



# PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN STUDENT HANDBOOK SY2023-2024

Dr. Melinda Browne, Head of School  
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(207) 613-8900

School Website: [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org)  
Enrollment Portal: <https://meva.k12.com/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/MEVAK12>

MEVA Governing Board, Handbook Approval Date: 8/15/2023

*Notice: This document supersedes any previous versions from the approval date. MEVA has rights to make amendments to the handbook when necessary, without prior notice.*

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## **Welcome to Maine Virtual Academy!**

### **Letter from the MEVA Board of Directors**

It is with great pleasure that we present to you our Student & Parent/Legal Guardian Handbook for the 2023-2024 school year. We are excited to launch our 9th operating year as a school, but even more excited to welcome you to our student body.

MEVA, authorized by the Maine Charter Commission, exists to meet the diverse needs of all individuals in a learner-centered environment. We believe that the use of effective technology and successful teaching strategies will result in students with an appreciation for life-long learning and the ability to become competent, productive citizens.

Every student deserves an opportunity to excel—an honest and real chance to reach their potential. At MEVA our mission is to provide this opportunity and greatly increase the probability that Maine students will achieve their individual potential. MEVA's online learning instructional model will leverage research-based, 21st century learning skills in order to facilitate self-motivated, competent, life-long learners who participate effectively in society. We intend to provide an excellent educational alternative for students throughout the State of Maine who, for a variety of reasons, do not attend high school, or who may benefit from a non-traditional school setting. MEVA is available to Maine residents seeking an alternative academic setting, no matter what their specific life circumstances may be.

Our highly qualified faculty members, all Maine state-licensed, are eager and excited to share their vast knowledge and experience throughout the upcoming school year. Our teachers have worked hard to prepare an enriching course of study designed to educate and stimulate a passion for learning. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, please contact our office and we will ensure the appropriate member of our administrative team assists you. Our school contact information is as follows:

Maine Virtual Academy  
Ballard Center  
6 East Chestnut Street, Suite 230  
Augusta, ME 04330  
(207) 613-8900

Please always feel free to share with us your ideas on ways to improve our school and make the 2023-2024 school year the best experience for all involved.

Best Regards,

Melinda Browne, Ed.D., MEVA Head of School

Donna Pelletier, Chairperson of the MEVA Governing Board

## **Introduction to the MEVA Parent & Student Handbook**

The MEVA Student and Parent Handbook, 2023-2024, is intended to guide students and Parents/guardians in the operations of the school and the responsibilities and expectations of MEVA Legal Guardians and students. Policies contained herein have been approved by the Maine Virtual Academy Board of Directors.

**Special Notice:** During the current public health crisis (Covid-19), please feel free to contact school Administrators for any questions you may have, 207-613-8900 x 2000.

### ***Mission and Vision Statement***

Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop each student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high-quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of alternative educational options. MEVA will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs. MEVA's rigorous curriculum is aligned to the eight Maine content areas, the Maine Learning Results, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. MEVA will demand the highest level of accountability from our Maine-certified teachers, our educational management system and our nationally recognized provider of educational services. The MEVA Board will contract with Stride K12 for educational products and selected support services.

### ***Authorization and Governance***

MEVA operates statewide under the authorization and oversight of the Maine Charter Commission and the MEVA Governing Board

### ***Translated Materials/Access Statement***

To translate this correspondence to a different language, please go to <https://translate.google.com/> and copy and paste the text. (Please be advised that Maine Virtual Academy is not responsible for the translated content through Google. This link is provided as an aid only). For further assistance or to request additional translation resources/services, please call the school at 207.613.8900.



2023- 2024 School Calendar

August 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

November 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

February 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Vacation Days  
 School Holidays  
 Important Dates  
 First and Last Day of School  
**180 Total School Days**

Semester One: Aug 28 2023 - Jan 11, 2024  
 Semester Two: Jan 12, 2024 - Jun 14, 2024  
 Summer Session: Jun 24, 2024 - Aug 9, 2024

Vacation Days
October 6
November 22-24 Thanksgiving Vacation
December 21 - January 1 Winter Break
February 16-23 February Vacation
March 15
April 12-19 April Vacation
July 1-5 Summer Session Break
Important Dates
August 28 First Day of School; June 14 Last Day of School
June 7 Graduation Day
June 24 First Day of Summer Session
August 9 Last Day of Summer Session

School Holidays
September 4 Labor Day
October 9 Indigenous Peoples' Day
November 11 Veterans' Day Observed November 10
November 23 Thanksgiving Day
December 25 Christmas Day
January 1 New Year's Day
January 15 MLK Day
February 19 President's Day
April 15 Patriots Day
May 27 Memorial Day
June 19 Juneteenth
July 4 Independence Day



## STUDENT MATRIX FOR SUPPORT/DIRECTORY

Frequent Contacts	Name	Email	Phone Number
Head of School	Dr. Melinda Browne	mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900 x 2001
Academic Administrator	Don Fournier	dfournier@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900 x 2040
Guidance Counselor 10-12	Heather Tyler	guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900
Guidance Counselor 7-9	Dan Pierce	guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900
Student Support/Attendance Liaison	Mehry Mohammadi	mmohammadi@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900 x 2010
Family Academic Support POC	Dr. Holly Chapdelaine	hchapdelaine@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900
Special Services Office (504/IEP)	Lena Vitagliano	lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org	207.613.8900

Issue	Who To Contact
Academic Help	Content Teacher
Accommodations/Modifications	Lena Vitagliano, Special Services Office, lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org
Student Account Set-Up & Login	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison 207-613-8900 x 2010
Address/Phone Number Update	Meghan Crosby, Registrar 207-613-8900 x 2000
Attendance Questions	Mehry Mohammadi, Attendance/Engagement Clerk 207-613-8900 x 2010 Attendance@mainevirtualacademy.org
Family Academic Support Team/Liaison	Dr. Holly Chapdelaine, FASL: hchapdelaine@mainevirtualacademy.org
Live Session Tech Issues	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison 207-613-8900 x 2010
Classroom Distractions/Issues	Content Teacher
Course Change or Missing Course(s)	Guidance Department, guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org
Curriculum/Course Content Questions & Errors	Content Teacher
School Materials Shipping, Missing & Damaged	Gina Davis or Mehry Mohammadi 207-613-8900
Emergencies/Issues interfering w School Success	Dr. Melinda Browne, HOS: mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org
Feedback	Dr. Melinda Browne, HOS: mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org
Grades/Scores for Assignments/Assessments	Content Teacher
Course Planning	Guidance Department, guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org
IEP/504 Plan Questions	Lena Vitagliano, Special Services Office, lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org
Student Computer Hardware/Software Issues	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison 207-613-8900 x 2010
Title IX Coordinator	Dan Pierce and Heather Tyler, guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org
Computer Malware/Virus/Error Messages	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison 207-613-8900 x 2010
Computer Requests	Meghan Crosby, Registrar 207-613-8900 x 2000
Child Find Coordinator	Lena Vitagliano, Special Services Office, lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org
Online Navigation	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison, 207-613-8900 x 2010
Orientation for new & returning families	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison, 207-613-8900 x 2010
Post-Secondary / Explore EC Questions	Guidance Department, guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org
Homeless Liaison/Foster Care Liaison	Dr. Melinda Browne: 207-613-8900 x 2001 & Guidance Department
Quiz/Test Retakes	Content Teacher
Registration/Re-Registration Questions	Meghan Crosby, Registrar / Stephanie Emery, Ops/Program Manager 207-613-8900 x 2000 or x 2002
Return Course Materials/Computer Equipment	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison, 207-613-8900 x 2010
Return Labels (or Additional shipping Labels)	Mehry Mohammadi, Student Support Liaison, 207-613-8900 x 2010
English Language Learner Questions	Roberta Polland, EL Coordinator, rpolland@mainevirtualacademy.org
NWEA Testing (virtual/remote exams)	Christina O'Grady, cogrady@mainevirtualacademy.org
State MEA Science Testing (in person exams)	Stephanie Emery, Operations Manager 207-613-8900 x 2002
School Events	Mehry Mohammadi, Attendance/Engagement Clerk 207-613-8900 x2010

Issue	Who To Contact
IXL, Bongo, Zoom Questions	Content Teacher
Transcript Requests	Stef Carter, Guidance Secretary, <a href="mailto:guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org">guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org</a>
Working Ahead in Course	Content Teacher
Synergy/State Reporting Data Manager	Stephanie Emery, Operations Manager 207-613-8900 x 2002
ESEA Coordinator	Dr. Melinda Browne, Head of School, <a href="mailto:mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org">mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org</a>

***Program Scope***

MEVA is primarily a full-time, online, diploma-granting, free virtual public-school serving students in grades 7-12. Full-time status is defined as students enrolled in 5 or more courses each semester. All students will be classified under public school status. The model requires an active Legal Guardian at home (usually a Parent, family member, etc.) to ensure student success.

***Affirmative Action Policy***

MEVA, under the governance of the MEVA Governing Board, complies with all applicable federal and state rules & regulations and provides equal access. The school unit does not discriminate on the basis of sex or other protected categories in its education programs and activities, as required by federal and state laws/regulations.

Discrimination against and harassment of school employees because of actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, familial status, disability, or genetic information are prohibited.

Discrimination against and harassment of students because of actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability are prohibited.

For the purpose of this policy, “race” includes traits associated with race, including hair texture, Afro hairstyles, and protective hairstyles, including braids, twists, and locs.

The Board directs the school administration to implement a continuing program designed to prevent discrimination against all applicants, employees, students and other individuals having access rights to school premises and activities.

The school unit has designated and authorized an Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal and state requirements relating to nondiscrimination, including sexual harassment. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator is a person with direct access to the Head of School.

The school unit has implemented complaint procedures for resolving complaints of discrimination/harassment and sexual harassment under this policy. The school unit provides required notices of these complaint procedures and how they can be accessed, as well as the school unit’s compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations to all applicants for employment, employees, students, parents and other interested parties.

You may find the discrimination appeal policy within this handbook, Inquiries may be directed to:

Dr. Melinda Browne, Chief Executive Officer/Head of School  
Ballard Center: Maine Virtual Academy  
6 East Chestnut Street, Suite 230  
Augusta, ME 04330

*Additionally, you may contact the Office of Civil Rights by calling 1-800-421-3481  
(You may review the MEVA Board Manual located on the school website for more detailed information)*

### ***Residency Requirement***

MEVA is a publicly funded school. Currently, students who are, or will be, residing in the state of Maine for the 2023-2024 academic year and are in grades 7-12 are eligible to attend.

Families must provide at least one of the following documents during the enrollment process to demonstrate residency; however, students who are unable to demonstrate a fixed residence will not be denied admission:

- Copy of a utility bill with a home address within the state
- Copy of a housing agreement with a home address within the state
- Other documents as accepted by MEVA on a case-by-case basis

### ***Military Families – Enrollment Support***

MEVA supports the State’s requirements to provide a smooth and seamless enrollment transition for military families who are offered a seat, as outlined by the Military Interstate Children’s Compact Commission MIC3 URL: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/military> . Enrollment is subject to seat availability as outlined in the Maine Charter Commission enrollment requirements.

### ***McKinney Vento – Enrollment Support***

Students eligible under the McKinney Vento Act / Homeless Education, linked here; Definitions: <https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento-definition/> and Legislation: <https://nche.ed.gov/legislation/mckinney-vento/> are supported throughout the enrollment process by the Registrar and Guidance Department. The family and/or student will complete “MKV” questions at the time of enrollment and will be reviewed by the Head of School and Guidance Counselors. The Guidance department may provide referrals to state/town resources to assist with potential needs. The Registrar will help seek out alternative compliance documentation options, or waive required documents until such time it can be provided by the family/student or transferring district. Families will experience ease of enrollment support and equal access to education as outlined by the linked rule. Virtual charters in Maine do not have the same enrollment barriers as districts in regard to town/city boundaries. Maine Virtual Academy enrolls students statewide and abides by the MDOE and Maine Charter Commission enrollment requirements. Transportation arrangements/accommodations are also offered to MKV students during any in person state testing requirement.

### ***Age Restrictions***

MEVA serves students in grades 7-12. There is no minimum for attending MEVA so long as a student is in grades 7-12; however, based on your cohort year, MEVA will determine placement. If a student is 20 years of age or older before October 1st, MEVA will be unable to enroll.

### ***Application and Deadline***

Maine Virtual Academy has an enrollment cap of 390 students. If we reach our enrollment cap, applicants will be placed on our waitlist in the order in which they complete the initial enrollment steps. Seat offers may be extended mid-year if/as space becomes available. Because of this, there is no official deadline announced unless MEVA hits the enrollment cap. MEVA gives preference to previously enrolled students, siblings of enrolled students, and students in grades 7-9, followed by grades 10, 11, and then grade 12. You will find more about the application process later in this handbook.

### ***State Immunization Requirements***

\*One dose of meningococcal vaccine MCV4 (serogroups A, C, W, and Y) is required for all students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade. 1 dose of the Tdap is also required.

\*Two doses of meningococcal vaccine MCV4 are required for students entering 12<sup>th</sup> grade, with a minimum interval of 8 weeks between dose one and dose two. If the first dose of meningococcal vaccine was administered on or after the 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, a 2nd dose is not required.

As of Sept 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 a new state law passed (LD798) that only allows Medical waivers to be accepted for public school attendance. Maine Virtual Academy is a public charter school that will also be required to adhere to this new rule. Additional details are below;

- Medical exemption for one or all vaccines
- Laboratory evidence of immunity to specific diseases or reliable history of disease documented by a physician or other primary care provider
- Philosophical or religious exemptions are only allowable for students with an IEP and exemption in place prior to September 1, 2021

-Updated information can be submitted via the Stride k12 Parent Enrollment Portal under Immunizations, or it can be e-mailed to the Registrar, and/or via MEVA fax 603-836-0489.

### ***Hearing and Vision***

Rule for Hearing and Vision Screenings in Maine Schools, Chapter 45.

\*For Vision: Any public or private school approved pursuant to 20-A MRSA 2902 shall screen students for vision as follows: Distance vision acuity will be screened in public pre-school, kindergarten and grades 1,3,5,7, & 9. (MDOE Vision screening rules apply to MEVA)

\*For Hearing: Any public or private school approved pursuant to 20-A MRSA 2909 shall screen

students for hearing as follows; Hearing screening will be conducted in public preschool programs, kindergarten and grades 1,3, and 5. (Amended MDOE rule in 18/19 removes the recommendation on hearing checks for 7<sup>th</sup> grade.)

### ***Completion of 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade***

Students entering the 9th grade must have completed 8th grade in a homeschool, public, or private school setting. Families of entering freshmen must provide documentation necessary to establish successful fulfillment of this requirement. Additionally, students entering the 7th grade or the 8th grade must have completed (respectively) the 6th and the 7th grade in a homeschool, public or private school setting. MEVA 7<sup>th</sup> graders advance to 8<sup>th</sup> grade at MEVA unless otherwise decided via a meeting with the Head of School and/or Guidance Counselor.

### ***Special Education and Individualized Education Plans***

MEVA provides enrollment counseling to all students who have current Special Education or Section 504 eligibility. The enrollment counseling process is led by a Special Education Coordinator who holds a special education license in the state of Maine.

\*The enrollment process has two intended outcomes. First, it is an educational process for students and families to help them become familiar with the online learning model. Second, it allows the school the opportunity to better understand the students' unique strengths and needs, to ensure adequate preparation to support student success.

\*When a student with current special education eligibility enrolls at MEVA, the Parent/legal guardian, or the adult student if rights have been transferred, must provide consent for MEVA to obtain all special education records from the resident school district. These records are received via electronic fax or hard copy and are stored in a secure environment. In accordance with applicable federal and state law, only those persons authorized will have access to the records, including those staff members having a legitimate educational purpose for reviewing the records.

\*When a student enrolls with current special education eligibility and a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP), the student will be provided special education services and related services in accordance with the IEP. MEVA may request consent to conduct an evaluation or re- evaluation of the student in order to revise the IEP or determine appropriate placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). If a student enrolls with current special education eligibility, but no current IEP, the student will be provided with appropriate educational services until an IEP can be developed.

\*As soon as possible after enrollment, MEVA staff will complete progress monitoring using multiple measures (such as attendance monitoring, task and assignment completion, quality of work and grades) to determine if the placement supports adequate academic progress. The Special Education Director of MEVA will convene an IEP team meeting as soon as possible. The IEP Team must include the following members:

- Parent (or adult student if rights have been transferred);

- Advisor/designee knowledgeable of the online general education curriculum/ resources
- Special education teacher or service provider (e.g., Speech Language Pathologist);
- General education teacher of the student (at least one);
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications evaluation results;
- Other individuals at the discretion of the Parent, student, or school district, who have knowledge or special expertise

If MEVA and the Parent agree in writing that participation of a member of the IEP Team is not necessary because that team member's area of expertise is not being modified or discussed, that team member may be excused. The IEP team will review relevant progress monitoring, evaluation results, and the current IEP. They may also review existing eligibility or determine initial eligibility for special education services and related services, as well as revise or develop a current IEP and determine placement within the LRE. MEVA offers several types of academic support for students with special education eligibility. Course placement decisions are made jointly by the Special Education Director, MEVA Advisor, Parent/Legal Guardian, and student. Adaptations and modifications developed by the IEP team will be fully implemented.

### ***Section 504 Plan***

MEVA shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Any facilities of MEVA shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA. Students who qualify for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan ("Section 504 Plan") or are currently receiving accommodations or other services, are admitted as general education students meeting the minimum admission requirements. The administration will review all Section 504 Plans and discuss with the Parent/guardian the accommodations required by the student. Further, MEVA will comply with the MEVA Governing Board's policy outlining the requirements for identifying and serving students with a Section 504 Plan. MEVA recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of MEVA. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning is eligible for accommodation by MEVA. *\*See Staff matrix/directory for points of contact.*

### ***Health and Safety/Reporting Medical Needs***

In the unfortunate circumstance of a medical emergency at a face-to-face event such as (but not limited to) a field trip or state testing, MEVA staff and faculty receive basic first aid training. If your child has any medical needs, it is essential to let them Special Services Dept know which medications, where the medications need to be stored, and how to handle those medications for your child. We also strongly suggest that a guardian stays on-site. If there is an emergency, the school will call 911 and alert you as soon as possible.

### **Emergency Communications**

When an emergency condition exists, the Head of School will notify the necessary personnel to respond to their area of assignment. The methods of communication listed below will be used.

Notifications will be given in plain language. Code words shall not be used.

- A. Phone
- B. Runners
- C. Email

### **Emergency Contact Numbers/ Public Safety Agency Numbers**

- A. General Emergency: 911
- B. Police/Fire: 911
- C. Poison Control: 800 222 1222
- D. Maine General Medical Center Emergency Room: 207 626 1000

*\*Please review the “MDOE Required Board Policies Manual” on the school website at [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org) scroll to the bottom and select “Board Policies” and refer to the “Emergency Management Plan” within the document for further details.*

### ***Child Find Policy***

MEVA seeks to ensure that all students within its school are identified, located and evaluated who are school-age (5 through the school year in which they turn 20) and who are in need of special education and supportive assistance - including homeless children, state wards, state agency clients, students who have been suspended or expelled, students receiving home instruction, children incarcerated in county jails, children who have the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during the school year, highly mobile children (including migrant or homeless), and children who are suspected of being disabled and in need of special education and supportive assistance even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

MEVA’s child find responsibility shall be accomplished through a school-wide process which, while not a definitive or final judgment of a student’s capabilities or disability, is a possible indicator of special education needs. Final identification of students with disabilities and programming for such students occurs only after an appropriate evaluation and a determination by the IEP Team.

The child find process shall include obtaining data on each child through multiple measures, direct assessment and Parent information regarding the child’s academic and functional performance, gross and fine motor skills, receptive and expressive language skills, vision, hearing and cognitive skills.

If the child find process indicates that a student may require special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education, the student shall be referred to the IEP Team to determine the student’s eligibility for special education services. School staff, Parents or agency representatives or other individuals with knowledge of the child may refer children to the IEP team if they believe that the student, because of a disability, may be in need of special education and supportive services in order to benefit from regular education. Such a referral should follow the school’s pre-referral and referral policy. Legal Reference: 34 CFR § 300.111 (2066) Ch. 101, IV (2) (2007 (Me. Dept. of Educ. Regulations)

\*Please contact the MEVA Special Services Office at 207 613 8900 if you have any further questions.

### ***Suspended/Expelled Students***

MEVA shall evaluate enrollment for any student currently suspended or expelled by any other Maine public school on a case-by-case basis. MEVA may refuse to allow a student who is expelled to enroll during the term of the expulsion if the student was expelled for one of the following reasons:

1. Possessing or using an illegal drug at school or a school function
2. Selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function
3. Committing a third-degree assault involving assaulting another and inflicting substantial bodily harm
4. Violation of previous school technology policy/agreement

Unless agreed to by the MEVA Governing Board, MEVA will not enroll any student who is currently under expulsion for the following reason: Possessing a dangerous weapon, including a weapon, device, instruments, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury at school or a school function.

### ***Transfer Credits***

Students may transfer in credits from any Maine high school or middle school as MEVA serves grades 7-12.

Students wishing to transfer credits based on homeschool work or portfolios or course work completed at a non-accredited institution may petition MEVA to have credits accepted. MEVA reserves the right to refuse transfer credits from non-accredited institutions or for homeschool experiences.

Factors to be considered in the evaluation of student's progress toward graduation will include:

- Number and type of credits earned at previous school(s);
- Definition of credit at previous school;
- Transcript analysis conducted by Guidance Counselor;
- Number of semesters left until graduation.

**Students must comply with the state-mandated minimum graduation requirements.** Please continue reading the handbook for more information on graduation requirements and credits.

### ***Enrollment Application and Registration Process***

The online Enrollment Application/Intent to Enroll Form may be accessed on the MEVA website. The Intent to Enroll Form collects Parent information, student information, as well as background demographic and marketing information. The MEVA website provides additional instruction to applicants.

Enrollment Applications are date/time stamped and processed in the order in which the forms are received. Students who have completed the initial application process can expect to hear from MEVA



within two weeks. After that, a written Commitment to Enroll Form must be signed by legal guardian, which authorizes the resident school to release the student's SSID in the state system. The resident school is then notified within 5 days of receiving a commitment to enroll form.

If MEVA reaches the enrollment cap, applicants will be placed on our waitlist in the order in which they complete the steps below. Seat offers may be extended mid-year if/as space becomes available. MEVA will maintain contact with those applicants who apply after the enrollment deadline and before the start of the current enrollment period to establish continued interest.

For more detailed information about the MEVA registration process, step-by-step instructions, and registration timeline is available on the MEVA website at <http://meva.k12.com> or by calling the MEVA Registrar at 207 613 8900, ext 2000

### ***Re-Registration***

Parents and Legal Guardians are notified of approaching Re-Registration windows annually, in school communications during the months of January and February. When the Enrollment Portal opens during the window, parents will be provided step by step instructions on how to complete their Re-Registration process. Parents will be asked to select "Registering" or "Not Registering" in the portal. Parents will also be asked to complete any required documentation and answer some registration questions associated with their selection. Parents who have students that are *on track to graduate* will still be required to go into the portal and select "Not Registering" as their status.

Any *unconfirmed* seats at the *end of the Re-Registration window* will become available to the public waitlist. If there are less number of seats available, than the number of interest/students on the waitlist then the available then a lottery is required to fill those seats. A lottery date is advertised and will be conducted publicly via Zoom if one is needed.

### ***MEVA Evaluation for Special Services***

Following the collection of documentation and prior to the completion of registration, the following steps will be taken as needed:

- Special Services Enrollment Team will review and re-evaluate any IEP student to determine the best placement for that student.
- MEVA administration will evaluate homeschool portfolios and transcripts to determine credit eligibility and assessment scores to determine course appropriateness.
- MEVA Administration or designee will seek information on current expulsions from former districts if necessary.

### ***Registration/Course Selection***

The MEVA Guidance Counselor will schedule each student in the courses which meet the student's previous transcript, student's progress, and graduation requirements. Students are provided detailed course information as well as several tools to help them establish graduation plans with MEVA's

Guidance Counselor. The Guidance Counselor will contact every student to discuss their graduation plan and course selections. All courses are approved by school administration.

Foreign language courses are offered at MEVA to students in grades 7-12.

### ***Student/Parent Orientations & Trainings***

Students and their families will be expected to attend a live and/or asynchronous orientation training, that will enable them to become familiar with all aspects of the MEVA online learning environment. MEVA will coordinate live online orientations prior to the first day of school. MEVA provides an abundance of educational support and trainings to students, parents and/or learning coaches throughout their onboarding and beyond. Parents and students are welcome to request additional support in their training of the learning environment and platforms.

Parents and students also participate in valuable surveys throughout the school year to provide an opportunity for feedback. MEVA surveys are important as they provide the school information on areas that may need improvement or further development. Surveys that parents and students will be asked to complete include the following;

- Maine Charter Commission: “Panorama Survey” for both family & students.
- Approximately 7 times a year - “Pulse Check School Surveys” for both family & students.
- “3<sup>rd</sup> Party, School Evaluation Surveys”

### ***Title IX, Affirmative Action - Civil Rights, Discrimination and Appeals/Complaint Process***

In accordance with Federal and State OCR (Office for Civil Rights) Guidelines, any student who believes that MEVA, or any of the school’s staff, instructors, and/or administrators have inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 (sex/gender), and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability) may make a complaint which shall be referred to as a formal grievance. However, whenever possible and practical, an informal solution to the complaint is encouraged and should be attempted with the MEVA Chief Executive Officer/Head of School. There is more information on the Grievance process in this handbook, along with the necessary form, both in this handbook and on the website.

The definition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment is as follows:

- Sex discrimination occurs when a person, because of his or her sex, is denied participation in or the benefits of any education program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.
- Sexual harassment is conduct that: 1) is sexual in nature; 2) is unwelcome; and 3) denies or limits a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from a school’s educational program or activity. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal or physical. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

- Maine Virtual Academy has a designated Title IX Coordinator and the contact information is as follows:

NAME: Dan Pierce & Heather Tyler

TITLE: Guidance Counselors/ Guidance Dept.

ADDRESS: Maine Virtual Academy, Ballard Center, 6 Chestnut St, Suite 230, Augusta, ME 04330

PHONE NUMBER: 207 613 8900

EMAIL ADDRESS: Guidance@mainevirtualacademy.org

*Additionally, you may contact the Office of Civil Rights by calling 1-800-421-3481*

*(You may review the MEVA Board Manual for more information located on the school website)*

### ***Grievance Procedure: Title IX, Civil Rights, Discrimination***

Any student, Parent/guardian, current or prospective employee or other individual within the school community who believes he/she has experienced and/or observed sex discrimination or sexual harassment (“grievant”) should promptly report the matter to the school’s Title IX Coordinator , a school counselor, principal or other school administrator. A Title IX grievant is requested to complete a complaint form. Complaints of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, brought forth by students, Parents/guardians, current or prospective employees, and other members of the school community will be promptly investigated in an impartial and in as confidential a manner as reasonably possible, so that corrective action can be taken if necessary.

The grievance procedures will be as follows:

1. It is the express policy of Maine Virtual Academy to encourage the prompt reporting of claims of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. A form for such purpose can be found on our website and will also be provided to grievant. As it pertains to students, in appropriate circumstances, due to the age of the student making the complaint, a Parent/guardian or school administrator may be permitted to fill out the form on the student’s behalf.
2. At the time the complaint is filed, the grievant shall be given a copy of these grievance procedures. It is the responsibility of the Title IX Coordinator or designee to explain these procedures and answer any questions anyone has. In addition, if the grievant is a minor student, the Title IX Coordinator should consider whether a child abuse report should be completed in accordance with Maine Virtual Academy’s policy on the Reports of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect of Children.
3. The Title IX Coordinator or designee shall investigate the complaint as promptly as practicable but in no case more than ten (10) working days from the date the complaint was received. The Title IX Coordinator shall have the complete cooperation of all persons during the investigation.
4. The Title IX Coordinator shall meet with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the grievant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged, and

any witnesses to the conduct. The investigation shall be carried on discreetly, maintaining confidentiality insofar as reasonably possible while conducting an effective investigation.

5. If after an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that sex discrimination or sexual harassment has occurred, the Maine Virtual Academy shall take appropriate corrective action in an effort to ensure that the conduct ceases and will not recur. The Title IX Coordinator shall also provide and or arrange for confidential counseling or training where appropriate. In addition, the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall seek an informal agreement between the parties which is consistent with Maine Virtual Academy's Title IX principles and goals.

6. If no agreement satisfactory to the parties can be reached within twenty (20) working days from receipt of the complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall make a report to the School Board within thirty (30) working days from receipt of the complaint

7. The School Board shall review the case and make its recommendations to the Title IX Coordinator within fifteen (15) working days after receiving the grievance.

8. The Title IX Coordinator shall make provisions to maintain all records of complaints and their disposition.

9. Retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or cooperating in an investigation is strictly prohibited, and Maine Virtual Academy will take actions necessary to prevent such retaliation.

### ***General Complaints***

General complaints outside of the grievance polices herein, can and must be reported *in writing* directly to the Head of School, Dr. Melinda Browne at [mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org) and/or to the school Human Resources/Accounts Payable Manager, Jillian Dearborn at [jdearborn@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:jdearborn@mainevirtualacademy.org)

### ***Dissemination of Information***

Maine Virtual Academy shall notify applicants for admission and employment, students, Parents/guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, and sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, disability, or age, in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and its administrative regulations not to discriminate in such a manner. The notification shall be made in the form and manner required by law or regulation.

\*Please see the MEVA website for the form and for more information.

## **Instruction and Curriculum**

### ***Staff Qualifications***

Teachers at MEVA must meet the following minimum qualifications;

- Hold a Bachelor's Degree,
- Hold a current state teaching certificate
- Complete an approved Criminal History Record Check (CHRC).

MEVA abides by all applicable Maine State Department of Education Teacher Certification requirements as outlined in the Title 20-A, Chapter 502.

MEVA maintains licensure and personnel records in the format specified by Maine State Department of Education (MDOE). This documentation can be provided to the MDOE upon request, or can be made available for examination upon 24 hour request. Parents have the right to request their student's teacher credentials. Written requests can be made by e-mail to the Head of School at [mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:mbrowne@mainevirtualacademy.org)

**School Materials Exemption from Required Instruction:** Please review MEVA's "MDOE Required Policies" on the school website to follow the process on requesting any material/assignment/curriculum exemptions at [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org)

### ***Teacher Course Assignments***

Teachers are assigned to teach courses for which they hold current Maine certification and proper endorsements.

### ***Alignment to State Standards***

MEVA core academic courses are aligned to Maine State standards as required by state law. Standard mappings are documented, and necessary course content is developed by curriculum teams and overseen by the Academic Administrator and Head of School.

## **Academic Operations**

### ***Course Approval***

The Guidance Counselor and/or Head of School are authorized to grant approval for courses requiring administrative approval as a prerequisite for enrollment.

### ***Course Catalog***

MEVA courses - with their associated credits and descriptions - are published in the course catalog on the MEVA website. Students must take necessary core courses before enrolling in other courses. All course assignments are approved by the Head of School.

### ***Add/Drop Course Load***

The Head of School and Guidance Department at MEVA reserves the right to deny Add/Drop requests. Add/drops are on an as needed basis only and is subject to approval.

### ***Course Fees***

Course Fees - MEVA is a publicly funded, tuition-free, online public school serving grades 7-12. Courses taken through MEVA's HS platform and related materials are provided for full-time

students who are residents of Maine at no charge.

Additionally, resident students who take Early College courses through ExplorEC are eligible for MEVA to cover the complete cost of the course (including textbooks) for up to 12 credits per year. Students who take Early College courses from programs outside of ExplorEC and MEVA may be responsible for associated costs. AP4ALL courses are also available through the University of Maine programs, if interested you may inquire with your assigned Guidance Counselor.

### ***Low-Enrollment Courses***

Some elective courses are dependent upon enrollment. Students may be automatically enrolled in an alternate course if their original course choice is not ultimately offered.

### ***Credit for Courses***

Unless otherwise approved by the Head of School, course credit is assigned by percentage/letter grade.

### ***Change of Student Information***

Students are required to inform the main office of changes in address, telephone number, emergency contact(s), and/or any other important directory information within two (2) school days of the change. The main office can be reached at 207 613 8900, ext. 2000 or [mcrosby@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:mcrosby@mainevirtualacademy.org) . If a student moves out of the state of Maine, the student may be transferred to their resident state.

### ***Hardware and Materials Return***

To return hardware and/or materials, students will be contacted by MEVA's Technology Coordinator for instructions. UPS or USPS shipping labels will be provided by the school for all items to be returned. These items can also be returned to the local school. The student/Legal Guardian is responsible for packaging supplies for returning the hardware and/or materials.

### ***Progress Checks***

Legal Guardians are expected to check their student's progress at least weekly via the Student's Brightspace account. Legal Guardians and students have access to their grades every day through this platform. **Questions about progress in a course should be directed to the content teacher.** Questions about school progress, in general, should be directed to the Guidance Counselor.

### ***Grades and Report Cards***

Teachers always provide, and zero out, grades on a weekly basis. Students receive at least one graded assignment each week in each course.

Students and Legal Guardians can access current grades at all times – located in the Brightspace Student account. MEVA will distribute report cards and/or transcripts via email and/or USPS to the Legal Guardian following the end of each semester.

### ***Transcripts***

Transcripts requested by students will be forwarded to colleges, educational institutions, and/or employers to which students are applying. Official transcript requests (signed, sealed documents) must be submitted to the MEVA Guidance Department including requests for Unofficial transcripts (unsigned, unsealed documents).

### ***Student Data Privacy***

MEVA, in compliance with Federal Laws 93-308 and 93-568, presents these facts for the information of Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and students.

Student records are open for review and inspection by Parents/guardians or students 18 years of age or older. Students 16 years of age or older or who are emancipated have the right to give informed consent regarding their records, with some exceptions. Information regarding students 14 years of age or older with HIV/AIDS or a sexually transmitted disease may be released by the student only.

Appointments may be made at the Guidance Counselor's office for viewing cumulative records of grades, and/or achievement test scores.

MEVA, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), have adopted a policy regarding student education records and the release of student information. This policy is set forth in the FERPA section of this handbook.

### ***Disclosure of Identifiable Information***

Parent(s)/guardian(s) who do not want personally identifiable information (otherwise known as directory information) contained within a student's educational records made public may file a written objection with the MEVA Head of School regarding the public release of such information within ten (10) calendar days following notice of these rights to students, or the first day of school start date whichever is sooner. Please review page 48 of the new "FERPA Opt Out Notice" policy.

## **Grading and Testing**

### ***Grading Policy***

Grading policies are in compliance with applicable Maine State and school guidelines. Grading information and other course-specific information are provided online within each course

### ***Grade Scale/Grade Point Values***

MEVA 4.0 Grading Scale: High school students will be awarded credit only for courses in which they have earned a grade of 60% or better.

A	(4.0) (93-100%)
A-	(3.7) (90-92%)

B+	(3.3) (87-89%)
B	(3.0) (83-86%)
B-	(2.7) (80-82%)
C+	(2.3) (77-79%)
C	(2.0) (73-76%)
C-	(1.7) (70-72%)
D+	(1.3) (67-69%)
D	(1.0) (63-66%)
D-	(0.7) (60-62%)

### ***Grade Point Average***

The grade point average for MEVA students is calculated as follows using a 4-point scale:

- a. Each student's grade point average is the sum of the point values of all the grades received for all of the courses attempted divided by the sum of the credits for all courses attempted.
- b. The grade point value is calculated by multiplying the numerical value of the mark/grade earned by the number of credits assigned to the course.
- c. The minimal passing grade is "D-".
- d. Pass/Fail and Credit/No Credit marks may be used as agreed upon by the instructor and school administrator. These non-numbered marks will be clearly identified and excluded from the calculation of grade point average.
- e. Marks for Incompletes ("I") will be calculated as a 0.0 until the grade is replaced by a letter grade.
- f. Courses marked as Withdrawals ("W") will not be included in GPA calculations.
- g. Weighted Grades apply to Honors and AP related courses
- h. Early College courses are *weighted, GPA value of 1.0 for A, 0.5 for B, 0.25 for a C and awarded 1 full credit for every 3 college credits.*

### ***Class Rank***

For the purposes of determining class rank internally, MEVA uses a 5-point scale. Courses designated as AP, dual-credit, or Honors (transfer credit only) are valued at a maximum of 5.0 points/credit. All other courses are valued at 4.0 points/credit. Class rank information can be published on the student's unofficial and official transcript and designated as weighted class rank. *(This information is only available for students attending MEVA. Students withdrawn, will not have class ranks listed.)*

### ***Class Standing***

Grade level is determined by the student's cohort year, which is determined by the date the student entered high school. Students will remain in the calculated cohort for enrollment and state assessment purposes for the duration of the school year.



### ***Late Assignments***

It is important that students complete assignments and stay on schedule. Staying current with assignments will allow teachers to be better able to provide group, as well as individual, assistance. Completing assignments will provide the student with knowledge necessary to be successful in future coursework.

Our curriculum provides due dates for assignments. Students should complete assignments by the assigned due dates. If unable to do so, the student will still be responsible for completing the work. Teachers will communicate specific information about due dates, expectations and penalties for late work in each class.

Under extreme circumstances, due-date extensions can be granted. It should never be assumed that these will automatically be granted. Due-date extensions must be requested before the due date and on a school day. Requests received on or past the due date, or on a non-school day may not be granted. If the extension is being requested due to illness or injury, a doctor's note will be required before administration will consider granting an extension.

### ***Proctored Exams- Face-to-Face and Virtual (State Standardized Achievement Assessments)***

All students enrolled and attending 7-12 grade at MEVA will participate in all district and statewide assessments developed by the Maine Department of Education, as well as any assessment developed by the United States Department of Education or the Maine Legislature to implement the federal assessment requirements. Students in grades 7, 8, 10 and 11 will be required to travel to regional locations within the state to participate in the mandated state assessments, which must be proctored. The face-to-face state testing for grades 7, 8, 10 and 11 take place in May. The only opt-out excuse approved by the state is if the student attending the public school has medical documentation that they are bed-ridden during the window of mandatory state testing.

Because standardized achievement and proficiency tests are often important for post-secondary plans and are mandated by the state, MEVA will post test information, including testing dates, location for face to face testing, times, etc., for all mandatory standardized tests. Students should always consult with their advisory teacher for more information. Families with questions regarding accommodations and modifications should contact the Special Services Office at 207 613 8900.

Students are required to take the (virtual) Northwest Educational Assessments (NWEA) for grades 7-11, the Accuplacer (virtual) in grade 12, and the face-to-face Maine State Assessment (MEA ELA & Math) for grades 7,8, and 10. Face-to-face MEA Science for grades 8 and 11. The NWEA is proctored virtually so students may take their exams at home. However, the MEA must be administered face-to-face in multiple remote locations across the State of Maine. Locations, dates, and times of the face-to-face

MEAs will be communicated via email in a timely fashion. Again, as a Maine public charter school, it is imperative that your child participates in face-to-face state testing along with virtual NWEA testing.

For more information on State Assessments, the Department of Education has added a resources page called MECAS Assessment Information for Families at, [https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/family](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/family)

Testing opt outs fall under 2 different categories, the requirements are as follows;

1. Special Considerations – Medical Exemptions

- a. Students who have serious medical conditions or emergencies that cannot test under these criteria's; Long term hospitalization without access to academics, severe trauma, mental health crisis, students in hospice care. A letter from a medical professional and/or additional medical documentation will be required in order to submit a “Special Considerations Exemption Request” to the MDOE. The MDOE may choose to approve or deny the exemption.
- b. Parents/Guardians will be required to complete a consent form.

2. Testing Opt Outs – Philosophical Reasons/Other

Note: The MDOE requires school districts to test all students for the purpose of providing information about the academic progress of students, schools, and the state as a whole. The MECAS includes state assessments, known as the Maine Educational Assessments, which measure the progress of Maine students in the areas of English Language Arts and Literacy, Mathematics, and Science. The variety of assessments in MECAS allows for comparisons between Maine students and students in other states and nations. These comparisons can help educators, families and communities, and educational agencies measure quality of curriculum, address achievement gaps, and understand where additional supports may be needed. Source, Maine Department of Education; [https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing\\_Accountability/MECAS/family](https://www.maine.gov/doe/Testing_Accountability/MECAS/family)

- a. Parents or guardians have the right to opt out of testing for any reason and will be required to submit a written request to the school.
- b. MEVA will then send the parent or guardian an opt out consent form via docusign, outlining further on what the opt out means. This form is also required and must be completed ahead of testing.
- c. Please be aware that any student who does not test may impact the school negatively. Participation in state assessments is an opportunity to support schools and help promote successful outcomes in various ways.

Please contact the Head of School or Operations Manager if you have any questions.

***Withdrawing from a Course***

Students are permitted to withdraw from a course with permission from the guidance department and/or Head of School.

### ***Grade Appeal Process***

Students wishing to appeal a final grade in a course must follow the appeals process within 30 days, including:

- Identify in writing any assignments that s/he would like re-evaluated.
- Explain in writing why the student believes the grade on each of the identified assignments should be revised.
- Submit identifications and explanations to the course instructor

### ***Course Retake for Grade Replacement***

Students who have received a low or poor grade that is not consistent with the student's ability and ambitions in a core subject may replace up to four (4) semester grades during high school. Students may earn this replacement credit by retaking the course at MEVA with the approval of the Head of School. MEVA may offer programming adjustments for students to recover credit.

## **Graduation**

### ***General Requirements***

To earn a diploma, incoming students must meet the diploma-requirements approved by the MEVA Governing Board. Completing this program of studies will greatly expand/enhance students' post-secondary options. Credit requirements, listed by academic cohort year, are shown in the table below.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>MEVA Recommended</b>	<b>MEVA Requirement</b>
English	4.0	4.0
Math	3.0	3.0
Science/Lab**	3.0	2.0
Social Studies*	1.0	1.0
Physical Education/Health	1.0	1.0
US History*	1.0	1.0
Visual and Performing Arts	1.0	1.0
Electives	3.5	4.5
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>In addition, every student must demonstrate yearly evidence of successfully completing post-secondary planning &amp; activities.</b>		

**Permission to deviate from the requirements must be granted by the Head of School. The HOS also reserves the right to make programming adjustments for a student.**

### **Graduation Requirements**

\*Must include United States History, United States Government, Civics, and/or Economics.

\*\*One credit must be an approved Lab credit course (i.e. Biology, Chemistry)

Fine Arts- The State of Maine requires 1.0 of Fine Arts credit.

MEVA also offers self-paced courses, work study and external credit options. Team meetings are always available upon request of the parent and/or the school. Team meetings are a great way to navigate additional options and/or support options that may best fit your student's needs.

**Important Note:** (Updated policy as of Jan 1, 2023) All team meetings will be conducted in Zoom or another similar platform only. Face to face meetings and events are no longer available due to the nature of MEVA's virtual schooling model. (i.e... graduation, open houses)

For students interested in reviewing their graduation plan please reach out to your assigned Guidance Counselor or Advisory Teacher for support. Transcripts are also available and mailed to high school students at the end of each semester.

### ***Advanced Placement and Gifted Program***

Maine Virtual Academy offers advanced placement courses as well as a Gifted Program. Please reach out to the Guidance Department, for information on options and placement.

### ***HS Credit Options for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade***

Middle School students interested in taking HS courses for HS credit should reach out to the Guidance Department to discuss possible options. The Head of School makes final approval.

### ***Incoming 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Students***

To earn a diploma through MEVA, all students must meet all diploma requirements for their designated graduation year published at the time the student begins course work at MEVA.

### ***10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Transfer Students***

Graduation requirements for students who transfer into MEVA after completing at least one semester of course work at an accredited institution will be amended on a case-by-case basis. District graduation requirements, including the required credits, will be pro-rated as necessary to reflect student's progress toward graduation at past schools. Transfer students must provide or authorize transfer of transcripts for all previous high school work prior to their first day of course work.

Factors to be considered in the evaluation of student's progress toward graduation will include:

- The number and type of credits earned at previous school(s);
- The number of credits possible in a given semester;
- The definition of credit at previous school;
- A transcript analysis and course matching conducted by MEVA;
- The number of semesters left until graduation;

### ***Transfer Credits***

MEVA reserves the right to refuse transfer credits from non-accredited institutions or for homeschool experiences.

### ***Promotion/Retention Policy***

- a. Based on a student's ILP and/or IEP, MEVA reserves the right to promote or retain a middle school student.
- b. However, if a Parent makes a specific request to retain a student, the HOS must approve the retention. If the HOS approves, then the Guidance Counselor will retain the student and the student will retake the middle school courses from the previous year.
- c. If a Parent or the school does not request that a student is retained, then middle school students are promoted to the next grade-level at MEVA.
- d. High school students who are off-track to graduate may still be promoted to the next grade-level (at the approval of the Head of School), with the expectation that they will make-up courses and complete necessary post-secondary planning to graduate with their cohort (cohort year does not change).
- e. Students need 17.5 credits to meet MEVA's graduation requirements. Students who are in their final year and are not close to meeting MEVA credit requirements, may qualify for graduation based on the state minimum of 11 credits. This is subject to a credit evaluation, a team meeting and final approval from the Head of School. State guidelines also allow for students who have not met graduation requirements to stay in a public school until the student reaches 20 years old. Students who turn 20 during the school year may complete the academic year, additional state rules may apply.

### ***Credit Recovery Options***

For questions relating to credit recovery, please reach out to the Guidance Counselor to discuss available credit recovery options.

### ***Dual Enrollment Credit Offering***

MEVA students have access to Dual Enrollment programs for enrichment and for academic credit. The following are the kinds of Dual Enrollment programs that MEVA students may access:

- Career and Technical education through a student's local Regional Vocational Centers.
  - Early College courses through the University of Maine's Early College program – Explore EC
- Students seeking to access vocational programs must meet the admissions requirements specific to their local Region Center. Students looking to take Early College courses must meet MEVA requirements

and the requirements of the Early College program. For more information on Dual Enrollment opportunities and questions about access, please speak with the Guidance Counselor.

### ***Extra-Curricular Club Eligibility***

MEVA students may access their local school districts for courses and extracurricular programs that MEVA does not offer. This is provided that the local school district has capacity to take the student on and that MEVA and the local school district reach agreement to allow the student access.

### ***Accelerated Graduation***

Graduation at an accelerated rate will be considered upon petition, subject to school policy and approval by the Head of School.

The following policies govern accelerated graduation decisions:

- A. Gain approval from the Guidance Counselor and Head of School for accelerated graduation of the school year they intend to graduate in. Approval is granted when the student can show the following:
  - 1.) For students under the age of 18, parental permission to graduate early.
  - 2.) A clear and solid post-secondary plan for the student.
  - 3.) Participation in a Head of School approved, post-secondary activity.
  - 4.) Completion of the Accuplacer Exam
  - 5.) Complete any other additional requirements issued by the school as determined by the Guidance Counselor or Head of School.

### ***Diploma Authorization***

Students who graduate from MEVA with at least the minimum number of credits, in accordance with the requirements specified above, will earn a diploma from Maine Virtual Academy authorized by the Maine Charter School Commission.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

### ***Student Code of Conduct Overview (includes webcam usage)***

MEVA recognizes and strives to meet the individual needs of each student through programs which promote the development of self-esteem, cooperation and vision. This expanded view of school will result in well-educated, productive and socially responsible citizens. To this end, we believe the school should reflect the desires and expectations held by our community for our children, and that the school should provide an environment that ensures the safety and well-being of students. For this reason, it is important that the school have clear expectations and guidelines for students.

### ***\*PROHIBITED USE OF RECORDING DEVICES***

To encourage open channels of communication among Teachers (Employees) and to ensure the privacy of our Teachers (Employees), Students, and the integrity of our school information, you may not openly or secretly, photograph, tape, record, or videotape, any conversation, communication, classes/sessions, activities/events, and field trips during a school day.

You are restricted from using the recording or camera functions on any electronic communication devices to record MEVA students at any time, unless the recording is for an educational purpose ***authorized*** by MEVA. Students who need to review missed live sessions, can access the recording links by going into their course and clicking on the module they missed. Within the module there is a recording link of the missed live session. If a link is missing, please contact the teacher for further direction.

### ***Virtual Classroom and Face-to-Face School Events Conduct (includes webcam usage)***

In order for virtual classroom sessions and school events and activities to be educationally effective and safe for students, all students should abide by a standard set of rules. The following rules govern student conduct in the virtual classroom as well as face to face events:

- Students' written and oral communications must be free of vulgar, belittling, or offensive language
- Students must abide by rules established by the course instructor or administrator
- Students must comply with instructions communicated orally or in writing by the instructor or administrator
- Students are not to be in possession of weapons, tobacco, or drugs at face-to-face events
- Students may not display affiliation with a gang

Students who violate the virtual classroom rules and/or face-to-face events rules of conduct, will be warned by the instructor to correct their behavior. If the student does not comply with the instructor's instructions, s/he/they will be removed from the virtual classroom for the rest of the session. The Legal Guardian can then expect a phone call from the classroom teacher to address the behavior and ensure it does not happen again. If a student has been removed from a virtual classroom, the student may receive read-only privileges in the virtual classroom for the rest of the semester or until the instructor deems it appropriate to restore all classroom privileges to the student. If student does not comply at a face to face event, the student's Parents may be contacted and student may be asked not to attend future face to face events.

### ***Use of Language and Images (includes webcam usage)***

Students must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs or acts in written or oral communications, including email, discussion board, listserv, virtual classroom, student websites, or in photographs. Students are prohibited from posting content from or links to suggestive, lewd or otherwise inappropriate websites.

***Dress Code (includes webcam usage)***

Appropriate attire (free from offensive language and images) shall be worn at all school activities and classroom webcam activities.

***Personal Respect (includes webcam usage)***

MEVA administrators, instructors and students know that personal respect is the foundation of learning. Language, comments, or images that show a lack of respect for individuals or groups will lead directly to disciplinary action.

***Defiance (includes webcam usage)***

Students should follow the requests of school staff; failure to do so is defiance toward school personnel or rules. Defiance is defined as defying instructions of school personnel, the bold resistance of school authority, and/or contemptuous behavior or attitude that is manifested by breaking of school rules. Acts of defiance may result in disciplinary action.

***Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying***

No one should be subjected to harassment, intimidation or bullying at school for any reason. Therefore, it is the policy of MEVA that all students will deal with all persons in ways which convey respect and dignity. Harassment, intimidation or bullying in the form of name-calling, taunting, gestures, unwelcomed conduct, jokes, pictures, slurs, ridicules, or sexual harassment are prohibited. Such conduct referencing or directed at an individual or group that demeans that person/group on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, age, disability or other extraneous factors is prohibited and shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

Sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited, and non-reciprocal sexual attention as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile or offensive school or work environment. This can include:

- Sexually suggestive looks or gestures
- Sexual jokes, pictures or teasing
- Pressure for dates or sex
- Sexually demeaning comments
- Deliberate touching, cornering or pinching
- Attempts to kiss or fondle
- Threats, demands or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances

MEVA has a zero-tolerance policy towards intimidation, harassment, bullying, fighting, and racial and/or sexual harassment as such actions are considered violent acts against others. These behaviors cannot be tolerated, and the natural consequence is to be barred from interactions with others.



A warning letter will be sent to the student and/or legal guardian/Legal Guardian for the first harassment, bullying, or intimidation offense requiring the student (and Parent if applicable) to communicate with the teacher or Advisor. Subsequent offenses may lead to suspensions in accordance with the School Discipline policy.

MEVA will promptly and thoroughly investigate reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying, whether of a physical or of a nonphysical form. If it is determined that either has occurred, MEVA will act appropriately within the discipline codes of MEVA and will take reasonable action to end such behavior.

If deemed necessary, bullying incidents will be reported to the state every quarter.

### ***Bullying and Cyber Bullying***

***Sources Used: Maine Department of Education***

#### **I. Introduction**

It is our goal for our school to be a safe and secure learning environment for all students. It is the intent of the MEVA Board to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the Board has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

Bullying and other forms of peer mistreatment are detrimental to the school environment as well as student learning, achievement, and well-being. Peer mistreatment interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying and other forms of peer mistreatment affect not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior. These behaviors must be addressed to ensure student safety and an inclusive learning environment.

It is not the Board's intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others, or from engaging in civil debate. However, the Board does not condone and will take action in response to conduct that interferes with students' opportunity to learn, the educational mission of Maine Virtual Academy, and the operation of the school.

#### **II. Prohibited Behavior**

The following behaviors are prohibited:

1. Bullying;
2. Cyberbullying;
3. Harassment and Sexual Harassment (as defined in board policy ACAA);
4. Retaliation against those reporting such defined behaviors; and

5. Making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior.

Any person who engages in any of these prohibited behaviors that constitutes bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

### **III. Bullying and Cyberbullying Defined**

“Bullying” and “Cyberbullying” have the same meaning in this policy as in Maine law:

A. “Bullying” includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

- (1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:

- (a) Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property; or

- (b) Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property;

**OR**

- (2) Interferes with the rights of a student by:

- (a) Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or

- (b) Interfering with the student's academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school;

**OR**

- (3) Is based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based on a student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, and that has the effect described in subparagraph (1) or (2) above. (These behaviors might also meet the criteria for harassment as defined in board policy ACAA: Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students.)

Examples of conduct that may constitute bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, or demeaning humor;
2. Behavior that is likely to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others, including but not limited to gossip, spreading rumors, and social exclusion;
3. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidations such as use of aggressive, menacing, or disrespectful gestures;
4. Threats of harm to a student, to his/her possessions, or to other individuals, whether transmitted verbally or in writing;
5. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money, or involuntary loans or donations;
6. Blocking access to school property or facilities;
7. Stealing or hiding books, backpacks, or other possessions;
8. Stalking; and
9. Physical contact or injury to another person or his/her property.

B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device, including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device and personal digital assistant.

Examples of conduct that may constitute cyberbullying include, but are not limited to the following actions on any electronic medium:

1. Posting slurs or rumors or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, disparaging, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material about a student on a website, an app, in social media, or any other electronic platform;
2. Posting misleading or fake photographs or digital video footage of a student on websites or creating fake websites or social networking profiles in the guise of posing as the targeted student;
3. Impersonating or representing another student through the use of that other student’s electronic device or account to send e-mail, text messages, instant messages (IM), phone calls or other messages on a social media website;
4. Sending e-mail, text messages, IM, or leaving voice mail messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to bombard the target’s e-mail account, IM account, or cell phone; and
5. Using a camera phone or digital video camera to take and/or send embarrassing or “sexting” photographs of other students.

C. “Retaliation” means an act or gesture against a student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. “Retaliation” also includes knowingly falsely reporting an act of bullying.

D. “Substantiated” means that the outcomes of the investigation on the Responding Form (JICK-E2) provide clear evidence to prove that bullying or cyberbullying, as defined in policy, did occur.

E. “Alternative discipline” means disciplinary action other than suspension or expulsion from school that is designed to correct and address the root causes of a student’s specific misbehavior while retaining the student in class or school, or restorative school practices to repair the harm done to relationships and persons from the student’s misbehavior.

#### **IV. Application of Policy**

A. This policy applies to any student, school employee, contractor, visitor or volunteer who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying or retaliation, all of whom have the responsibility to comply with this policy.

B. This policy applies to bullying that:

1. Takes place at school or on school grounds, meaning: a school building; property on which a school building or facility is located; and property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training. “School grounds” also includes school-related transportation vehicles.

2. Takes place while students are being transported to or from schools or school-sponsored events;
3. Takes place at any school-sponsored event, activity, function, program, instruction or training; or
4. Takes place elsewhere or through the use of technology, but only if the bullying also infringes on the rights of the student at school as set forth in this policy's definition of bullying.

## **V. Reporting**

*Refer to the Reporting Form – JICK-E1*

Bullying or suspected bullying is reportable in person or in writing (including anonymously) to school personnel.

A. School staff, coaches and advisors for extracurricular and cocurricular activities are required to report alleged incidents of bullying to the school principal or other school personnel designated by the superintendent or Head of School. Any other adult working or volunteering in a school will be encouraged to promptly report observed or suspected alleged incidents of bullying to the building principal or school personnel designated by the superintendent or Head of School.

B. Students who are believed to have been bullied or are aware of incidents of bullying are strongly encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

C. Parents and other adults who believe that an incident of bullying has occurred are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

D. Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an alleged incident of bullying are prohibited. Any student who is determined to have knowingly falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **VI. Responding**

*Refer to the Responding Form – JICK-E2*

The school principal or a superintendent's designee will:

A. Promptly [OR: within \_\_\_ days] investigate and respond to allegations of bullying behavior;

B. Keep written documentation of all allegations of bullying behavior and outcomes of the investigations, and report alleged and substantiated incidents to the superintendent or Head of School;

C. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) who was alleged to have bullied AND of the student(s) who was believed to have been bullied that a report of an alleged incident of bullying has been made;

D. Communicate to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student(s) who was believed to have been bullied the measures being taken to ensure the safety of the student(s) who was believed to have been bullied and to prevent further acts of bullying;

E. Inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of the students involved the findings of the investigation and actions to be taken;

F. Communicate with local or state law enforcement agency if it's believed that the pursuit of criminal charges or a civil action under the Maine Civil Rights Act may be appropriate.

## **VII. Remediation**

*Refer to the Remediation Form – JICK-E3*

The school principal or a superintendent's designee will:

A. Identify the specific nature(s) of the incident.

B. Apply disciplinary actions, which may include but are not limited to, imposing a series of graduated consequences that include alternative discipline. In determining the appropriate response to students who engage in bullying behavior, school administrators should consider the type of behaviors, the frequency and/or pattern of behaviors, and other relevant circumstances. Alternative discipline includes, but is not limited to:

1. Meeting with the student and the student's parents/guardian;
2. Reflective activities, such as requiring the student to write an essay about the student's misbehavior;
3. Mediation, but only when there is mutual conflict between peers, rather than one-way negative behavior, and both parties voluntarily choose this option;
4. Counseling;
5. Anger management;
6. Health counseling or intervention;
7. Mental health counseling;
8. Participation in skills building and resolution activities, such as social-emotional cognitive skills building, resolution circles and restorative conferencing;
9. Community service; and
10. In-school detention or suspension, which may take place during lunchtime, after school or on weekends.

C. Remediate any substantiated incident of bullying to counter the negative impact of the bullying and reduce the risk of future bullying incidents, which may include referring the victim, perpetrator or other involved persons to counseling or other appropriate services.

## **VIII. Appeal**

Notification shall be provided to parent(s), guardian(s) and students of the right to appeal a decision of a school principal or a superintendent's designee related to taking or not taking remedial action in accordance with this policy. The appeals procedure must be consistent with other appeals procedures established by the school board and may include an appeal to the superintendent or Head of School.

## **IX. Assignment of Responsibility**

A. The School Board is responsible for:

1. Annually providing written versions of this policy and related procedures to students, parent(s) and guardian(s), volunteers, administrators, teachers and school staff;
2. Posting this policy and related procedures on the school administrative unit's publicly accessible website; and
3. Including in student handbooks a section that addresses in detail this policy and related procedures.

B. The Superintendent or Head of School is responsible for:

1. Oversight, implementation, and enforcement of this policy and its procedures;
2. Designating a school principal or other school personnel to administer the policies at the school level;
3. Developing a procedure for publicly identifying the superintendent's designee or designees for administering the policies at the school level;
4. Ensuring that the prohibition on bullying and retaliation and the attendant consequences apply to any student, school employee, contractor, visitor or volunteer who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying or retaliation;
5. Ensuring that any contractor, visitor, or volunteer who engages in bullying is barred from school grounds until the Superintendent or Head of School is assured that the person will comply with the policies of the school board;
6. Ensuring that any organization affiliated with the school that authorizes or engages in bullying or retaliation forfeits permission for that organization to operate on school grounds or receive any other benefit of affiliation with the school;
7. Providing professional development and staff training in the best practices in prevention of bullying and harassment and implementation of this policy;  
[NOTE: The law requires “training and instructional materials related to the policy” be posted on the Maine Department of Education’s website. See “Bullying Prevention Resources” at <http://www.maine.gov/doe/bullying/resources/> for further information]

8. Filing the SAU policy that addresses bullying and cyberbullying with the Maine Department of Education; and
9. Ensuring that substantiated incidents of bullying and cyberbullying are reported to the Maine Department of Education on at least an annual basis.

\*Title IX, Bullying, and Cyberbullying Reporting Form can be found on the MEVA website and towards the end of this handbook.

### ***Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and Cheating***

Cheating (giving or receiving information) and plagiarism on class work may result in a zero grade for the assignment without the opportunity to complete an additional assignment to make up lost points.

The following procedure governs identification and discipline for instances of academic dishonesty:

1st Offense: The teacher will setup and participate in a phone conference with the family and log the information in the school system. The teacher will alert the head of school. The student will not receive credit for the plagiarized assignment. In addition, he or she will be required to review the plagiarized lesson and complete the plagiarized lesson for 70% of the original points.

2nd Offense: The student and Parent will attend a conference with the head of school and teacher. The student may not be allowed to rewrite/redo the assignment.

Continued Offenses: Additional disciplinary action may be taken and may result in failure of the course.

### ***Academic Freedom/Students Rights***

In addition to other rights established by law, each student served by MEVA shall possess the following substantive rights, and no school district shall limit these rights except for good and sufficient cause:

- No student shall be unlawfully denied an equal education opportunity or be unlawfully discriminated against because of national origin, race, religion, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration or a physical, mental or sensory handicap.
- All students possess the constitutional right to freedom of speech and press, the constitutional right to peaceably assemble (see Freedom of Assembly) and to petition the government and its representatives for a redress of grievances, the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and to have their schools free from sectarian control or influence, subject to reasonable limitations upon the time, place and manner of exercising such right.
- All students possess the constitutional right to be secure in their persons, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures.
- All students shall have the right to be free from unlawful interference in their pursuit of an education while in custody of a common school district.

- No student shall be deprived of the right to an equal educational opportunity in whole or in part by a school district without due process of law.
- The foregoing enumeration of rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage other rights set forth in the constitution and the laws of the State of Maine or the rights retained by the people.

### ***Technology Usage (includes webcam usage)***

MEVA has done due diligence to protect students' personal information and to guard against cyber predators by installing anti-virus software and security settings on each MEVA issued student computer. Students are responsible for installing updates and patches for anti-virus software. Students must not change the security settings of the computer.

Students must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement governing their use of the on-loan hardware, the internet and email.

Students who are found to be in breach of the Acceptable Use Agreement, or have been withdrawn from the school, must return the computer to MEVA. Students/families who do not comply with the return request will be liable for the cost of the computer.

### ***Discipline Process***

The most effective discipline is taught and dealt with before problems arise. It is a learning process that should be Instructor directed. This being said - when applicable - internal interventions will be utilized prior to the referral process.

The teacher will try to positively redirect the student. If this doesn't work, the Instructor will call the Legal Guardian to explain the situation and reiterate expectations. The instructor will log the phone conversation in the school system.

If the problem persists during next class, the teacher is to email the Head of School and Advisor a detailed email and a system note which states the nature of the problem and what the teacher did to try to defuse or solve the situation. The student may then be referred to the Head of School.

Within one school day of receipt of the referral, the student will communicate with the Head of School to review the incident and develop a plan to return to the class, which will include communication with and a response from the Parent.

The Head of School will contact the student's Parent by the Parent's preferred method of contact (phone or email) to review concerns relating to the disciplinary incident.

The student will miss the virtual classroom session from which s/he was excluded, and is responsible for viewing the recording. If necessary, s/he may be blocked from participating in further live sessions, the discussion board and/or the course itself.



If the student doesn't follow through with the agreed-upon plan, he/she will be referred to the Head of School and Guidance Counselor again.

With each additional referral, the student will be assigned a consequence or disciplinary step to be determined based on the student's behavior.

Additional referrals may result in continued suspension from school, and the need for a conference between the student/Parent and Head of School to develop a plan for return to class.

It should be noted that there are instances where this process may be altered. Behaviors such as violence toward others, bullying, harassment, intimidation, disrespect toward instructors, non-compliance, and other behaviors that a staff member deems as disruptive to an orderly learning environment, may result in an automatic referral to the Head of School.

Instructors may not re-admit a student to the online classroom until they have communicated with the Head of School.

### ***Discipline Appeal Process***

A Parent or student has a right to appeal disciplinary action. If an appeal is desired, a letter must be received by the Head of School within ten (10) school business days (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) with an official request for an appeal hearing.

### ***Re-admission after Suspension/Expulsion***

A student who has been long-term suspended or expelled from MEVA and wishes to be considered for entrance or readmission to MEVA must appeal to the MEVA Head of School. In the case of expulsion, entrance or re-admission will be considered based on review of the offenses resulting in expulsion and a review of the student's re-entry plan.

### ***Records to be Maintained***

MEVA will maintain and store the following records:

1. Student Information Forms/Demographics
2. National and State Assessment Results
3. Student Transcripts

### ***Records Storage***

Records will be stored in accordance with state standards and MEVA policies.

### ***Instructional Hours***

MEVA's schedule provides students with the state required instructional hours per year. All courses have been and will be audited to ensure they meet this criteria and evidence of that audit will be recorded. Audit records are maintained by MEVA.

School assemblies, student orientations, testing, Parent-teacher conferences, work sessions, and other instructionally related activities directly involving students may be included in the required instructional hours.

### ***Attendance Policy***

As a Maine public school, Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) must adhere to the same attendance requirements as other public schools. Accordingly, the following are MEVA's policies for tracking student attendance and, when necessary, reporting truancy.

At MEVA, we expect every student to attend every class every school day in accordance with the school calendar. Attendance is defined below. Participating within each course is mandatory. These lessons are recorded for student viewing at other times. If a student cannot attend a live session, they must watch the recording and perform the activity the instructor provided to receive credit for the live session. MEVA develops an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each students' needs. Students are expected to make continuous progress through their courses and attain the expected outcomes.

If a student is going to miss school due to sickness or anything else, administration must be notified by the Legal Guardian via phone or email. If the absence is due to illness or injury, a doctor's note will be requested.

Logging Instructional Time is required and must be entered every school day by the Legal Guardian. Per the MDOE, a minimum of 5.5 hours counts as a full school day. These hours must be entered by the Legal Guardian through their Student's Brightspace accounts. The school day at MEVA is defined as Monday through Friday with classes taking place any time between 8:15am to 4:00pm, unless permission is given by the Head of School for an alternate program of studies or because of the student's ILP.

1. Attendance— The following criteria is counted toward Instructional Time and counts as attendance recorded; when the Parent logs it into their student's Brightspace account, then logs the time within the Attendance box on the student's course page/homepage. Brightspace houses the attendance information and student grades. <https://meva.brightspace.com/>

- Student attended a Live Session (whole group, small group or 1:1);
- Student logged into a lesson or lesson activity and the login can be documented;
- Student and teacher engaged in a subject-oriented telephone conversation;
- There is documentation of an email dialogue between the student and the teacher regarding the subject matter;
- There is documentation of activity/work between the Legal Guardian and student;
- If a MEVA student is involved in a CTE program, community college class, or other dual enrolled programming, please reach out to the Guidance Counselor;

- MEA attendance at a remote test center location;
- School sanctioned group activities or individual activities per the students' ILP.
- School related field trips

## 2. Reporting Planned and Unplanned Absences

- If a student is going to be absent for any reason, please email [attendance@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:attendance@mainevirtualacademy.org) OR call 207 613 8900 x 2010. The Attendance Clerk will send the documentation to the Head of School to determine if the absence meets the criteria to be excused.
- Students whose absences are excused will be allowed to make up schoolwork missed with no loss of credit up to the end of the reporting period. However, it is the responsibility of the student to arrange make up assignments/times with his/her teachers.

## 3. Excusable Absences: Maine Law stipulates that absence from school can be excusable if a student has:

- Personal illness; An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day; Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day; A family emergency; A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose that has been approved.

### ***Attendance Tracking***

MEVA recognizes that many of our students have work and family responsibilities that make “traditional” school attendance difficult to comply with, and that is why they choose to attend our school. However, attendance must be tracked for State and Federal reporting. Within the State of Maine, the following measures are tracked:

- Instructional Hours
- Attendance
- Student Behavior Data

### **Truancy Guidelines:**

Truancy for grades 7-12 in the state of Maine is defined as: 10 days absent unexcused OR 7 consecutive days unexcused absences during the school year.

### **Compulsory Attendance:**

Under Maine State Law, full-time attendance is required of all children from their 6th to their 17th birthday except a student who has:

- i. Reached the age of 15 years or completed the 9th grade;
- ii. Permission to leave school from that person's Parent;

- iii. Been approved by the principal for a suitable program of work and study or training;
- iv. Permission to leave school from the Board or its designee; and
- v. Agreed in writing with that person's Parent and the Board or its designee to meet annually until that person's 17th birthday to review that person's educational needs. When the request to be excused from school has been denied pursuant to this paragraph, the student's Parent may appeal to the Commissioner.

### **Attendance Tracking Procedures**

Students with no entered attendance or no participation in Live Class sessions or logging into the online school to complete work for 3 or more days without an approved excuse will be considered excessively absent. In that case, the following protocols will be followed:

1. Level 1 -  
Defined as: 3 unexcused absences - 3 days with no entered attendance or no participation in live class sessions or logging into the online school to complete work  
Action Taken: Attendance warning email and call from the school
2. Level 2 -  
Defined as: 5 unexcused absences – 5 days with no entered attendance or no participation in live class sessions or logging into the online school to complete work  
Action Taken: 2<sup>nd</sup> Attendance Warning Letter, Call from school.
3. Level 3 -  
Defined as: 7 unexcused absences – 7 days with no entered attendance or no participation in live class sessions or logging into the online school to complete work  
Action Taken: Certified letter sent home to legal guardian, truancy reported to the state, appropriate steps taken per Maine law
4. Level 4  
Defined as: 10 unexcused absences – 10 days with no entered attendance or no participation in live class sessions or logging into the online school to complete work  
Action Taken: Certified letter sent to legal guardian, truancy reported, and appropriate steps taken per Maine state law which may include reporting to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

**Note:** Any student with 10% excused or unexcused absences will be required to attend a meeting with the teacher, Guidance Counselor, and Head of School.

## ***Withdrawing from MEVA / Voluntary Withdrawal:***

### ***Voluntary Withdrawal***

To voluntarily withdraw a student from MEVA, Parents/guardians (or students who are 18 year of age or older) should notify the school administration via phone as far in advance of the withdrawal as possible. An exit interview will be completed with an administrator before a student is withdrawn. All requests for transfer of student records will be initiated by the school in which the student will be enrolled.

- If a family decides to withdraw from MEVA, verification is necessary and can be in the form of a records request from the next school, copies of filed home school application paperwork, HiSet paperwork, or any other appropriate paperwork.
- The formal withdrawal process begins with the legal guardian reaching out to the Registrar at 207 613 8900 x 2000 or via e-mail, see page 7 for additional contact info.
- As a public charter school, the school is responsible to reach out to the legal guardian until the legal guardian follows the proper withdrawal steps with the Registrar.

### ***Manifestation Determination***

MEVA has numerous safeguards governing the discipline and removal of students with disabilities, including what is known as a “manifestation determination” when questions surround whether a student’s disability contributed to attendance or behavior/conduct leading to discipline, which may or may not trigger the need for MEVA to implement a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

### ***Student/Parent Satisfaction/Pulse Check Surveys***

As part of our continual school improvement process, MEVA will develop, distribute, and collect satisfaction surveys from students/Parents about their experience with various aspects of their school experience, which may include:

- Enrollment process
- Course registration process
- Orientation process
- Material distribution and return
- Student/Teacher Relationships
- Academic advising experience
- Student/Parent Portal
- Courses and classrooms

Data collected in surveys will be considered the property of MEVA. MEVA will use this data to make improvements for our families.

## **Materials & Technology**

### ***Inventory Identification***

Any hardware belonging to MEVA is “on loan” to the student for the semester or the school year. School materials (such as books, laptop, and software) are also “on loan” to the student for the semester or the school year.

### ***Acceptable Use Policy***

Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) recognizes the benefits of technology in the education of MEVA’s students. Computers, including wireless laptops, are valuable tools that students can use to perform daily tasks, conduct research, complete written assignments and special projects, and attend LIVE and/or Asynchronous courses.

To ensure that MEVA seventh through twelfth graders gain the maximum benefits from their laptop, the MEVA Board of Directors supports the use of this equipment at home. Students are expected to follow all Board policies/regulations, all school rules, and follow all regulations published by MEVA. Additional regulations may be directed by the Head of School or designated representatives.

It is MEVA’S belief that by providing the Students with laptops to work with at home, it will facilitate continuance of academic programs, advance the timely completion of assigned work, and encourage parental involvement with their children’s academic endeavors.

In enrolling with MEVA, Students (and if under the age of 18, their Parent/Guardian) must accept the responsibility of using the laptop, printer and course materials, and the system supplied by MEVA in a responsible and appropriate manner by signing an Acceptable Use Agreement, a legally binding contract, as part of the online enrollment process.

This Acceptable Use Agreement contains certain promises of Students concerning the use of course materials, laptop and printer, if applicable (“Hardware”) and other systems & programs, that MEVA may provide access to, that enable a Student’s online education (e.g., learning management system (Brightspace), and internal (Gsuite email). The Hardware, programs and course materials (collectively “MEVA Property”) are intended to provide a means for educational activities only.

The laws of the State of Maine govern the Acceptable Use Agreement. The rights of use stated in the Acceptable Use Agreement are not transferable to another party. The Acceptable Use Agreement is located at the end of the Parent Student Handbook and is required to be reviewed and signed annually.

### ***Distribution of Textbooks, Materials, and Technology***

MEVA will provide textbooks, software, and required materials for all core academic courses required for graduation. Most textbooks will be an online version accessible through the Learning Management System. Hardback textbooks will only be provided in the event the course does not contain an online

version or the student is required by a student's IEP and/or Section 504 Plan. Students/families may be responsible for expenses associated with optional software or optional materials for selected non-core courses such as technology courses. Computer hardware (if ordered) will be shipped to students via USPS or FedEx with delivery confirmation. Shipments will carry insurance to cover the cost of replacing the system. Students/families will be notified of the method of delivery, the expected arrival date, and the tracking number of the package(s). The student or a parent/guardian must sign for the package.

If there is an issue with any of the instructional materials, the family is to fill out the Challenge of Instructional Materials Form and submit to the Head of School.

Maine Virtual Academy is a virtual school and does not have an on-site library.

### ***Insurance Coverage for Equipment***

School insurance will not cover stolen, lost or fire-damaged equipment. ***MEVA highly recommends adding the laptop to the Parent's/student's homeowner's/renter's insurance policy.*** Without the insurance protection against stolen, lost or fire-damaged equipment, the student and their family are financially responsible for replacement costs for any equipment damaged by fire, lost or stolen. All technology packages must be insured up to the amount described in the Acceptable Use Policy/Contract, please refer to page 73 of this handbook.

### ***Return of Textbooks, Materials, and Technology***

Textbooks and other course materials must be returned within 14 calendar days following the last day of the semester during which the materials are used, or from withdrawal, whichever occurs first. Shipping labels will be provided to you for any labels or questions please contact the Student Support Liaison at the school.

### ***Internet Reimbursement Qualification***

If you qualify under the Economic Status Requirements, you may be eligible for internet reimbursement through Maine Virtual Academy. To request an application please contact the school at 207 613 8900 for more information.

## **Student Support Operations**

### ***Student Inquiries and Process***

Students are encouraged to ask questions! The following guidelines define the process and appropriate contacts for common student questions. Classroom specific questions should be directed to the classroom specific teacher.

**Please also refer to the Student Help Matrix located in the beginning of this handbook.**

Students should submit their questions/problems via email or by phone as soon as possible to the necessary contact.

### ***Response Time***

MEVA has a policy of responding to student inquiries within 24 hours, e-mail is the preferred method of communication. Weekends and/or holidays are not included.

### ***Technical Support***

Students can access technical support related to hardware and/or courses through our Student Technology Support Coordinator at 207-613-8900 or [tech@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:tech@mainevirtualacademy.org)

### ***Academic Support***

Students and/or Legal Guardians should contact their course teacher for questions related to course content. Contact with the teacher should take place via email, phone or during the teacher's office hour. MEVA is here to support students, parents/guardians and/or learning coaches. We have resources available that are accessible to families within Brightspace that include; the MEVA Helpdesk, Parent/Student Corner, Guidance Room, along with the support from our Family Academic Liaison, Student Support Liaison, and the Guidance Department. We are here to help!

### ***Academic Advising/Guidance Support***

Students should contact their Guidance Counselor via email or phone for academic counseling or contact the Guidance Counselor for further assistance.

### ***Advisory***

A dedicated Advisory teacher works with MEVA Parents and students to foster success in the online learning environment. Advisory attendance is mandatory.

### ***Admission/Registration Support***

Students should contact the Registrar and the Guidance Counselor for admissions and/or course registration support via email or phone at 207 613 8900 during regular hours.

### ***Work Permit***

Students interested in a work permit must contact their neighborhood/local public school district.

### ***Academic Support and Intervention/Non-Compliance Procedures***

MEVA's Family Academic Support Team (FAST) who welcomes and provides ongoing support to our families through strength-based and proactive interventions. New families and previously struggling families will receive a live orientation to online schooling with MEVA through our onboarding program. During their onboarding program, families will, among other things, become more familiar with the learning platform and other programs used, explore learning and motivational strategies and enrichment for at-home learning, become adept at logging attendance and progress, develop and maintain a school schedule, practice planning techniques in small group and one-on-one meetings with a FAST member.



MEVA will also utilize FAST support teams to assist families in achieving and maintaining compliancy for those needing an additional layer of support.

Team meeting requests are open to all students needing supports or interventions. Additional areas of support like the MEVA Helpdesk are also available daily to all students and continue year round. Parental/LC involvement is important to the success of the student. MEVA also offers one on one support where and when needed to both the Parent and Student in navigating tech related issues, learning platforms, onboarding programs and so forth. The purpose of MEVA's team meetings is to help identify barriers or challenges that the student may be experiencing.

Prior to determining non-compliance, the teacher will communicate concerns with the Parent/Legal Guardian/mentor by email and/or phone. The teacher will make every effort to support the Parent/Legal Guardian's needs and to clearly and concisely communicate the policies, expectations, and compliancy factors for students and Parents as outlined in the MEVA Student/Parent Handbook.

- Teachers will also refer to the goals established during the student's ILP goal-setting conference. MEVA may require face-to-face assessments with the student at a neutral location to help determine needs.

When a teacher makes the determination that a Parent/Legal Guardian/student is non-compliant (including, but not limited to, not meeting expectations pertaining to daily and/or live class attendance and participation, work sample submission, progress, communication, conferences, etc.), the teacher will refer the family to the Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team for support.

Staff meetings are held regularly to identify students who are struggling. The Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team will reach out to the parent by either phone, or email to schedule a team meeting with the student and parent. Families are expected to work closely with the Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team as well at their student's teacher. The Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team and teacher will work closely to develop a plan which outlines the specific actions required by the student and Legal Guardian to maintain compliance and become successful with the goal of academic achievement. The Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team will contact the family to discuss academic plans.

- The Guidance Department and/or Engagement Team member will monitor compliancy issues and will follow up with the family by phone or online meeting every week or more often, as needed. The family will remain supported throughout the plan.

## **FERPA Policy**

### ***Notification of Rights Under FERPA***

At MEVA, safeguards are in place for proper access to student records by phone and electronically. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford Parents and students turning the age of 18 or are over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

A. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the HOS a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The HOS will make arrangements for access and notify the Parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

B. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the Parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask Maine Virtual Academy to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the Maine Virtual Academy decides not to amend the record as requested by the Parent or eligible student, the Maine Virtual Academy will notify the Parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the Parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

C. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school unit as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; person or company with whom the school unit has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a Parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the Maine Virtual Academy discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

D. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Maine Virtual Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

E. The Maine Virtual Academy may make public at its discretion personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without Parental consent if that information has been designated as directory information by the school. This school unit has designated the following information as directory information: the student's name, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletes, and honors and awards received.

Such information will not be disclosed if the Parent of the student informs the school unit in writing within 10 days of the first student day of the school year or within 10 days after enrollment that such information is not to be designated as directory information with respect to that student. Any such notice should be sent to the Head of School at the following address:

Maine Virtual Academy  
Ballard Center  
6 East Chestnut St., Suite 230  
Augusta, ME 04330

F. Federal law permits military recruiters and institutions of higher learning to request and receive the names, addresses and telephone numbers of high school students upon request, unless the student's Parent or eligible student notifies the school unit that he/she does not want such information released. Such information will not be disclosed if the student's Parent or eligible student notifies the school unit, in writing, that such information should not be released without his/her written consent. Any such notice should be sent to the Head of School at the following address:

Maine Virtual Academy  
Ballard Center  
6 East Chestnut St., Suite 230  
Augusta, ME 04330

G. Under Maine law, Maine Virtual Academy shall not publish on the Internet without written Parental consent any information whether directory or otherwise, that identifies a student, including but not limited to the student's full name, photograph, personal biography, email address, home address, date of birth, social security number and Parents' names.

## **FERPA OPT-OUT DIRECTORY – \*New Expanded Policy**

[Note: Per 34 C.F.R. § 99.37(d), a school or school district may adopt a limited directory information policy. If a school or school district does so, the directory information notice to parents and eligible students must specify the parties who may receive directory information and/or the purposes for which directory information may be disclosed.]

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that MEVA, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, MEVA may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the School District to the contrary in accordance with MEVA procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the MEVA to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want MEVA to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify MEVA in writing by the first day of school, as identified in the school calendar located on the website [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org). MEVA has designated the following information as directory information:

- **Student's name**
- **Address**
- **Telephone listing**
- **Electronic mail address**
- **Photograph**

- Major field of study
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized use.

To Submit an “Opt Out Request” please contact in writing by mail or e-mail, use subject line **“OPT OUT”** to the below contact;

Meghan Crosby, Registrar  
 Mrosby@mainevirtualacademy.org  
 6East Chestnut Street  
 Augusta, ME 04330  
 207-613-8900 x 2000

## **PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS ACT (PPRA)– \*New**

### **Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of*–

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of

- a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law or the Individuals with Disabilities Act; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling or otherwise distributing the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

•*Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum if the instructional material will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any survey funded in whole or in part by a program of ED.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

MEVA will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. MEVA will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. MEVA will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. MEVA will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

## **LEGAL GUARDIAN SETUP**

Once a student is approved for enrollment, the Legal Guardian will receive the a “Your Student is Enrolled/Accepted” email. Please complete the directions within this email to set up your student’s school email and online Brightspace schooling accounts. This email is usually received within 24 – 48 hours after a student has been approved.

This email contains all of the information needed to complete the Account Setup process which will provide access to the School. The subject line of the email will be **“Your Student is Enrolled in the Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) for the 2023-2024 School Year!”**

If you do not see this email, please make sure to check your **SPAM** folder. If you still cannot find it, please call our Registrar, at (207) 613-8900 ext. 2000, and the Registrar will be able to provide you with the information you need. Welcome Email in order to set up your new Student’s accounts.

## **STUDENT ACCOUNT SETUP**

Creating a student’s Online School Account can only be completed by the student’s assigned Legal Guardian. The Legal Guardian has the ability to create a separate login for all of their students regardless of their grade level.

The Student Online Brightspace Account Set Up process can be completed immediately. You will be automatically prompted to change your password. If you are not taken to the log in setup page, you can also set up your student’s account by logging into the online school <https://meva.brightspace.com/>

To access these instructions at any time, please reference step by step help provided to you in the Welcome/Enrollment email.

**Student Account Setup Guide:** Click [Student Guide](#) to access the document.

For other resources, contact your child’s Advisory teacher or content teacher, check out MEVA’s facebook page, and browse through MEVA’s website: [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org)

## ACCESSING LIVE CLASS SESSIONS

- Log in to the student account through <https://meva.brightspace.com/>
- Navigate to “My Courses” on the homepage and click to enter the course.
- Or scroll down to look at your Calendar and click on the course to also enter the live session.

The screenshot displays the Brightspace user interface. At the top left is the MAINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY logo. Below it is a green banner with 'Brightspace Resources' and a dropdown arrow. A large blue and orange nebula image serves as a background for the 'Welcome to Brightspace' text. The 'My Courses' section is highlighted with a yellow circle and contains a grid of course cards: 'Administrator Lounge', 'Brightspace Bulk Tools', 'American Literature Crane A', 'American Literature Crane B', 'Async\_English Foundations I', and 'Async\_World Literature Hamilton B'. To the right, a 'Calendar' widget is also highlighted with a yellow circle, showing the date 'Saturday, July 24, 2021' and a message 'There are no events to display.' Other visible elements include 'Getting Started' and 'Announcements' sections.

## Maine Virtual Academy Title IA School

Title IA is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to school districts with high numbers or percentages of low-income children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. This information is gathered from the Family Income Forms and information from these forms are not shared with others.

In 2016, Title IA was reauthorized through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation. Title IA is a supplemental service and is not intended to replace classroom instruction. Our ELA and Math Interventionists work closely with classroom teachers to ensure the success of our students; a team



approach provides the greatest gains. The classroom teacher is providing the primary instruction to all students in the classroom, and Title IA is giving additional small group ELA and Math instruction.

Title IA mandates Parental involvement in its programs. The emphasis on Parental involvement is justified by research showing that the support of Parents at home can have a positive impact on student achievement, attendance, classroom behavior, as well as a positive effect on Parents/Legal Guardians themselves by giving them the tools to help their students learn at home.

Title IA services are focused on the lowest 25% of the school population in ELA and Math. Supplemental ELA and Math support are provided to eligible (i.e., Below Basic) students. Students who can most benefit from our services will be targeted. Title IA uses many approved screening procedures which include: NWEA, teacher observation, and classroom interventions. Parents/Legal Guardians will be encouraged to be part of this process every step of the way and will be given strategies to help their student learn at home. This information will be made available through the Title IA newsletters, Parent/Legal Guardian-teacher-team conferences, and numerous Title IA Parent/Legal Guardian connect meetings offered throughout the year. We hope that by establishing a partnership between home and school we can help all students become learners for life.

### **Title I Eligibility Criteria**

It has been determined that the NWEA is the most equitable method for determining placement in Title IA programs. Based on the fall and winter reading and math assessment data, Title IA will direct the majority of its services to targeted students in grades 7-11.

Title IA personnel will serve a minimum of (approximately) the lowest 25% of the population at the school (i.e., Below Basic, < 21<sup>st</sup> percentile in reading and/or math) in grades 7-11. Students above this 25% who meet eligibility criteria will be served as staffing allows at the Middle School and High School levels.

### **Title IA Services- (Schoolwide)**

The school district will distribute the **Title IA Parent Involvement Policy** and the **School-Parent Compact** to all Parents/Legal Guardians whose students participate in Title I Part A (it is included in this handbook – page 50-51).

Parents of Title IA students will be notified that military recruiters and institutions of higher education are entitled to receive the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary students and that Maine Virtual Academy must comply with any such request, provided that Parents/Legal Guardians have been notified of their right to request that this information not be released without their prior written consent. Parents/eligible students who do not want Maine Virtual Academy to disclose this information must notify the Head of School (Superintendent) in writing by September 15th or within thirty (30) days of enrollment, whichever is later.

It is the policy of Maine Virtual Academy to provide remedial services in ELA and Math using Title IA funding to targeted students. Title IA of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a federal program designed to provide supplemental remedial services to students identified through an approved screening process. Title IA services are intended to reinforce and not replace classroom instruction. School personnel will inform Parents/Legal Guardians if their student is recommended for Title IA

services. Parents/Legal Guardians will receive: an email (letter) stating that their child qualifies for the Title IA program, the Title IA Parent Involvement Policy and the Home/School Compact. Parental permission is not required for NWEA testing because testing is administered schoolwide to all students. Parents have the right to decline Title IA services for their child. Also, if a child no longer qualifies for services based on the approved screening process, the Parent will be informed that services will end.

**Parents can attend Parent-teacher-team conferences** during the schoolyear at their request or at the school's request. Face-to-face conferences or phone conferences can be scheduled upon Parent request at any time during the school year. Parents will receive Title IA Student Progress Reports via email at least once during the fall and spring semesters.

### **Title IA Parent/Legal Guardian Communication**

The Parent-teacher-team shall organize two Parent/Legal Guardian meetings annually that Parents will be encouraged to attend. (The involvement policy is on the next page).

These meeting shall be used to provide Parents with:

- A. An overview of Parental rights.
- B. Information on curriculum, instruction and assessment.

### **The Title IA designees will ensure the following:**

- A. Title IA Parent Involvement Policy and the **Parent/Legal Guardian - School Compact** are distributed via email.
- B. Title IA Rights about releasing directory information to **Military Recruiters and requesting Core Teachers' Professional Qualifications** are distributed by email.
- C. Title IA Parent/Legal Guardian Training **Needs and Effectiveness Surveys** are distributed by email.
- D. Title IA Student **Progress Reports** are prepared and distributed via email.
- E. Organize, oversee, and implement meetings/events with Title IA Parents/Legal Guardians. Provide support as needed to Title IA faculty

## **Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) Title IA Parent Involvement Policy**

This school policy for Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) has been developed in consultation with the Parents/guardians of students participating in Title IA programs at MEVA. The policy includes a "School-Parent Compact" that outlines the way Parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The Head of School will be responsible for distributing this policy to Parents/guardians of students participating in the school Title IA programs.

### **I. PARENT INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS**

The school shall convene an annual meeting at a convenient time to which all Parents/guardians of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend to inform them of the school's participation under Title IA, explain the right of Parents to be involved, and to encourage their

involvement in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I programs and Parent involvement policy.

The school will offer at least two (2) other meetings during the school year, held at various times in the morning or evening for Parents/guardians of students participating in Title IA programs.

**The Head of School/Title IA Coordinator will:**

- A. Invite Parents/guardians of participating children to the annual meeting and to other meetings held during the school year;
- B. Provide an overview of Title IA and the programs the school provides under Title IA;
- C. Explain the rights of Parents/guardians to be involved in developing and reviewing the school's Parent involvement policy, including the School-Parent Compact;
- D. Provide a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- E. Give Parents/guardians an opportunity to ask questions and engage in informal discussion about student achievement and school performance;
- F. Respond to requests from Parents for opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate (as appropriate) in decisions relating to the education of their children;
- G. Invite Parents/guardians to serve on the Parent Advisory Committee and/or other school or district-level Title IA committees;
- H. Invite Parents/guardians to participate in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title IA and the school-Parent involvement policy and establish a schedule for this activity;
- I. With the input of Parents/guardians, establish a process by which an adequate representation of Parents/guardians can be assured;
- J. Describe the process by which Parents/guardians may express concerns and complaints if they are dissatisfied with the Title IA program;
- K. Engage school-based Parent organizations in outreach to Parents/guardians of students participating in Title IA; and
- L. Arrange for child care so that Parents/guardians who would otherwise be unable to attend may do so.

**II. SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT**

This School-Parent Compact describes how Parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and Parents will develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's academic achievement standards.

- A. The school is responsible for providing a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students served under Title IA to meet the State's academic achievement standards.
- B. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to support their children's learning by:

1. Monitoring their children's attendance;
2. Providing assistance and encouraging their children to complete homework assignments;
3. Encouraging their children to ask for help from teachers or classroom aides (Ed Techs) when needed;
4. Talking with their children about the school day;
5. Reading to or with their children;
6. Monitoring and limiting their children's technology usage;
7. Volunteering in the classroom and for school-related activities such as field trips;
8. Participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to the education of their children; and
9. Enrolling their children in extracurricular and age-appropriate, community-based, after-school activities.

C. The school will address the importance of communication between Parents and teachers on an ongoing basis by:

1. Scheduling one or more Parent-teacher meetings annually for Parents/guardians of elementary school level students during which the Compact shall be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.
2. Providing reports to Parents/guardians on their children's progress;
3. Providing Parents/guardians with reasonable access to staff to discuss issues related to their children's learning;
4. Welcoming Parents as volunteers in the classroom; and
5. Providing adequate supervision and feedback for Parents/guardians who volunteer.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 6318

Adopted: December 6, 2006

Revised: August 2, 2017



## Student Continued Engagement Strategy - SY2023-2024

Maine Virtual Academy has prepared for unpredictable interruptions in normal systems access by implementing the following communications plan and developing strategies for continued student engagement. By adopting these measures, it is hoped that while systems may occasionally be disrupted, access to learning never should be. In the case of technical issues affecting Brightspace, Zoom and/or Bongo, please follow these procedures:

### Scenario 1: Access to the Learning Platform, Brightspace is interrupted.

- Check your email! Students/Families will receive an external email warning of the outage and the information will be posted on MEVA's website at [www.mainevirtualacademy.org](http://www.mainevirtualacademy.org)
- Students can reach their teacher if they cannot use School email by phone. Students are directed to save a hard copy of all teachers' phone numbers on the first day of school in case of an outage or emergency.
- Students should still attend all scheduled live sessions if possible.
- If Brightspace is down for an extended period of time, students should:
  1. Work on offline assignments or readings, provided by your teacher. Please e-mail or call your teacher/ advisor for guidance.
  2. If applicable, student should login to IXL and work on developing specific skills. Students should use this time to also work on essays and/or to work on outstanding assignments.
  3. Legal Guardians will need to log students' offline work time for the appropriate subject, this is done in the Attendance landing page in your Student's Brightspace account, so that the student is not penalized as soon as the system is up and running again.
- When course access is restored families will be notified via the MEVA website and an external email.

### Scenario 2: If Zoom/Bongo and/or Brightspace is temporarily down for everyone:

1. **Check your email:** MEVA administration will send out a mass school email to all students/LG's to inform them of the outage.
2. Students should continue to try to login and reach out to teachers to see if the issue has been resolved.
3. If Zoom/Bongo and/or Brightspace is down for an extended period of time, students should:
  - Work on assignments or readings
  - If applicable, student should login to IXL and work on developing specific skills. Students should use this time to also work on essays and/or to work on outstanding assignments.
  - Legal Guardian will need to log students' work time so that the student is not penalized
4. If Zoom/Bongo and/or Brightspace for an extended period of time, students' attendance will not be penalized for the outage:
  - a. Teachers will be responsible for setting up make-up classes, and, if needed, small group or 1:1 sessions with those students affected.
  - b. Student should login to their courses and work on any outstanding assignments. If you do not have outstanding assignments, please reach out to your teacher or advisor for further direction.
  - c. Legal Guardians will need to log students' offline work time so that the student is not penalized
5. Once the issue has been resolved, another mass school email will be sent to families.

**For computer issues please contact us at 207-613-8900 x 2010 for troubleshooting**

## ***Policy On Use Of Physical Restraint & Seclusion***

The Maine Virtual Academy Governing Board has adopted this policy and the accompanying procedures to implement the standards for use of physical restraint and seclusion with students, as required by state law and regulations, and to support a safe school environment. Physical restraint and seclusion, as defined by this policy, may only be used as an emergency intervention when the behavior of a student presents an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or others.

State law and MDOE Rule Chapter 33 do not restrict or limit the protections available to school officials under 20-A M.R.S.A. § 4009, but those protections do not relieve school officials from complying with this policy/procedure.

The Head of School has overall responsibility for implementing this policy and the accompanying procedure, but may delegate specific responsibilities as they deems appropriate.

### **1. Definitions**

The following definitions apply to this policy and the accompanying procedure:

- A.
  1. **Physical restraint:** A personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move their arms, legs, or head freely.
  2. **Physical restraint does not include any of the following:**
    - a. Physical escort: A temporary, voluntary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back to induce a student to walk to a safe location.
    - b.. Physical prompt: A teaching technique that involves voluntary physical contact with the student and that enables the student to learn or model the physical movement necessary for the development of the desired competency.
    - c.. The use of adaptive devices or mechanical supports to achieve proper body position, balance or alignment to allow greater freedom of movement than would be possible without the use of such devices or supports.
    - d.. The use of vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.
- B.
  1. **Seclusion:** The involuntary isolation or confinement of a student alone in a room or clearly defined area from which the student does not feel free to go or is physically denied exit.
  2. **Seclusion does not include:**
    1. A timeout, An intervention where a student requests, or complies with an adult request for, a break.

### **2. Procedures for Implementing Physical Restraint and Seclusion**

The requirements for implementing physical restraint and seclusion, as well as incident notices, documentation and reporting are included in the accompanying procedure, JKAA-R.

### **3. Annual Notice of Policy/Procedure**

**Maine Virtual Academy** shall provide annual notice to parents/legal guardians of this policy/procedure by means determined by the Head of School/designee.

### **4. Training Requirements**

- A. All school staff and contracted providers shall receive an annual overview of this policy/procedure.
- B. **Maine Virtual Academy** will ensure that there are a sufficient number of administrators/designees, special education and other staff who maintain certification in a restraint and seclusion training program approved by the Maine Department of Education. A list of certified staff shall be updated annually and maintained in the Head of School's Office, in each school office and in the school unit's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

### **5. Parent/Legal Guardian Complaint Procedure**

A parent/legal guardian who has a complaint concerning the implementation of this policy/procedure must submit it in writing to the Head of School as soon as possible. The Head of School/designee shall investigate the complaint and provide written findings to the parent/legal guardian within twenty (20) business days of receiving the complaint, if practicable.

A parent/legal guardian who is dissatisfied with the result of the local complaint process may file a complaint with the Maine Department of Education. The Department of Education will review the results of the local complaint process and may initiate its own investigation at its sole discretion. The Department shall issue a written report with specific findings to the parent/legal guardian and the school unit within 60 calendar days of receiving the complaint.

Legal References: 20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4014, 4502(5)(M); 4009  
Me. DOE Reg., ch. 33

Cross References: JKAA-R – Procedures on Physical Restraint and Seclusion  
JK – Student Discipline  
EBCA – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

## ***Procedures On Physical Restraint & Seclusion***

These procedures are established for the purpose of meeting the obligations of **Maine Virtual Academy** under state law/regulations and Board Policy JKAA governing the use of physical restraint and seclusion. These procedures shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with state law and regulations.

### **1. Physical Restraint**

To the extent possible, physical restraint will be implemented by staff certified in a training program approved by the Maine Department of Education. If untrained staff have intervened and initiated a physical restraint in an emergency, trained staff must be summoned to the scene to assume control of the situation if the emergency continues.

This procedure does not preclude law enforcement personnel from implementing physical restraints consistent with their professional responsibilities.

#### **A. Permitted Uses of Physical Restraint**

1. Physical restraint may be used only when the behavior of a student presents an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or others, and only after other less intrusive interventions have failed or been deemed inappropriate. The physical restraint must end immediately upon the cessation of the imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or another person, and should involve the least amount of force necessary to protect the student or other person.

“Serious physical injury” is a physical injury that a reasonable person would consider to be serious for the victim if it were to occur.

2. Prescribed medications, harnesses, seat belts and other assistive or protective devices may be used as permitted by law and described in Policy JKAA.
3. Parents/legal guardians may be requested to provide assistance with their child at any time.

#### **B. Prohibited Forms and Uses of Physical Restraint**

1. Physical restraint used for punitive purposes; as a therapeutic or educational intervention; for staff convenience; or to control challenging behavior.
2. Physical restraint used solely to prevent property destruction or disruption of the environment in the absence of a risk of serious physical injury.
3. Physical restraint that is life threatening, restricts breathing or restricts blood flow to the brain, including prone restraint.



4. Physical restraint that relies on pain for control, including but not limited to joint hyperextension, excessive force, unsupported take-downs (e.g., tackles), the use of any physical structure (e.g., wall, railing or post), punching and hitting.
5. Physical restraint that is contraindicated based on the child's disability, health care needs, or medical or psychiatric condition if documented in:
  - A health care directive or medical management plan;
  - A school-approved behavior plan;
  - An IEP or an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP); or
  - A school-approved 504 or ADA plan.
6. Aversive procedures, and mechanical and chemical restraints.
  - a. Aversive procedures are defined as the use of a substance or stimulus, intended to modify behavior, which the person administering it knows or should know is likely to cause physical and/or emotional trauma to a student, even when the substance or stimulus appears to be pleasant or neutral to others. Such substances and stimuli include but are not limited to infliction of bodily pain (e.g., hitting, pinching, slapping); water spray; noxious fumes; extreme physical exercise; costumes or signs.
  - b. Mechanical restraints are defined as any restraint that uses a device to restrict a student's freedom of movement. Such restraints do not include adaptive devices or mechanical supports to achieve proper body position, balance or alignment to allow greater freedom of movement, or the use of vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.
  - c. Chemical restraints are defined as the use of drug or medication that is not prescribed as the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition by a licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under state law that is used on a student to control behavior or restrict freedom of movement.

**C. Monitoring Students in Physical Restraint**

1. At least two adults must be present at all times when physical restraint is used except when, for safety reasons, waiting for a second adult to arrive is precluded by the particular circumstances.

2. The student must be continuously monitored until they no longer present a risk of injury or harm to the student or others.
3. If an injury occurs, applicable school policies and procedures should be followed.

**D. Termination of Physical Restraint**

1. The staff involved in the use of physical restraint must continually assess for signs that the student in physical restraint is no longer presenting an imminent risk of serious physical injury to themselves or others, and the physical restraint must be discontinued immediately after it is determined that the imminent risk of serious physical harm has ended.
  - a. The time a student is in physical restraint must be monitored and recorded.
  - b. If physical restraint continues for more than ten (10) minutes, an administrator/designee shall determine whether continued physical restraint is warranted, and shall continue to monitor the status of the physical restraint every ten (10) minutes until the restraint is terminated.
  - c. If attempts to release the student from physical restraint have been unsuccessful and the student continues to present behaviors that create an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or to others, then staff may request additional assistance from other school staff, parents, medical providers, or other appropriate persons or organizations.

**2. Seclusion**

To the extent possible, seclusion will be implemented by staff certified in a training program approved by the Maine Department of Education. If untrained staff have intervened and initiated seclusion in an emergency, trained staff must be summoned to the scene as soon as possible.

A “timeout” where a student requests, or complies with an adult request, for a break is not considered seclusion under this procedure. Seclusion also does not include any situation where others are present in the room or clearly defined area with the student (including but not limited to classrooms, offices and other school locations).

**A. Permitted Uses and Location of Seclusion**

1. Seclusion may be used only as an emergency intervention when the behavior of a student presents an imminent risk of serious bodily injury to the student or others, and only after other less intrusive interventions have failed or been deemed inappropriate. The seclusion must end immediately upon the cessation of the imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or another person.

“Serious physical injury” is a physical injury that a reasonable person would consider to be serious for the victim if it were to occur.

2. Seclusion may be achieved in any part of a school building with adequate light, heat, ventilation and of normal room height.
  - a. Seclusion may not take place in a locked room.
  - b. If a specific room is designated as a seclusion room, it must be a minimum of sixty (60) square feet; have adequate light, heat and ventilation; be of normal room height; contain an unbreakable observation window in a wall or door; and must be free of hazardous material and objects which the student could use to self-inflict bodily injury.
3. Parents/legal guardians may be requested to provide assistance with their child at any time.

**B. Prohibited Uses of Seclusion**

1. Seclusion used for punitive purposes; as a therapeutic or educational intervention; for staff convenience; or to control challenging behavior.
2. Seclusion used solely to prevent property destruction or disruption of the environment in the absence of an imminent risk of serious physical injury.
3. Seclusion that is life threatening.
4. Seclusion that is contraindicated based on the child’s disability, health care needs, or medical or psychiatric condition if documented in:
  - A health care directive or medical management plan;
  - A school-approved behavior plan;
  - An IEP or IFSP; or
  - A school-approved 504 or ADA plan.

**C. Monitoring Students in Seclusion**

1. At least one adult must be physically present at all times to continuously monitor a student in seclusion. The adult, while not present in the room or defined area, must be situated so that the student is visible at all times.
2. The student must be continuously monitored until they no longer presents an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or to others.
3. If an injury occurs, applicable school policies and procedures should be followed.

#### **D. Termination of Seclusion**

1. The staff involved in the seclusion must continually assess for signs that the student is no longer presenting an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or others, and the seclusion must be discontinued as soon as the imminent risk ceases.
  - a. The time a student is in seclusion must be monitored and recorded.
  - b. If seclusion continues for more than ten (10) minutes, an administrator/designee shall determine whether continued seclusion is warranted, and shall continue to monitor the status of the seclusion every ten (10) minutes until the seclusion is terminated.
  - c. If attempts to release a student from seclusion have been unsuccessful and the student continues to present behaviors that create an imminent risk of serious physical injury to the student or to others, then staff may request additional assistance from other school staff, parents, medical providers, or other appropriate persons or organizations.

#### **4. Notification and Reports of Physical Restraint and Seclusion Incidents**

For the purposes of this procedure, an “incident” consists of all actions between the time a student begins to create an imminent risk of serious physical injury and the time the student ceases to pose that imminent risk and returns to their regular programming.

##### **A. Notice Requirements**

After each incident of physical restraint or seclusion:

1. A staff member involved in the incident shall make an oral notification to the administrator/designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day.
2. An administrator/designee shall notify the parent/legal guardian about the physical restraint or seclusion (and any related first aid provided) as soon as practical, but within the school day in which the incident occurred. The administrator/designee must utilize all available phone numbers or other available contact information to reach the parent/legal guardian. If the parent/legal guardian is unavailable, the administrator/designee must leave a message (if the parent/legal guardian has a phone and message capability) to contact the school as soon as possible. The parent/legal guardian must be informed that written documentation will be provided within seven (7) calendar days.
3. If the physical restraint or seclusion incident occurred outside the school day, the notifications must be made as soon as possible and in accordance with the school unit’s usual emergency notification procedures.

4. If serious bodily injury or death of a student occurs during the implementation of physical restraint or seclusion, the **Maine Virtual Academy's** emergency notification procedures shall be followed and an administrator/designee shall notify the Maine Department of Education within twenty-four (24) hours or the next business day.

## **B. Incident Reports**

Each use of physical restraint or seclusion must be documented in an incident report. The incident report must be completed and provided to an administrator/designee as soon as practical, and in all cases within two (2) school days of the incident. The parent/legal guardian must be provided a copy of the incident report within seven (7) calendar days of the incident.

The incident report must include the following elements:

1. Student name;
2. Age, gender and grade;
3. Location of the incident;
4. Date of the incident;
5. Date of report;
6. Person completing the report;
7. Beginning and ending time of each physical restraint and/or seclusion;
8. Total time of incident;
9. Description of prior events and circumstances;
10. Less restrictive interventions tried prior to the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion and, if none were used, the reasons why;
11. The student behavior justifying the use of physical restraint or seclusion;
12. A detailed description of the physical restraint or seclusion used;
13. The staff person(s) involved, their role in the physical restraint or seclusion, and whether each person is certified in an approved training program;
14. Description of the incident, including the resolution and process of returning the student to his/her program, if appropriate;
15. Whether the student has an IEP, 504 Plan, behavior plan, IHP (individual health plan) or any other plan.
16. If a student and/or staff sustained bodily injury, the date and time of nurse or other response personnel notification, and any treatment administered;

17. The date, time and method of parent/legal guardian notification;
18. The date and time of administrator/designee notification.
19. Date and time of staff debriefing.

Copies of the incident reports shall be maintained in the student's file and in the school office.

## **5. School Unit Response Following the Use of Physical Restraint or Seclusion**

- A. Following each incident of physical restraint or seclusion, an administrator/designee shall take these steps within two (2) school days (unless serious bodily injury requiring emergency medical treatment occurred, in which case these steps must take place as soon as possible, but no later than the next school day):
  1. Review the incident with all staff persons involved to discuss: (a) whether the use of physical restraint or seclusion complied with state and school board requirements and (b) how to prevent or reduce the need for physical restraint and/or seclusion in the future.
  2. Meet with the student who was physically restrained or secluded to discuss: (a) what triggered the student's escalation and (b) what the student and staff can do to reduce the need for physical restraint and/or seclusion in the future.
- B. Following the meetings, staff must develop and implement a written plan for response and de-escalation for the student. If a plan already exists, staff must review it and make revisions, if appropriate. For the purposes of this procedure, "de-escalation" is the use of behavior management techniques intended to cause a situation involving problem behavior of a student to become more controlled, calm and less dangerous, thus reducing the risk of injury or harm.

## **6. Procedure for Students with Three Incidents in a School Year**

The school unit will make reasonable, documented efforts to encourage parent/legal guardian participation in the meetings required in this section, and to schedule meetings at times convenient for parents/legal guardians to attend.

### **A. Special Education/504 Students**

1. After the third incident of physical restraint and/or seclusion in one school year, the student's IEP or 504 Team shall meet within ten (10) school days of the third incident to discuss the incident and consider the need to conduct an FBA (functional behavioral assessment) and/or develop a BIP (behavior intervention plan), or amend an existing one.

**B. All Other Students**

1. A team consisting of the parent/legal guardian, administrator/designee, a teacher for the student, a staff member involved in the incident (if not the administrator/designee or teacher already invited), and other appropriate staff shall meet within ten (10) school days to discuss the incidents.
2. The team shall consider the appropriateness of a referral to special education and, regardless of whether a referral to special education is made, the need to conduct an FBA (functional behavioral assessment) and/or develop a BIP (behavior intervention plan).

**7. Cumulative Reporting Requirements**

**A. Reports Within the School Unit**

1. Each building administrator must report the following data on a quarterly and annual basis:
  - a. Aggregate number of uses of physical restraint;
  - b. Aggregate number of students placed in physical restraint;
  - c. Aggregate number of uses of seclusion;
  - d. Aggregate number of students placed in seclusion;
  - e. Aggregate number of students with disabilities having IEPs or 504/ADA plans who are placed in physical restraint;
  - f. Aggregate number of students with disabilities having IEPs or 504/ADA plans who are placed in seclusion;
  - g. Aggregate number of serious physical injuries to students related to the use of physical restraints;
  - h. Aggregate number of serious physical injuries to students related to the use of seclusion;
  - i. Aggregate number of serious physical injuries to staff related to the use of physical restraints; and
  - j. Aggregate number of serious physical injuries to staff related to the use of seclusion.

2. The Head of School shall review the cumulative reports and identify any areas that could be addressed to reduce the future use of physical restraint and seclusion.

**B. Reports to Maine Department of Education**

1. The Head of School shall submit an annual report to the Maine Department of Education on an annual basis that includes the information in Section 7.A.1 above.

Legal Reference: 20-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4014, 4502(5)(M); 4009  
Me. DOE Rule., ch. 33

Cross Reference: JKAA-R – Procedures on Physical Restraint and Seclusion  
JK – Student Discipline  
EBCA – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan



## **Bullying, Cyber-Bullying Reporting Form**

### **MAINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY**

Bullying or suspected bullying is reportable in person or in writing (including anonymously) to school personnel.

Upon completion of this form, or when providing a verbal report, submit to designated personnel or administrative office.

Date the alleged incident of bullying is being reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) reporting the alleged incident(s) of bullying (this is optional as reports can be made anonymously, except when reported by staff, coaches and advisors): \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) completing this form (if different than person listed above and not anonymously reporting): \_\_\_\_\_

Person reporting is:    student    Parent    grandparent    guardian    school staff  
   coach    advisor    other \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information of person reporting (optional):

Home or work phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Details**

Name of student(s) who is believed to have been bullied: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the student(s) or adult(s) who is alleged to have bullied: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s)/time(s) of day: \_\_\_\_\_

Location(s) of incident(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?     yes     no

May the school personnel conducting an investigation contact these witnesses?

yes    no

If so, please provide names of witnesses to be contacted during the investigation:

Please provide a description of incident(s) and include any supporting documentation:|

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(use additional pages, if needed)

I agree that the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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

Signature of person reporting (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Received by:                      Date:  
Position/title:

Copy to Head of School/Superintendent on:  
Date

Copy received:  
Signature of Head of School/Superintendent:

# Maine Virtual Academy

## TITLE IX FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Title IX grievance formal complaint form is to gather the essential basic facts of the alleged actions in order that, prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints based on sex discrimination, including complaints of sexual harassment or sexual violence, in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") can be resolved as expediently and appropriately as possible.

This form **only applies** to complaints alleging discrimination prohibited by Title IX (including sexual harassment and sexual violence). Complaints of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, brought forth by students, Parents/guardians, current or prospective employees, and other members of the school community will be promptly investigated in an impartial and in as confidential a manner as reasonably possible, so that corrective action can be taken if necessary. A "**formal complaint**" is a document filed by a complainant **or** signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. **INSTRUCTIONS:** Individuals alleging Title IX discrimination through a formal complaint and requesting review are required to complete this form and submit it to the appropriate administrator as soon as possible after the occurrence of the alleged discrimination. However, it should be noted, there is no time limit or statute of limitations on a complainant's decision to file a formal complaint

1. Contact our **Title IX Coordinator's**: Point of Contact for Student/Families: Guidance Counselors; 6 East Chestnut St. Suite 230, Augusta, ME 04330; Phone: 207-613-8900 ext. 2003.
2. Point of Contact for Employees & Third Parties: Jillian Dearborn, Human Resources & Accounts Payable Manager; 6 East Chestnut St. Suite 230, Augusta, ME 04330; Phone: 207-613-8900 ext. 2016.

### FORMAL COMPLAINANT STATEMENT

Name of Complainant:

Contact information:

Home Address/City/State/Zip/Home Phone/Email:

Student Grade:

- 1. Nature of Grievance:** Please describe the action you believe may be sex discrimination, including complaints of sexual harassment or sexual violence, in violation of Title IX and identify with reasonable particularity any person(s) you believe may be responsible. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary:

- 2. When did the actions described above occur?**

- 3. Are there any witnesses to this matter?** (Please circle) **Yes No**

- 4. If yes, please identify the witnesses:**

- 5. Did you discuss this matter with any of the witnesses identified in Item 4?**  
(Please circle) **Yes No**

- 6. If yes, please identify: Person to whom you have spoken:**

Date:

Method of communication:

**7. Have you spoken to any administrator(s) or other District employee(s) about this matter?**  
(Please circle) **Yes No**

**If yes, please identify: Person to whom you have spoken:**

**Date:**

**Method of communication:**

**8. Please describe the result of the discussion(s) identified in Item 7:**

**9. Please provide any additional information that would be important to this complaint:**

**PLEASE ATTACH ANY STATEMENTS, NAMES OF WITNESSES, REPORTS, OR OTHER  
DOCUMENTS WHICH YOU FEEL ARE RELEVANT TO YOUR COMPLAINT.**

*I certify that the foregoing information is true and correct.*

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date



## MEDIA RELEASE FORM

To publicize the achievements of our students, we like to occasionally publish students' names, photographs, academic / extracurricular achievements, performances, and speeches in a variety of media forms such as: school notices, school newsletters, yearbooks, homerooms, local newspapers, and Maine Virtual Academy or Stride publications and or websites.

We request that you sign this release for the student to allow us to record on film, tape or otherwise, to edit such items as desirable/necessary, and to use the student's name, likeness, image, voice, and performance as outlined above. Your child's safety and privacy are our utmost concern. We are aware that some parents may have reasons for not wanting a child's name, photo, or achievement published.

Please contact the school if you need further information.

category	yes, release/publish	no, don't release/publish
Permission for my child _____, photo/video, work and/or achievements to be published in SCHOOL newsletters and yearbook.		
Permission for my child _____, photo, work and/or achievements to be published on the school's websites: <a href="https://www.mainevirtualacademy.org">https://www.mainevirtualacademy.org</a> <a href="https://meva.k12.com">https://meva.k12.com</a>		
Permission for my child _____, photo/video, work and/or achievements to be published in local newspapers and/or on television.		

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\*This form will be kept on file until the student leaves the Maine Virtual Academy. A new release may be filled out at any time. Please reach out to the school if you wish to change your selections.

## Parent/Legal Guardian Contract

Parent and Legal Guardians are expected to follow all of the following statements and discuss with their student. After discussing each with your student, please sign your initials after every statement. You can either mail this to the school or email it to your child's advisory teacher.

I understand we must participate in required student orientations at the beginning of the school year.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand that it is the duty of the Legal Guardian and/or adult student to provide the student's transportation to mandatory state testing sessions and face-to-face exams around the state.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand the student will participate in all required state testing preparation such as SAT Prep, teacher required tutorial Blackboard sessions, and NWEA testing.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must ensure my student is putting in the hours at home to be successful in school and that it is my responsibility to enter my student's attendance every day in the system. Students who have poor attendance (insufficient hours recorded over time in the system) or low progress in courses may be withdrawn and reported as truant to the student's resident school district and district attorney.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand regularly scheduled Bongo/Zoom sessions must be attended and that it is a requirement to make up any missed sessions by watching the recording and submitting the activity within the time allotted by my teacher.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand and accept the responsibility to supervise the student in using the MEVA curriculum, and I understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about it. Any other work accomplished by the student is supplemental to, and not in place of, the MEVA curriculum lessons. MEVA does not consider it acceptable to leave a student home alone or unsupervised to complete coursework.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand and agree that I am expected to participate in regular and scheduled conferences (adult and student), and office hours my teacher and/or advisor schedules.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_



- I understand that I will treat staff and fellow students with respect at all times including communication within email, Blackboard, discussions and phone conversations.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must provide a reliable internet connection before school starts, and identify a backup internet plan in case of service interruptions. I am responsible for any assignments that are assigned during this time.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must report any missing textbooks or materials to the teacher immediately. I must return textbooks, software and/or supplementary materials upon request, at the end of the course, to avoid charges.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must report technical problems to MEVA's Tech Coordinator immediately to receive timely assistance. I will also notify administration via email when the problem will impede on my coursework for more than one day.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand and agree that I am expected to follow the guidance and support of a certified teacher in implementing the MEVA program with the student and will contact course instructors first on any questions related to course content, assignments, exams or grades.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand and agree that I must log student attendance ***daily***.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must check my email account on a regular basis to receive communications and progress reports from the school and to respond to communication within 48 hours.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand the student must *STAY ON PACE* with weekly assignments, tests, and quizzes. We are committed to ensuring this expectation is met.

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must contact the office immediately if the student will be unable to participate in classes. Please contact [attendance@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:attendance@mainevirtualacademy.org)

***Guardian's Initials*** \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand the student must put forth the effort required to ensure every chance of being successful to earn a high school diploma.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand that I will follow all the policies of MEVA as listed in the Parent/student handbook.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand I must contact the school with my telephone number or address changes two school days, so I will continue to receive regular communications.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand if I move out-of-state, I will immediately be transferred to my resident state.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand MEVA is a full public-school school program and that a student may not be enrolled in any other full-time or part-time school without MEVA administrative approval.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand the student will need to adhere to the academic integrity policy in which plagiarism is discussed along with the consequences for violations. I will read the plagiarism policy with my student.

*Guardian's Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

**Please accept this completed and/or electronically signed document for my student in Maine Virtual Academy for the academic year 2023-2024.**

*If the student is at least 18 years of legal age and older, the student can sign this agreement on their own behalf.*

**I expressly state that I have read, understand, and am familiar with all provisions and that I sign it of my own free will.**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Note: If the head of school does not receive a signed copy of this, it will still be expected that the Parent/Legal Guardian and student understand and follow everything in this handbook. This handbook has been distributed to every MEVA family, and MEVA's expectation is that this is followed whether or not we receive a signed copy.**

## **Maine Virtual Academy Acceptable Use/Laptop Contract**

The following rules/regulations apply to Student use of laptop computers at MEVA.

### **Part I: Student's Responsibilities**

1. Laptops issued on loan to Students are the property of and are registered to MEVA. Students are not allowed to install software programs without the Technology Department's authorization. Students may not modify or change the device settings and internal or external configurations are prohibited.
2. Students are responsible for any information sent from and retrieved on their assigned laptops. Students must immediately report ANY violation of laptop policies and/or regulations to a MEVA staff.
3. As the property of MEVA, MEVA personnel may check laptops at any time. Use of Internet resources should only be for educational purposes.
4. Students are responsible for obeying all copyright laws and for properly citing sources.
5. While using the Internet or e-mail, Students should not reveal their full name, telephone, address and/or Social Security number to anyone.

### **Part II: Student's And Parent's/Guardian's & Learning Coach Responsibilities**

1. Laptops must be returned to MEVA in the same condition as it was received. Students should save the box in which they received the laptop in order to ship it back to MEVA later. Laptops must be returned within 14 calendar days following withdrawal. Shipping labels will be provided.
2. UNRETURNED LAPTOPS- If your student's laptop is not returned within 14 calendar days of withdrawal, you will be billed the full replacement cost of \$625.00. Any unpaid bills will result in legal actions. Furthermore, we will not release records/transcripts to a new school or college until the laptop is returned or the replacement bill paid.
3. Student/Parent/Guardian may be responsible for any costs resulting from loss or damages caused by intentional or negligent behavior. School insurance will not cover stolen, lost or fire-damaged equipment. MEVA highly recommends adding the laptop to the Parent's/Student's homeowner's/renter's insurance policy. Without the insurance protection against stolen, lost or fire-damaged equipment, the Student and their family are financially responsible for replacement costs for any equipment damaged by fire, lost or stolen. All technology packages must be insured up to the full replacement cost stated above.
4. If a laptop is lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the Student/Parent/Guardian to report the loss/theft to the Police Department where the laptop was lost or stolen. At the earliest opportunity, the Student/Parent/Guardian must report the incident to the MEVA Head of School and, if available, must provide MEVA with a copy of the police report.

### **Part III: General Use Rules for Laptops**

1. Students are responsible for the security of their passwords. Students will provide their Parent/Guardian with their password. Students may not share their passwords with anyone other than their Parent/Guardian/Learning Coach.
2. While in school, Students may send and/or receive e-mail only with the permission of their teacher or during designated periods. E-mail and forum content are the property of MEVA and may be read by any Technology Department personnel or by those designated by the Head of School.
3. Students must abide by the MEVA Acceptable Use Policy and must not download, store or view pornographic, violent or otherwise unacceptable material. If a Student accidentally accesses one of these sites, he/she must immediately report the incident to a teacher.
4. "Hacking" into any computer or the network is strictly forbidden and may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance to student conduct policies.
5. Laptops may not be left unattended anywhere except at home.
6. Students must not let laptops drop to the ground. Avoid placing heavy materials, such as books, on top of the device.
7. No stickers or marks of any kinds are permitted on the laptop.
8. No food or beverages are allowed near laptops while in use.
9. The screen must not be touched with any object, and the laptop must not be closed with an object between the keyboard and the screen.
10. Students must not lend their assigned laptop to anyone for any reason.
11. Students should regularly back up their files stored on their laptop hard drive to their network folder.
12. The laptop computers should be fully charged every night, so they are available for classes the following day.
13. Students can access technical support related to hardware and/or courses through our Technology Department at [tech@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:tech@mainevirtualacademy.org).

**MAINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY ACCEPTABLE USE AND LAPTOP POLICY  
PARENT/GUARDIAN/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & AGREEMENT FORM**

MEVA is pleased to offer laptop computer take-home privileges for Students.

Please review MEVA's Acceptable Use and Laptop Policy. In order for MEVA to extend take-home privileges to your child, it is necessary that a signed acknowledgement of this policy be returned to MEVA.

Your signature below signifies that you have read, understand, and accept the MEVA Acceptable Use and Laptop Policy. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the school or the Student Support Liaison.

\*Note: If the Head of School does not receive a signed copy of this Agreement, it will still be expected that the Parent/Legal Guardian and Student understand and follow everything in this policy. This policy has been distributed to every MEVA family, and MEVA's expectation is that this is followed whether or not we receive a signed copy.

I agree to all of the aforementioned terms and conditions of MEVA's Acceptable Use Agreement, including the replacement cost of \$625 for an unreturned, or damaged laptop after withdrawal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian printed name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student printed name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)