student is consistently living up to the Honor Code
6. Voluntary withdrawal of the student from MCA
7. Expulsion

***PARENT HONOR CODE***

As a parent of a Millennium Charter Academy student, I understand the school’s high level of academic rigor and expectations of moral character, and I agree:

- ✓ To uphold and adhere to the school’s established values, policies, procedures, and expectations
- ✓ To partner with the Academy in its efforts to assist me in my responsibility to educate my child
- ✓ To hold my child to the Academy’s Honor Code at and away from school
- ✓ To foster in my child the expectations of being respectful, honest, compassionate, responsible, and courageous
- ✓ To nightly check homework, to read notes from the teacher, to help my child stay organized and ready for what lies ahead, to discuss books, field trips and the experiences of the day, and to counsel and exhort my child regarding peer relationships, schoolwork, and homework
- ✓ To ensure that my child wears clothing within the limits of the established dress code
- ✓ To provide transportation to and from school in a timely manner

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*Parent's Signature and Date*

*To be signed and dated annually by at least one parent/guardian.*

Flagrant failure to comply with the Parent Honor Code may result in 1) Parent conference or 2) Voluntary withdrawal of the student from MCA.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE FAMILY HANDBOOK**

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**The school presumes that you have read and agree to the current Family Handbook, including the honor codes, but if you have not, you can access the honor codes and handbook any time on our website <http://www.mcademy.com/family-handbook>, and we have hard copies in either office.**