

GUIDELINES for CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these Guidelines is to describe Maret School's expectations regarding appropriate conduct of faculty and students, the School's approach toward violations of rules, efforts to prevent abuse and neglect, procedures for mandatory reporting of abuse and neglect, and general compliance with recent laws affecting schools in the District of Columbia. These Guidelines harmonize with Maret's Mission and Philosophy, which inform our actions and expectations. The Guidelines address the following topics:

- Section 1. Code of Conduct for Maret Faculty
- Section 2. School Philosophy regarding Violation of Rules by Students
- Section 3. Violations Leading to Disciplinary Action for Students
- Section 4. Procedures for Investigations and Disciplinary Actions
- Section 5. Additional School Response to Drug and Alcohol Use
- Section 6. Counseling Resources
- Section 7. Restorative Practices
- Section 8. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 9. Additional Information on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Section 10. Common Courtesies
- Section 11. Use of Social Media
- Section 12. Resources, Training and Information for Faculty, Students and Families
- Section 13. Website and Handbook Links

SECTION 1. Code of Conduct for Maret Faculty

All adults employed by Maret School—without exception—are considered part of the faculty. Although all faculty members have different roles and responsibilities, each person is responsible for “teaching” and for respecting our students. Everyone is expected to fulfill and support the School's Mission & Philosophy statement.

A. Basic principles of the Code of Conduct include the following:

1. The best interests of students should always be our highest priority;
2. Adults should set appropriate limits and maintain healthy boundaries in their relationships with both students and co-workers;
3. Maret employees should be solid role models;
4. Maret employees may never have sexual or romantic relationships with students, use alcohol or drugs of any kind with students, or partake in any illegal conduct;
5. Maret employees should promptly communicate any concerns about misconduct in accordance with the procedures set forth in these Guidelines for Code of Conduct.
6. It is firmly prohibited for any faculty member to say, write, sing, read aloud or communicate in any form, the word that is represented by the letter “n” in the term “n-word.” This is a form of hate speech. ANY usage of the n-word in any of its derogatory or slang iterations will not be tolerated and may lead to serious disciplinary action including termination.

B. Prevention of Abuse

1. Maret's work toward preventing abuse is comprehensive and ongoing, and faculty is expected to display high standards.

2. All Maret employees are trained to maintain appropriate boundaries with children.
3. The School runs annual faculty workshops and training sessions about abuse and abuse prevention using experts within and outside of the Maret community.
4. The School commissions background checks on all employees, including coaches and substitutes, and continues background checks after they are hired. All contracted workers are also expected to have had background checks.
5. The School teaches students and faculty how to identify and stop an abusive situation before it happens; what predatory behavior looks like; and how to help a friend if you are aware of any unsafe conduct.

SECTION 2. School Philosophy Regarding Violations of Rules by Students

- A. Maret takes pride in being an inclusive community of individuals working in an environment of trust. Our size and single campus foster meaningful connections among students, faculty, and parents. All faculty are expected to uphold the Mission & Philosophy of the School and embrace our Core Values: respect, integrity, excellence, creativity, the individual, connectedness, and joy. Please review the complete Mission & Philosophy included in these Guidelines.
- B. We do not have a thick rulebook or a detailed list of the consequences that will result if community members break the trust given to them. However, in light of our Mission, the size of the School, and the need to protect and preserve school property, the School has established and take seriously basic rules, guidelines, and common courtesies. The violation of any of these could lead to a range of disciplinary actions.
- C. Students are expected to behave during school activities, events at school, while using social media utilizing school accounts, and travel to and from school and school events.
- D. The School will evaluate and judge any infraction on an individual basis.
- E. The School understands that students learning from mistakes is an essential part of growing up. Our responses to these mistakes can take various forms, including sending students home to begin a process of remediation. Serious student misconduct in grades nine through twelve that results in suspensions of two or more days or expulsion is reported to colleges. Serious disciplinary issues that occur at any time may be reported if the student applies to other schools or programs. Other disciplinary issues may remain confidential at the discretion of the Division Director and the Head of School.

Starting in 2021-2022, faculty have been trained to offer Restorative Practices to anyone in our community who feels they have experienced racial harm. (See Section 7)

SECTION 3. Violations Leading to Disciplinary Actions for Students

- A. The following rules, if violated, will lead to suspension at a minimum and could lead to further disciplinary measures including expulsion:
 1. Abuse—physical or sexual—and assault are illegal and will not be tolerated.
 2. No weapons are permitted on campus.
 3. No student may possess, consume, or sell illegal drugs, drug-related paraphernalia, or alcohol or alcohol-related paraphernalia on campus or at school-sponsored events (including events off campus). Students who leave campus and return to campus under the influence of an illegal drug or alcohol will be viewed as having consumed the substance on campus. Not only is the use of alcohol and other drugs (including steroids) by students illegal, it is detrimental to one's health, development, and achievement.

- B. The following rules, if violated, could lead to suspension and further disciplinary measures:
1. Any actions in violation of federal, state, and/or district law are prohibited.
 2. No one may engage in any activity that may endanger their own or another's health, safety, or welfare.
 3. Harmful language or conduct that degrades, insults, or injures a person or group based on their real or perceived race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, immigration status, socio-economic status, religion, or ability, regardless of intention, is counter to our Mission. Although Maret values the freedom to express one's opinions and beliefs, this kind of hateful language and conduct inhibits constructive conversation and undermines our commitment to build "community that is equitable and inclusive." This includes, but is not limited to, language and conduct, such as: graffiti, name calling, jokes, or rumors; threatening or intimidating conduct; slurs, stereotypes, and hostile acts; written or graphic material circulated physically or electronically; a physical act of aggression or assault; and damage of property.
 4. Harassment—bullying, verbal, physical, sexual, or electronic—by or toward any member of the community, either direct or indirect, is counter to our value of respect. Harassment behavior includes physical or verbal threats, teasing, or intimidation that humiliates, degrades, or otherwise damages a student's physical, emotional, or psychological well-being. Harassment may occur in a single instance or repeatedly over time. The School takes a proactive approach to preventing harassment through the Social-Emotional Learning curriculum, Wellness classes, and advising program in MS/US. Students learn to recognize and mobilize against harassment and bullying behavior. For more information, please go to: <https://www.maret.org/academics/wellness>.
 5. Dating violence during activities described in Section 2.C is not tolerated. Dating violence is the use of abusive behaviors by a person to harm, threaten, or intimidate a current or former dating partner, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.
 6. In a community of trust, no stealing, plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of dishonesty is allowed.
 7. Everyone is expected to show respect for the campus and the people who comprise the Maret community, both in person and online, by demonstrating honesty, courtesy, and appropriate behavior.
 8. The Maret campus belongs to all of us. No vandalism is allowed, including "trashing" of school property such as bathrooms, classrooms, lounges, hallways, or outdoor areas. "Hacking" into online spaces, compromising the regular use or security of the network, changing software configurations, or installing software on school computers, or deleting, altering, or moving files belonging to others on the school network is not allowed.
 9. Maret is a smoke-free campus. Students are not allowed to smoke or use other tobacco/nicotine products, any type of e-cigarettes, whether or not they include nicotine/tobacco, and no product used for vaping or juuling, on or off campus during the academic day and while participating in school activities (e.g., sports practices, rehearsals). When coming or going to school, students should not use any of the products listed above around the campus. The smoke-free zone is defined from Cleveland Avenue/Calvert Street to Macomb Street and from Connecticut Avenue to 34th Street.

SECTION 4. Procedures for Investigations and Disciplinary Actions

If a student may have violated any rules listed in Sections 3A or 3B above that may lead to suspension or expulsion, the School may utilize the following steps as appropriate to the specific situation:

- A. The faculty member or student who witnesses the transgression or hears about a behavioral concern will inform the Division Director who informs Head of School.
- B. The Division Director, or their designee (e.g., School Counselor, Grade Dean, Assistant Director), will meet with the student and other affected parties to gain more information, including as appropriate the teachers of the students involved and others who may have witnessed the situation.
- C. The Division Director or designee, other pertinent faculty members, School Counselor, if appropriate, and Head of School will meet to discuss next steps.
- D. The Division Director or designee will inform the student's parents/guardians of the situation.
- E. The Head of School or her designee may consult with the school lawyer and the President of the Board of Trustees.
- F. The Head of School and Division Director will meet with the student and the student's parents/guardians.
- G. After conducting interviews and gathering facts, the School will determine whether there is clear and convincing evidence that the conduct at issue was inappropriate and merits any discipline, including such actions as written apologies, meetings with other students as indicated, social probation, loss of privileges, suspension, required outside psychological evaluation and counseling, and expulsion.
- H. The Division Director or designee informs the student's parents/guardians in writing of the status of the discipline, including the situation leading to discipline, the specific disciplinary action if any, whether social probation will occur, and the follow-up process when the student returns to school.
- I. Where appropriate, the Division Director, Head of School, and the student, with the parents/guardians, meet for re-entry and discuss next steps if counseling, therapy, or other medical steps are recommended as part of process.
- J. The Division Director will set expectations moving forward, which may involve monitoring of future behavior. The Division Director will prepare a written report.
- K. Should expectations be broken, the process will begin again, recognizing that there is now a continuing pattern of behavior, and more serious consequences may follow.
- L. If the Division Director or designee and Head of School determine at any point that there is no reasonable basis to conclude that a rule has been violated, there will be no further investigation of the matter unless additional information is forthcoming.
- M. Variations from the procedures set forth in this Section will not be considered a violation of the Guidelines and will be guided by considerations unique to the particular facts of the situation. Whenever possible, the School will explore informal resolutions and consider the desire of parties involved to not go through a formal process or adversarial proceedings. The School generally resolves matters without resorting to any formal hearings.
- N. The School will determine whether and how to communicate with the school community regarding allegations of misconduct or abuse. Any such communication will be guided by privacy considerations, protecting the safety of those making complaints and avoidance of reputational damage to those involved in the allegations.

SECTION 5. Additional School Response to Drug and Alcohol Use

- A. At a time when drugs and alcohol are prevalent in our society and the temptation to use them may be great, the School has established an educational program that will try to help our students understand the dangers of substance abuse and avoid making mistakes.
- B. The School recognizes that the primary responsibility for students' off-campus activities rests with the students and their parents/guardians. However, the School encourages and supports social activities that conform to the law and works with parents to ensure the health of their children.
- C. The School will support, without penalty, to the fullest extent possible, any student who seeks help to overcome substance use, abuse, or dependency (including to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaping, or juuling). The student may ask for help voluntarily or others may ask for help on the student's behalf if there is an indication of a problem. In each case, the School will determine, with the student's parents, the need for professional evaluation.

SECTION 6. Counseling Resources

- A. The Counseling Department serves as a resource to all members of the Maret community, including students, faculty, and parents. The school counselors offer individual and group counseling for students on a short-term basis, act as consultants to faculty, and maintain an extensive network of referrals and resources based in the Washington metropolitan area. Students may receive these, or other, services offered by the school counselors as part of our regular academic program. All services are confidential as appropriate. Under certain circumstances, confidential information may be shared with people who have a legitimate need to know.
- B. The Counseling Department is also actively involved with equity & inclusion programs, substance abuse education programs for students and parents, advisor/advisee groups, the assembly program, the wellness program, and student activity groups.
- C. Our School Counselors are well-known to all students and operate in an environment in which asking for help is encouraged.
- D. Parents, students, or faculty may contact the Director of Counseling, LaNaadrian Easterling, at leasterling@maret.org or 202-939-4064 or our divisional counselors: Eric Jefferson in the Lower School (ejefferson@maret.org, 202-939-8816) or Vanessa Robin in the Middle School (vrobin@maret.org, 202-939 8815)
- E. The Counseling Department and the Head of School have developed guidelines for reporting to the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency if a student, who is found to have committed harassment, assault or dating violence, may also have been the victim of child sexual abuse or child abuse.

SECTION 7

Restorative Practices (RP) is a series of conversations for repairing relationships after racial and other types of harm have occurred. The RP team is composed of faculty members chosen by the school community and entrusted to lead these conversations. An RP protocol is separate from a formal consequence. Anyone within the school community--students, faculty, and families--is welcome to use the RP process.

SECTION 8. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

- A. The well-being of every child in the Maret community is the School's most important priority. Therefore, as required by law, every Maret employee must understand the reporting obligations regarding suspected child abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.
- B. If a faculty member *knows* or has *reasonable cause to suspect* that a child known to them in a professional or official capacity **has been** or **is in immediate danger of being** a mentally or physically abused or

neglected child, by any parent, guardian, adoptive parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for the supervision of a child, or any household or family member of such child, then they should immediately report that information to Head of School Marjo Talbott.

- C. If a faculty member *knows* or has *reasonable cause to suspect* that a child **has been** or **is in immediate danger of being** the victim of sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse (this includes learning *after the fact* that a student under the age of 20 had a sexual relationship with an employee of the School), then they should immediately report that information to Head of School Marjo Talbott.
- D. If a faculty member *knows* or has *reasonable cause to suspect* that a child was assisted, supported, caused, encouraged, commanded, enabled, induced, facilitated, or permitted to become a prostitute **or** has an injury caused by a bullet **or** has an injury caused by a knife or other sharp object which has been caused by other than accidental means, then they should immediately report that information to Head of School Marjo Talbott.
- E. If Marjo Talbott is not available, then the faculty member should make the report to Assistant Head of School Susan Epps or, in her absence, Trey Holloway, the Assistant Head: Finance & Operations. A faculty member who is concerned about Head of School Marjo Talbott's involvement with children, should contact the President of the Board of Trustees Ian Cameron.
- F. The law protects any person who participates in good faith in the making of a required report, by providing immunity from civil or criminal liability with respect to the making of the report.
- G. After a faculty member has made a report, Head of School Marjo Talbott or her designee will promptly investigate and will notify, together with the faculty member, the appropriate legal authorities if there is reasonable cause to suspect any of the above infractions. The D.C. Child and Family Services Agency can be contacted at 202-671-SAFE (7233). At any time, the Head of School or her designee may seek legal advice in connection with a possible report. The Head of School will generally also make a written report following the oral report.
- H. If there are questions about what exactly constitutes "mental abuse," "physical abuse," "neglect," "sexual abuse," "attempted sexual abuse," etc., faculty members may review copies of the relevant laws in the Business Office.
- I. It is our moral and legal obligation to protect children from abuse and neglect. It is not always easy to know the right action to take. Faculty should always err on the side of doing what is best for children.
- J. The families of victims – or even the victims themselves – may ask a faculty member to let them keep private an incident of abuse. Doing so, however, risks allowing the abuser to victimize other children. That is why reporting is mandatory and not optional. A faculty member may not avoid the mandatory reporting obligation on the grounds that the victim has requested that they maintain confidentiality.
- K. The laws of the District of Columbia penalize the willful failure to make a required report by fines or imprisonment.
- L. Additional resources are available at the DC Child and Family Services Agency. (See link noted below.)
- M. All employees who have contact with our students are required to participate in annual Mandated Reporter Training in order to educate mandated reporters. The average completion time is 2.0 hours and requires an email address. The link to the DC Child and Family Services website is

<https://cfsa.dc.gov/service/mandated-reporter-training>

In the center of the page, there is a yellow circle that refers to the training. The user will be prompted to answer a few questions; upon completion, a printed certificate will be provided and should be sent to the Business Office. The School will specify a date for completion of training every year.

SECTION 9. Additional Information on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect from the D.C. Child and Family Service Agency



Nationally and in the District of Columbia, most reports and substantiations of child maltreatment are neglect, followed by physical abuse and sexual abuse.

Neglect occurs when parents or caretakers do not provide proper supervision, control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care necessary for healthy development. By itself, lack of financial means to provide for a child is not neglect.

Physical signs may include:

- Poor hygiene.
- Inappropriate or ill-fitting clothing.
- Being left alone or with people unable to provide proper supervision.
- Obvious lack of necessary medical treatment.

Behavioral signs may include:

- Chronic hunger or sleepiness.
- Delayed language development.
- Clinging behavior or development of indiscriminate attachments.
- Frequent complaints of feeling unwell.
- Frequent tardiness or absence from school.

Physical abuse is non-accidental injury of a child by a parent or caretaker.

Physical signs may include:

- Bruises, welts, or swelling.
- Sprains or broken bones.
- Burns.
- Lacerations or abrasions.
- Bite marks.
- Unexplained or repeated injuries.

Behavioral signs may include:

- Attempts to hide injuries.
- Difficulty sitting or walking.
- Wariness of physical contact with adults.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Depression or self-mutilation.
- Fear of parent(s) or caregiver(s).

Sexual abuse is exploitation of a child for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child.

Physical signs may include:

- Difficulty walking or sitting.
- Torn, stained, or bloody clothing.
- Genital pain or itching.
- Sexually transmitted diseases.
- Pregnancy.

Behavioral signs may include:

- Precocious sexual knowledge or behavior.
- Extremes—hostile and aggressive or fearful and withdrawn.
- Self-mutilation.
- Substance abuse.
- Running away.



To report child abuse and neglect in the District, call 202-671-SAFE.

SECTION 10. Common Courtesies

- A. Lower School and Middle School students may not use personal electronic devices, including cellphones, during the school day. Students are not allowed to use personal electronic devices during the school day in classrooms (unless approved by teacher for specific class-related purpose) and in the Theatre. Cell phones are expected to be turned off during classes and school activities.
- B. Behavior in the cafeteria—before, during, and after scheduled meals—must be respectful of others, particularly those who serve that area. Students and faculty are expected to return their trays and dishes to the dishroom.
- C. We take pride in a clean campus. Students are allowed to have snacks during the school day; however, no snacks or food are allowed on the backfield. Snacks or food are not allowed in classrooms, except during club meetings or meetings with teachers. Club meetings are designated to rooms AC361-363. Food and drink need to be disposed of in closed trash bins. Food policy is subject to change if students are not able to keep spaces clean (including cafeteria and outdoor space).
- D. Students are expected to dress appropriately. Each Division Director, with the faculty, will have guidelines for their students. We should all try to be sensitive to the standards and concerns of others, but racially and sexually offensive clothes are unacceptable. For safety reasons, shoes must be worn at all times.
- E. Because of limited parking, students may not park on campus at any time before 4:00 p.m. on a school day, including during exams, except in limited, pre-assigned designated spaces. Students who drive to school must obtain a parking decal and attach it to an interior window. They also need to abide by any parking regulations or restrictions.
- F. Using school resources, including the computer network, for commercial use or advertising is not acceptable.

SECTION 11. Use of Social Media

- A. Maret uses social media resources such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to celebrate events and to connect with our community. Any information posted using Maret's social media channels is considered an official school communication.
- B. The intent of this Section of the Guidelines is to clarify appropriate and effective ways to engage students, colleagues, and the greater community without compromising the privacy of our students and the integrity of the School, and to explain limitations on communication between faculty and students outside of school.
- C. Faculty serve as Maret ambassadors in the greater community and must exercise discretion when using social media to promote school activities.
- D. Faculty should not create social media accounts on behalf of Maret and should instead consult the Director of Social Media, Patrick Scott, (Ex. 2460) regarding the use of existing Maret accounts.
- E. When using social media networking to promote the School, faculty should review the account's security settings or consult Patrick Scott to ensure the proper level of access related to the event, when appropriate.
- F. Faculty who use social media on behalf of Maret are responsible for the accuracy and appropriateness of the content they make available.
- G. Faculty should not share or post identifiable information about students; however, faculty may identify the School as well as their professional capacity, e.g., "Today, I am accompanying my Maret students to a coral reef in Puerto Rico where they will begin their lab reports."

- H. Faculty should always consider the target audience and the sensibilities of all potential recipients.
- I. When uncertain about the appropriateness of a message, faculty should contact Patrick Scott (Ex. 2460) or the Director of Communications (Carolyn Law, Ex. 8835) for advice and recommendations.
- J. Faculty should adhere to the following restrictions:
 - 1. Faculty should not post images or identities of students on their personal social media networks; however, images and text posted to official Maret accounts may be shared with personal accounts.
 - 2. Faculty should be mindful that social media and other online activities may be visible to current, past, and prospective members of the school community.
 - 3. Faculty must use appropriate discretion on personal social media accounts when those communications impact one's position at the School, the reputation of the School, and the School's privacy policies.
 - 4. Faculty should not use school social media, school email, or any other school resources to endorse any candidate for public office or communicate anything that favors or opposes a candidate. Faculty may participate in political campaign activities in their personal capacity on their own time from their personal accounts, but not as a representative of the School. When uncertain as to whether a message is considered political advocacy, please consult Social Media Director Patrick Scott or Director of Communications Carolyn Law.
 - 5. Faculty posting messages related to Maret on their personal accounts should be authentic about who they are and acknowledge their affiliation with Maret. Only your personal opinions should be expressed. Faculty should never represent themselves as a spokesperson for Maret via a personal account.
 - 6. Faculty should ensure that they are always honest and accurate when posting information or news. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about Maret, fellow Faculty, or other schools.
 - 7. With approval from the Director of Social Media, faculty may initiate contact with students from an approved official Maret account for school-related messaging only.
 - 8. If a faculty member learns through social media that a student is being abused, they are responsible for reporting that information, per DC Mandatory Reporter training. The faculty member should also inform their Division Director or Head of School. (need to confirm)
 - 9. Faculty are expected to wait until at least one year after a student's graduation from upper school before connecting with the student online.

SECTION 12. Resources, Training and Information for Faculty, Students, and Families

- A. The School has compiled resources, services and information for students and families affected by student sexual abuse. These resources are available in Section 12 of these Guidelines.
- B. The School has placed these Guidelines on the website and informed parents, faculty, and students of its location.
- C. In addition to the resources referred to in Section 10.A above, the School's Counseling Department is available to provide resources as more fully described in Section 6 of these Guidelines. Any student or family may contact the Director of Counseling, LaNaadrian Easterling, at leasterling@maret.org or 202-939-4064, or our divisional counselors Eric Jefferson in the Lower School (ejefferson@maret.org, ext. 8816) or Vanessa Robin in the Middle School (vrobin@maret.org, ext. 8815).
- D. The School provides electronic training and information annually for parents regarding child abuse, including recognizing warning signs and techniques to engage students in discussions of these topics.
- E. The School, assisted by the Counseling Department as appropriate, provides training for faculty at the time of hiring and at least every two years, covering such topics as the following:

1. The content of these guidelines, sexual misconduct, student sexual abuse and mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect.
 2. Identifying, responding to, and reporting student-on-student harassment, assault and dating violence;
 3. Assisting students to set boundaries on appropriate behavior; and
 4. Receiving reports and disclosures from students in a supportive manner.
- F. The School provides training to the school community on how to interrupt specific acts of student-on-student sexual harassment, assault or dating violence and how to prevent their recurrence.

SECTION 13. Website and Handbook Links

The following website and handbook links provide additional information about the topics addressed in these Guidelines:

<https://www.maret.org/about-us/mission>

<https://www.maret.org/academics/wellness>

<https://www.maret.org/parents-resource-center>

<http://www.maret.org/about-us/emergencies>

<https://cfsa.dc.gov/service/mandated-reporter-training>