

Merit Academy Discipline Policy & Code

Purpose

This document presents the procedures for addressing student behaviors at Merit Academy. We are committed to academic success for every student. At Merit Academy, we expect that each student will respect staff members, volunteers, and other students. Every student will conduct himself/herself in a manner compatible with the school's code of honor and function as an educational facility. Students that disrupt the operation of the school, interfere with the rights of others, or damage school or personal property will be held accountable for their behavior.

Discipline Systems

Any staff member who witnesses inappropriate behavior has the obligation and responsibility to implement this system. Any parent volunteer witnessing any inappropriate behavior will notify a staff member so disciplinary action, if warranted, can be taken. Students not adhering to school-wide expectations of Merit Academy's Code of Honor will be subject to the following process:

Classroom Intervention

Teachers will use a variety of verbal and non-verbal techniques as they work with students in order to refocus the student to prevent a discipline issue. Each grade level, including upper school, will have systems in place for classroom management. In upper school, teachers recognize minor infractions through a behavioral process that models the Merit core virtues. These systems may include a parental/family report, a phone call home, email, or any other form of discipline in the classroom at the teacher's discretion.

Director of Student Behavior and Discipline Intervention

Academic success happens in an environment where students feel connected, cared for, and respected. While the Director of Student Behavior and Discipline (DSBD) implements consequences for students who exhibit serious or habitual violations of school-wide expectations or the Merit Academy Code of Honor, they also implement systems and interventions proactively to establish a school climate and social culture needed for all students to grow socially and emotionally. When students violate the Merit Code of Conduct, their behavior will be documented on the online school-wide behavior tracker that is monitored by the DSBD. When the behavior has reached a Level II or higher on the [Merit Academy Behavior Matrix](#), the DSBD will intervene with the student. The consequences for specific behaviors are listed out on the matrix, and may include bringing in the Dean of Grammar or Dean of Upper School.

Consequences

The Director of Student Behavior and Discipline and Deans will follow the procedures defined in the Merit Academy Code of Honor and the current Merit Academy Behavior Matrix, which may result in classroom removal, detention, in-school or out of school suspension, and/or other appropriate consequences, including expulsion if necessary. Parents will always be informed of any Level II or higher behaviors.

Detention

Detentions will be scheduled as needed and may include lunch detention, after school detention or community service.

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In-School Suspension

In-school suspension is a consequence and is designed to be a deterrent. The students will spend the day in an alternate location within the building reflecting on their behavior. In the Attendance Policy, there is a section for In-School Suspension that will apply for missed work.

Out-of-School Suspension

Students serving out-of-school suspension will not report to school on the designated day(s) of their suspension. In the Attendance Policy, there is a section for Out of School Suspension that will apply for missed work. In addition, students will not be allowed on school grounds for the duration of their suspension.

Discipline Matrix

Level I Violations {3 Violations = Class II}	Level II Violations {3 Violations = Class III}	Level III Violations {3+ Violations = Expulsion Hearing}	Level IV Violations {Involvement of Law Enforcement and/or Expulsion}
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disruptive behavior ● Noncompliance ● Off-task behavior ● Unnecessary noises ● Uniform noncompliance ● Excluding others ● Littering ● Chewing gum/eating without teacher permission ● Not properly caring for school property ● Inappropriate dress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disruptive Horse Play ● Mean messages ● Low level mean tricks ● Name calling ● Insulting ● Lying (age appropriate) ● Breaking Lunch/ Playground Rules ● Unsafe behavior ● Defiance ● Start/Spread Gossip ● Leaving class without permission ● Verbal disrespect to peers or teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Punching, hitting, etc. ● Throwing or overturning furniture ● Direct, inappropriate language or gestures ● Spitting on others ● Fighting or physical aggression ● Overt defiance ● Property destruction ● Theft/Stealing ● Forgery ● Internet misuse/ Breaking technology use policy ● Reference to violence (without intent to follow through) ● Skipping Class/Refusal to go to class ● Cheating/Lying/ Plagiarism/Unapproved AI ● Cyberbullying Harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vandalism/Extreme Property Damage ● Drug, Alcohol, Tobacco Use/Possession ● Treat/Assault ● Threatening with weapon ● Weapon use/ Possession ● Pornography/ Inappropriate Sexual Behavior ● Bomb Threat ● Arson ● Explosives or Combustibles ● Leaving School Building Without Permission
Other Violations			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tardies (5 tardies = Level III) ● Uniform Violations (3 violations = Level III) ● Disruptive students can be removed from class at any time at the teacher's or staff's discretion 			

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<p>PREVENTION</p>	<p><u>Use Love and Logic and/or other classroom management skills.</u></p> <p>If problem behavior occurs, inform students of the problem behavior and the consequence.</p> <p>Give age appropriate warnings/chances to improve.</p>
<p>LEVEL I VIOLATION</p> <p>Handled in Class</p>	<p>Give the student some reflection time if possible. Provide a “cozy corner” or quiet, reflective space in class for students to re-direct. If a student is too disruptive in class, they can sit in a safe place in the hallway or another class to do their work. If the behavior escalates in disruption, please radio the Director of Student Behavior and Discipline (DSBD), indicating the behavior has moved to a Level II violation. (If the DSBD is not available, please call the Dean of Grammar or Dean of Upper School, accordingly.)</p> <p>The teacher/staff addresses the behavior using behavior management strategies such as: Redirect the behavior; Proximity control; Nonverbal cue; Private conference with the student; In-class modified seating, in-class recovery; Remind student of desired behavior; Reteach and practice desired behavior; Opportunity to apologize AND make it right.</p> <p>Report the behavior in the Online School-wide Behavior Tracker.</p> <p>Contact parents.</p>
<p>LEVEL II VIOLATION</p> <p>Handled in Class or by Director of Student Behavior and Discipline</p>	<p>Either Level II violations or repeated Level I violations are also to be handled in-class, unless the disruption is interfering with the learning environment of others. If a student is too disruptive in class, they can sit in a safe place in the hallway or another class to do their work. If they are interfering with the learning environment of others, please call the Director of Student Behavior and Discipline (DSBD) to assist with the student. If the DSDB is unavailable, please call the Dean of Grammar or Dean of Upper School to assist.</p> <p>As needed, refer to the DSBD where they will address the behavior using consequences from the Behavior Matrix, such as: Discipline (loss of privileges, detention, time in the office); Written reflection on behavior to be processed with an adult; Behavior contract/plan; Safety plan if necessary.</p> <p>Report the behavior in the Online School-wide Behavior Tracker.</p> <p>Contact parents.</p>

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<p>LEVEL III VIOLATION</p> <p>Referred to Director of Student Discipline and Behavior/Dean of Grammar or Upper School</p>	<p>Depending on the nature of the Level III violation, students may be sent straight to the behavior office, where they will discuss the behavior and consequences with the Director of Student Behavior and Discipline (DSBD). If the behavior is such that it can be handled at a later time, the behavior can be reported in the Online School-wide Behavior Tracker and mentioned to the DSBD to address later in the day.</p> <p>Refer to the DSBD and/or Dean of Grammar or Upper School. Student can expect consequences such as: Loss of privileges; Suspension (in-school or out); Behavior contract/plan; Safety plan</p> <p>Law enforcement may need to be called in extreme cases.</p> <p>The office will contact parents.</p>
<p>LEVEL IV VIOLATION</p> <p>Referred to Director of Student Discipline and Behavior/Dean of Grammar or Upper School</p>	<p>Due to the nature of a Level IV violation, students must be sent straight to the behavior office, where they will discuss the behavior and consequences with the Director of Student Behavior and Discipline (DSDB) AND the Dean of Grammar of Upper School.</p> <p>Students and families can expect immediate out of school suspension, while consideration of expulsion or outplacement takes place.</p> <p>Law enforcement may be called if behaviors are found to be illegal.</p> <p>The office will contact parents to come in for a face-to-face conference.</p>

Additional Guidance

Some situations (e.g. cell phones, drugs & alcohol, weapons) require additional clarification. Merit Academy has developed these policies, and they are available on the school website. Merit Academy will develop additional policies and / or modify existing ones as required.

Discretion

No document can anticipate all contingencies that a school will face. Students, who have chosen to opt into this school, are expected to comply with the directions contained herein, in the school policy documents, and in the Merit Academy Student Handbook. However, they are also individuals who are learning discipline and behavior along with academics and virtues. Thus, in all cases, administrators, teachers, and staff are encouraged to use their discretion to balance this need for learning with the requirement to maintain an environment conducive to learning by all.