

# Merit Academy Discipline Policy & Code

*By choosing-in to Merit Academy, you are committing to this conduct and discipline policy and will be supportive of these consequences with your student, should behaviors warrant.*

## **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 middle school, will have systems in place for classroom management. In middle school, teachers recognize minor infractions through a behavioral process outlined below. These systems may include a parental/family report at the teacher's or Dean/Behavioral Interventionist's discretion.

## **Dean/Director of Student Behavior & Discipline Intervention**

Academic success happens in an environment where students feel connected, cared about, and respected. While the Dean/Director of Student Behavior & Discipline implement 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 academic and behavioral excellence.

## **Consequences**

The Dean or Director of Student Behavior & Discipline and their designees will follow the procedures defined in the Merit Academy Code of Honor and the current Merit Academy Consequences Matrix, which may result in classroom removal, detention, suspension, or other appropriate consequences including expulsion if necessary. Parents will be informed if implementation of the [Merit Academy Consequences Matrix](#) is needed.

## **Detention**

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

## **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. The Attendance Policy for In-School Suspension section applies 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. The Attendance Policy for Out-of-School Suspension section applies for missed work.

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## Severe Incidents

Any incident that is considered severe will be handled using the Merit Academy discipline matrix.

## Discipline Matrix

Level I Violations [3 Violations = Class II]	Level II Violations [3 Violations = Class III]	Level III Violations [3+ Violations = Expulsion Hearing]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption</li> <li>• Uniform Violations</li> <li>• Electronic Devices Misuse</li> <li>• Inappropriate/Rude Language</li> <li>• Off Task</li> <li>• Property Misuse/Littering</li> <li>• PDA</li> <li>• Gossip</li> <li>• Chewing Gum/Eating Without Permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defiance/Non-compliance</li> <li>• Plagiarism</li> <li>• Lying/Cheating</li> <li>• Repeated Class I Violations</li> <li>• Minor Profanity/Disrespect / Excessive Rude Language</li> <li>• Acting with malice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Punching, hitting, etc</li> <li>* Direct, inappropriate language or gestures</li> <li>* Throwing or overturning furniture</li> <li>* Fighting or physical aggression</li> <li>* Spitting on others</li> <li>* Reference to violence (without intent to follow through)</li> <li>* Overt defiance</li> <li>* Insubordination</li> <li>* Vandalism</li> <li>* Theft</li> <li>* Forgery/cheating</li> <li>* Internet misuse</li> <li>* Skipping class/refusal to go to class</li> <li>* Interference with the ability to provide educational opportunities to other students</li> <li>* Repeated Level I or II violations</li> </ul>
<b>Other Violations</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tardies (5 tardies and/or uniform violations = Class III)</li> <li>• Uniform Violations (5 violations/tardies = Class III)</li> <li>• <b>Disruptive students can be removed from class at any time at the teacher's or staff's discretion</b></li> </ul>		

### Level IV Violation

- \* Vandalism/extreme property damage
- \* Drug, alcohol, tobacco use/possession
- \* Threatening with a weapon
- \* Pornography/inappropriate sexual behavior
- \* Weapon use/possession
- \* Bomb threat
- \* Arson
- \* Explosives or combustibles
- \* Leaving school building without permission
- \* Repeated Level III violations
- \* Interference with the ability to provide educational opportunities to other students

### Remember the Rule of 3's:

Exceeded the appropriate number of warnings = Class I (handled and reported by teacher)

3 Class I's = Class II Violation (handled and reported by: teacher, Dir. of Student Behavior & Discipline, or Dean)

3 Class II's = Class III Violation (handled and reported by: teacher, Dir. of Student Behavior & Discipline, or Dean)

Class III & Class IV Violations (handled by: staff, Dir. of Student Behavior & Discipline, or Dean) may also include law enforcement or other outside agencies

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<b>PREVENTION</b>	<p><u>Use Love and Logic and/or other classroom management skills.</u></p> <p>If problem behavior occurs, inform student of the problem behavior and the consequence.</p> <p>Give age appropriate warnings/chances to improve.</p>
<b>LEVEL I VIOLATION</b>  Handled in Class	<p>After 3 repeated offenses, inform the student that they will receive a Class I write-up. Give the student some reflection time if possible. If student is too disruptive of class, they can sit in a safe place in hallway or MnM room to do their work.</p> <p>The teacher/staff addresses the behavior using behavior management strategies such as: Redirect the behavior; break with Dir. of Student 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;</p> <p>Parents may be contacted, depending on incident.</p>
<b>LEVEL II VIOLATION</b>  Handled in Class or by Director of Student Behavior & Discipline/Dean	<p>Either Class II violations or repeated Class I's are also to be handled in-class or by the Dir. of student behavior &amp; discipline or dean. If student is too disruptive of class, they may be sent to a safe place in hallway or MnM room to do their work.</p> <p>As needed, referred to the Director of Student Behavior &amp; Discipline and/or dean where they will address the behavior using consequences such as: Discipline (such as 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>Fill out an Incident Report. Parents may be contacted, <b>depending on incident</b></p>
<b>LEVEL III/IV VIOLATIONS</b>  Referred to Director of Student Behavior & Discipline or Dean	<p>Class III violations are to be sent straight to the office, where they wait in detention while Incident Report is completed.</p> <p>The Director of Student Behavior &amp; Discipline and/or dean will address the behavior using consequences such as: Loss of privileges; suspension (in-school or out); behavior contract/plan; safety plan; possible expulsion</p> <p>3+ Level III or a Level IV (depending on the violations = Consideration of expulsion); Law enforcement may be called when appropriate. The office will contact parents. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: suspension, behavioral plan, safety plan, expulsion, or outplacement</p>

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## Profanity Policy

Profane, Vulgar, and Hate Speech is considered a Class III Violation.

However, Merit Academy recognizes that the degree of offense can be diminished or elevated by the emotion and/or body language of perpetrators. We reserve the right to adapt the level of violation based on the circumstances. If desired, a list can be provided to serve as an example of profane, vulgar, and other unacceptable language.

## Additional Guidance

Some situations (e.g. cell phones, drug & 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.

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Adopted: November 2, 2021