



# **Student & Parent Handbook**

## **2023-2024**

Magic City Acceptance Academy  
75 Bagby Drive  
Homewood, Alabama 35209

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**Annalynn Law**

**60**

**Mckinney- Vento Law**

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## **Mission Statement**

The Magic City Acceptance Academy facilitates a community in which **all** learners are empowered to embrace education, achieve individual success, and take ownership of their future in a brave, LGBTQ-affirming learning environment.

## **Vision Statement**

The Magic City Acceptance Academy (MCAA) will motivate and prepare students in grades six through twelve by providing an exceptional, innovative, and quality-driven education. MCAA's purpose is to engage students who have dropped out, are not thriving in traditional schools, or are enrolled in home-school programs. Mentors and teachers will be incorporated throughout the diverse MCAA curriculum to empower students in directing their own education. MCAA will provide a brave learning environment and LGBTQ-affirming culture for all.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

The Magic City Acceptance Academy (MCAA) works to foster a community of respect, dignity, and inclusion, for students, staff, and faculty of all backgrounds. We define a diverse population to include a wide range of racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender identities; economic and geographic backgrounds; physical abilities; life, school, and career experiences; and political, religious, and personal beliefs. Our goal for our students is to gain an understanding and appreciation of differences and similarities. We challenge students to reflect, through social and educational experiences, how their behaviors impact others in our community, including those with different perspectives, identities, and backgrounds. MCAA welcomes allyship as a lifelong journey.

## **Equal Education Opportunities**

No student will be unlawfully excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the Board on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, disability, creed, national origin, sex, immigrant or migrant status, non-English speaking ability, or homeless status. All career and technical education opportunities are offered to all students regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability.

## Profile of a Graduate

We are a community of innovative and thinking learners that are grounded in justice and acceptance for all through collaboration that leads to social-emotional and academic growth with the following core values:

These core values can be modeled by using the following acronym: **MAGIC**

**M**indful

**A**ccepting

**G**rowth-Oriented

**I**nclusive

**C**urious

**Each MCAA student will be:**

1. **Mindful**- Students will build self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. Students will learn the importance of productive conversations, organization, creating health habits and learn what they need to grow as a student.
2. **Accepting** - They will value diversity and will be aware of societal needs. They will have multi-cultural awareness and an understanding of current and historical issues facing different communities of people.
3. **Growth Oriented** - Every student will learn how to grow academically, and personally by being educated as a whole student. Students will learn from a well rounded educational standpoint, and receive equitable life skills that they can translate into everyday life once they graduate.
4. **Inclusive**- Students will learn and understand the importance of inclusivity and diversity. Students will be able to participate in an inclusive space, as well as learn how to create one for all learners.
5. **Curious**- Students will be intellectually curious, lifelong learners. They will have a solid understanding of the different pathways to their college and career interests and will have a passion to pursue those interests. They will have strong critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. They will zealously further their education and pursue their dreams.

## **School Directory**

Patton Furman, Principal: [pfurman@mcaabhm.org](mailto:pfurman@mcaabhm.org)  
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## **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20U.S.C. 1232g; 34CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to a student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom rights have transferred are "eligible students".

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student records maintenance at the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, makes it impossible for parents or eligible students to review these 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 has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the 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 in order to release 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 (34 CFR 99.31).
  - 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.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a bulletin, student handbook or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.



## **Purpose of Trauma-Informed Restorative Justice Practices**

Restorative Justice Practices are cultural actions that teaches students how to self-regulate their emotions, actions, and mindset within the school community; reflect on their actions towards others and the impact they have on their overall community; repair relationships and co-create strategies to address their behavior; and reintegrate into the community using strategies, accommodations, learned skills, and practice.<sup>1</sup>

Restorative Justice Practices were developed in response to chronic childhood traumas, also known as ACEs. Studies showed that exclusionary and punitive disciplinary actions, such as suspensions and expulsions, does not improve student behavior or school environment.<sup>2</sup> Disciplinary actions such as restraint, corporal punishment, suspensions and expulsion may induce more trauma on children that suffer from traumatic experiences such as homelessness, abuse, neglect, domestic violence, etc. Students with disabilities and students of color tend to be expelled or suspended at higher rates. Students affected by trauma tend to exhibit: an inability to self-manage or regulate; have a lack of social, emotional, and self-awareness; have poor relationship skills; and demonstrate irresponsible or impulsive decision-making skills.

Restorative Practices establish that relationships are of utmost importance when building a school community and focuses on harms committed and the consequent needs of victims, offenders and communities. It addresses the obligations of the person's trauma and behavior resulting from the harm done to the overall community and also how the community is obligated to heal all parties involved, making these practices for solving problems both inclusive and collaborative. Restorative Practices gives voice to every person whose voice was stunted by the action, encouraging growth, change, responsibility, accountability, and coping skills. Because of this characteristic, the school community will always be in a state of restoration, therefore creating a safe, friendly and enjoyable learning environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and included. The primary goal is that MCAA will be a school where students are motivated to learn and faculty and staff enjoy meaningful and fulfilling work.

MCAA believes in building a community of creative and innovative world leaders who are socially responsible. Our goal is to maintain high standards and expectations and to do this within a trauma-informed and restorative environment.

\*\*For an explanation of the differences between punitive disciplinary actions and restorative corrective actions, please see chart below. To read these examples, we chose a list of example behaviors with their respective levels of severity. The Punitive column will state the outcome of the behavior as handled outside of our community framework and the Restorative column will give examples of a restorative course of action.

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<sup>1</sup> Restorative DC, Trauma-Informed Restorative Toolkit.

<sup>2</sup> Helping Traumatized Children Learn, 2005

| Infraction                  | Exclusive/Punitive                                     | Inclusive/Restorative   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Theft                       | Out-of-school suspension                               | Students return the items stolen and a restorative circle will be held between all stakeholders affected by theft with potential accountability actions to reintegrate into the community. Administration and parents will meet to discuss potential causes of action and develop a plan based on discussion held in the restorative circle.  |
| Use and possession of drugs | Out-of-school suspension or expulsion                  | Student's drug paraphernalia will be confiscated. Administration will notify parents of use or possession of drugs and discuss the behavior (such as if they know the behavior exists, where the student received the drug paraphernalia, do they suspect any potential causes/stressors related to drug use or possession) during a home visit. All stakeholders involved will participate in a restorative circle for accountability purposes and discuss and develop a plan for reintegration. |
| Truancy                     | Suspension, referral to law enforcement, truancy court | Administration and/or teacher will perform a home visit and establish a plan with parent and student to improve attendance.   |

The goal of our student discipline practices is to assist students in understanding the source of adverse behaviors and teaching them how to utilize behaviors that contribute to academic success, social wellness, and exist within a community where everyone is responsible, collaborative, inclusive and respectful. Our mission is to teach our students to overcome their adversities while giving them the necessary tools for them to be successful. It is our belief at the Magic City Acceptance Academy that students need to be in school and learning, therefore it will be our practice to minimize out-of-school suspensions utilizing restorative justice practices in order to build and mold thinking and creative world leaders. Here are some of those tools that we will utilize:

- Trauma-Informed and Restorative Classroom management with engaging instruction
- Allowing students to correct behaviors in the event of an incident, creating a growth mindset and respectful behaviors within the overall school community.
- Building positive relationships with all school stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, and staff) that establishes safety, trust, and academic excellence.
- High standards should be promoted by all school personnel through teaching, modeling, and monitoring behavior, and by fairly and consistently correcting misbehavior as it occurs. All members of the community will model and encourage actions that support and are aligned with MCAA's pillars.
- Consistency in correcting and teaching student behaviors according to MCAA's disciplinary plan.

Establishing trauma-informed restorative justice practices in the school community maximizes learning, a growth mindset, and critical thinking while minimizing and/or eliminating punitive consequences.

## **Right to a High-Quality Education**

The belief at the Magic Acceptance Academy (MCAA) is that all students have a right to a high-quality education. As such, school disciplinary measures should not be used to exclude students from school or otherwise deprive them of such an education, unless it is necessary to preserve the safety of students and staff.

# **Section I.** **School Operations**

## **Hours of Operation & Communication**

The office at MCAA will operate daily between the hours of 8:35 a.m. and 4:05 p.m. Students should wait in the cafeteria until they are dismissed at 8:30 a.m. to transition to their first class of the day. MCAA operates on a 7 period traditional school schedule, with an 8th period added in the middle of the day for lunch and homeroom.

Students may arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. and students should leave by 5:30 p.m. If there is no notification, then the parent/guardian will be contacted followed by emergency contacts listed on PowerSchool SIS. If there is no contact made after a certain period of time, the school is required to contact the Alabama Department of Human Resources for further assistance.

Any messages and deliveries from parents to students should be left at the front office to respect the educational opportunity of all students. Please keep in mind that we are an educational institution and these messages and deliveries should be in the event of an emergency only and within respect of the technology policies of MCAA.

MCAA is closed during all school holidays and closing days; any changes will be announced via email and on the homepage of our website.

## **Transportation**

## **Car Line & Parking Information**

Students can begin arriving at 7:30am and will enter on the backside entrance of the cafeteria. Student drivers can park in the student parking lot which is located near the front entrance on the side of the building and can enter the building through the cafe entrance or side parking lot door if a teacher is present to open it. Students are expected to go into the building once they arrive at school. Students are not allowed to return to their cars through the school day without permission from their teacher and a pass from the front office.

Student drivers are expected to fill out the permission form and contract for student drivers and turn in a copy of their valid Alabama drivers license in order to drive to and from school. Failure to uphold the driver contract can result in revoking the privilege of driving.

The car line will begin at 3:45 p.m. Parents will enter one of two lanes of the car line at the designated entrance directed by a staff member. Once in the car line, a staff member will collect the names of the child from each parent/guardian in the order of arrival. After the parent/guardian picks up the child, they will leave out of the designated exit. Pick up ends at 5:30 p.m. If the parent/guardian is late picking up their child they should notify the school. If there is no notification, then the parent/guardian will be contacted followed by emergency contacts listed on PowerSchool SIS. If students remain after 5:30pm, the school may contact local agencies for support.

## **Student Bus Expectations**

MCAA provides four buses as an alternative form of transportation. Please call the front office or email [Hugh@mcaabhm.org](mailto:Hugh@mcaabhm.org) for more information about bus routes and times.

In order to continue to ride the bus, students must follow these guidelines put in place for their safety and the bus drivers safety. The privilege of riding the bus is contingent upon students abiding by the rules established by MCAA and STS,Inc., listed below.

Failure to comply with the rules of the bus driver could result in losing your seat on the bus for a period of time or permanently.

- The buses must maintain a regular schedule and cannot wait for students.
- The driver has disciplinary responsibilities which pupils must respect. **THEY ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT ANY BREACH OF BUS RULES TO ADMINISTRATION or BUS SUPERVISOR**
- A regular seating arrangement may be implemented if deemed appropriate by the bus driver/principal
- No profane or inappropriate language or inappropriate conduct will be permitted.

- Students shall be respectful to persons whom they meet or pass on the roads/streets.
- All passengers must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- No one may leave the bus without the driver's consent
- Changing seats during a trip is not allowed.
- The use of tobacco in any form, vaping, and further use of drugs is prohibited.
- Spitting on the floor or other parts of the bus is prohibited.
- Throwing objects at, on, against, into or out of bus is strictly prohibited
- Parents should not confront a bus driver at the bus stop. Please call Operations with any complaints/concerns.
- The rear door will be opened only in case of emergency
- Students will be picked up/dropped off only at their assigned bus stop.
- The bus is equipped with video equipment and records all bus-related activity
- Parents are expected to abide by any discipline action deemed appropriate by school administrators, until an investigation has been completed.
- Only those students assigned to a specific bus will be allowed to enter that bus without prior approval
- No fighting or striking fellow students or employees, and no employee shall fight with or strike any student or employee.
- Defacing, cutting, or scratching school property is prohibited and will result in restitution.
- Blocking, restricting, or otherwise placing objects in the aisle, steps, or emergency exit is prohibited.
- Students must keep heads, hands, arms, and legs inside the bus
- Students are prohibited from entering the bus with weapons of any kind
- No one should board a school bus, at any time, without expressed authorization of the school bus driver.
- The driver will be considered the authority during transportation, unless his/her/their actions directly challenge the afore-mentioned rules, therefore, all pupils must abide by instructions given during travel.
- Action taken is to ensure the highest possible safety standards are maintained.
- Questions regarding incidents on the bus should be referred to school office personnel. Students waiting to ride the bus or riding the bus are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with established standards for
- classroom behavior as stated in the systems code of student conduct. When infractions occur, the following disciplinary action will be taken:
  - 1st Infraction - Warning - parental notification**
  - 2nd Infraction - Suspension of riding privileges for 5 days**
  - 3rd Infraction - Suspension of riding privileges for 10 days - parent conference**
  - 4th Infraction - Suspension of riding privileges for the remainder of the current school year**

If bus infractions are of a severe nature, bus privileges will be suspended until an investigation has been completed. The results of the investigation may result in the suspension of riding privileges. Each incident will be evaluated on its own merit and additional riding privileges may be revoked at administration discretion, as well as other appropriate disciplinary action. **All decisions from MCAA and STS, Inc. are final.**

## **Health Office**

MCAA employs a school nurse to dispense medication and provide basic healthcare. Students can also access healthcare providers through the Magic City Wellness Center [www.magiccitywellnesscenter.org](http://www.magiccitywellnesscenter.org).

### **Nurse Station Protocol**

Every student has the right to visit the nurse's office in the event that the student is not feeling well, is injured, or during a medical emergency.

The guidelines that are in place for the nurse's office are in place to help regulate the space and help the students feel comfortable, while also not missing class.

- Students have to receive a written pass from their current teacher to see the nurse.
- Every classroom has a first aid kit, and teachers are encouraged to work with the students first before sending them to the nurse's station.
- Students are allowed in the nurse's station for 15 minutes at a time.
- Students that need to stay past the 15 minutes need to advocate for themselves to their teacher and most likely call home to check out.
- Students that have regular medication to take need to create a daily appointment with the nurse, and they will receive a special pass daily to go to the nurse.

### **Administering Medicines to Students**

#### **Oral Medication in Schools**

If under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take oral medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, the school nurse will administer the medication in compliance with the regulations that follow:

- A. Written instructions signed by a physician will be required and must include:
1. Child's name
  2. Name of medication
  3. Time to be administered
  4. Dosage
  5. Possible side effects
  6. Termination date for administering the medication
  7. Special storage instructions

A medical form for this purpose may be obtained from each school's office.

B. Over the counter medications (example: Tylenol, Advil, aspirin) must be prescribed by the physician or licensed health care provider to be given on an "as needed" basis for chronic illness. Over the counter medication will not be given for acute illnesses. **Prescription medications for students require a physician's signature.**

C. The medication must be brought to school in a container labeled by the pharmacist according to the prescription.

D. Students will not be permitted to carry medication to and from school. All medication that will be administered at school must be brought to the school office by the parent/guardian of the student. When the medication is completed, out-of-date, or at the end of the school year, parents will be advised in writing to pick up any unused medicine. Medications not picked up by parents (by the last day of school) will be destroyed.

### **Self - Administered Medications**

Students who have conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and hypersensitivity to bee stings/insects may require self-administration of medications. The student may self-medicate when the following criteria are met:

- A. Written consent by parents on the medical form
- B. Written instructions signed by a physician are also included on the medical form. Certain medications (i.e., inhalers) may be kept on the student's person if the physician deems necessary and provides instructions. This must be discussed with and approved by the school's principal and school nurse.
- C. The student must be trained in the procedure and be able to demonstrate to the school nurse that they are able to manage his/her condition.

### **School's Responsibility**

The school nurse or principal's designee trained in the administration of medication will:

- A. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication
- B. Keep a record of the administration of medication
- C. Keep medication in a locked cabinet
- D. Return unused medication to the parent/guardian only. The school system retains the discretion to reject requests for administration of medication in the schools.

For ongoing medical conditions requiring unique nurse intervention, the parent should set up a meeting with the nurse in order to create a healthcare plan. Parents should provide written documentation from a doctor outlining a diagnosis and needed medical treatment.

## **Parents' Responsibility**

The parent/guardian of the child should ensure that all required forms and current medications are shared with the school's Health Office if they wish for their child to take medications on the school's premises. Any and all changes to the child's health and medications should be communicated in writing and in a timely manner. If the conditions have subjected the child to having a 504 plan under federal law, then the 504 coordinator should also be informed of changes.

Parents/guardians are also responsible for keeping their child home in the event that they are sick and ill. If your child is vomiting, has diarrhea, has a fever of 100 degrees (Fahrenheit), and/or any other illness that is contagious (cold, flu, conjunctivitis, COVID-19, etc). If a child misses 3 consecutive days of school, they should return with a doctor's note to school for the absences to be considered excused. For detailed information related to attendance, please see our attendance policy.

## **COVID-19 Protocol**

The health, safety, and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff are top priority at the Magic City Acceptance Academy. As we prepare for another successful year of in person learning, our Covid protocols may change based on CDC guidelines and will be updated regularly on the schools website and social media page. Visit our school website for the most recent update on mask policy, Covid testing availability, vaccination clinics, and quarantine protocol.

## **Nutrition**

Students at MCAA have access to buy breakfast and lunch from the school cafeteria or bring in their own lunch.

Prices for our 2023-2024 programs are provided below:

Student Breakfast: \$2.00

Student Lunch: \$4.00

Adult Lunch: \$4.50

Adult Breakfast: \$2.50

Every family at MCAA is required to fill out a free and reduced lunch application.

Each parent/guardian will have access to an online portal to add money to their students' account. Students will use their assigned 4-digit PIN in order to pay for their school lunch that they will receive at the beginning of the school year.

If a student has doctor approved dietary restrictions, please contact the front office or the nutrition page of the website for the application.

All questions regarding our nutrition program should be emailed to [nutrition@mcaabhm.org](mailto:nutrition@mcaabhm.org).



## **Nutrition Policies**

Our cafeteria is required to follow state nutrition laws and the policies of the nutrition company that supplies our food.

Students are more than welcome to bring their lunch, however students are not allowed to have food delivered through delivery services such as DoorDash, UberEats, etc. Students are also not allowed to have packaged food from outside restaurants and fast food agencies.

Students are prohibited from having caffeinated drinks, not limited to caffeinated soda, coffee, and energy drinks. If a student has these items, they will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

## **Wellness Suite**

### **Contact Information**

Kathleen Durkin [kdurkin@mcaabhm.org](mailto:kdurkin@mcaabhm.org)

Dawnteia Little [dlittle@mcaabhm.org](mailto:dlittle@mcaabhm.org)

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide a comprehensive and data-driven Wellness Suite to better facilitate our students' emotional well-being. Through the use of evidence based practices we strive to equip our students with the skills required to excel not only in school but in life.

Working with our administration team and teachers, The Magic City Acceptance Academy Wellness Suite works to facilitate our students in developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to become effective students, responsible citizens, productive workers, lifelong learners, and leaders within their communities.

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision for our students is that upon graduation they are equipped with the essential skills and strategies to successfully navigate and succeed at their chosen career paths and complex social lives through the implementation of a comprehensive, data-driven counseling program. Through our use of data-driven curriculum and interventions alongside community support and a whole heap of love we hope to empower and uplift our students and give them the confidence they need to thrive beyond high school.

## **Referral Process**

In order to better serve our students, the Wellness Suite is utilizing a referral form through Google Forms that is available for access on our website. We will check this form regularly and set up student meetings in a timely manner, and request that, unless there is a crisis situation at hand, this be the primary source of trying to set up meetings with us.

## **Telehealth Information**

At MCAA we understand and value the input of outside mental health help. To that end, we are more than able and very willing to find a space for students to participate in virtual mental health services set up outside of school. Per request, telehealth consent forms will be sent home, and upon being returned and notified in advance when the sessions are scheduled we can both make sure that the student has a quiet, private space to participate and that the people that need to know where they are (i.e. their teachers, admin, etc.) know where they are supposed to be.

## **Wrap-around Services**

Magic City Acceptance Academy utilizes a team approach in order to best support the whole family throughout their journey through and after MCAA. Wraparound services combine your family, community based partners, natural support systems, and academic personnel to develop a plan of supports and services unique to your specific need. If needed, our Mental Health Services Coordinator (MHSC) will work with you on an individual basis to find the appropriate resources to assist your family. Our goal is to create the best possible plan of care for you and your student to succeed during their time at MCAA while finding the appropriate resources to solidify lifelong skills for life beyond MCAA. Services that can be developed for your needs can include, but are not limited to, substance use treatment, therapeutic counseling referrals, vocational rehabilitation, career counseling, eating disorders, utility assistance, and academic planning. General wraparound partnerships are listed on our website under the Wellness Corner. Our MHSC has personally vetted each organization and individual listed as a partner.

If a threat of suicide is reported, the mental health counselor is authorized to inform the student's parent or guardian of the report. However, if the threat of suicide is a result of child abuse or other significant harm from a parent or guardian it will be at the discretion of the school principal or the principal's designee to inform student guardian.

## **Self-Harm**

If a student self-harms while on MCAA campus, a staff from the wellness suite and the school nurse will assess the self-harm and consult with the principal to determine if it warrants the

student to be sent home. In this situation, it is recommended that parents contact a mental health service provider for ongoing treatment.

Self-harm, or self-mutilation, is the act of deliberately inflicting pain and damage to one's own body. Self-harm most often refers to but is not limited to cutting, burning, scratching, and other forms of external injury. If a student harms themselves on campus, our school nurse and a member of the wellness suite will work with the student and then consult the principal to determine the next steps. Depending on severity of self-harm, the student may be asked to be picked up by guardians to ensure student safety and well-being. In cases of an emergency, administration and The Wellness Suite will determine the best course of action, including but not limited to calling DHR, contacting the police, or calling a medical center.

### **Wellness Suite Informed Consent**

The Magic City Acceptance Academy Wellness Suite offers short-term individual counseling to students as well as small group counseling. Topics that may be addressed in these settings include: social skills, communication skills, anger, depression, anxiety, and bullying. The Wellness Suite aims to teach students about self-control, self-esteem, and self-advocacy with evidence-based research. These services are not intended for psychiatric diagnosis or medical treatment for any mental health disorder. Guardians and students will be provided additional resources if they are in need of treatment.

Parents/guardians or school staff may refer students for counseling. Students are also encouraged to request services for themselves in order to promote self-advocacy. The consent form allows guardians and students to make a collaborative choice to receive services from the Wellness Suite.

In compliance with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) ethical responsibilities, the school social worker will keep information confidential. This does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or others.

In order to provide mental health services to students, parents/guardians must opt-in for services (individual counseling, support groups, referrals and mental health resources) for students under the age of 14. Each parent/guardian or student will have to turn in the opt-in form to receive services. Forms must be completed, unanswered forms will **not be** considered as approval of services.

### **Sensory Room**

At MCAA we are very happy to have partnered with KultureCity to allow us to have a fully equipped sensory room for our higher need students. The sensory room is equipped with all

types of sensory toys, sensory lights, and comfortable seating for our students in crisis that need a place to cool off. In between students that utilize our space we have procedures in place to go in and sanitize to make sure we are staying within COVID protocols.

To protect student safety and privacy in these moments we have the following procedures in place to access the sensory room:

1. Students, Teachers, Wellness Staff, and any other school personnel in times of high need will contact Mr. Hugh in the front office to check for Sensory Room availability.
2. If the Sensory Room is available, the student will be given a sensory room pass and is allowed 15 minutes baseline.
  - a. In cases of higher need students can be allowed more time slots if there are not other students that need the space
3. After the allotted time is up, the student will be expected to return the pass to the front office and go back to class.

## **School Counseling**

### **Contact Information**

Katie Frost

[kfrost@mcaabhm.org](mailto:kfrost@mcaabhm.org)

### **The Counselor's Role**

School Counselors assume many roles and they assist in a variety of ways. Counselors are an integral part of the school community, working with students, teachers, other school personnel, and parents. Counselors also coordinate more in-depth services with community agencies when the need arises. All students should have the benefit of a functional guidance program. The academic years of students are critical ones and are a time when proper guidance by the home and school is vital to the development of individuals. Therefore, Magic City Acceptance Academy has developed a program of guidance to meet the needs of the students. The guidance program shall encompass the areas of educational guidance, personal guidance, and vocational guidance. With a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counseling program, counselors help lay the foundation for personal, social, and academic success throughout school. By providing a nurturing and caring environment for students, their needs are met through prevention, early at-risk identification, and intervention services.

### **Counselor Services Include:**

- Individual counseling (1-on-1 with the child)

- Small peer groups for related issues
- Classroom guidance lessons and career exploration activities
- School crisis intervention as needed
- School-wide character education programs and state initiatives throughout the year (EX: Attendance Awareness Month, Red Ribbon Drug Awareness Week, etc.)

**Counselors Work with School Personnel to:**

- Identify and help struggling learners
- Decrease classroom disturbances
- Promote positive behavior
- Increase school morale
- Recognize early warning signs for students at-risk
- Implement safety and violence prevention programs
- Plan with learning communities and problem solving teams
- 

**Coordination**

Our counselors are frequently involved in the coordination and leadership of other activities within the school. These may include the administration of standardized testing, advisory activities, and working with students on course selection and scheduling.

**Consultation**

The counselor communicates regularly with parents/guardians to address any concerns they may have regarding their child’s education. The counselor also consults with administrators, teachers, and staff members to ensure a positive educational experience for all students.

The guidance program shall utilize professionally trained counselors and teachers and shall provide the following:

1. Counseling services for all students on the individual and/or group basis.
2. Information for students necessary to make wise decisions concerning educational, vocational or personal planning.
3. Counseling services for students concerning achievement and aptitude.
4. Testing programs that will assist students to better understand themselves and assist teachers to better understand the students with which they are working.
5. Assistance for students needing more intensive diagnosis.

6. Assistance for students and teachers to help improve communications between the school and home.

7. In addition, when possible, follow-up studies of former students to facilitate evaluation of the total school program.

The counselor will work with students on issues affecting their academic performance and on issues of personal and social development. The counselor is available to parents for consultation and parents are encouraged to contact the counselor with questions regarding counseling services. Magic City Acceptance Academy's school counselor provides students with brief counseling in three domains: academic, personal/social, and career planning. MCAA's counselor provides resources to assist students in planning for life after high school and works in conjunction with the Wellness Suite and MCAA's Social Workers when needed.

### **Confidentiality**

Conversations with a school counselor are confidential with the exception of situations in which the student has authorized the counselor to speak to someone else. In addition, there are a number of urgent situations which limit confidentiality:

- Threat of harm to oneself
- Threat of harm to another
- Any report of abuse or neglect or suspected abuse or neglect
- Reports of behavior which could reasonably lead to harm to self or others
- Court orders requiring disclosure

### **Transcript Audits and Course Credits**

Counselors at MCAA complete transcript audits each semester to assure students are enrolled in and satisfactorily completing courses required by the Alabama State Department of Education for graduation.

### **Course Selection Process**

Course selection begins with a study talk that provides an overview of the course selection process and course options. Students are given directions, a list of deadlines, transcripts, and color-coded course selection sheets. The curriculum guide is available to assist with this process, and teachers are available to advise students by subject area. Students will complete their course requests online and using the course selection sheet and may meet individually with the counselor to select courses.

In the spring, course request verifications will be handed out at school and notifications will be sent home. After reviewing the student's requests, parents are to sign and return the form to the school. Course request verifications do not reflect a final schedule.

In the event the form is not returned, guidance will assume parents are in agreement with the selections. Verifications are considered official course requests when they are due to the Counseling Office. Between the beginning of April and the end of the school year students and parents may modify course requests by notifying guidance in writing (i.e. - email from a parent, course change request form). After the last day of school, all course requests are considered finalized.

The following suggestions are designed to help students and parents with this process.

1. Study the MCAA Curriculum Guide. Each student will have access to the online curriculum guide and course description videos. These guides should be used to review diploma requirements, course descriptions, and prerequisites.
2. Consult with your child's school counselor. The counselor is especially helpful in considering graduation requirements and balancing the student's overall schedule.
3. Talk with your child's teachers. Teachers are aware of specific skills and work habits of each student and can be a sound source of advice since they work with students on a daily basis.
4. Consider the overall workload. Special attention should be paid to the overall time commitment necessary for classes and extracurricular activities. Students are encouraged to balance academic work with their other commitments.
5. Choose additional courses carefully. Students should list four alternate electives. An alternate elective will be used if one of the chosen electives is closed or not offered. In the event of a schedule conflict or if an alternate elective is needed, an elective will be chosen for the student who did not list four (4) alternate electives.

### **Schedule Change Request Process**

All requests for changes must be submitted in writing and will be evaluated following the steps below. Only cases of extreme circumstances will be honored after school begins/schedule change deadline passes. Please understand schedule changes are not guaranteed and must be approved by administration.

Student completes a course change request form and returns it to the school counselor. The form must have the parent's signature to be considered valid.

OR

Parent emails the school counselor, and the counselor follows up with a phone call or email to the parent to confirm the request.

The schedule change request team evaluates the course change request.

Change Requests that Will NOT be Honored:

- A preference request (class order, teacher request, or desire to be with another student)
- A course that was originally requested (class listed on the course selection sheet and verification sheet)
- A course request that was not granted (class is full or does not fit in the student's schedule)
- A case of unexpected rigor (class is harder than expected, overall load is more than expected)
- A course that was not originally requested (sudden desire to take a course that was not requested)

Change Requests that MAY be Considered:

- A course that was not requested was placed on the student's schedule (listed alternates did not fit)

Change Requests that WILL be Honored:

- A course that the student already completed (error on MCAA's part)
- A desire to increase the rigor in the student's schedule (change from Regular to AP or Advanced)

Administration will make any approved schedule changes.

The student will be directed to view the updated schedule through the student portal or will be given an updated printed copy of their schedule. The parent will be notified of the change.

OR

A member of the schedule change request team will communicate with the student and/or parent that the request was not approved.

We will be taking schedule change requests up to and no later than **Friday, September 1, 2023**. We understand that things may come up and classes may not always be the best fit, and we strive to make sure that all students are taking the most appropriate courses across the board. That being said, due to filling courses and class restrictions, students may not always be able to be in their requested classes.

## Library Procedure

At MCAA, we have a beautiful library space for students to utilize. Our students are able to check out books using a unique check out system. They email the librarian which books they are borrowing and are able to take them. Students are held responsible for missing books and will be notified of any fees related to late or missing books.

Students are also able to utilize the library during lunch periods and/or during class time with permission. Students are not allowed to be in the library without permission. Students must ask



teachers for a library pass that includes the student's name, date, time they left class, and how long they will be in the library.

## **Standards of Student Safety & Security Plans**

There are two national response models that serve as the framework for local policies, procedures and response plans.

For larger-scale emergencies and disasters, the National Response Framework (NRF) offers guiding principles that enable all response partners to prepare for and provide a unified response to disasters and emergencies—from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe. The term “response” (as defined by NRF) includes taking immediate action to save lives, protect property and the environment and meet basic human needs. Response also includes the execution of emergency plans and actions to support short-term recovery. The NRF also describes how agencies, such as schools, can work together with communities, tribes, states, the federal government and private partners.

Secondly, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a comprehensive national design for conducting incident management. NIMS provides the template, while the NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for incident management. A key component of NIMS is the Incident Command System (ICS), which provides a standardized approach for incident management, regardless of cause, size, location or complexity. By using ICS during incidents, schools and districts will be able to more effectively work with the responders in their communities.

To maximize success, effective management of school emergencies requires training, preparation and planning. Schools are responsible for anticipating and preparing to respond to a variety of emergencies.

The policies and procedures outlined below will help empower the students and staff to respond in an emergency, closely aligned with the phases of emergency management: The Five Phases of Emergency: Management, Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, and Response & Recovery.

MCAA will incorporate all required elements in the Alabama Code in ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff. For detailed information of our crisis protocols, please read below.

### **Crisis Protocols**

#### **Lockdown Procedures**

A lockdown takes place if a threat or possible threat is identified inside the school or on the campus and school is on HIGH ALERT. All exterior and interior doors are locked. No one (except appropriate emergency response personnel) will be allowed to enter or leave the

building/campus to avoid hindering emergency response teams arriving at the school. We ask that you monitor local news or wait for communication from MCAA Leadership about any possible evacuation of the building and parent reunification site. Please note that we conduct a lockdown audit and review of lockdown procedures at least twice during each school year.

### **Secure Perimeter**

Secure Perimeter is used in the event of a potentially dangerous emergency that is occurring near or on MCAA's campus and is considered a Partial Lockdown. When a secure perimeter is announced, teachers will implement all external procedures as listed above, brief students on what to do and continue instruction. If students were pulled from the hallway, teachers will inform the student's teacher of whereabouts to ensure proper communication. Students are only allowed outside of the classroom upon approval.

### **Lockdown**

Lockdown is used in the event of a dangerous crisis that is actually occurring on MCAA's campus and is considered a Full Lockdown. When this is announced, teachers will implement all external procedures as listed above. Students movement is prohibited and during this code, students are to sit on the floor in a safe location in the classroom. Upon hearing a Lockdown announcement students should immediately enter the nearest classroom or bathroom and lock the door. Students in the classrooms should immediately flip their desks on their side and lay down behind them. More instructions will come from leadership depending on the event.

### **Shelter in Place**

This phrase might be encountered during inclement weather or a hazardous material release. A tornado warning will require schools to take students to the Stormatorium and stay there until it is safe to release students. These areas have been reviewed and approved by the Emergency Management Agency, and have been deemed safe in the event of severe weather. Please note that we cease operations such as checkouts during an active warning. If you are at the school during a warning, we invite you to join us as we "shelter." Should we ever encounter a hazardous material release, we have made precautions to limit the amount of exposure students have with the outside environment.

### **Heightened Awareness**

This means a potential MAY exist for an unusual situation. This status may be used when there is an event in the community or on the state or national level. Instruction will continue but the system/school will be instructed to report any suspicious or unusual activity. This includes weather watches/warnings.

### **Medical Emergency Lockdown**

In the event of a medical emergency, students are to remain in the classroom and hallway movement is strictly monitored, students are only allowed to move with administrative permission. Teachers will take in students found in the hallway and notify teachers of the student's whereabouts. Instruction and activities will continue until Code Green is called.

### **Parent Unification Procedure**

When students have been removed from the school or when an emergency has occurred that affects the ability to have a normal dismissal, a relocation site will be established. Parents will be notified of this location by school/district communication systems. At this location, parents will be updated concerning the situation and the plans for reunification with their child.

### **Secured Perimeter**

Secured perimeter is used when we are notified of a concern or when a potential threat is identified in the vicinity of the school but not within the school or on campus. If you are notified of a secured perimeter, do not go to the school as instruction will continue with restricted entry and limited supervised movement within the building. These situations are often very short lived. If the situation allows and is of a lengthy period of time, the school will make notifications to parents via their normal communication methods. Entries and exits are monitored during this situation; students will not be released outside the building until we receive an all clear by the appropriate agency.

### **Fire Protocol**

In the event of a fire emergency, each floor will be dismissed using their designated staircase down to the Cafetorium through the back door of the building. Teachers will guide their students to their assigned spots, and take attendance of their students. Once attendance is taken and all students are taken care of, teachers will display the Green side of their class sign. If there are students missing, the teacher will display the Red side of their class sign.

## **Weather Related Concerns**

### **Emergency Closing Procedures**

Notification Procedures:

1. In the event of inclement weather you should assume that school will open as usual but begin monitoring the news outlet, social media, and our website.
2. Advance Notice: Only when the evidence of severe weather predictions is clear, such as ice or snow, will we make announcements of school closings or delays a day in advance.
3. Same Day Notice: Decisions regarding cancellation or delayed start will be made between 5:30 AM and 6:00 AM.
4. In the event that the Superintendent determines that closing schools is the appropriate course of action, we will immediately begin alerting parents and the public using the following methods:

- a. Social Media
  - b. Email
  - c. Robocall
  - d. MCAA Website
5. In the event of a delayed start, cancellation, or early dismissal we will also issue phone notifications to the families of enrolled students via Robocall. Due to high call volumes in our area during such events these calls may take longer or shorter time to process. Therefore, families should not rely solely on receiving a call, but should also monitor the media and check our website and social media for more information.

## **Decision-making process and procedures**

The decision to close or delay school opening is a very important one and is made only after thorough consideration. The following information is provided to help parents understand how MCAA determines whether or not to hold school on bad weather days.

1. MCAA's procedure for closing schools is as follows:
  - a. We closely monitor weather reports from NOAA as well as the major television and radio stations
  - b. We are in contact with local police and the Jefferson County sheriff's department as needed.
  - c. We are in contact with neighboring school districts.
  - d. We are in contact with the Jefferson County EMA
  - e. This input is provided to the principal and their leadership team to make a decision to close or not and then begin to inform employees, students, parents, and the various media outlets.
2. The Principal and staff members advising considers several factors:
  - a. Road safety of students and staff and the ability of school buses to travel safely.
  - b. Whether utility services are affected such as power and gas.
  - c. Some young students may not have adult supervision during the day if school is closed.
  - d. Other students may not have a warm place to stay during the day
3. If/when the Superintendent makes the decision to close schools, all notification procedures are put into place between 5:30 and 6:30 AM.
4. If schools must be closed, the school day must be made up later in the year on one of the dates designated as an "inclement weather" day unless the Governor's Office has declared a state of emergency.

## **Delayed openings**

While delayed openings are rare, the above procedures will be followed but with a designation of being a "delayed opening" with the time delay noted.

## Considerations for Delaying School Openings

1. Visibility during pre-dawn hours. The delay helps avoid the limited visibility during pre-dawn hours which is when buses normally start their routes. This limited visibility can impair a bus driver's ability to see ice patches.
2. Identifying and locating icy road conditions. The delay allows county crews to locate and apply sand to icy patches.
3. Assessing traffic conditions. The delay can mean that traffic conditions are more relaxed and allow for safer travel.

## Early/Delayed Dismissals

Early/delayed dismissals can occur because of impending fast approaching weather such as ice, snow, severe thunderstorms, tornado warnings or by some type of facility failure such as a water main break or power failure. Utilizing all the resources mentioned above such a determination may be made by the Principal. Every effort will be made to notify parents utilizing the media listed above. In addition, schools will use their listserv email systems to alert parents. Students will remain under school systems supervision until safely transported or picked up by a parent or guardian.

# Section II. Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct shall apply to any conduct: during all times that the student is in the responsibility of the Magic City Acceptance Academy. Including but not limited to:

- On school property prior to, during and following regular school hours when school is in session or when school activities are in operation.
- From the time a student leaves home until the student returns home.
- At all school sponsored events and activities.
- All field trips and off campus school activities
- On the bus to and from school
- During travel to and from any internships or dual enrollment assignments.
- The Code also applies to out-of-school conduct by a student if the school believes the nature of the conduct indicates the student presents a threat to the health, safety or welfare of other students and staff.

## **Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices**

MCAA administrators follow a progressive discipline approach. We use restorative practices first, when appropriate. Each infraction may impact the consequences of future infractions.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

MCAA views the school as a place where students have the opportunity to experience academic and social success. Success contributes to positive student self-esteem and positive student behavior when given an environment that nurtures that. By providing an environment with opportunities for students to learn concepts, practice skills, and learn, a positive school environment shall promote academic and social success.

Our school policies are intended to allow for opportunities for students to develop self discipline while providing boundaries within which individuals find emotional and physical security. Our Restorative Practices allow our students to accept responsibility for their actions and work to make amends to our community.

### **The Restorative Practice Process**

The Restorative Practice Process (RPP) is designed to incorporate the principles, concepts and goals of restorative practices in practicing discipline at MCAA. While the process outlined below is designed to provide a “map” for how administration, teachers, students and staff should correct misbehavior, address harm done, and provide an opportunity for students to be reincorporated into the school community, all are advised to utilize their training in acting within trauma-informed restorative justice framework. All disciplinary actions should be within the restorative justice framework when appropriate.

The goals of these restorative practices are that:

- MCAA would be a safe, friendly, and enjoyable learning environment
- MCAA would foster an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and included
- MCAA would be a school where students are motivated to learn and staff enjoy meaningful and fulfilling work

### **Student Agreement**

Students who choose to attend MCAA agree to basic guidelines of behavior that will create a safe, cooperative, inclusive and restorative classroom setting. This agreement addresses the following behaviors: respect of self, the respect of others, respect of the learning environment, and the respect of the facilities and equipment. Students agree to all school rules outlined in this code of conduct.

If the teacher's attempt to use classroom management does not resolve the behavior, teachers will remind students of their agreement. They will have discussions around how the behavior in question violates the community agreement.

If the behavior is not corrected with classroom management strategies, teachers will contact parents, and then reach out to administration for further support.

### **Discipline and Students with Disabilities**

Discipline of students with disabilities will be subject to applicable legal requirements as determined by the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504.

#### **Classroom Management**

MCAA leadership and staff will make every effort to assure that we strive to correct student misbehavior at the lowest level possible, and to support students in learning the skills that they may need to enhance a positive school environment. The vast majority of issues can, and should be, addressed at the classroom level. In all circumstances discipline should be fair, age-appropriate, timely, private and should match the severity of the behavior.

Teachers should ensure that they set their classroom expectations from the very beginning and stay consistent through the school year. Using the restorative justice practices framework, teachers should be able to handle minor misconduct within their classroom. If the incident involves a single student, the teacher will seek to de-escalate the issue. If the infraction involves a group of students or the entire class, the teacher will de-escalate and reframe the situation to build community around the classroom agreements set at the beginning of the school year. In the event that the infraction is beyond the reproach of classroom management, the teacher will refer the student to administration.

#### **Conferencing and Circles**

If an incident occurs between students of different classes, or attempts to resolve an issue in class has proven unsuccessful, students will be given one of three options:

1. The student may elect to have the teacher decide an appropriate resolution to the incident;
2. Students may request that a designated restorative circle leader serve as a mediator to work with students and impacted community to come to a resolution; or
3. Students may choose to work at resolving the issue without a mediator.

If the incident involves a student and an adult, and an appropriate resolution has not been reached, the teacher can then refer the student to the School Administration for a restorative conference. If the incident involves a number of students, the Administrator may choose to hold a restorative circle with students and adults involved in the incident. Everyone who is involved in the incident will be included in the Restorative Circle. Conferencing and circle issues might include the following:

- Repeated Failure to follow dress code
- Repeated infraction of in-class possession of electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, etc) not being used in the learning process
- Lying that causes harm
- Bullying behavior
- Throwing objects at anyone at anytime
- Repeated loitering in the hallways
- Repeated littering anywhere on school grounds – inside or outside.
- Repeatedly eating in class without adult permission or supervision (to the teacher's discretion).
- Unexcused absences, lateness or cutting class
- Disrespectful or abusive language or gestures
- Repeated offenses of in-class issues mentioned above
- Repeated academic issues not resolvable in class

In the course of the discussion, a resolution will be reached, with appropriate consequences for the person committing the offense or inflicting the harm decided by the circle leader, school counselors, and other persons involved. A notice will be placed in the student's file of the infraction and restorative action that was agreed upon. Restorative actions that might be suggested could include the following:

- Verbal or written apology to person harmed or community as whole
- Community service
- Action plan for correction of student behavior
- Notice being sent home to student's parents
- [Alternative Virtual Plan](#)
- In School Community Break

### **Factors Relevant to Making Discipline Decisions**

When choosing consequences for student's misbehavior, MCAA teachers, administrators, and staff must consider the following factors:

- Age, health, and disability or special education status of the student
- Appropriateness of student's academic placement
- Student's prior conduct and record of behavior
- Student's attitude
- Student's willingness to repair the harm
- Seriousness of the offense and the degree of harm caused
- Impact of the incident on the overall school community

### **Community Service**

In the event that it is determined that the restorative action chosen includes some kind of community service component, the following guidelines will be followed:

- The community service will be conducted in conjunction with a restorative conference involving all persons affected by the student misconduct. Affected persons may include



staff, faculty, school leaders, other students, community members, law enforcement officials, and the offender's family members.

- The restorative conference shall be facilitated by the designated Circle Leader.
- The nature of the community service performed shall be related to the nature of the offense (e.g. vandalism would include repairing and/or paying for damage done) and shall be determined in the context of the restorative conference.
- The designated Circle Leader and/or other designated personnel shall oversee the fulfillment of the community service performed and shall document the nature of the service, and the beginning and completion dates and placed in the student's file.

The student will then be released from any further obligations to community service, and a message shall be sent by the Circle Leader to the all affected parties indicating that the person has fulfilled the obligations of their community service.

## **Community Breaks**

### **Alternative Virtual Learning Plan (AVL)**

In the rare event that a student has committed an egregious infraction against our school community, they will participate in the Alternative Virtual Learning (AVL) Plan. They will be removed from the school environment until they have completed the requirements of the program.

### **In-School Suspension**

In-School Suspension allows for students at MCAA to learn and build skills to regulate their emotions and behaviors in order to effectively operate within the school community. Restorative Circles will be used in this program. Before students are recommended for ISS, teachers and administrators will use the offense system.

### **Out of School Suspension:**

In those instances where the person(s) committing the misconduct or inflicting the harm does not agree to be restored, he or she will be asked to take a temporary break from the community, and not come to school for a period of days. Prior to being asked to take a break, the student will be asked to think about the reasons for his temporary suspension from the community. When the break time is over, the assistant principal will meet with the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to review, and to discuss appropriate measures for restoring the offending student to the community.

Depending on the nature of the misconduct or harm done, the student may be asked to take additional actions in order to be fully restored. Once those actions are completed, the student will be formally welcomed back into their classroom as a full participant. During the time away from school, the student is also responsible to complete any assignments that would be due during their time away.

If a student continues to be uncooperative, or engages in repeat behaviors of a similar nature to the first misconduct, they may be asked to take a second break from the community. Prior to returning to the classroom, administration will meet with the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the items discussed in the letter and the steps necessary for restoring the student to full inclusion in the community. During the time away from school, the student is also responsible to complete any assignments that would be due during his/her time away.

Some common behaviors requiring students to take a temporary break from the community might include the following:

- Bullying behavior
- Coming to school under the influence (but not in possession of) of alcohol or illegal substances
- Academic dishonesty
- Abuse of computer privileges
- Destruction or defacing of school property
- Sexual harassment
- Voluntary sexual acts while in school
- Theft of school or personal property
- Truancy or leaving school property without permission
- Smoking on school grounds or school-sponsored events
- Possession and/or use or transfer of matches, lighters, or any incendiary devices
- Tampering with fire alarm/extinguishers
- Arson
- Terroristic threats
- Fighting or Encouraging fighting
- Counterfeiting, forging another's signature on school-related documents, or presenting another student's work as one's own
- Failure to abide by previously decided resolutions

If the student's misconduct continues, MCAA Administration may decide to permanently exclude (i.e. expelled) the student from MCAA community.

## **Guidelines for Behavior**

First and foremost, MCAA is a school that provides a safe and nurturing environment for all students. Therefore, all students are expected to behave in a manner that will reflect favorably

on our school community. The following guidelines are expected to govern and characterize student behavior:

- **Attendance** – Students are expected to attend school on time on a regular basis, as required by state law.
- **Safety** – Students are expected to exhibit behaviors that are safe for themselves and others. Students, parents, faculty, and staff are expected to follow all rules, as they were designed with consideration of a safe MCAA school community.
- **Cooperation** – Students are expected to cooperate fully with mentors, advisors, administrators, and other adults in the school not only when they are in the classroom but also when they are in all areas of the school. Students are always expected to be polite and helpful to others at all times.
- **Orderly movement** – Students are expected to move between classes and other activities in common areas, inside or outside the school in an orderly and timely manner.
- **Entering the building** – students should always enter the building quietly and orderly with no pushing or shoving. Students must be respectful of the personal space of others at all times.
- **Electronic devices** – Students should not have electronic devices, besides the school issued laptop, in use during the school day.
- **Illegal drugs and alcohol** – Illegal drugs and alcohol are forbidden at all times. If a student is taking any medications for health reasons, they must be signed in and administered by the school nurse only. All medications must be accompanied by a signed physician form.
- **Dress Code of Conduct** – No sharp objects such as spikes or blades may be attached to your person. All private areas are to be covered, i.e., cleavage is covered, no visible undergarments.
- **Bullying** – at MCAA a safe and secure community and environment is the foundation of our beliefs. Safety and security will ensure a learning environment for all students that allows them to achieve at the highest levels. All incidents of bullying, hazing, and cyberbullying are strictly forbidden, and consequences will be administered in order to alleviate any of these behaviors.

## **Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

MCAA believes that access to technology in school provides students greater opportunities to learn, create, communicate, collaborate and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life

and citizenship. Therefore, MCAA is pleased to provide network, internet, and devices to all students, faculty, and staff. We expect all students to exercise responsible and ethical behaviors while online as a demonstration of good digital citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop the technology and problem solving skills necessary to support their future successes.

Please read the following carefully. Student access to District technology resources, including access to the internet, is to be used for research, instructional, and academic purposes only; and reflect the school's mission. Violations of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy may cause access privileges to be limited or revoked. Disciplinary action may be taken against any user in violation of this agreement. Use of district technology resources is a privilege and not a right.

### **Device Care and Usage:**

1. All devices remain the property of Magic City Acceptance Academy.
2. Use of MCAA technology resources must be consistent with the primary goals of the school.
3. Students will not use any school technology resources for illegal purposes of any kind.
4. Students specifically agree not to submit, publish, or display on the system any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, violent, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material, or to encourage the use of controlled substances.
5. Students will not use school technology resources to interfere with or disrupt network users, services, or equipment through the distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer viruses, hacking, using printers other than those designated at the student's school site for student use, and/or using the network to make unauthorized entry to any other machine accessible via the network or by any other means.
6. Students (or their family/guardian) will be responsible for the repair costs associated with all accidental or deliberate damage. Students (or their family/guardian) will be responsible for the replacement cost of lost/stolen devices and accessories. Loaner devices may be provided during repair or replacement of a primary device. This agreement also applies to loaner devices.
7. Students must notify a school teacher or administrator as soon as possible if their device is lost, stolen, or damaged. A police report may be required in the case of theft, vandalism, and other criminal acts.
8. The alteration of the setup and configuration of any computer or system component is unacceptable unless such activities are curricular objectives, in a specific course, under direct teacher supervision.
- 9. Adding stickers, markings, or other cosmetic alterations is prohibited.**
10. The device must be returned to the school in working condition prior to leaving Magic City Acceptance Academy.

### **Email:**

Email addresses will be provided to students through Google Apps for Education to facilitate use of web tools and to develop an appropriate digital presence. Email services are to be used only for appropriate information exchange. Email etiquette should be observed. School email accounts are provided for school communication and other academic purposes. Do not provide school email accounts to websites, companies, or third parties without the permission of a teacher or administrator. Email accounts may not be used for sending inappropriate messages such as: harassing, derogatory or obscene messages; threatening messages; unsolicited e-mail ("spamming"); chain letters; commercial purposes, or profit; anonymous messages.

Because email is not securely transmitted, discretion must be used when sending, or encouraging the receipt of email containing sensitive information. There is no assurance that email will be confidential and/or private. MCAA administrators will not intentionally inspect the content of e-mail sent or received by a user or disclose contents of an email without the consent of the sender or intended recipient. MCAA administrators will, however, comply with inspection and disclosure requests when required to do so by law or policies of the Magic City Acceptance Academy, or to investigate complaints regarding mail which is alleged to contain defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive or illegal material.

#### **Internet:**

1. All school rules and guidelines for appropriate technology usage shall apply to Internet usage.
2. Users may not access, capture/record, view, download, transmit or attempt to access, capture/record, view download, or transmit profane, lewd, obscene, pornographic, abusive, objectionable, illegal, or otherwise prohibited content on MCAA's computer system or through any of its other technology resources or on personally owned devices.
3. Student access to the Internet will be restricted in compliance with Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) regulations and school policies. MCAA has implemented filtering software and other security measures designed to block and prohibit access to inappropriate materials based on CIPA guidelines.
4. The Board may also utilize monitoring software to control and monitor access to its system and the Internet and to further the safety and security of its users. Any attempt to disable, modify or circumvent this software or other limiting device is strictly prohibited.
5. Successful or unsuccessful attempts to bypass Internet or network filters by using proxies or other resources are a violation of this agreement.
6. Faculty and staff should screen all Internet resources before distributing them for use for instructional purposes.

#### **Privacy and Safety:**

1. There is no right or expectation of privacy in any MCAA technology resource, and the school will monitor internet use, network use, electronic mail, or any other use of its

technology resources without limitation. All computers, devices or other components of the School's system may be inspected by School staff or its designees at any time.

2. MCAA may collect and examine any personal device at any time for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this agreement, investigating student discipline issues, or for any other school-related purpose. Personal devices are subject to immediate inspection when there is a reasonable suspicion that the contents or recent utilization of the device is in violation of any of the Board's policies, rules or regulations.
3. The Board cannot guarantee the privacy, security, or confidentiality of any information sent or received via the Internet.
4. Student data will only be collected with district approved data collection resources to protect minors from unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal data in compliance with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).
5. Students shall not reveal or post any personal or contact information about themselves or other people on websites and/or social media sites while utilizing the Board's technology resources. Personal information includes, but is not limited to, names, addresses, telephone numbers, photos or likenesses, video, ages, dates of birth, grade levels, social security numbers, or any other information by which a person might be identified.
6. Any online message, comment, image, or anything else that causes a student to be concerned for his/her personal safety, should be brought to the attention of an adult. Students should immediately bring any threatening or unwelcome communications to the attention of school personnel.
7. All passwords are required to be kept private.

### **Resources:**

Students will be using online tools such as G Suite for Education for communication, collaboration, time-management, document storage and course content. Furthermore, please be aware that additional instructional web tools may be introduced by teachers to enrich student learning. These tools can be accessed from most internet-connected devices with a web-browser.

Although content filtering is in place while students are at school, there is always a possibility that students could be exposed to inappropriate content. It is impossible for MCAA to restrict access to all controversial materials. Parents/guardians will not hold MCAA responsible for materials acquired on the District network or Internet. Furthermore, parents/guardians will report any misuse of any information resources or technology to the school site administrator, teacher, or technology representative. Parents/guardians are fully responsible for the supervision of their child should they use remote connections to the District network or Internet in a non-school setting. School staff will monitor students' use of these tools when at school. Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's use when accessing programs from home. No personal student information is collected for commercial use. The school's use of student information is solely for educational purposes. These online tools require utilization of student information such as student's name and school email address. Under federal law, these websites must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from students under the age of 13. The law permits schools to consent to the collection of

personal information on behalf of all of its students, thereby eliminating the need for individual parental consent given directly to the website operator. District and school employees have the right to monitor all postings and activities in these online tools.

### **Laws, Rules, and Regulations:**

In accordance with the Electronic and Communications Privacy Act of 1986, (18 USC Section 2510), all students are hereby notified that there are no facilities provided for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. All messages may be considered readily accessible to the general public. Do not use this system for any communications, which the sender intends only for the sender and intended recipients to read. By the student's use of the District network or Internet, the student agrees to hold harmless the District against any and all claims arising out of said use. The student and his/her parent(s) or the student alone, if emancipated, is bound to the terms and conditions of this Notice. The student has discussed these rights and responsibilities with his/her parent(s).

Congress enacted the **Children's Internet Protection Act** in 2000 to address concerns about children's access to obscene or harmful content over the Internet. CIPA imposes certain requirements on schools or libraries that receive discounts for Internet access or internal connections through the E-rate program. Schools subject to CIPA have two additional certification requirements: 1) their Internet safety policies shall include monitoring the online activities of minors; and 2) as required by the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, they shall provide for educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyber bullying awareness and response.

## **Instructional Materials**

In some other instances, class sets (books not assigned to students but used in class and available to students and parents as needed for use at home) may be assigned when the text is used as a reference. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will advise you in person or by newsletter of the core materials they plan to use and how homework will be assigned. In some instances, there may be no textbook, because other materials are more appropriate or up-to-date for content purposes. Many textbooks are available online through a link to each student's district portal. These textbooks can be accessed from any location where an Internet connection is available.

When textbooks, library books, or other instructional materials are assigned to a student and materials are lost or damaged, the parent is financially responsible. F.S. § 1006.42 Failure to pay for lost or damaged textbooks may result in the student's suspension from extracurricular activities or a requirement that the student perform community service equal to the value of the lost or damaged materials. Parental and student responsibility as to instructional materials, debts for loss, damage or destruction, and accountability procedures, including debt collection efforts by MCAA

## Cellphones and Other Electronic Devices

MCAA provides every student access to technology for educational purposes. **Cell phones, headphones and other distracting devices are prohibited during class time.** Students should keep their phones and other devices on silent or off and put away in a backpack, or personal bag. Students should always rely on and have their school loaned technology for classwork and homework that needs to be done using technology. The policy on electronic devices is designed to ensure that the use of such devices does not interfere with teaching and learning during the school day.

Any student who chooses to bring a cellular phone or other wireless communication device to school shall do so at his or her own risk and shall be personally responsible for the security of his or her cellular phone or wireless communication device. Neither the school personnel nor Board will assume any responsibility or liability for loss, theft, damage, nor vandalism to a cellular phone or other wireless communication device brought onto school property or for the unauthorized use of any such device.

If a student needs to contact a parent or guardian during class they will need to do so through the front office.

Staff members have the right to take up electronic devices if being used during class time. Devices will be taken to the office until the end of the day when the student can pick it up. After the second time, a parent will need to retrieve the device after a meeting with an administrator.

**Students are not allowed to take pictures or videos of other students, teachers or staff members without their permission.**

If a student needs special accommodations regarding electronic devices including headphones, communication from a licensed professional or the counselor should be given. Otherwise students should be following the guidelines of the Code of Conduct.

Employees of MCAA are not in any way responsible for the repair, or replacement of any electronic device a student may bring to school. A student's possession, use, or transfer of any electronic device during the school day or any other school event, is at their own risk.

Possession of an electronic device is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student not abiding by the terms of this policy. Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of their electronic devices. Neither the MCAA nor its employees shall assume any responsibility for theft, loss, transfer use or damage of any electronic device or its unauthorized use.

## Dress Code



The responsibility for the dress, grooming and hygiene of a student rests primarily with the student and their parent or guardian, but adhering to the following guidelines.

- No sharp objects such as spikes or blades may be attached to your person.
- All private areas are to be covered, i.e., no low cut or deep v shirts, no visible undergarments.
- Students should wear garments that entirely cover the chest, stomach, and upper legs.
- No clothing that promotes drugs, tobacco, alcohol or other illegal substances.
- Students should wear appropriate and safe footwear at all times.

If administrators find a student to be out of dress code, they will go to the school's closet and get a garment that will meet dress code requirements. Students are not required to return the garment that they borrowed.

If a student has 3 or more dress code violations, parent/guardian will be notified and an accountability plan will be developed with parent/guardian, administration, teacher, and student. If there are continued violations, the administration will do a home visit to figure out the causes.

## **Safe and Drug Free School**

The Magic City Acceptance Academy is committed to providing learning environments free from alcohol, drugs, controlled substances, and weapons. The Code of Conduct includes consequences for those who violate its provisions relating to drugs, alcohol, controlled substances and weapons. The possession, use, sale, attempted sale, attempted possession or any other involvement with tobacco, drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, or dangerous instruments/weapons will not be tolerated and will subject the violating individual to immediate disciplinary action. Such prohibition applies not only to firearms, guns, deadly weapons, or dangerous instruments carried by a person, but extends also to said prohibited items in automobiles, person purses or backpacks, or otherwise in the actual possession of any persons. Any violations regarding firearms will result in involvement by appropriate law enforcement authorities. Per State law, safety drills including severe weather, fire, and active shooter are periodically completed as required by law.

### **Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) Program**

Magic City Acceptance Academy is committed to providing learning environments free from alcohol, drugs, controlled substances and weapons. The Parent and Student Handbook includes serious consequences for those who violate its provisions relating to drugs, alcohol, controlled substances and weapons. The possession, use, sale, attempted sale, attempted possession or any other involvement with tobacco, drugs, alcohol, controlled substances, or dangerous instruments/weapons will not be tolerated and will subject the violating individual to immediate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Such prohibition applies not only to firearms, guns, deadly weapons or dangerous instruments carried by a person, but extends also to said prohibited items in automobiles, personal items such as purses or backpacks, or otherwise in the actual possession of any person. Any violations regarding firearms will result in involvement by appropriate law enforcement authorities and will result in

a recommendation to the Discipline Committee for expulsion. Per State law, safety drills including severe weather, fire, and active shooter are periodically completed as required by law.

The purpose of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program is to foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports academic achievement. The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program (SDFSC) is a federally funded initiative which supports programs that prevent violence in and around schools; that prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; that involve parents and communities; and that are coordinated with related federal, state, and community efforts and resources. Funds may be used for drug prevention and education programs (Pre K-12); violence prevention; professional development for drug, alcohol, and violence prevention; implementation of strategies; drug abuse resistance education programs; program evaluations; and conflict resolution programs. All of these efforts together form a comprehensive plan to promote peaceful resolution to conflict and to reduce the demand for and use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana and other drugs by school-age children.

### **Gun Free/Tobacco Free School Environment**

MCAA is a weapon and illegal substance free campus. Students, staff, and guardians are not allowed to bring weapons, tobacco, alcohol or any other illegal object or substance onto campus. If a student knows of illegal objects on campus, they are to report it to an administrator immediately in a calm fashion.

Items that should never be brought to campus:

- Vapes
- Cigarettes
- Non-prescription pills
- Drugs
- Guns, including realistic replicas
- Knives
- Chains
- Weapons
- Pepper spray
- Brass knuckles
- Drug paraphernalia

### **Search Policy**

#### MCAA Property:

All school property, facilities, equipment, and grounds may be entered, inspected, and searched for any lawful purpose by school administrators. School computers are monitored closely by our technology department and any non-educational search material may be flagged.

#### Personal Property:

A student's personal property, including but not limited to vehicles, purses, wallets, gym bags, book bags, cell phones, and computers may be search by authorized school officials when reasonable suspicion exists that the property contains prohibited materials, illegal substances, weapons, or other items that are reasonably deemed to present a risk or threat to the safety or welfare of the school community or significantly disruptive to the overall discipline of the school or is evidence of a crime or violation of those code, provided that the nature and extent of the search shall be reasonably related and limited to the suspected violation.

### Law enforcement searches

Law enforcement agencies are allowed to make periodic, unannounced visits to any local school for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal drugs or other justifiable reasons. These visits may be unannounced to anyone except the local Superintendent and building principal.

### **Confiscated Items**

Any items which are specifically prohibited by law or by school policy may be impounded by school administrators or teachers. Such prohibited items shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Knives of any size or type, including pocket knives
- Weapons of any type
- Tobacco/vapes
- Drugs or drug paraphernalia of any sort
- Alcoholic beverages
- Pornography
- Property that is alleged to belong to another party
- Unauthorized electronic devices

The school administration is not obligated to return confiscated items to the student. Items can be returned to the parent or guardian, or kept on school property after being confiscated.

### Infractions

Positive behavior enhances the learning environment. Classroom teachers are responsible for maintaining classroom discipline and will deal with general classroom disruptions. Only when the action taken by the teacher is ineffective or the disruption is sufficiently severe should the student be referred to administration. Parents or guardians of students who consistently disrupt class and/or exhibit poor work habits should be notified by the teacher or other school official and/or referred to a guidance counselor. When a student is brought to the office of the supervising employee, the principal/designee shall hear the student's explanation and consult further with other school personnel, if necessary, before determining the classification of violation or disciplinary measure.

Violations of the Code of Conduct are grouped into four classes: Class I, Class II, Class III, and Class IV. Each classification is followed by a disciplinary action that is to be implemented by principals or their designee. Parental contact (verbal and/or written) will be made as disciplinary

consequences are assigned to a student for misconduct. Additionally, law enforcement and other state agencies (i.e., DHR) may be contacted depending as circumstances dictate.

### **Class I Offenses**

Class I offenses may receive restorative actions in the classroom, conference with teacher, administration and parents, confiscation, referral to wellness team, coaching, behavior contract. This is not an exhaustive list of potential restorative actions. Subsequent offenses may result in additional actions.

- Bus violations
- Minor technology misuse
- Dress Code violations
- Tardiness
- Lying
- Coming to class unprepared
- Possession of Non-Criminal Altering Substances (Energy Drinks, Coffee, etc.)
- Nuisance Items
- Horseplay, minor
- Possession of a nuisance item
- Any other offense that the staff may reasonably deem falls into this category.

### **Class II Offenses**

Class II offenses may receive restorative actions in the classroom, conference with teacher and administration, administration and parents, confiscation, referral to wellness team, coaching, behavior contract, etc. These infractions may additionally require a consequence such as detention or In-School Suspension. This is not an exhaustive list of potential restorative actions. Subsequent offenses may result in additional actions.

- Profane language
- Inappropriate use of device
- Skipping class
- Disobedience or Defiance
- Bullying or Cyberbullying
- Unserved Detentions
- Cheating
- Verbal Confrontation
- Possession of Non-Criminal Altering Substances (Energy Drinks, Coffee, etc.)
- Excessive Public Displays of Affection
- Habitual Tardiness or Truancy
- Firecrackers/Poppers
- Stealing <\$200
- Vandalism <\$200
- Any offense that the administration may reasonably deem falls into this category

### **Class III Offenses**

Class III offenses may receive restorative practices listed above in conjunction with consequences, such as In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, or removal from the learning environment.

Offenses may include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment
- Possession, Use, Sale of tobacco products, including vaping supplies
- Possession of a knife

- Consensual Sexual Contact/inappropriate sexual interactions
- Fighting
- Assault, physical or verbal, against student or staff
- Stealing <\$200
- Vandalism >\$200
- Physical Aggression
- Hazing
- Serious misuse of technology
- Inappropriate materials
- Mind-altering substances, such as intoxicants,
- Any other offense that administration deem falls into this category

### **Class IV Offenses**

Class IV offenses are the most severe offenses. These offenses may result in restorative actions in conjunction with consequences. Such consequences may include immediate dismissal from school. Class IV infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Alcohol possession, use, sale
- Drug/Paraphernalia possession, use, sale
- Aggravated Assault
- Non Consensual sexual behavior
- Terroristic Threat
- Felony charges pending
- Any criminal act
- Any other offense the administration deems falls into this category.

## **Prevention Practices, Disciplinary Interventions, and Responses**

### **Alternative Virtual Learning**

- Program prior to potential permanent removal from MCAA. Students will be required to participate in virtual learning while going through restorative justice practices to correct behavior and restore relationships within the overall school community.

### **Assigned Bus Seat**

- One of the main responses to minor behavioral issues on the bus is to enact assigned seats that puts the student at the front of the bus, closer to the bus driver, and away from the students that they are having issues with.

### **After School Detention**

- Instead of going home at the end of the day, the student reports to a designated classroom where he or she must sit at a desk for an amount of time generally ranging from 10 minutes to two hours, with an hour or less being most typical. They will use this time to work on any unfinished work that needs to be done without disrupting time in the typical school day.

### **Behavior Contract**

- A written and signed contract between students and teachers/administrators, enforced by parents and support team. It lays out any specific behaviors the student struggles with or is

working on, along with goals for those behaviors. Ideally the goals will be attainable, but still challenging. It also outlines the rewards and consequences for meeting or not meeting goals.

### **Coaching**

- Students will meet with a member of their support team to discuss the behaviors the student needs support with and ways they can go about working on those behaviors. Coaching is usually over a shorter period of time.

### **Confiscation**

- If a student is caught with prohibited items, the first course of action will be to confiscate that item. This could range from phones for violation of the technology policy to illicit substances and even weapons. The severity of the infraction will determine the amount of time, if any, that the student will have to spend before they can get the confiscated item back.

### **On-Campus Community Service**

- Will allow the student to participate in some sort of activity to serve and benefit the community. This is usually carried out via lunch detention, but it usually involves students taking on a cleaning role in large scale environments like lunch, and is spent cleaning our school and taking ownership of the space we are in.

### **Conferences**

- Conferences can involve students, teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians in discussion about student performance/behavior and potential solutions for any problems identified. Conferences strictly to address student behavior should include/address the social, academic, and personal issues related to the behavior.

### **Daily / Weekly Report**

- These act as behavioral progress reports. On the established dates the student will meet with their support team, discuss whether or not the behaviors are improving, what can improve, and then send that report back home to parents.

### **Functional Behavior Assessment**

- FBAs consist of the information gathering process to identify the problem behavior(s) exhibited by the student and the development of interventions to lessen or eliminate them.

### **In School Community Break**

- In School Suspension (ISCB) is utilized as a stage in the Offense system where students are referred to a reintegration program that helps them learn skills to be an effective member of the school community. Activities that will take place in ISS include reflective journaling, daily reporting to a school mentor, yoga, etc.

### **Mentoring Program**

- In cases of needs we can work with the support team and students to assign mentors that can work with the students one-on-one over a long term basis. This mentor can be a teacher, an administrator, any support staff, or even another student (peer helpers).

### **Parent / Guardian Outreach**

- School staff are required to inform parents/guardians of their children's behavioral and academic performance. Teachers should reach out to parents to seek assistance with correcting any academic or behavioral issues related to students.

### **Restorative Circles**

- Community meetings designed to address both family and community circumstances that are underlying causes of the inappropriate behavior. They are meant to rebuild relationships,

develop rehabilitative plans and respond to victims' needs. They involve the offender(s), victims(s), the friends and family of each and necessary staff.

### **Re-Teach Behavior**

- This is an in-class strategy that involves teachers reinforcing classroom rules and expectations and working with the students to help teach them behaviors that will allow them to better exist in the classroom environment. The hope is that this is the first step any time there are issues so we can help students before the behaviors move past the point where they require admin intervention.

### **Reflective Assignment / Apology Letter**

- These are outside of the classroom work that students have to do to allow them the space to reflect on the incident they were involved in. The assignment allows students to revisit the actions taken and decisions made and look at ways they could have addressed things differently, and the apology letter can give the victim / offended party a chance to have their feelings be validated.

### **Schedule Change**

- If there is space in other classes at the time or availability to rework schedules, schedule changes could be made available for students to move them apart from other students or teachers they may have conflict with.

### **Student Advisories**

- Students meet in small groups with an adult advisor to focus on character and civic development. Students discuss day-to-day issues, define their values, develop a trusting relationship with an adult, advocate, refine communication skills, and participate in social justice or service-learning projects. Student Advisories offer emotional support for students, develop a trust relationship with the adult mentor/advisor and discuss student progress academically.

### **Victim - Offender Mediation**

- Provides a forum for victims and offenders to meet in a safe and respectful environment with the assistance of a facilitator. The purpose of the meeting is to explore and discuss the effects of an offense and the ways in which healing can take place.

### **Whole School Moments**

- WSM are brief, preventative sessions practiced each week to develop coping skills, resiliency, and self awareness among students.

## **Threat Assessment Protocol**

The purpose of this protocol is to establish a procedure for members of the Magic City Acceptance Academy and community to work together to recognize and assess threats of violence in a school setting and, if possible, prevent acts of violence from occurring. The protocol is intended to help school administrators and law enforcement officials identify credible threats of violence, establish procedures for addressing them, and develop guidelines for follow-up once a threat has occurred.

**Threatened Act of Violence:** Any threat or action that suggests the possibility that serious physical injury or death may be caused to another.

**Procedure:** The following procedure is separated into several sections to highlight responsibilities of different members of the school community.

1. Any student, parent or guardian, or school staff member upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
  - a. Assume the threat is serious
  - b. Immediately report the threat to a school administrator or law enforcement
  - c. Take measures to preserve the evidence
  - d. Be available and cooperative in providing a statement of information with the understanding that the information source will remain anonymous to the greatest extent possible.
2. Any school administrator upon receiving information that a person is threatening to commit an act of violence shall:
  - a. Assume the threat is serious
  - b. Arrange for threat assessment interviews to be conducted

**Threat Assessment Interviews:**

The primary purpose of the interviews are to engage in an assessment of the available information in an attempt to determine the veracity of the threat in order to decide what level of follow-up action is needed and appropriate.

- The school administrator will make arrangements for the threat assessment interview to be conducted at the time of the threat or as closely to the time of the threat as possible.
- Administrators will work with law enforcement personnel to determine an appropriate time to conduct the assessment if law enforcement determines there is need/cause for immediate removal of the student from the school campus.

**Bullying**

MCAA has a **zero tolerance** stance on bullying. Our community was built on being a safe space for all no matter race, sexuality, religion, political beliefs, or abilities. MCAA is tasked with creating safe and inclusive spaces for all folks and in breaking down those barriers, students will be held accountable for their actions.

Bullying is defined as repeated actions, either physical or verbal, which instill fear or which serve to demean an individual, committed by a community member over a period of time. It includes verbal and physical taunting or intimidation. Bullying includes in person bullying and cyber bullying to students and staff members. Parents are strongly encouraged to have conversations about inclusion means and inclusive language with their student(s).

Students are encouraged to report any form of bullying to the school counselor, teacher or other staff members. Our staff is trained to handle situations of conflict amongst students, and will follow the right avenues to make sure it doesn't continue.

Students who are caught bullying will go through our restorative programs to help them understand and rectify the situation. If a student continues to break our community standards parent conferences, community service, or the AVL program will be brought into effect.



## **Hazing**

MCAA has a zero tolerance policy on hazing. Hazing is defined as any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or which wilfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with or as condition for continued membership in, any organization operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the school.

Students who participate in the hazing of another student will be held accountable for their actions by the administration.

# **Section III** **Academic Program**

## **Classroom Policies & Guidelines**

Each teacher at MCAA has the right to create their own individualized classroom guidelines in addition to this document. Teachers will have a syllabus or information sheet for students and parents with all information on this during the first week of school. Students are responsible for respecting each teacher's guidelines, and in the event that an issue arises, they might be asked to refer back to the policies in place, have a restorative circle, or a parent teacher conference depending on the offense.

Individual teacher policies and guidelines are at the discretion of each teacher, and students or parents who are eager to learn more about those policies are asked to schedule an appointment with the individual teacher.

## **Curriculum/Academic Policies**

While many of our students will be over-aged and under-credited as a result of emotional distress, dropping out, or experiencing a lack of rigor in their homeschool environment, we nevertheless believe that our student population will have a vast range of academic readiness. Therefore, it is imperative that we maintain a small, intimate setting in which teachers can personalize instruction for their students and provide meaningful 1:1 mentorship.

To do so, MCAA will deliver an academic model that embraces the following core components:

- **High quality, Aligned Curriculum** that allows for culturally-responsive adaptations
- **Project-Based Learning** embedded in each content area and learning unity

- **Blended Learning** driven by excellent teachers and a world-class online platform that allows students to learn at their own pace and allows teachers to upload curriculum and lesson plans, monitor student progress in real time, and make data-based decisions.
- **Arts-Infused Community Projects** emphasizing a social/restorative justice theme
- **1:1 Mentoring** upon request, students will have the opportunity to meet with their assigned adult mentor who helps set college and career goals, regularly monitors progress towards those goals on the online platform, gives real time feedback on next steps, and serves as a personal ally.

## **Social & Emotional Learning**

SEL is the process through which an individual acquires and applies knowledge and skills to develop a healthy identity and includes emotional regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. For those new to SEL, there are four key competencies to keep in mind: awareness of self and other people; positive attitudes and values; responsible decision-making; and social interaction skills. People with strong social-emotional skills are better equipped to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially. Programs such as CharacterStrong and SecondStep will be utilized to assist students in building skills that will help them after they graduate from MCAA. We also have clubs and organizations such as Student Government Association, and others that give students an opportunity to be leaders and contribute to the school and overall communities.

## **Assessment/Testing**

MCAA will assess the chosen curriculum and will measure student mastery through both formal and informal assessments. The principal or designee will establish assessment approaches for determining the effectiveness of instructional programming at MCAA for all classrooms.

Assessments will focus on determining the extent to which students are achieving and maintaining mastery of curriculum objectives and the extent to which instructors are displaying effective conveyance of curriculum in the classrooms. MCAA leadership staff will design and use a variety of assessment approaches in determining the effectiveness of the planned and written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and instructional programs. Students at MCAA will also take state-mandated assessments such as the ACT, pre-ACT, ACCESS for ELLs, and ACAP. They will also take benchmark assessments through NWEA, a nationally recognized and nationally normed assessment.

Reports will be made periodically to the MCAA Board, staff, and families concerning these assessments and results. Teachers will be expected to conduct frequent assessment of students on the curriculum objectives. These will include:

- Teacher-made assignments/assessments
- MCAA grade-level benchmark assessments
- Advanced Placement Common Assessments
- Criterion-referenced tests will be utilized to determine patterns of student achievement.

Teachers and supervisors will utilize test results to assess the status of individual student's achievement in order to:

- Continuously regroup students for instruction
- Identify general achievement trends of various groups of students
- Modify instruction as warranted by assessment results
- Modify individualization of instruction
- Perform continuous goal-setting and progress monitoring

## Grading Policy

The following outlines the grading system and policy for MCAA.

Final grades are comprised of the following percentages:

Classwork = 30%

Assessments (tests, quizzes, projects) = 60%

Homework = 10%

Final Grade Setup for the year:

1st 9 weeks grade (40%) + 2nd 9 weeks grade (40%) + 1st semester exam (20%)= Semester 1 Grade

3rd 9 weeks grade (40%) +4th 9 weeks grade (40%) + 2nd semester exam (20%)= Semester 2 Grade

Semester 1 grade (50%) + Semester 2 grade (50%)= Final Grade

Grading Scale:

| <u>Percentage</u> | <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>GPA (only applies to high school courses)</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| 90-100%           | A                   | 4.0  |
| 80-89%            | B                   | 3.0  |
| 70-79%            | C                   | 2.0  |
| 60-69%            | D                   | 1.0  |
| 0-59%             | F                   | NO CREDIT (0.0)                                  |

### **Academic Integrity**

MCAA has a zero tolerance stance on plagiarism and cheating. Teachers will use instances of academic dishonesty as teaching moments. If the behavior continues, then the administration will work with the teacher to respond appropriately.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own without giving credit to the original source.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment or assessment. It includes using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

Plagiarism is defined as copying/stealing and passing off as one's own the ideas or words of another, using someone else's created production without crediting the source.

## **Exceptional Education**

Exceptional Education - Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Students referred for exceptional services will be evaluated by the Exceptional Education team for eligibility. Eligibility for exceptional services is determined as necessary for the following students: those who have a qualifying disability that inhibits their access to the general education curriculum, those who have not successfully responded to MTSS process interventions, and those who require specialized instruction to access the general education curriculum. Students with an IEP will have annual meetings with the IEP Team to review the effectiveness of the plan and to determine if the student continues to require specialized instruction. Any and all updates will be made to the student's program by assembling the IEP team. Once a student has an IEP, teachers and educational staff will provide the accommodations specified in the program to support student success in the classroom and all other relevant areas where the student's IEP is utilized.

If a student with an IEP or 504 receives disciplinary action that removes them from the school program for 10 days or more during a school year, a Manifestation Determination Hearing will be held to determine whether the behavior in question was a manifestation of the child's disability and the

## **Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

The MTSS process allows for MCAA educational staff to effectively support the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. MTSS is done by taking the following steps:

1. MTSS Referral - teachers and educational staff refer students to the process on the last Wednesday of each month by submitting a referral form.
2. The MTSS team will review the referrals to analyze the problem and relevant data and collect research-based strategies to address concerns.
3. MTSS Meeting - Meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday of each month. The referring teacher will meet with the MTSS Team during their planning period to discuss the following:
  - a. Select intervention plan to implement.
  - b. Evaluate the intervention for effectiveness
4. Implement Interventions - The referring teacher will collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions for 4-6 weeks.
  - a. *Progress monitor includes:*
    - i. Weekly measurements of growth
    - ii. Anecdotal notes
    - iii. Progress charts (charts are based on teams intervention selection)
5. MTSS Intervention Follow Up - After 4-6 weeks, the referring teacher will return to step 1, completing the MTSS referral form, and follow up with the MTSS team to discuss the effectiveness of the intervention plan. Adjustments will be made at this time.
6. SST Referral process with Exceptional Education team

## **Gifted Referral Protocol**

Gifted students are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student. For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of Aptitude, Characteristics, and Performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services. To make a referral, contact our Gifted Specialist, Katherine Porter at [kporter@mcaabhm.org](mailto:kporter@mcaabhm.org).

## **Gifted, ExEd Grievance Procedures**

### Level 1: Informal Procedures

- The aggrieved person (student, parent, guardian, or employee) must first discuss their grievance with the gifted specialist with the objective of resolving the matter informally.
- The aggrieved person and the GS shall discuss the grievance with a view toward arriving at a mutually satisfactory resolution.

### Level 2: Formal Procedures

- If as a result of the discussion between the aggrieved person and the gifted coordinator, the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the aggrieved person, the aggrieved person may, within 5 school days of the date of the meeting with the GS, set forth their grievance in writing, directed to the GS and shall specify the following:
  - The nature of the grievance
  - The nature or extent of the injury, loss, or inconvenience
  - The remedy desired
  - The results of previous discussions
  - Areas of dissatisfaction with decisions previously rendered
- The gifted coordinator will consult with the Director of Special Education (Ms. Benoit for High School and Mrs. Maiden-Moore for Middle School) and shall communicate in writing their decision to the aggrieved person within 5 school days of receipt of the written grievance
- If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of his or her grievance at this point, they may within 5 school days of receipt of the GS written decision, present their grievance to the Principal (Dr. Patton Furman).
- The principal will review the written record and convene a hearing, no later than 10 working days after the filing of the grievance, at which both the aggrieved person, the GS, and Director of SPED may present testimony and documents relevant to the grievance.
- Witnesses may be presented and cross-examine. Detailed minutes of the hearing will be made and kept; a copy of the minutes will be available to each party.
- Within 10 working days of the hearing, the Principal will provide a written copy of their determination to both parties.

### Level III

- In the event the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of their grievance at Level II, they may request a hearing before the Board of Education.
- The request shall be in writing and include copies of the original complaint, the minutes of the hearing before the principal, and the written determination of the principal.
- The request for a hearing before the Board must be made within 10 working days of the receipt of the decision from the Principal.
- The request for a hearing before the Board shall be submitted to the Principal
- The Board shall convene a hearing within 30 calendar days of receipt of the request at which the parties may present additional testimony and argument.

- The aggrieved person shall be given a written decision by the Board within 5 working days of the Board's hearing.
- In the event the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the Board, they should follow the procedures listed in the State Compliant and Mediation Processes for Matters Pertaining to Gifted Students
- This information is available for download from the Alabama State Department of Education.

## **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Section 504 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination/harassment on the basis of a disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In particular, Section 504 provides that: No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States... Shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance... 29 U.S.C. § 794(a) (1973) Students who receive 504 services must adhere to the district's Code of Student Conduct, and may not be subjected to a disciplinary action for more than 10 (consecutive/cumulative) school days - unless it has been determined, by the 504 Team, that the behavior(s) causing the disciplinary action IS NOT related to the student's disabled condition(s). Disciplinary action(s) that may result in 10 or more school days out of the school building must follow the 504 Manifestation Determination/Evaluation prior to any outcome. Disciplinary action(s) less than 10 days (cumulative/consecutive for the year) DO NOT require the 504 Manifestation Determination/Evaluation. However, a review of the 504 Plan may be needed. For additional information please contact the proper school channels.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

MCCA offers several extracurricular activities that are led by a teacher advisor. It is up to each individual group to decide on meeting times, and community standards for that activity.

Failure to uphold the student code of conduct can result in having extracurricular activities taken away for a period of time and replaced with mentoring, tutoring, or a period of time to re-evaluate the community standards.

## **Section IV** **Parent Responsibilities & Communication**

### **Change of Information**

Should you need to change any information that we have saved in the Student Information System (PowerSchool) please call or email the front office at MCAA. Please make sure that we always have a current phone number, custody arrangements, and emergency contact information.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Conferences with an individual teacher can be made at the request of the teacher or the parent. An appointment will need to be made. Each teacher has the right to their own format for parent/teacher conferences whether that be in person, a phone call, or a virtual conference.

Please contact a counselor or administrator for any other types of conferences, and make an appointment.

## **Custody Notification**

The school needs to be notified immediately of any and all custody changes for a student so that we can have the correct information in our systems. Please call or email the school to update any information as soon as possible as it pertains to a change in custody.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is essential for a student's successful academic progress. The right to attend school and arrive on time is the responsibility of both the student and the parent (in the case of children under seventeen years of age). Alabama State Law 16-28-3, Code of Alabama, 1975 requires all children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) to attend school regularly. Alabama State law states that each child who enrolls in a public school, whether or not the child is required by law to enroll, is subject to the school attendance and truancy laws of the state.

Parents or guardians having control over school age students are responsible for their children's regular attendance and proper conduct. Failure to comply with the Compulsory School Attendance Law requires the Attendance Officer or school team member assigned to school attendance to file a complaint in the Jefferson County Family Court. Excused absences may be excused for the following reasons:

- personal illness
- death in the immediate family
- inclement weather (as determined by the principal) which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child
- legal quarantine
- emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- prior permission of the principal upon request of the parent or legal guardian



## Written Excuses

A written excuse from the parent/guardian explaining the absence or a doctor's note stating the reason for the absence must be provided to the school within **three (3) days** of the student's return to school to be counted as an excused absence. The written statement must include:

1. Student's Name
2. The date(s) of absence
3. The reason for absence
4. The parent's signature

A written excuse from parents or guardians, as described above, will excuse absences for up to but not exceeding ten (10) absences during the school year. Further absences will require a written excuse from a medical doctor or court official.

## Unexcused Absences

Any absence that does not fall under the category of Excused Absence is recorded as an Unexcused Absence. Any student with seven (7) unexcused absences during the school year may be referred to Early Warning Court. What to Expect for Excessive Unexcused Absences:

- 3rd unexcused absence: warning letter from school
- 5th unexcused absence: parent conference with administration
- 6th unexcused absence: home visit from school staff/administration
- 7th unexcused absence: parent and/or student may be referred to Early Warning Truancy Program
- 10th unexcused absence: petition may be filed in Jefferson County Family Court against parent or student for truancy or educational neglect 44 Early Warning Truancy Program

Parents and students will be referred to the Early Warning Truancy Program on the seventh (7TH) unexcused absence. Referral to the program includes the following steps:

1. The parent will receive official notification by U.S. Mail. The notice will require the parent and student to report to Jefferson County Family Court.
2. The parent and student will meet with the attendance officer and a court official. The attendance officer will review the system's Attendance Policy. The Court Official will review the State of Alabama's Attendance Laws and consequences of breaking the laws.
3. If the parent and student fail to appear at the scheduled Early Warning Truancy Program, the parent may receive legal notice and a court referral.

## Absence Due to Chronic Ailment

Parents or guardians of any student having a chronic ailment that may cause the student to miss school are required to provide the school with a clinical or doctor's statement verifying the child's condition. The clinical or doctor's statement must be provided when a student enrolls or

at the time of diagnosis (if already enrolled). An updated doctor's statement should be provided at the beginning of each school year. The written statement must include:

1. The nature of the child's illness
2. A statement from the doctor that the student may have to miss school from time to time due to this illness Failure of parent/guardian to provide the school with a chronic ailment statement can result in unexcused absence accumulation and referral to Juvenile Court.

A written excuse from the parent/guardian must be submitted to the school for each absence explaining the reason for absence is due to the chronic ailment. In cases of prolonged absences due to illness, the parent or guardian should seek assistance from the Homebound Program.

### **Absence Due to Extreme Emergency**

In cases where extreme emergencies exist and can be verified, the principal may extend the maximum number of unexcused absences per term that a student may accumulate before credit is withheld. The principal may establish an alternative plan by which students may redeem credits. This plan must include completion of assignments as well as a time requirement, such as Saturday School or before/after school time.

### **Loss of Credit and Appeal**

For high school students, excuses are limited to ten (10) a year for a full credit course and five (5) for a half-credit course. Combined (excused and unexcused) absences from a class period more than ten (10) times a year may result in a loss of credit. The parent or guardian may appeal a decision to withhold credit for an individual student based upon excessive unexcused absences to the School Secretary or Registrar setting forth the reasons for the absences and attaching any supporting documentation. The appeal is to be considered by a three-member panel, which will include the Principal and the CEO of MCAA. The committee can exercise one of the following:

- Uphold the principal's decision and withhold credit
- Reject the principal's decision and award credit
- Approve or revise the principal's offer of an alternative plan.
- Students over age seventeen (17) who accumulate more than ten (10) days of unexcused absences during a single school year may be withdrawn from school.
  - Parents must be notified of pending withdrawal and given one (1) week to appear before the principal to show cause as to why the student should not be withdrawn from school.
  - Counselor and Assistant Principal must conduct an exit interview where the student and student's parents or legal guardian meet with designated school staff and are advised of the negative effects of their actions and are given possible ways to correct the situation.

- The student and parent or legal guardian also be provided with GED information and discuss other classes or opportunities available to the student.
- The completed exit interview should be placed in the student's cumulative file. The administration in conjunction with the Exceptional Education Department Chair must approve all withdrawals for special education students.

### **Visitors and Volunteer Information**

All visitors and volunteers must check in at the front office before entering the school. They are required to present an I.D. and wear visitors badge the entire time that they are at the school.

All visitors and volunteers are also required to be compliant to our school mission and rules. Under no circumstance is a visitor or volunteer allowed to bring weapons or drugs onto the campus, including the parking lot. Failure to adhere will result in removal from the campus.

All visitors and volunteers should call the front office ahead of time and make an appointment.

Volunteers and visitors are subject to a background check.

### **Reporting, Investigation, & Compliant Resolution Procedures**

If parent(s)/guardians or students have a complaint to report, please follow the listed procedures below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the assistant principal.

- Complaints alleging violations of this policy should be presented to the principal in writing.
- Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal will determine if the complaint alleges a serious violation of this policy. If the principal determines that the complaint alleges a serious violation, the principal will undertake an investigation of the complaint in a reasonably prompt time period. The investigation will entail the gathering of relevant facts and evidence taking into account the circumstances of the complaint. If the investigation establishes a violation, appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on the offending student(s). Other measures that are reasonably calculated to prevent a recurrence of the violation(s) may also be imposed by the principal or the school system.
- Any reprisal or retaliation against any student who has reported a violation of this policy or sought relief provided by this policy are prohibited and are themselves a violation of this policy. Any confirmed acts of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary sanctions that may include any sanction, penalty, or consequence that is available to school officials under the Code of Student Conduct. A student who deliberately, recklessly, and falsely accuses someone of a violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

## Glossary

- Bullying - an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behavior that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm.
  - Verbal Bullying - when an individual uses verbal language (e.g., insults, teasing, etc) to gain power over his or her peers.
  - Social Bullying - the use of various **means** to damage or destroy someone's social relationships.
  - Physical Bullying - using one's body and **physical** bodily acts to exert power over peers.
  - Cyber Bullying - the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.
- Harassment - aggressive pressure or intimidation.
- Truancy - the action of staying away from school without good reason
- Circle Leader - a trained staff member that will be able to hold restorative meetings between all stakeholders when a student misbehaves.
- Sexting - the action or practice of sending sexually explicit photographs or messages via mobile phone

## It's the Law

### **The Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Policy**

It is the policy of the Board that no student shall engage in or be subjected to bullying, violence, threats of violence, or intimidation by any other student that is based on any of the specific characteristics that have been identified by the board in this policy. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

The term “bullying” as used in this policy means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on or off of school property, on a school bus, at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, cyberbullying or written, electronic, verbal, or physical actions that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the characteristics contained in this policy. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;

- have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student;
- have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school;
- have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function;
- have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Bullying, intimidation, violence or threats of violence are prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary consequences and sanctions if the perpetrator of such action is found to have based the prohibited action on one or more of the following personal characteristics of the victim of such conduct:

- The student's race
- The student's sex
- The student's sexual orientation
- The student's religion
- The student's national origin
- The student's disability

## **The Jamari Terrell Williams Cyberbullying Policy**

### **Bullying, Intimidation, Violence, and Threats of Violence Prohibited:**

No student shall engage in nor should any be subjected to (cyber)bullying, violence, threats of violence or intimidation by any other student that is based on any of the specific characteristics set forth in this policy. Students who violate this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions as specified in the Parent and Student Handbook and applicable law, subject to the investigating school administrator's authority and decision. A copy of the **Bullying Complaint Form** can be found on the last page of the Handbook.

Definitions In this policy, these terms shall have the following meanings:

- "Bullying" means a continuous pattern of intentional behavior on or off of school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to: cyberbullying or written, electronic, verbal, or physical actions that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics contained in this policy. To constitute bullying, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:
  - Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
  - Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student;

- Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school whether the conduct occurs on or off school property, online, or electronically;
- Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function;
- Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
- “Hostile environment” means the perception by an affected student that the conduct of another student constitutes a threat of violence or bullying and that the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, would agree that the conduct constitutes bullying, threat of assault, or assault.
- “Violence” means the unjustified infliction of physical force by a student with the intent to cause injury to another student or damage to the property of another student.
- “Threat” means a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action to cause fear of harm. The intention may be communicated through an electronic, written, verbal, or physical act to cause fear, mental distress, or interference in the school environment. The intention may be expressly stated or implied and the person communicating the threat has the ability to carry out the threat.
- “Threat of violence” means an unjustified expression of intention to inflict injury or damage that is made by a student and directed to another student.

### **Description of Behavior Expected of Students**

1. Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity and comply with the MCAA Code of Conduct.
2. Students are expected and required to comply with the requirements of law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting bullying, violence, or intimidation;
3. Students are expected and required to refrain from inflicting or threatening to inflict violence, injury, or damage to the person or property of another student, and
4. Students are expected and required to refrain from placing another student in fear of being subjected to violence, injury, or damage when such actions or threats are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any personal characteristic of the student that is identified in this policy.

### **Annalynn’s Law**

Annalyn's Law (March 2018) is named after child victim, Annalyn Cook, who was sexually abused by a juvenile offender in Alabama.

The law states that juvenile sex offenders must submit an application to all school property and school functions and must meet with school personnel to create and implement an individualized safety plan.

Schools are required to share information and monitor the student(s) through school enrollment and school personnel changes. Officials will offer training to school personnel on how to take appropriate action when an increase or escalation of certain triggering behavior is noticed.

Members of the advisory committee developing the policy include the state's Law Enforcement Agency, the Alabama Department of Education, Department of Human Resources, the Governor's Office, the Alabama Coalition Against Rape, the Attorney General's Office, and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

### **Mckinney- Vento Law**

The term "homeless children and youths"--

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence

(B) includes--

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Students who experience homelessness are still entitled to the following:

- Right to immediate school enrollment even when records not present
- Right to remain in the school of origin, if in the student's best interest
- Right to receive transportation to and from the school of origin
- Right to receive support for academic success

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) allocates McKinney-Vento funding annually to states based on the state's proportion of the Title I, Part A federal allocation. States must subgrant funds competitively to school districts within the state to be used for program implementation at the district level.

### **Erin's Law - Sexual Abuse Prevention Education**

In 2016 the Alabama Legislature passed Erin's Law which requires schools to provide an age appropriate curriculum to students on avoiding child sexual abuse.

## **Jason Flatt Act**

Suicide is the tenth cause of death in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, the cause of death rankings are 2nd and 3rd in the nation, and these rankings are higher for youth in the same age brackets in the state of Alabama. The Jason Flatt Act was passed in order to equip education institutions and their personnel to recognize and act on signs of suicide risk in order to provide prevention, intervention, and postvention with students at risk, their families, and the communities who may be affected.

The Jason Flatt Act, which amends the 16-28B-8 of the Code of Alabama 1975, includes several elements listed below (in italics) which should be interpreted as policy. "To the extent that the legislature shall appropriate funds, or to the extent that [the] local board may provide funds from other sources, the Fort Payne City School System shall implement the following standards and policies for programs in an effort to prevent student suicide:"

### **Section 1: Prevention of Suicide**

The Jason Flatt Act was passed in order to equip Alabama school districts and their personnel to recognize and act on signs of suicide risk in order to provide prevention, intervention, and postvention with students at risk, their families, and the communities who may be affected. This act, which amends 16-28B-8 of the Code of Alabama 1975, includes prevention of harassment and violence.

### **Section 2: The Jason Flatt Act includes several elements which should be interpreted as policy. MCAA will:**

- (1) Foster individual, family, and group counseling services related to suicide prevention.
- (2) Make referral, crisis intervention, and other related information available for students, parents, and school personnel.
- (3) Foster training for school personnel who are responsible for counseling and supervising students.
- (4) Increase student awareness of the relationship between drug and alcohol use and suicide.
- (5) Educate students in recognizing signs of suicidal tendencies and other facts and warning signs of suicide.
- (6) Inform students of available community suicide prevention services.
- (7) Promote cooperative efforts between school personnel and community suicide prevention program personnel.
- (8) Foster school-based or community-based, or both, alternative programs outside of the classroom.
- (9) Develop a strategy to assist survivors of attempted suicide, students, and school personnel in coping with the issues relating to attempted suicide, suicide, the death of a student, and healing.
- (10) Engage in any other program or activity which the Board of Education for the Fort Payne City School System determines is appropriate and prudent in the efforts of the school system to prevent student suicide.
- (11) Provide training for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students on the local board policies to prevent harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence.
- (12) Develop a process for discussing with students local board policies relating to the prevention of



student suicide and to the prevention of harassment, intimidation, violence, and threats of violence.

(13) Provide annual training for all certificated school employees in suicide awareness and prevention. This training may be provided within the framework of existing in-service training programs or as a part of required professional development by MCAA.

### **Section 3: Description of Behavior Expected of Students**

Students are expected to treat other students with courtesy, respect, and dignity and comply with the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected and required to (1) comply with the requirements of the law, policy, regulation, and rules prohibiting harassment, violence, or intimidation and (2) to comply with the system's prevention strategies related to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention support.

### **Section 4: Responsibility of Reporting**

Any person involved in a cause of action or omission resulting from the implementation of this suicide prevention policy or resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by this section, shall be subject to state immunity law.

### **Section 5: Promulgation of Policy and Related Procedures, Rules, and Forms**

This policy and any procedures and rules developed and approved to implement the policy will be published, disseminated, and made available to students, parents, and legal guardians, and employees by such means and methods as are customarily used for such purposes.

### **Attendance and Conduct (Act 94-782) (Ala. Code § 16-28-12)**

Each parent/guardian or other person having control or custody of a child required to attend school who fails to require the child to enroll, to regularly attend school, or to compel the child to properly conduct himself/herself as a pupil in accordance with the written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education shall be guilty of misdemeanor (may be fined up to \$100 and may be sentenced to hard labor for up to 90 days).

### **Teacher Assault (Act 94-794) (Ala. Code § 13A-6-21)**

A person commits the crime of assault in the second degree (Class C felony) if the person assaults with intent to cause serious physical injury to a teacher or to an employee of a public educational institution during or as a result of the performance of his or her duty.

### **Drug Dealing (Act 94-783) (Ala. Code § 6-5-72)**

A person who unlawfully sells, furnishes, or gives a controlled substance to a minor may be liable for injury or damage or both suffered by a third person caused by or resulting from the use of the controlled substance by the minor if the sale, furnishing, or giving of the controlled substance is the proximate cause of the injury or damage.

**Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, Physical Harm, or Threatened Physical Harm (Act 94-784) (Ala. Code § 16-1-24.1)**

The school principal shall notify appropriate law enforcement officials when a person violates local board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person, or threatened physical harm to a person. If any criminal charge is warranted, the principal is authorized to sign the appropriate warrant. If that person is a student, the local school system shall immediately suspend that person from attending regular classes and schedule a hearing within five school days.

**Weapons in Schools (Act 94-817) (Ala. Code § 13A-11-72)**

No person shall knowingly with intent to do bodily harm carry or possess a weapon on the premises of a public school. Possession of a deadly weapon with the intent to do bodily harm on the premises of a public school or school bus is a Class C felony. (Note: The term “deadly weapon” means a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious physical injury, and such term includes, but is not limited to, a bazooka, hand grenade, missile, or explosive or incendiary device; a pistol, rifle, or shotgun, or a switch-blade knife, gravity knife, stiletto, sword, or dagger; or any club, baton, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.)

**Possession of Firearms—Expulsion Recommendation (Al Code 16-1-24)**

All City and County Boards of Education shall develop and implement local policies and procedures requiring the expulsion of students, for a period of one year, who are determined to have brought to school or have in their possession a firearm in a school building, on school grounds, on school buses, or at other school-sponsored functions.

**Vandalism (Act 94-819) (Ala. Code §16-5-380)**

The parents, guardian, or other person having control of any minor under the age of 18 with whom the minor is living and who have custody of the minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to school property, plus the court costs, caused by intentional, willful, or malicious act of the minor.

**Pistol Possession/Driver’s License (Act 94-820) (Ala. Code §16-28-40)**

Any person over the age of 14 who is convicted of the crime of possession of a pistol on the premises of a public school, or a public school bus, shall be denied issuance of a driver’s permit or license to operate a motor vehicle for 180 days from the date the person is eligible and applies for a permit or license. If a person over age 14 possesses a driver’s license on the date of conviction, the driver’s license will be suspended for 180 days.

**Drop-Out/Driver’s License (Act 94-820 which amended Act 93-368 as codified in Ala. Code 16- 28-40(1975) & Ala. Code §16-8-40)**

The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver's license or learner's permit to any person under 19 who is not enrolled or has not received a diploma or certificate of graduation. Exceptions are students who: are enrolled in a GED program, are enrolled in a secondary school, are participating in an approved job training program, are gainfully employed, are parents of a minor or unborn child, or are the sole source of transportation for the parent.

### **Theft of Lost Property (Acts 1977, No. 607, p. 812, §3205)**

#### **Theft of lost property – Definition**

A person commits the crime of theft of lost property if he actively obtains or exerts control over the property of another which he knows to have been lost or mislaid, or to have been delivered under a mistake as to the identity of the recipient or as to the nature or the amount of the property, and with intent to deprive the owner permanently of it, he fails to take reasonable measures to discover and notify the owner.

#### **Theft of lost property in the first degree Section 13A-8-7**

(a) The theft of lost property which exceeds two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) in value constitutes theft of lost property in the first degree.

(b) Theft of lost property in the first degree is a Class B felony

#### **Theft of lost property in the second degree Section 13A-8-8**

(a) The theft of lost property which exceeds five hundred dollars (\$500) in value but does not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) in value constitutes theft of lost property in the second degree.

(b) Theft of lost property in the second degree is a Class C felony.

#### **Theft of lost property in the third degree Section 13A-8-9**

(a) The theft of lost property which does not exceed five hundred dollars (\$500) in value constitutes theft of lost property in the third degree.

(b) Theft of lost property in the third degree is a Class A misdemeanor.

#### **Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect (Code of Ala. § 26-14-3(f))**

According to Alabama laws, all ... nurses, school teachers and officials, peace officers, law enforcement officials, social workers, day care workers or employees, mental health professionals, as defined in Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence, or any other person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to any child shall report or cause to report incidents where a child below the age of 18 is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect.

### **Title IX**

Title IV is a federal statute that prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program or activity receiving federal funds. Title IX states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." This means that our students and employees are entitled to be free from sex-based discrimination in our educational programs or

activities. This includes discrimination based on gender, gender identity, pregnancy status, parental status, and sexual harassment as defined by law.

Title IX defines “sexual harassment” as “conduct on the basis of sex” that satisfies one or more of the following:

- An employee of the school system conditioning the provision of aid, benefit, or service of the school system on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to an educational program or activity of the school system
- Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined under various federal statutes

Title IX protects students, employees and applicants for employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity or failure to address stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. All students (as well as other persons) at institutions /districts that receive federal funds are protected by Title IX - regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, race, or national origin – in all aspects of a recipient’s educational programs and activities (OCR Title IX Resource Guide).

To file a Title IX complaint with MCAA, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Patton Furman.

To file a Title IX Sexual Harassment complaint requires a completed Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Form. The form can be submitted to Ms. Matthews directly, or the local school’s administration. The local school is required to send all completed complaint forms to Dr. Furman.

- Examples of Title IX Concerns:
  - Gender Discrimination
  - Domestic and/or Dating Violence
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Sexual Assault
  - Sexual Misconduct (inappropriate touching, comments, text messages)
  - Gender Identification Discrimination
  - Teasing or Bullying/Cyberbullying because of gender/gender identification
  - For more information you may visit: The Office of Civil Rights.

## **Title IX**

### **What is Title IX?**

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To file a Title IX complaint with the Magic City Acceptance Academy, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Furman.

To file a Title IX Sexual Harassment complaint requires a completed Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Form. The form can be submitted to Ms. Matthews directly, or the local school's administration. The local school is required to send all completed complaint forms to Dr. Furman

Examples of Title IX Concerns:

- Gender Discrimination
- Domestic and/or Dating Violence
- Sexual Harassment
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- Teasing or Bullying/Cyberbullying because of gender/gender identification

For more information you may visit: [The Office of Civil Rights](#).

Although the recipient of the complaint is ultimately responsible for ensuring that it complies with Title IX and other laws, the Title IX coordinator is an integral part of a recipient's systematic approach to ensuring nondiscrimination, including a nondiscriminatory environment. Title IX coordinators/directors can be effective agents for ensuring gender equity within their institutions only when they are provided with the appropriate authority and support necessary to coordinate their institution's Title IX compliance, including access to all of their institution's relevant information and resources (OCR Title IX Resource Guide). The Title IX form can be found on our website.

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## Jamari Terrell Williams Bullying Complaint Form

Name of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Charged Student(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Infraction Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_ Parent

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The incident resulted in a threat of suicide by the victim: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

The Jamari Terrell Williams Bullying Prevention Act, No. 2018-472, defines bullying as a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function including, but not limited to, written, electronic, verbal, or physical acts that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic, if the characteristic falls into one of the categories of personal characteristics contained in the model policy adopted by the department or by a local board. To constitute harassment, a pattern of behavior may do any of the following:

- a. Place a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- b. Have the effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of a student.
- c. Have the effect of substantially disrupting or interfering with the orderly operation of the school.
- d. Have the effect of creating a hostile environment in the school, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored function.

e. Have the effect of being sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

***My signature below is verification that the information on this Anti-Harassment form is correct.***

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note that the submission of a complaint does not automatically substantiate that misconduct has occurred. The school administration has the prerogative to investigate any allegations of wrongdoing.**

Information Received by Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_