

MOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

Updated Summer 2022

The Mountain Christian School plan of discipline is based on our desire to train students in a Biblical worldview and on our motto: “*Committed to being the best we can be in order to glorify the Lord.*”

No child is perfect, and on occasion, every student needs correction and guidance. MCS works to accomplish this through carefully structured classrooms, small class sizes, and proactive classroom management. MCS is willing to partner with parents to resolve conflict that may arise when administering discipline. However, MCS is unwilling to battle parents to administer needed discipline. When a student offense occurs, simple corrective measures such as timeouts or the loss of recess will be tried. If these measures fail, the parents will be contacted for their input and support. Should there come a time that parents can no longer support the school’s approach to discipline or the student cannot or will not comply with the school’s code of conduct, they may be asked to withdraw their student from the school.

We expect students:

- To work hard with full attention to the business of education and glorification of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- To learn the school and classroom rules and consistently follow them.
- To be kind by treating others with respect and consideration regardless of the circumstances.

Teachers are expected to:

- Provide a safe, structured classroom environment governed by a clearly communicated and consistently reinforced set of class rules and procedures.
- Quickly and consistently deal with student classroom discipline problems that arise and follow up with parents about these incidents.
- Provide students with classroom recognition for effort and behavior.
- Participate in assemblies to acknowledge Honor Roll recipients, student who made the Principal’s List, and the Lion’s Award.

Parents are expected to:

- Support the school’s discipline policy and individual student disciplinary measures.
- Partner with the classroom teacher to find effective solutions to address any student behavior problems.
- Do everything reasonably within their own power to encourage good behavior and help their student(s) follow classroom and school rules.

Violence Policy: MCS takes threats or perceived threats of violence very seriously. Such threats will be reported to parents and the proper authorities, and students may be subject to suspension or expulsion. One of the school's primary responsibilities is the protection of all students, faculty, and staff from physical, mental, and emotional harm. If administration deems that a threat of violence is credible and specific, the student may be suspended immediately and law enforcement may be notified.

Students are not allowed to talk about committing an act of violence, threaten to commit an act of violence, or joke about committing an act of violence toward anyone at MCS. In the event that administration determines that a threat is not likely or credible, the school may still decide to suspend the student after a parent meeting (including cases where the student was "just joking").

Weapons Policy: Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes in school facilities cause substantial disruption to the school environment and present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. These items will be confiscated; parents will be informed and, if possible, may come pick up these items from teacher or administration.

Bullying Policy: In order to provide a safe academic and emotional environment for all students, MCS takes bullying very seriously. Bullying will be determined by whether the behavior has the following three things:

- **Intention To Cause Harm** – Bullies are intending to hurt or cause harm to another.
- **Imbalance of Power** - This could be physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or class popularity. Bullies use this imbalance to control or harm another.
- **Repetition** – The behavior happens more than once. Although the behavior was addressed, it continues to occur, and a pattern is discerned.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Verbal bullying such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate comments, or threatening.
- Social bullying such as spreading rumors or publicly embarrassing someone.
- Physical bullying such as hitting, spitting, tripping, or taking someone's property.
- Bullying may also include touching, threats, or harassment of a non-sexual nature.

Students who bully or harass others will be subject to strong disciplinary consequences or immediate suspension. School administration will work with teachers, staff members, and parents to determine if specific student cases constitute bullying.

Sexual Harassment Policy: In order to provide a safe academic and emotional environment for all students, MCS takes sexual harassment of any kind very seriously. This includes any touching, threats, or harassment of a sexual nature. Such behavior is inconsistent with Christian tenets and the biblical philosophy of MCS. This policy applies to unlawful and immoral conduct occurring at any time, on or off school property. Students are strongly encouraged to report any incidents of sexually harassing conduct promptly to a teacher or administrator.

While sexual contact of any kind is inappropriate at MCS, sexual harassment between students is defined as any unwelcome sexual conduct by another student that is severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates a hostile or abusive educational environment. This conduct can be verbal, nonverbal, or physical, and the behavior in question does not necessarily have to be aimed at the student who is complaining of harassment.

Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment may take many different forms. School administration will determine if the offense constitutes sexual harassment. Examples of the kind of behavior that may be determined as sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances including propositions, flirtations, or obscene gestures.
- Physical assault or unwelcome physical contact
- Using words, pictures, objects, gestures, or other actions relating to a sexual activity or someone's gender that causes discomfort or embarrassment to another.

Sexual harassment or inappropriate touching between students will be treated very seriously by administration, dealt with swiftly, and may result in immediate expulsion and/or action by law enforcement.

Office Referral Process

The majority of behavior problems will be dealt with by teachers or staff using classroom policies, rules, and procedures. If students are consistently violating classroom/school rules and repeatedly being disciplined for the same behavioral offenses, the following steps will be implemented by the administrator.

- **Step 1** - Students will receive a classroom consequence and/or a temporary loss of a privilege such as PE or sitting with friends at lunch. They may also be sent to the front office for a time-out and disciplinary conversation with an administrator. The teacher or administrator will communicate details with parents.
- **Step 2** – Students may receive after-school detention in which the parents will be responsible to arrange transportation. Students may also receive temporary loss of school privilege or ability to participate in sports team. Administrator will communicate details with parents.
- **Step 3** – A conference will be set up with the student's parents to discuss the behavioral issue and whether MCS is a good fit for the student moving forward. Possible solutions and future consequences will be discussed. Student may be placed on behavioral contract.
- **Step 4** – Parents will be contacted and student will be given a one to three day suspension. Upon return, the student will be placed on a behavioral contract and will lose privileges until they can regain the trust of the teacher and administrator. Student will not be able to participate in sports programs or class trips.
- **Step 5** – Parents will be contacted and student will be suspended. Recommendation will be taken to the MCS School Board regarding possible expulsion of the student.

**For serious student offenses, the administrator may decide to move directly to step 4 or 5 in dealing with incidents.*

Levels of Discipline Infractions

The following infractions are based on the severity of a behavioral issue.

- **Level 1:** This is the lowest level. These behaviors are handled by the teacher or staff member in charge at the time of the occurrence. These behaviors are usually not referred to the office unless they are excessive in terms of damage, loss, disruption or injury whereupon they become level 2 events. Any level 1 behavior that shows a pattern of repetition despite teacher intervention will be referred to the office as a level 2.
- **Level 2:** These are moderate behaviors but nonetheless cannot go unchecked. These behaviors may be referred to the office for administrative action. The administrator and teacher will work together to assign consequences. Consequences may depend upon the situation, severity of the violation, and the student's past behavior. Repeated level 2 behaviors will result in increasing penalties and may be handled as level 3 behaviors. Behaviors that are excessive in terms of damage, loss, disruption or injury will become level 3 events. The office referral process will be used to deal with repeat violations.
- **Level 3:** This is the category of serious offenses. It includes dangerous, defiant and highly disruptive behaviors. Administration will immediately contact the student's parents or guardians. The first offense in this category will result in strong disciplinary consequences possibly including suspension. Repeated behaviors at level 3 may result in recommendation to expulsion or notification of law enforcement.
- **Level 4:** This is the category of most serious offenses. Level 4 behaviors may result in action by law enforcement, charges being filed and/or removal of the student from MCS by the Board. This category includes repeated fights or assaults, assault on a staff member, possession of deadly weapons, and sale or transfer of drugs.

Behavioral Violation Codes

Level 1 Offenses*

- Defiance of authority / not following directions of teachers, administrator, or staff
- Disrupting class or speaking at inappropriate times
- Running in the hall
- Throwing objects outside of PE
- Name calling or teasing
- Use of electronic devices not allowed by teacher
- Copying homework
- Littering or defacement of school property
- Excess noise in the cafeteria
- Failure to be prepared for class
- Minor use of unwholesome language (not swearing)
- Tampering with another student's property
- Lying to teacher or authority figure.

**If any of the above infractions are more serious or repeatedly violated, students may be moved up a level at the discretion of the teacher or administrator.*

Level 2 Offenses*

- Stealing
- Cheating on an assessment or contributing to cheating
- Being physical in an overly aggressive manner
- Intimidation or threatening physical harm
- Use of profanity or offensive gestures
- Inappropriate pictures or stories
- Spreading rumors or engaging in gossip
- Possession of fireworks
- Vandalism or destruction of school property
- Spitting on another person
- Direct disobedience
- Intentional, repeated lying or deception

**If any of the above infractions are more serious or repeatedly violated, students may be moved up a level at the discretion of the administrator.*

Level 3 Offenses*

- Fighting
- Pranks involving personal property of any school personnel
- Vandalism
- Arson or false alarm
- Severe disrespect or defiance toward any school staff
- Pushing or harming any school staff
- Bullying as defined in the Bullying Policy
- Inappropriate touching
- Falsifying documents or forging signatures

**If any of the above infractions are more serious or repeatedly violated, students may be moved up a level at the discretion of the administrator.*

Level 4 Offenses

- Sexual Harassment
- Violence or threats of Violence
- Possession of Weapons
- Possession of Drugs or Alcohol

STUDENT COVENANT

Each student must understand what is expected of him and be committed to doing his best to make choices in behavior that support the school's goals. The student covenant reads, "I commit ..."

1. To exhibit Christian behavior at all times. I will do my best to be an example for my fellow students and others to follow.
2. To be mindful of each student's right to an education by not interrupting the learning process. I will leave electronic games, CDs, DVDs, MP3s and other electronic devices home except for when used during specific class projects with the approval of the teacher.
3. To respect my body by not using or possessing tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
4. To refrain from the use of vulgar, obscene, or profane language.
5. To bring only Christian music and videos to share with my fellow students.
6. To respect authority by responding politely and promptly to teachers and other adults.
7. To show an appreciation for property and buildings by treating them with respect.
8. To respect other students by not fighting, rough housing, bullying, name-calling, or using put-downs. I will not bring weapons or look-alikes to school, or even suggest that I will do so.
9. To be appropriately dressed in accordance with the school dress code.
10. To keep interpersonal relationships in good taste without an outward show of affection.

PARENT / FAMILY COVENANT

All parents who enroll their children at MCS are to read and accept the Statement of Faith and this Family Covenant. By enrolling their student(s), parents indicate their willingness to support the school in all endeavors. Should there come a time that parents can no longer support the school, they may be asked to withdraw their child from Mountain Christian School.

When parents and the school come together for the mutual benefit of a child, both parties should be in agreement on certain fundamental principles. MCS has set forth certain policies and standards that are very important to how MCS functions as a school. Mountain Christian School covets families who want to be committed to the same principles. MCS asks that each family accept the following statements. The family covenant reads, "I/We commit ..."

1. To refrain from involving another parent or third-party should I have any questions or criticisms that need to be addressed. Instead, I will bring all necessary complaints to the

proper school personnel and work with them to resolve the differences. In all our discussions, I will maintain a proper Christian testimony, as I am an example for all children to see.

2. To accept the directive of Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” We attest that godly principles are being taught and reinforced in the home, and that our family is actively involved in a church or diligently seeking a church where God’s Word is preached.
3. To cooperate in keeping doctrinal controversy and denominationalism out of the school at all times, “endeavoring to preserve the unity of the Spirit.” (Ephesians 4:3)
4. To uphold and support the high academic standards of MCS by encouraging and working with my child on his daily homework assignments.
5. To allow my child to be disciplined by the teachers and administration in accordance with the guidelines established in the MCS handbook. I will assist the school in producing the peaceable fruit of righteousness in my child (Hebrews 12:11) as together we seek to develop in them a Biblical standard of conduct.
6. To grant MCS sole discretion to suspend or dismiss any student who does not adhere to the standards in the handbook. In addition, I understand that my child’s continued enrollment at MCS may be jeopardized if my child becomes involved in any activities outside of school that violate biblical principles, dishonor God, or might damage the reputation of MCS.
7. To volunteer my time, energy, and resources to the school in order that the school might become the best possible example of what can be accomplished by a unified Christian community. Some areas of service include the following:
 - a. Fundraisers: These are held each year to help keep tuition costs down. All families benefit from these efforts, and each family is required to participate to its fullest ability.
 - b. SALT Hours (Serving And Laboring Together): This program is designed to meet the needs of our school, keep our costs down, and give parents the opportunity to be actively involved in the total educational process. Parents are required to serve 25 hours each school year or pay \$20 per hour not served.
 - c. Board meetings, PTF meetings, school work days, and field trips.
8. To honor my financial obligations to MCS. I will adhere to the policies set concerning the timelines of payments realizing my biblical obligation.