



**MINNEHAHA
ACADEMY**

**Lower School
Parent & Student
Handbook**

Kindergarten - Grade 5

2020 - 2021

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY | 4200 WEST RIVER PARKWAY |
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55406
612.721.3359 | MinnehahaAcademy.net



MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

Minnehaha Academy Mission Statement

To provide high quality education
integrating Christian faith and learning.

Minnehaha Academy Core Values

Distinctively Christian

We encourage one another to become authentic followers of Jesus Christ.

Exceptional Academics

We pursue truth and excellence in all educational experiences.

Cultivating Potential

We help each person discover and develop his or her unique gifts and talents.

Caring Community

We share a unity that is based on care for one another rather than conformity.

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Lower School Faculty and Staff: 2020 - 2021

To contact Minnehaha Academy Faculty and Staff by email, use the format below:

lastnamefirstname@minnehahaacademy.net

For example: norbybetsy@minnehahaacademy.net

To contact Minnehaha Academy Faculty and Staff by phone, call 612.721.3359 and the receptionist will direct your call.

Lower School Principal	Karen Balmer
Lower School Dean of Students	Devin Ayers
Lower School Counselor	Kathlene McGraw
Lower & Middle School Nurse	Paul Slininger
Literacy Specialist	Caitlin Schlachter
Math Specialist	Sue Borchard
Library & Data Specialist	Susan Besser
Lower & Middle School Office Manager	Ashley Swanson
Lower & Middle School Administrative Assistant	Betsy Norby
Lower & Middle School Receptionist	Elizabeth Rausch
Extended Day Program Director	Micayla Rollerson
Summer Programs Director	Carman Coffman Johnson
AV & Technology Administrator	Charlie Peterson
Lower & Middle School Facilities / Operations	Curt Bjorlin / Dan Kostecky

Grade Level Teams

Kindergarten:	Bethany DeLong Stephanie Norlin Nancy Ringling Kelly Nicoski, Teaching Assistant Gina Schmidt, Teaching Assistant
Grade 1:	Britt Guild Natalia Jankowski Megan Thurow, Teaching Assistant
Grade 2:	Joi Payton Naomi Peterson Erika Nolby, Teaching Assistant
Grade 3:	Kristi Classen Mary Jo Severson David Grano, Teaching Assistant
Grade 4:	Blake Christiansen Angie Magnuson Rachelle Berthuiame, Teaching Assistant
Grade 5:	Jeff Bosshardt Nichole DeHaven Rachel Verdoorn Lily Bjorlin, Teaching Assistant Jackie Lofstad, Teaching Assistant

Lower School Specialists

Art	Sheryl Cullen
Information Skills	Jim Nelson
Innovation Lab	Tarah Cummings (Grades K-2)
	Karee Smith (Grades 3-5)
Music	Karen Benson
Physical Education	Jordan Fitch
Spanish	Elizabeth Carlson

Lower School Building Aides

Vicky Carey
Ashley DeWolf
Kathy Erickson
Martha Maendel



MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

Minnehaha Academy Administration

President	Dr. Donna Harris
Principals	
- Lower School	Karen Balmer
- Middle School	Jason Wenschlag
- Upper School	Mike DiNardo
Executive Director of Faith Formation	David Hoffner
Executive Director of Teaching & Learning	Jason Wenschlag
Executive Director of Institutional Advancement	Sara Jacobson
Executive Director of Finance & Operations	Dan Bowles
Transportation Director / Ice Arena Manager	Scott Glenn
Director of Student Accounts	Brenda Robbins
Director of Special Academic Services	Elaine Ekstedt
Diversity Director	Paulita Todhunter
Director of Admissions	Michelle Ulland
Director of Teaching & Learning	Julie Winn

Addresses and Phone Numbers

Upper School Grades 9 – 12	3100 West River Parkway Minneapolis, MN 55406 (612) 729-8321
Lower & Middle School Grades PreK – 8	4200 West River Parkway Minneapolis, MN 55406 (612) 721-3359
Extended Day & Summer Programs: <i>Fun-N-Friends Program (Grades PreK-5)</i> <i>Yellow Lounge (Grades 6-8)</i>	4200 West River Parkway Minneapolis, MN 55406 (612) 728-7745 (office)

Student Life

Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and others.
~ Luke 2:52

As a Christian community, we continually look to Jesus as a model for our own behaviors, as well as the behaviors we seek to bring about in our students. The intent of our discipline policy is to establish an understanding that will foster family partnerships, while supporting and empowering students to grow in wisdom and stature. As students learn to make good choices, they will bless their community and feel blessed in return.

Lower School Discipline Philosophy

Everyone in the Minnehaha community is responsible for doing their part to build positive connections and trust. At Minnehaha Academy we are committed to maintaining a climate where all individuals feel safe and valued. In order to have a vibrant, healthy environment where students thrive, we hold all students to high standards of behavior.

What We Believe:

- Every person is worthy of respect.
- Every person is worthy to be safe, to feel safe, and to be free from danger.
- Students attend school to grow academically, behaviorally, socially, and spiritually.
- Learning is enhanced by the establishment of rigorous expectations.

RACERS Student Expectations:

Respect:	Showing care for God, others, property, and myself
Attitude:	Choosing the way I think or feel towards work and others
Cooperation:	Working together to create community
Effort:	Trying my best in all things
Responsibility:	Using what I know to make good choices
Self-Control:	Managing my actions and words

Discipline Procedures

Just as it is important for students to clearly understand the expectations for behavior, it is also important to be clear about the consequences for failure to comply with these expectations. There are developmental variations between kindergarten children and fifth graders. As such, we value a discipline model that is structured, yet flexible, in order to focus on encouraging responsible behavior and learning. We believe children learn by accepting responsibility for their actions and choices, which then results in powerful opportunities for growth. When student behavior or actions need to be addressed we identify appropriate consequences, guide conflict-resolution conversations, help students give and receive grace and forgiveness, and establish plans for future decision-making. Behavioral issues are handled on an individual basis, in accordance with the following process:

General Behavior Issues

- All Lower School faculty and staff are authorized to intervene and address behavioral concerns.
- Most behavior issues are addressed immediately and within the space where the issue occurred.
- Minor behavior corrections are not always communicated to parents.
- A Discipline Report may be issued.

Recurring Behavior Issues

- The Dean of Students and/or Counselor will work with the student to identify the behavioral concerns, seek to understand the cause or contributing factors for the behavior, and develop strategies to help the student be successful.
- The Dean or Counselor will communicate with parents.
- Discipline Reports may be issued and may include consequences, as appropriate.
- The Dean or Counselor may determine that a conference is warranted; if so the conference will include parent(s), classroom teacher, administrators, and the student (if appropriate). The purpose of a conference is to develop a student support plan as well as a timeline for expected outcomes.

Behavior Issues of Major Concern

- Behavior issues of major concern will involve immediate action and consequences, in order to maintain a safe learning community for all.
- The process will involve the Dean and/or Principal.
- A Discipline Report will be issued. Consequences may include early dismissal, in-school or out-of-school suspension, or expulsion from the school.
- Parents will be notified and a meeting will take place as quickly as possible.
- In the case of an early dismissal or suspension, the student may not return to school until there has been a parent meeting and a student support plan is developed.
- Communication with involved families will happen in a timely manner.

Issues of Major Concern include:

- *Aggressive physical behavior towards self or others.*
- *Aggressive verbal behavior towards self or others.*
- *Swearing or other inappropriate school language.*
- *Destruction of school/student property.*
- *Dishonest behavior (e.g., theft, lying, cheating, and plagiarism).*
- *Bullying behavior.*
- *Inappropriate use of technology, including social media*
- *Any form of racial or religious harassment.*
- *Inappropriate touch, talk or act of sexual harassment.*
- *Possession, distribution and/or use of illegal chemicals and/or weapons.*

Discipline Reports

When a student behaves in a manner that warrants discipline, a discipline report may be issued. A discipline report is a communication tool between school and home. Discipline reports do not become part of a student's permanent school file.

Possible consequences include loss of a privilege or participation in a special event, age-appropriate service to the school before or after the school day, partial or full-day suspension, multiple-day suspension, and implementation of a student behavior plan. A parent meeting will be called if a child receives multiple Discipline Reports. Serious behaviors and/or chronic behaviors that are not corrected by our discipline system may result in termination of enrollment.

All behavior expectations remain in place during school functions, even outside the instructional day (e.g.; a concert) and/or off-site (e.g.; on a field trip), as well as on school transportation.

Weapons and Illegal Substances

Possession of illegal or dangerous items including weapons, chemicals, alcohol, and tobacco is prohibited. Weapons are not permitted at Minnehaha Academy. A look-alike weapon is treated the same as a real weapon. Items that may be considered weapons for Lower School students include guns, toy guns, water pistols, pocket knives, slingshots, fireworks, etc. If these or other items considered to be or used as a weapon are brought to school, parents will be called immediately. The item(s) will be confiscated by the administration, a Discipline Report will be issued, and consequences will be imposed which could include suspension or expulsion.

Recess

Weather permitting, all students participate in outdoor recess every day. Students are required to participate in recess unless they have a written release from home or a medical provider.

On days when outside recess is not possible due to weather conditions students will have an indoor recess in their instructional space.

Recess Attire & Weather Conditions

Students must be appropriately dressed for weather conditions and outdoor recess. Once snow has covered the ground, students must have a jacket, snow pants, gloves, hat/head covered, and boots to participate in outdoor recess. If students are inadequately dressed, they will be sent to the office for recess and a reminder will be sent home.

We monitor weather closely. If the temperature and/or wind chill drops below -10 degrees we will have indoor recess for students.

Please label every item of clothing or equipment your child brings to school with your child's first and last name. Unclaimed items will be kept in the school's Lost and Found located near the school cafeteria. Unclaimed items at the end of the year will be donated.

Playground Expectations

In order to ensure that the playground experience is fun and safe for students, we expect all students to display RACERS behavior expectations. Specific rules pertaining to recess are clearly communicated to students at the beginning of the school year in addition to being posted near the playground.

Students are **not** allowed to:

- Be on top of the monkey bars
- Go up slides
- Hang upside down on the spider web
- Climb on the outside of the slide structures
- Have metal or wood bats
- Throw snow, ice, woodchips, leaves or dirt

Dress Code

It is important to maintain a learning environment free of distractions, including distractions that come from how students are dressed. Clothing must be modest and must not be distracting or controversial. Specifically:

- Spaghetti strap tank tops or shirts, shirts that reveal midriffs, and clothing that exposes underwear are not acceptable.

- Shorts or skirts must be at least mid-thigh, preferably below the student's fingertips with arms extended to the side.
- Yoga pants or leggings must be worn with a shirt long enough to cover the bottom.
- Hats are allowed as students arrive, for recess or other outdoor activities, and at dismissal, but cannot be worn during the instructional day.
- Hoods are not permitted to be on during the school day.
- Students must wear shoes or boots at all times.

Teachers and administrators will make judgments about the appropriateness of clothing. If a student's dress is determined to be inappropriate in any way, the student will be asked to change clothes before returning to the classroom and the parent will be notified.

Faith Formation

Worship is an important part of our life together at Minnehaha. Lower School students worship God together once each week in a prerecorded Chapel. A wide variety of worship experiences during Chapel are offered, including special music, drama, and guest speakers. Classroom teachers will play the Chapel recording on Thursdays or Fridays, depending on which day they are in the classroom.

Students' spiritual development extends far beyond our scheduled Chapel times into classroom instruction, daily interaction with faculty and staff, and classroom practices such as devotions, prayer, and Bible teachings.

Lunch

Our contracted food provider, Taher, offers lunch service every school day. The online order form must be submitted the week prior. The costs for the 2020-2021 school year are:

Kindergarten – Grade 2	\$4.25
Grades 3 – 5	\$4.95
Milk (white or chocolate)	\$.40

Parents are encouraged to set up an online account in MySchoolAccount, which is the platform used by Taher: www.myschoolaccount.com. This is an important tool for parents to monitor students' lunch spending. Funds can be deposited online. Parents can also bring a check or cash to the main office in an envelope labeled with the student's name, grade, and teacher. Parents will be notified when there is a negative balance. **Taher is unable to serve students who have a persistent negative balance.** Please be vigilant in monitoring your student's spending!

Visitors

During the 2020-2021 school year visitor access is very limited. Parents are not able to come into the building unless they have a scheduled meeting.

Invitations to Parties

Invitations to private birthday parties and other types of parties should be mailed (rather than distributed at school) to prevent situations where children may feel excluded.

Lost and Found

All articles found in or about the school building or grounds are taken to the lost and found. We will periodically share pictures with parents of lost and found items. Unclaimed items will be donated periodically throughout the year.

Valuables

Students should leave valuables at home. This includes money, radios, toys, electronic games and devices, and cell phones. Personal loss is not covered by the school insurance.

Classroom Assignments

Many factors go into assigning students to classrooms. The number of students, peer relationships, gender, academic abilities and needs, and teacher / Specialist recommendations all factor into these decisions. Parents are given the opportunity each spring to share academic, social and emotional needs of their child to aid in class placement. The school makes final placement decisions and reserves the right to change class assignments during the school year if necessary.

Emergency Drills

It is important to train students in school safety procedures. Throughout the year we have several drills: Fire Drills, Tornado/Severe Weather Drills, and Lockdown Drills. Students are provided specific instructions for each type of drill and the drills provide important opportunities to practice the instructions. Each classroom has the procedures posted in the event that a substitute teacher is in the classroom at the time of a drill or live situation.

School Attendance Policies

Regular attendance at school is an essential component to a student's academic success. Even in Lower School, school attendance and timeliness is very important. Not only is it important for students to receive the direct, ongoing instruction provided during the school day, but students also need to form healthy habits of attendance and timeliness at an early age. Excessive absences and/or tardies may be considered grounds for reconsideration of student's enrollment.

If a student is going to be absent, a parent must notify the school before 8:40. The attendance line is 612.721.3359. Parent notification is essential, as we must be able to account for all students.

During the 2020-2021 school year we recognize that students may have prolonged absences due to a quarantine. Given that these absences could be 10-14 days, we have developed a technology infrastructure so that students can access instruction from home and thus minimize the interruption to the learning process. In these situations students may access portions of the day from home. We don't want students at home to be on a screen for multiple hours at a time, so classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Specialists will determine the critical content and opportunities for students to access from home. Their priority will be to keep students at home connected through community times such as the daily CREW meeting and to keep students growing academically through key instructional times.

Students and parents will have access to the schedule for these things and a Zoom link within their learning management system (Seesaw or Schoology). Classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Specialists may also choose to record the key instructional times so that students can access them at alternate times as well.

Again, the priority is to keep students connected to their school community and continue growing academically. Some of the activities and instruction at school cannot be replicated at home and classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Specialists are not expected to create

separate learning plans for students who are at home. They will do their best to include students at home for the most critical components. Specialist classes, in particular, will be difficult to replicate at home due to the specialized equipment and materials often used in those classes.

Classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Specialists will make every effort to protect the privacy of students while using a Zoom meeting, but student faces will be visible and first names will be used. Students and parents are strictly prohibited from sharing student information or providing access to live or recorded school resources with anyone outside their immediate family.

For non-quarantine, typical absences (e.g.; sick, family vacation, doctor appointment), teachers are not required to provide live or recorded access to instruction. Classroom teachers, Teaching Assistants, and Specialists will handle these situations as we have in the past, providing materials to students as they are able during an absence and / or providing make-up materials and instruction following the absence.

Tardies

Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:40. Students arriving at school after 8:40am must check-in at the main office to receive a pass to class.

Note: Weather conditions are taken into consideration when taking attendance; on days when weather or driving conditions are difficult, late attendance is taken.

It is expected that students are on time and ready to begin class by 8:40 each morning. A student who is consistently late misses valuable instructional time. If a student is chronically tardy, a conference with the family may be scheduled to discuss solutions and plans for any necessary make-up work.

School Hours

The instructional day begins at 8:40 and ends at 3:10. Students arriving prior to 8:15 must be registered for Fun-n-Friends. Students arriving between 8:15 and 8:40 must go to their designated instructional space for the day. Prior to 8:40 students will engage in quiet, non-screen-based, independent activities. They may bring these from home or use activities provided by the teacher or Teaching Assistant.

Leaving School Early

Students must be signed out in the office by a parent or parent-authorized adult; at that time the student will be dismissed from his or her class.

Please notify the student's teacher prior to the beginning of the school day to indicate the time you are arriving and the reason for the early dismissal. (See "End of Day Messages" for instructions about last-minute changes.)

End of Day Messages

If you have a message for your student regarding plans after school (e.g.; to wait for a ride rather than take the bus home), contact the receptionist at 612.721.3359 before 2:30pm. **Please note that teachers are often unable to check emails or voicemails prior to the end of the school day; time-sensitive messages should be directed to the main office.**

Vacations

We recognize the value of family vacations, and encourage families to plan trips during school vacations and days off. While it is helpful for teachers to know if a student will be absent, they

are not expected to provide instructional materials or homework in advance of vacations. Upon returning from a vacation, students are expected to complete make-up work from the missed day(s).

School Closings and Late Starts

School closures and delays can be caused by a variety of reasons outside of our control including infrastructure (e.g.; utilities) and weather conditions. We understand that closings and late starts can be inconvenient and Minnehaha Academy works hard to keep our instructional calendar intact. However, the ultimate consideration is always student safety.

Instances of school closure or late start will be announced on the Minnehaha Academy website by 5:45 a.m. so that families can make necessary adjustments based on their individual circumstances. Parents will also receive an email or text notification. The decision to make an announcement by 5:45 a.m. may mean that we will not have complete busing information, so the announcement will advise parents to check the website for further updates by 6:15 a.m. This information is also published on designated local news outlets.

Extended Day: Fun-N-Friends

Fun-n-Friends is a fee-based program for students that provides supervision and age-appropriate activities.

- Morning care is available from 7:00–8:15am for students in K–5.
- No morning care is available for Preschool; they may be dropped off as early as 8:15am and go directly to their classroom.
- After school care is available for Preschool-5th grade from 3:10-6:00pm.

Care before and after school will be provided for children who are preregistered. No drop-in service will be available during the 2020-2021 school year.

Fun-n-Friends also offers childcare on many days when we do not have school. These Release Days typically provide care from 7:00am to 6:00pm.

Registration is available through the Minnehaha Academy website:

<https://www.minnehahaacademy.net/current-families/programs/extended-day>

For questions, please contact the Extended Day Office at 612.728.7745.

Academic Information

Homework

Homework is designed to accomplish the following goals:

1. Extend academic learning through practice and extension.
2. Foster a positive school-home partnership for academic growth.
3. Develop a “homework habit” and mindset in students.

Since many of our students are involved in church activities on Wednesday nights, every effort is made to reduce homework on Wednesday evenings. However, teachers may give an assignment early in the week to be due on Thursday or Friday. Students need to then realize that they may have to work a bit more on Monday or Tuesday to complete these assignments.

Physical Education

If a student is not able to participate in the physical education class, a note from home or a doctor must be presented. Only a written note from a doctor can excuse a student from Physical Education classes on a continuing basis. Students are required to wear athletic shoes when participating in physical education activities.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Textbooks and instructional materials are purchased by the school and loaned to students. If a book is lost, damaged, excessively soiled or worn beyond normal use, the student's parents will be charged accordingly.

Field Trips, Concerts, and Special Events

This year we may not be able to offer field trips and special community events as we typically do, but we will leverage alternative resources to supplement our curriculum. We will design creative new ways to foster community, celebrate special events, and continue to be the vibrant, caring community that we've always been. If we are able to proceed with field trips, concerts, or other special events parents will be notified.

Library

Library materials for students in Grades K-5 may be checked out for three weeks. In the event that a book is not returned, the student must pay for the material. At the end of the school year, report cards will be held until library books are paid for or returned.

Accelerated Reader

Lower School teachers use the Accelerated Reader (AR) program. AR focuses on careful selection of books to improve students' reading and comprehension skills and builds an intrinsic love of reading. AR uses the ATOS Readability Formula for Books that helps guide students to choose books at their reading level. Students are tested periodically to determine their reading level. They then choose their own books, read them at their own pace, and take a quiz on the chosen book. Classroom teachers monitor AR progress and report growth to parents through conferences and report cards.

Lower School Student Support Team (SST)

The Student Support Team (SST) exists to attend to specific learner needs, including academic, social-emotional, and behavioral. The group consists of Minnehaha faculty members that meet weekly to discuss specific student needs, analyze student data, and collaborate with classroom teachers as they provide support to individual learners. SST will determine appropriate student supports, including behavior plans, academic intervention, recommendations for evaluations or external professional support, and/or community resources. If a focused intervention plan is initiated at school, parents will be notified by SST.

Student/Family Information Privacy Policy

Minnehaha Academy seeks to be a responsible steward of the student information entrusted to its care. A guiding principle regarding student information will be used only by those with a legitimate educational interest, on a need-to-know basis, or for the purpose of instructional planning for an individual student. Due to our status as a private school which does not accept public funding, Minnehaha Academy is not bound by the Minnesota data privacy acts or the federal FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act). However, we maintain procedures in keeping with the spirit of that legislation.

The cumulative file is a physical folder which generally contains grades, report cards, standardized test scores, and individual educational assessments. Parents, legal guardians, and students over the age of 18 have the right to see the information in the student's cumulative file. Upon receipt of a written request to a school administrator, that person will make arrangements for access and arrange a time and place to examine those records. Public laws allow disclosure of information in the cumulative file to school personnel with legitimate educational interests without consent. The school will not send an individual educational or psychological assessment report to a third party without parental notification and consent. The school is authorized to allow emergency release of information, should it be necessary to protect the health and safety of students.

Directory information (student name, address, phone, grade) is published in our online student directory. Parents are annually given the opportunity to exclude their student's information from this directory. The information in this directory is strictly intended for the private use of members of the Minnehaha school community, and may not be used for any other purpose.

If a parent has a concern about use of student information the following steps will occur:

1. Gather information about who, when, how and where the information was inappropriately shared. Involve school administrators as necessary.
2. Express specific concerns in writing to the appropriate school personnel in order of involvement: teacher, coach/group leader, counselor, principal, president.
3. Work with school personnel toward resolution of the issue.

Technology

The Acceptable Use policy is available on the Minnehaha Academy website:

<https://www.minnehahaacademy.net/current-families/handbook/acceptable-use-policy>

Students are accountable to the expectations set forth in the Acceptable Use policy.

School iPads

Lower School students must put electronics away before they come into the building. iPad use in hallways or common areas is not allowed. Use of electronic games, devices, and social media (including texting) is prohibited in school unless directed and approved for educational use by a teacher and under that teacher's supervision. Lower School students not following these expectations will receive a Discipline Report. A teacher or staff member may confiscate devices and parents will be responsible to pick it up at the end of the day.

The iPad is a powerful tool for research, organization, collaboration, productivity, communication, design, and creation. Like any complex tool, however, the iPad can be misused or abused. Adherence to the expectations provided in this policy will allow us to enjoy the benefits of the iPads in our school. A student who uses the iPad in a manner deemed detrimental to our educational environment is subject to disciplinary action.

Personal Technology & Cell Phones

- **Gaming Devices:** Students are not allowed to use gaming devices at school.
- **Wearable Technology:** Wearable technology are electronic devices that can be worn such as SmartWatches, fitness tracking technology, or any other device that can send or receive messages. During school hours, any wearable technology with 2-way communication capability must be stored in the student's locker or backpack. Parents who need to contact their children during school hours should call the front office and a message will be relayed to the student.

- **Cell Phones:** Some Lower School students carry cell phones for safety reasons and we recognize that it is important for parents to be able to contact their child before or after school. However, to avoid interruptions to instructional time and distractions Lower school students must turn cell phones off and store them in their backpack upon entering the school. Phones are to remain in a student's backpack throughout the day and may not be used during the school day. Students may not check voice or text messages during the school day. Lower School students not following these expectations will receive a Discipline Report.

Home-School Partnership & Expectations

We believe that home and school should function in dynamic partnership. A positive and constructive relationship between the school and a student's family, is essential for the fulfillment of the school's mission.

In order to have the most positive results in the education of each child, commitment to principles of healthy and effective communication between parents and the school is vital. Faculty and staff at Minnehaha Academy are committed to working closely with parents.

These principles are in place to ensure parents can appropriately direct their concerns and contribute to a caring community that reflects and builds on our school's core values.

Partnership Principles for Parents and Families:

1. *Recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by:*
 - a. *clearly defined responsibilities,*
 - b. *a shared commitment to the school mission,*
 - c. *open lines of communication,*
 - d. *mutual cooperation and respect*
 - e. *a common vision of goals to be achieved*
2. *Respect the school's responsibility to do what is best for the entire school community, while recognizing the needs of their individual child*
3. *Be familiar with and support the school's policies and procedures and other communications distributed by the school*
4. *Share with the school any medical, personal, and/or academic information that will help the school best serve the student*
5. *Seek to resolve problems through appropriate channels (See 'Effective Communication' below)*

Partnership Principles for Minnehaha Staff and Faculty:

1. *Serve as Christian role models*
2. *Maintain responsibility to do what is best for the entire school community, while recognizing the needs of individual students*
3. *Strive to maintain a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for all students in accordance with Minnehaha Academy's mission, vision, and core values and report any rumors/reports of threats of danger*
4. *Provide regular communications with parents about student progress, including timely notification to parents if a child is experiencing difficulties, and provide follow-up with plans, actions, and strategies*

Interactions with staff, other parents, and students

Parents, staff, and faculty are expected to interact civilly with all Minnehaha employees, parents, and students on school grounds and at school events. Abusive language, raising one's voice, insulting or threatening behavior to anyone on school grounds is not appropriate and the person will be asked to leave the property immediately.

Effective Communication

Parents with concerns regarding their child's learning or school experience should contact their child's teacher in order for concerns to address the concerns directly. Teachers and staff can best be reached through their school email addresses.

(lastnamefirstname@minnehahaacademy.net)

Ongoing concerns may be addressed with the Principal, and meetings can be arranged through the Office Manager. Unannounced meetings are not appropriate and parents will be asked to schedule an appointment with the Office Manager.

It is proper to handle other concerns with the most direct level first (i.e. coach, teacher, or staff member most closely related to the concern). If the parent is not satisfied at that juncture, the next step is to involve the Principal to seek resolution. The President of Minnehaha Academy is the final arbiter for any disputes that are unable to be resolved by the Principal, including parent issues or student disciplinary issues.

Minnehaha Academy may choose to discontinue enrollment or re-enrollment of a student if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of the parent or guardian make a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise seriously interferes with the school's accomplishment of its educational purpose.

Minnehaha Academy is governed by the Board of Education whose job it is to secure the future of the school, set basic policies, undertake strategic planning, and lead in the financial support of the school. The Board entrusts the daily operations of the school to the President of Minnehaha Academy who supervises and evaluates all programs and personnel. The Board does not sit in review of administrative decisions.

Parent-Teacher Communication

During the 2020-2021 school year, teachers have limited prep time due to the on-campus hybrid instructional model. They are not expected to return voicemails or emails during the instructional day, as their focus will be with their students. They will do their best to respond within 24 hours (excluding weekends).

Parent Square

Minnehaha uses a platform called Parent Square for grade level and teacher communication. Teachers use Parent Square to provide information about what's happening in their class as well as any upcoming events or reminders.

The Principal will also send a weekly broadcast to parents with important information and reminders about upcoming events.

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Report Cards

Parents should make every attempt to attend conferences on these days as these are critical communication junctures.

- *October: Parent-Teacher Fall Conferences*

- *January: Report Cards*
- *March: Parent-Teacher Spring Conferences*
- *June: Report Cards*

Report cards are not released if there is an outstanding balance on the student's account. In the case of an outstanding balance, Minnehaha's Business Office will notify parents.

Changes in Emergency and Contact Information

It is critical that we are able to contact parents and those designated as emergency contacts. We rely on information submitted by parents in the enrollment process in Skyward. Please be sure to update this information if any of the information changes.

Mid-Year Withdrawal

If a decision is made for a student to withdraw from Minnehaha Academy for any reason, either by the family or by the school, all school materials must be returned on the final day of enrollment. This includes textbooks, athletic equipment and uniforms, iPads and accessories (case, charger, cord), and any other materials belonging to the school. The family will be billed for any materials not returned.

The family will be requested to complete an Enrollment Cancellation Form. Issues relating to tuition and fees will be handled by the Student Accounts staff.

Enrollment for the Following Year

Enrollment for the next year typically begins in February. Minnehaha Academy may determine that a student is ineligible to return the following due to academic or behavior concerns at any time, including after a student has re-enrolled.

Parent Engagement

MAPT: Minnehaha Academy Parents Together

MAPT is a parent group focused on building school-wide community. MAPT sponsors events throughout the school year to promote community and foster relationships among families.

Mosaic

The Minnehaha Academy Multicultural Family Network or MOSAIC is a group of parents within MAPT also committed to building community. MOSAIC exists to enhance the understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity throughout Minnehaha Academy and to serve as a bridge between parents, administrators, and faculty on diversity issues. All Minnehaha Academy families are welcome to join this group.

Volunteers

During the 2020-2021 school year, volunteer opportunities at the school will be very limited. In rare instances when we may utilize volunteers we will follow our standard practices for background checks.

Background Checks

It is in the best interest of our students to conduct background checks for all employees, coaches and volunteers. Anyone driving students will need to submit to a driver's check as well. This will align us with most organizations that work with children and follow MN Statute

123B.03 on background checks. This statute indicates Minnehaha Academy, at its discretion, can request a criminal history background check on any individual who seeks to enter a school or its grounds for the purpose of serving as a school volunteer or working as an independent contractor.

Transportation

Transportation is available for students in Minneapolis and in the surrounding areas. Minneapolis bus schedules are sent home prior to the beginning of the school year; families on St. Paul and suburban routes will be contacted with route information by our provider prior to the beginning of the year. Please note that no route changes will take place until after the first two weeks of school.

There is also a scheduled shuttle that takes students between the Minnehaha Academy campuses each day. Contact Scott Glenn, Transportation Director, for specific information: 612.728.7788.

Students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with expectations during the school day. Failure to comply with behavior expectations will result in a Discipline Referral and subsequent disciplinary processes. (See page 10.) Bus drivers are authorized to contact school administration regarding student behavior.

To receive more information about the costs and times of any of these bus services or carpool options or to register your child for bus service, contact Scott Glenn, Transportation Director, at 612. 728.7788.

Arrival, Departure, and Parking Procedures

The morning and afternoon traffic in and around the Lower & Middle School parking lot is very busy. The safety procedures are in place to ensure student safety. As such, the guidelines below are very important.

Pedestrian Traffic

Fifth Grade students serve as crossing guards in the morning and in the afternoon. Their primary responsibility is to help students and parents cross the street safely at the designated crosswalks. They are trained and take their jobs seriously.

Please utilize and respect the school patrol crossing guards and cross only at the patrolled crosswalks. Please also respect the crossing guard flags, as they indicate that students are in or nearing the street, including the guards themselves. **The “STOP” emblem on their flags hold the same legal authority as a fixed STOP sign and failure to respond can result in a traffic violation and ticket.** This will help adults focus on safety and teach it to our children by demonstrating respect for the rules.

Bus Traffic

The bus lane is dedicated for buses only and will allow buses to safely load and unload our students. For the safety of students arriving by bus, cars may not enter the bus lane during arrival and dismissal times: 8:15 – 9:00am and 2:45 – 3:30pm.

Car Traffic

For the safety of students arriving by bus, cars may not enter the bus lane during arrival and dismissal times: 8:15 – 9:00am and 2:45 – 3:30pm.

- **Cars with Preschool students** should park in the main lot and sign-in their child at the west doors.
- **Cars with Students in PreK-Grade 5** should use the drop-off lane located within the school parking lot.
- **Cars with Middle School students** should drop students off on 42nd Street rather than coming through the drop-off lane.

When entering the parking lot, follow the arrows to the drop-off area and pull your car forward as far as possible, allowing your children to exit onto the sidewalk. This lane of traffic will move quickly when all drivers follow the procedure.

Drop-Off Procedures for Parents Driving their Child(ren)

For the safety of students, faculty, and staff, parents will not be allowed entry into the building during drop off. Please have your child(ren) ready to be dropped off in the designated entry point:

- Preschool: West Door
- Kindergarten - 5th Grade: Main Doors
- Middle School: East Door (next to Chapel)

If a child needs extra time to get organized for the school day, park in the lot or on the street to assist them before entering the drop-off lane. Cars in the drop-off lane must be ready to keep the line moving.

Students who arrive between 8:15 and 8:40am will go immediately to their designated instructional space. Families have been asked to commit to one of the following arrival times:

- 8:15am
- 8:25am
- 8:35am

Health screening should be completed at home before boarding transportation to school.

Pick-Up Procedures for Parents Driving their Child(ren)

For the safety of students, faculty, and staff, parents will not be allowed entry into the building. Students will exit the building at multiple, designated locations:

- Preschool: West Door
- Kindergarten - 5th Grade: Main Doors
- Middle School: East Doors (next to the Chapel)

The following dismissal schedule will be used:

- 3:05pm - Students using buses and vans dismissed and exit through the front doors
- Families using the car line will commit to one of the following dismissal times:
 - 3:10 pm
 - 3:20 pm
 - 3:30 pm

Lower School students being picked up in the car line will wait inside their classrooms and be called over the PA system when their parent/guardian reaches the pick-up area. If a student has a preschool sibling, he/she will be released through the Main Doors and directed to walk up the

sidewalk to the West Door to meet their parent/guardian.

There is **NO PARKING** in the drop-off area. This is a fire lane and it is illegal to park there for any reason. If you need to assist your child into the building, you must park in one of the parking lot stalls or on the street and walk your child into the building. Please use the sidewalks to avoid cutting through the parking lot.

The city of Minneapolis has several ordinances that we must comply with. Failure to comply may result in tickets or fines. Please remember:

1. No car can be parked within 20 feet of marked crosswalks and 30 feet of all stop signs.
2. No car can be parked and unattended in a No Parking Zone.
3. Cars may only idle for a short period of time. Exceptions can be made in extreme weather conditions and for emergencies.

Note: If you anticipate needing to wait in your car for an extended period of time, please park. You are welcome to wait in the office area.

Health Services Policies and Procedures

**For COVID-related policies and information please see the
Minnehaha Academy website:
<https://www.minnehahaacademy.net/>**

The health office is staffed by a Licensed School Nurse or Registered Nurse each day school is in session from 8:15am to 3:30pm. In order to provide for the health and safety of your student, the Emergency Health Information Form and Ibuprofen Consent Form must be completed/submitted online. **These forms must be completed at the beginning of each and every school year for all students.** Information will not be stored year to year. Students are not be able to attend class until these forms are completed and submitted.

Questions should be directed to Paul Slininger, Lower & Middle School Nurse:
sliningerpaul@minnehahaacademy.net.

Required Health Forms

The following is a summary of which health forms are required annually for our students:

	Skyward Health Information	Physical Examination Summary Form	Immunization Record Form
Preschool	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kindergarten	Yes	Yes	Yes
1 st -6 th Grade	Yes	Only if there is a major health concern or for new students	Only for new students
7 th Grade	Yes	Yes	Yes
8 th Grade	Yes	Only if there is a major health concern or for new students	Only for new students
How to Submit?	Online (Skyward)	Physical Copy	Physical Copy

Due to the essential nature of this information, students are not be able to attend class until the forms above are completed and submitted.

First Aid and Emergency Care During School Hours (8:15 AM – 3:30 PM)

First aid will be administered by any staff person qualified to administer appropriate first aid. In the event of a serious emergency, 911 will be called. It is expected that parents of children with life-threatening allergies, asthma, or other emergency conditions will notify the school nurse, as well as provide emergency supplies and medications at the beginning of each and every school year. Medication must NOT be expired and medication will NOT be kept over the summer. Any medication not picked up at the end of the school year will be destroyed.

First Aid and Emergency Care Before School, After School, and for Extracurriculars

If your student requires an emergency health plan or medication (epi-pen, inhaler, etc) and attends the before or after school programs, rides a bus, plays a sport, or participates in other activities outside of regular school hours, **it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make the appropriate arrangements with coaches or before/after school program staff. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to supply these individuals with appropriate emergency plans, supplies, and medications.** The health office and student's classroom will be closed and locked outside of regular school hours; any medication stored there will NOT be available outside of regular school hours.

Illness and Communicable Disease

To protect your student and other students, please keep your child home if he/she shows any signs of illness or has a condition determined as contagious by the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department (www.hennepin.us/childcaremanual).

Students should NOT come to school with the following:

****Please see Minnehaha Academy website for Information regarding COVID exclusion****

- Fever of 100° F (orally) or 99° F (axillary) or higher within the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- An undiagnosed skin rash
- Live head lice (determined by school nurse or parent/guardian)
- A reportable illness or condition determined as contagious, including but not limited to: pink eye (conjunctivitis), chicken pox (varicella), strep throat, impetigo, influenza, ringworm, and scabies
- Significant respiratory distress or unexplained lethargy

Please call the health office if your student has been diagnosed with a reportable illness or contagious condition. In the event that other students are exposed to a contagious illness, written notices of exposure to illness may be sent home with students in the same class.

Students may NOT come back to school until:

****Please see Minnehaha Academy website for Information regarding returning after COVID****

- Fever is less than 100° F (orally) or 99° (axillary) for 24 hours **without** the use of Tylenol/Motrin/Ibuprofen
- No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours since last episode
- Skin rash is identified and treatment started if prescribed
- Initial treatment for head lice has been done and there are no live lice present
- Completion of 24 hours of treatment for contagious illnesses with antibiotics

- Chicken pox lesions are completely crusted over

Additional guidelines:

- If a student returns to school during the school day after an illness, you must check in with the nurse before he/she returns to the classroom.
- If your child cannot participate in Physical Education class or needs to stay in from recess, please send a signed note with that information. If your child will be missing gym or recess for multiple days, a doctor's note will be necessary.

Medication Policy

For the safety of all students, it is recommended that medication be given at home whenever possible. However, if your child requires medication to be dispensed during school hours, the following medication policy will be followed for all medications (prescription and non-prescription).

- School personnel will only give medication with the signed consent of both licensed prescriber AND parent/guardian. The Annual Authorization for Administration of Medication form can be found here: <http://www.minnehahaacademy.net/parents/> under the Health Services heading.
- A new medication consent form is required at the beginning of each school year or if there are any medication administration changes
- Medication must be in the original pharmacy container, including the child's full name, name and dosage of medication, time/directions for administration, physician's name, and current date of prescription. The label must be in agreement with the signed consent.
- Parents/guardians must bring the medication and consent to the health office in person. Students may NOT carry or transport medications.
- Parents/guardians must pick up medication at the end of the school year. Medication and supplies left in the health office after the end of the year will be destroyed.
- The only medications students may self-carry and self-administer are emergency inhalers and epi-pens. The parent AND licensed prescriber must indicate permission to self-carry on the medication authorization form. We encourage older students (5th grade and up) to self-carry/manage emergency medications.

Administration of Non-prescription Pain Medication

Health office personnel may administer Ibuprofen, Cough Drops, or Anti-Itch Cream (Hydrocortisone) to students if parent/guardian consent has been given on Skyward. Remember, when possible, administer medication in the home. The following policies apply to the administration of Ibuprofen to students at school:

- The health office will maintain a stock bottle of Ibuprofen for communal usage.
- The medication will ONLY be given as stated on the label based on age or weight.
- A physician/licensed prescriber order will be necessary if parents request a different dosage or if the nurse deems necessary for any other reason.

Note: Children/teens should not take aspirin products such as Excedrin because of its association with Reye's Syndrome.

Immunizations and Physicals

Minnesota Immunization Law requires that children enrolled in school show proof that they have had the required immunizations or that they are exempt. All students must be fully immunized

by the first day of school. Students will not be allowed to enroll or remain enrolled without completed immunizations or a legal exemption. Guardians are responsible for submitting documentation of immunization status to Betsy Norby in the main office before the first day of school.

In addition to Immunization Records, a Physical Examination Summary Form signed and dated by your healthcare professional is **mandatory** for:

- 1) All preschool students
- 2) All kindergarten students
- 3) All 7th grade students and every 3 years thereafter
- 4) New students, when any major medical change occurs, or at the school nurse's discretion

Your student will not be allowed to attend class without the proper immunization AND physical examination forms. Minnehaha's combined Physical-Immunization Form can be found at: <http://www.minnehahaacademy.net/parents/> under the Health Services heading. It is also acceptable to use an Immunization Record Form and Physical Examination Summary Form provided by your student's pediatrician or clinic.

Student Insurance

Information on student insurance was mailed in the summer packet from the president's office. The cost of this supplemental insurance is covered by student fees. In case of an accident, the student must report at once to the nurse or an administrative official, who will complete an accident form. Whatever medical costs are not covered by a student's own insurance, the school would typically cover. The policy covers riding in transportation to and from school, but it does not apply to injuries sustained while riding in or operating a two or three-wheeled vehicle. It also does not apply to injuries while playing football.

Life-Threatening Food Allergy Policy and Procedures

Accommodations for Students with Life-threatening Food Allergies

1. Allergy and Anaphylaxis Action Plans based on physician's orders will be maintained in the health office. It is the parent/guardian responsibility to provide the health office and other staff with new emergency plans EVERY year.
2. All faculty who have direct contact with students who have life-threatening allergies will be instructed on risk reduction and epi-pen administration.

Classroom Accommodations

1. All classrooms will be designated nut-free. Nuts and nut products will NOT be allowed in the classroom. Snacks that have been processed in a facility that also processes nuts are allowed, but NOT products that have been processed on equipment that also processes nuts.
2. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water before school begins as well as before and after eating. If it is suspected that a student's desk has been contaminated with an allergen, the desk will be cleaned with soap/water or disinfectant wipes. If a classroom has been used for an after-school program, the supervising adult will be responsible for washing desks and surfaces to remove allergens.

Bus and Extracurricular Accommodations

1. If your student rides the bus, **parents/guardians will be responsible for addressing their student's life-threatening allergies with the bus company.**
2. Students will not eat on buses when traveling to and from field trips. If a change in this accommodation for a particular field trip is deemed necessary, the change should be discussed with the school nurse before the field trip.
3. If your student participates in the before/after-school program, sports, or extracurricular activities, **parents/guardians will be responsible for addressing any health concerns with before/after-school program staff or coaches, including providing them with emergency plans and medical supplies as necessary.**

Responsibilities

Student with Life-threatening Allergies

1. Wash hands before and after eating, as well as avoiding known allergens.
2. Never trade or share food, containers, trays, napkins, or utensils with anyone.
3. Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction and promptly inform an adult and report to the school nurse (bring a friend as an escort).

Parent/Guardian of the Student with Life-threatening Allergies

1. Inform school nurse and teacher of student's allergy prior to school year or as soon as possible after a diagnosis.
2. Provide school nurse with a minimum of 2 up-to-date epi-pens and medication orders.
3. Provide before/after school program or other extracurricular staff with epi-pens.
4. Provide a bag of "safe snacks" for their student in the student's classroom.

School Nurse

1. Conduct education for appropriate faculty and staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, and epi-pen administration.
2. Ensure that epi-pens are accessible to faculty and staff while students are present in the building from 8:15 AM to 3:30 PM.

Minnehaha Academy Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures

Minnehaha Lower School seeks to provide a safe and positive climate for all students. Maintaining and promoting this environment is very important to all members of our community. This environment excludes hurtful and unacceptable behavior including name-calling, verbal putdowns and harassment. Sexual harassment or any harassment based on personal individuality or ethnic, racial, religious, or physical differences will be promptly investigated and resolved. Any incidences of harassment should be reported to a teacher, counselor or the administration. The incident will be investigated promptly, objectively, and confidentially.

Minnehaha Academy is committed to having a positive learning and work environment that is free from sexual harassment. Minnehaha Academy will not tolerate sexual harassment of students, employees, or other members of the school community whether on school property, at

school or work-related assignments, at events off school property, or at school-sponsored functions. In addition to being demeaning and degrading, sexual harassment is unlawful and strictly prohibited by school policy. Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment may constitute unlawful sexual abuse or assault under federal and/or Minnesota law.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted or unwelcome sexual conduct, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or related to a person's gender when:

- submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education or employment; or
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment, or academic or school-related decisions affecting that individual; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment is not limited to physical acts. The use of crude or sexually inappropriate language may be considered sexual harassment if it creates an uncomfortable environment for someone else. Sexual harassment may also include verbal teasing or inappropriate name-calling related to one's sex; spreading rumors of a sexual nature; and sending crude or unwanted sexual messages via letter, e-mail, text message, or social media. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes but is not limited to:

- suggestive sexual innuendo, comments, or slurs;
- inappropriate or suggestive comments about a person's body or appearance;
- unwanted touching, patting, pinching;
- displaying sexually suggestive pictures, cartoons, drawings, posters, or graffiti, including pornography;
- writing graffiti of a sexual nature on school property, such as on bathroom walls;
- subtle pressure for sexual activity;
- coerced sexual relations; or
- physical assault.

Complaints and Grievances

Minnehaha Academy strongly encourages all students and employees to report any incident of possible sexual harassment. Any student who believes he or she has been harassed should immediately report such actions to the principal, vice principal, school counselor, school nurse, or the student's teacher. Any employee who believes he or she has been harassed should immediately report such actions to his or her supervisor or to the Director of Human Resources.

- Any school employee who receives a complaint from a student of sexual harassment must report this information to the principal or the dean of students.
- Reports of sexual harassment will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need for a thorough investigation and applicable laws, including mandatory reporting laws.
- Any student or employee who is found to have knowingly filed a false complaint of sexual harassment will be subject to discipline by the school.

Investigation and Response

Following a complaint of harassment, the school will take prompt action to investigate the allegations of sexual harassment. Based upon its investigation, Minnehaha Academy will take prompt and appropriate corrective action.

- In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated.
- Any person found to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate discipline or other corrective action, including up to dismissal or discharge from Minnehaha Academy.
- In addition, some forms of sexual harassment may need to be reported to legal authorities pursuant to Minnesota law. Minnehaha Academy will comply with applicable legal reporting requirements in cases of suspected sexual abuse, physical abuse or neglect of any student.

Non-Retaliation

The school and its employees will not retaliate against any victim of, or witness to, sexual harassment, and any such retaliation by a school employee is forbidden. Students are also prohibited from retaliating against any student who was a victim of, or witness to, sexual harassment. Such retaliation shall be considered a violation of this policy and will subject that person to discipline. Such retaliation should be reported using the same reporting procedure as stated above for reporting harassment.