



**Middle School Student & Family
Handbook 2024-2025**

THE ACADEMY'S MIDDLE SCHOOL BELIEVES

The Middle School experience must be specifically designed to support the unique needs of middle school students. Much of the design of The Academy's Middle School is adapted from the Association of Middle Level Education's work titled, *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe*. The Academy's six core values provide the foundation for our community to engage with one another and to do our best work. A commitment to these values ensures that each member of our community has access to a safe, inclusive, and productive environment in which we can all thrive.

INTEGRITY	I will be honest with my words and open to the ideas of others. I will follow school rules, even when no one is watching. I will take ownership over the choices I make and accept the outcomes.
RESPECT	I will respect myself, others, and the environment we share. I will treat others as they wish to be treated. I will acknowledge and value the identity and contributions of others.
RESPONSIBILITY	I will be engaged and take the lead in my education. I will be reliable, punctual, and prepared. I will follow through and be dependable.
COURAGE	I will stand up for others. I will ask for help. I will make the right choice, even when it isn't easy.
KINDNESS	I will care for and be compassionate to others. I will be inclusive. I will be helpful and generous.
SELF-CONTROL	I will lead by example. I will set and achieve my goals. I will show restraint even when challenged.

Values Calendar:

Each month the Academy Middle School will focus on a particular value through social emotional curriculum, school wide events and activities, student incentives, and student recognition. These monthly values of emphasis will be:

1. August: *Self Control*
2. September: *Integrity*
3. October: *Courage*
4. November: *Respect (to self)*
5. December: *Responsibility (for self)*
6. January: *Respect (to others)*
7. February: *Kindness*

8. March: *Responsibility (for community)*
9. April: *Integrity*
10. May: *Self Control*

Values & Philosophy:

Our Middle School academic program prepares students for post-secondary success while demonstrating growth and achievement on individual measures. Our curriculum provides opportunities to explore important topics of personal, social, and moral significance. We invite young adolescents to pose and answer questions. We challenge students to address real-world, complex issues that introduce multiple, diverse perspectives. Our electives program provides students with opportunities to pursue what they love while trying something new. Teachers rely on active, purposeful instructional strategies that emphasize students to work with one another and movement within the classroom. We believe that middle school is a time for students to learn about themselves and how they fit into the world around them. Outdoor education and service learning empower students to define their sense of self and to figure out how they can meaningfully contribute to the larger community.

Our academic program has three navigational stars which guide our approach to all aspects of the middle grades experience: prepare, explore, and empower.

PREPARE

The Academy's Vision...

All students develop the academic skills needed to prepare for lifelong success.

EXPLORE

The Academy's Vision...

All students explore their strengths and passions through real-world learning.

EMPOWER

The Academy's vision...

All students practice habits of mind that will empower them to lead their own futures.

PREPARE

At the middle school level...

Middle school students will develop the inter- and intra-personal skills to successfully navigate adolescence while demonstrating growth on individual measures.

EXPLORE

At the middle school level...

Middle school students will explore their interests and strengths through projects, choice, and reflection.

EMPOWER

At the middle school level...

Middle school students will articulate what drives them, their values and goals, and how they meaningfully contribute to the larger community.

CURRICULUM

We rely on a guaranteed, viable curriculum and research-based instructional strategies to ensure that each student is challenged with appropriate level of understanding and readiness. Here are the curriculums we use for our core subject areas: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies:

Language Arts	HMH Into Literature HMH Writable	https://www.hmhco.com/programs/into-literature#overview https://www.hmhco.com/programs/writable#overview
Math	EnVision	https://www.savvas.com/index.cfm?locator=PS3c5r
Science	HMH Into Science	https://www.hmhco.com/programs/hmh-into-science-6-8#overview
Social Studies	HMH Social Studies	https://www.hmhco.com/programs/hmh-social-studies#overview

ATTENDANCE

We want your students here. Consistent attendance provides each student the best opportunity to learn and grow within our community. If a pattern develops of a student being absent, we will work with the student and family to create a plan for improved attendance. In that plan, we will also work with the student and family to complete missing assignments and/or instruction that was missed. In order to provide students and families with the appropriate support, we have determined tiered support practices by identifying levels of attendance, as well as timeline of support.

Levels of Attendance:

- Regular Attendance – 95% and above
- At-Risk Attendance – 90.0-94.9
- Chronic Absence – 80.0-89.9
- Severe Chronic Absence – below 80%

Arrival & Dismissal:

The doors to the North Gym (Middle School) will be open at 7:45am to align with the opening of both High School and Elementary. The start of our instructional day is 8:20am. This start time is intentionally staggered to reduce the flow of traffic. We will dismiss each day* at 3:30pm. We encourage middle school families to pick up on the west side of the building in both blue and green zones.

**Any changes to the dismissal time will be communicated with students and families*

Late Arrivals to School or Class (Tardies):

We encourage all of our students to arrive at school and be to classes on time. Being on time provides us with the best opportunity to ensure the student has access to the full experience of the day and/or instruction. If a student arrives at school after 8:20am, they should enter through the Bistro doors (east side of the school) and check-in at the desk. They will receive a tardy pass to give to their classroom teacher in order to enter the learning environment.

The expectation for students is that they are in their seats, ready to begin instruction when the bell rings. The Middle School team will conduct “sweeps” of hallways, common areas, and restrooms during passing periods and at the beginning of each period. Tardies are mainly managed by the classroom teacher; however, the middle school admin team may be involved if a pattern of tardiness develops. Patterns of tardiness may result in the use of our school’s behavior and conduct guidelines.

GRADING

The primary purpose of grading is to communicate student achievement and progress. Students are assigned a final grade in each course at the end of each semester. At any time, you are encouraged to check your student’s progress through PowerSchool. Teachers will do their best to ensure gradebooks are updated each week. If you have any questions regarding your student’s grade in a class, please contact that teacher directly.

Grading Scale:

A	=	90-100	Excellent
B	=	80-89	Good
C	=	70-79	Average
D	=	60-69	Below Average
F	=	59 or Less	Failing
I	=		Incomplete

Throughout the semester, teachers will assign grades based upon the following.

- Gradebooks are weighted 70% for assessments/projects and 30% for classroom assignments/homework
- Individual grades can be based on participation, completion, and/or accuracy
- Assessments factor into a student’s grade and take place after learning has occurred.
- Teachers will notify parents/families when a grade of D or F is assigned. We also aim to communicate any significant changes in a student’s behavior, performance, or attitude.

Semester Academic Awards:

- Students with a GPA of 3.0-3.49 receive academic recognition
- Students with a GPA of 3.5-3.99 receive honor roll recognition

- Students with a GPA of 4.0 receive high honor roll recognition

Late or Missing Assignments:

Late or missing assignments will be marked as “incomplete” until the work is completed. Students can turn in a late/missing assignment according to the following.

- Within 2 weeks of the assigned date, late/missing work can earn up to 90% of the total points available for that assignment.
- After 2 weeks, late/missing assignments will not be accepted unless previously approved by the teacher.

Missed Assignments & Makeup Work Due to Absences:

When a student misses class due to an absence, they are given two (2) school days for each day absent in which to make up work. Students must make arrangements with their teachers to make up assignments and assessments. After 2 days, any work or assessments not completed are considered late/missing.

If a student's individual circumstances require them to miss extended periods of time, then we will work with the student and family to create a plan of support that accounts for instruction and work completion. Through this collaboration, modifications may be made to eliminate nonessential assignments and/or change deadlines/due dates.

Redoing Assignments & Test Corrections:

All assignment redos must first be agreed upon by the teacher. Once approved, classroom work, assignments, and homework may be redone within 2 weeks for up to 90%. After 2 weeks, students are no longer able to submit redos, unless previously approved by the teacher.

All assessment redos or test corrections must first be communicated to and agreed upon by the teacher. Once approved, assessment/test corrections may be redone within 2 weeks for up to 90%. After 2 weeks, students may redo assessments/submit test corrections for up to 70%.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is when a student uses unauthorized assistance to deceive an instructor or evaluator. Some examples of academic dishonesty include the following.

- *Plagiarism* - Presenting someone else's ideas, research, or writings as your own. This can include using AI platforms.
- *Fabrication* - Making up data or results and recording or reporting them. This can include artificially creating data that should come from an experiment, or making up a source of information.
- *Collusion* - Unpermitted cooperation between students to complete work that is then submitted for assessment.

- *Cheating* - Using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids to gain an unfair advantage.

Homework:

Much of our academic program relies upon classroom instruction. Homework supports students when practicing skills learned in the classroom, previewing new content for an upcoming lesson, completing pieces for projects, and/or preparing for assessments. Additionally, we strongly encourage nightly reading and math practice for 15-20 minutes every night. Completing homework on time is very important because it serves to support classroom instruction. Homework not submitted in a timely manner will be marked as "Incomplete" in PowerSchool and be subject to the "LATE OR MISSING ASSIGNMENTS" practices defined above. Homework may be graded for completion and/or accuracy.

If a student develops a pattern of turning in homework late, we will support the student to complete this work. This may include the student being asked to work before or after school, in place of recess, or during another designated time.

Assessments:

Classroom teachers use a variety of assessments to evaluate student performance. As a middle school, we also use assessments to measure student growth and achievement. The data we collect from these assessments is then used to determine areas of strength and opportunities for growth as a middle school program. We also use this data to best support individual students, including scheduling and/or class placement. We use two primary assessment tools.

- *NWEA MAP Growth Assessment* - Students complete the NWEA MAP Growth Assessment three times each school year in math, reading, and science. These assessments measure a students' achievement and growth compared to millions of students across the country of their same age and content area. The MAP assessments provide us with a score that we use to determine a student's grade-level readiness and to evaluate a student's growth throughout the year. Following each testing period, we will provide students/families with a report illustrating how your student is performing academically.
- *CMAS (Colorado Measure of Academic Success)* - Once a year, students will be asked to complete the state's CMAS assessments in Language Arts and Math. 8th grade students will also complete the state's CMAS assessment for science. The CMAS tests are designed to measure what students have learned in comparison to the state's academic standards. These scores are also used to determine the school's performance and accountability to the larger community.

Other assessments may be used to help us individualize the support for each student. These assessments can include the WIDA Access assessment, progress monitoring for student support, and assessments that aid in the identification of special education services.

Student-Led Conferences:

Student-Led Conferences are scheduled twice each year (see school calendar). Student-led conferences provide students the opportunity to communicate the content they are learning, to identify their areas of strength, and identify opportunities for growth. Students use their leadership portfolio to illustrate evidence of what they are accomplishing and celebrating. Conferences will include the student, family, and Pride teacher. Pride Time teachers will be available for any questions or concerns; however, they may not be able to address specifics for another teacher.

Student-Led Conferences are designed for students to share their achievement, growth, and celebrations. If a parent/family wishes to have an additional parent-teacher conference with their student's teachers and/or counselor, please contact the teacher/counselor directly.

Math Pathways:

There are two pathways available for middle school students in math. We use a body of evidence to determine placement into math accelerated classes that is based on the following criteria:

- Performance on standardized measures (STAR, MAPS, and/or CMAS)
- Demonstration of content mastery by earning an 80% or higher on end of unit assessments
- MAPs math scores in the top 20th percentile
- Consistent growth in MAPs math data
- MAPs math scores of high- or above-grade-level
- CMAS math scores of Met or Exceeded Expectations
- Formative assessment data (quizzes, unit assessments, etc.)
- Overall math grade
- Teacher recommendation

Each year, student performance will be evaluated to determine best placement for math. For complete details on the Middle School's math pathways, click [here](#).

Blended Honors:

All middle school students have the opportunity to earn an honors designation on their transcript in English, Science, and Social Studies. Any student that is aiming for an honors designation will need to communicate that through the survey at the beginning of each semester. An honors designation can be earned by collaborating with the content-specific teacher and successfully completing the requirements in each content area. For complete details, click [here](#).

Course Selection & Schedule Requests:

During Spring Semester, our Middle School Counselor and Assistant Principal will present course offerings to all incoming middle school students. Students and parents will

complete the Course Selection form online. We will create a student schedule for the following school year that will include any of the top selections. During the first ten school days of each semester, a student may request a change to their schedule through the Middle School Counselor. Depending on availability, schedule change requests might not be fulfilled.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In response to community input, we have refined our practices around personal electronics with the following goals.

1. Limit the time students have permitted access to their personal electronics
2. Holding individual students accountable for misusing personal electronics
3. Providing students/families a tool for communication

We ask that personal electronic devices are not heard or seen inside instructional spaces, this includes both hallways and cafeteria during lunch. With the exception of headphones being used for instructional purposes and as directed by the teacher, individual electronic devices should be in the "off" or "silent" position at all times in the learning environment. We also ask that these devices be stored out of sight.

Electronic devices may be used at designated times and locations. At the middle school level, these spaces and times include before and after school and during recess. Although permitted to be used, students are responsible for ensuring that devices are not used in a manner that is unsafe, illegal, or disruptive to the school environment. We ask that students do not use their personal electronic devices for the following:

- Capturing video or audio recording without the community member's permission
- Capturing photos without the community member's permission
- Cheating or academic dishonesty

If it is determined that a student's personal electronic device has created a disruption to the school or learning environment, we will work with the student and family to create a plan that minimizes future disruptions which could include restricting access to these devices at school.

Students choosing to bring a personal electronic device shall be personally and solely responsible for the security. The Academy shall not assume responsibility for theft, loss, or damage of any such device and will not be responsible for the investigation of such incidents.

Chromebooks:

The Academy is a 1:1 technology school and every student receives a chromebook. These devices are an essential educational tool we use to improve and build upon learning that is happening in our classrooms. If a student consistently fails to bring their chromebook to school or their chromebook is damaged for a week or longer, then the administration

and IT will make a plan with the family in order to replace or repair the device. Students have the following responsibilities with the device:

- Charge the device each night in order to be prepared for the next school day.
- Do not share the device with other students.
- Practice digital citizenship.
- Keep the device clean, including no stickers or writing.
- Keep food and drinks away from the device.

NON-ACADEMIC ITEMS

Non-academic items brought to class will be confiscated if those items are a distraction to learning in any way. A few students may have a fidget written into a formal intervention plan and in that case, those items are permitted if they are not a distraction. It is the teacher's discretion to confiscate an item if it becomes distracting to the learning environment. Students are not to have Sharpies on school grounds. Sharpies should be confiscated and should not be returned to students.

Water bottles (containing clear water only) *are permitted in classrooms*. No other food or drink is permitted in classrooms. Water bottles are a privilege and may be confiscated if it becomes a distraction or is misused. Open containers of food, candy, or drink in the classrooms will be confiscated and *not returned*. Students are not to chew gum in classrooms.

Lockers:

Lockers are the property of the school and are available for students to rent for a fee during the school year. If a student would like to request a locker, you may complete this [Secondary Locker Request form](#). Students should keep their locker combination secret - they should not give their combination to anyone. Students are **not** to share lockers. If a locker does not work properly, the student should report it to the Middle School Office for assistance. It is the responsibility of each student to keep lockers clean inside and out. Any student defacing lockers (writing, banging, or tampering) will be expected to compensate the school for the damage done.

Passes Out of Class:

We know that students cannot learn if they are not in the classroom. Teachers will use their best discretion when students ask to use the restroom. Students who request to use the restroom on a frequent basis will be referred to the school nurse to determine if a physical condition exists necessitating the student's frequent trips out of the classroom. Students should be in the classroom during the first and last 10 minutes of class and during direct instruction.

If a student is out of a classroom, the student must have a pass. Students must get acknowledgement from their teacher before leaving the classroom with the pass. In addition, teachers will have a sign-out sheet for restroom use. Students will sign out prior

to leaving and then back in upon their return. Teachers will bring this sheet to the weekly team meetings. If a student is spending an excessive amount of time outside of the classroom, then parents will be notified and a plan may be created to limit passes.

Restroom Use:

The restrooms at the Academy are provided for the health and hygiene of all students. To maintain a safe, clean, and respectful environment the following rules and expectations regarding restroom use must be adhered to by all students.

- *General Guidelines -*
 - **Respect and Privacy** All students have the right to privacy and access to a clean environment in the restrooms.
 - **Appropriate Use** Restrooms are to be used for their intended purpose only.
 - **Keep it Clean** All students are asked to help keep the restrooms free of debris and generally clean after use.
- *Specific Rules -*
 - **No Vaping:** Vaping or the use of tobacco or THC products, including electronic cigarettes is strictly prohibited in all restrooms. Violators will face disciplinary action in accordance with the Academy's substance use procedure.
 - **One Student Per Stall:** Only one student is allowed in a restroom stall at a time. Multiple students in a stall may be interpreted as engaging in inappropriate behavior and will be subject to search, investigation, and possible disciplinary action.
 - **No Vandalism:** Vandalism including graffiti, damage to fixtures, improper disposal of waste is strictly prohibited. Students caught vandalizing the restroom will face disciplinary action. The school resource officer may or may not be asked to join the investigation depending on the severity of the vandalism.
 - **No Loitering or Hanging Out In the Restroom:** Students are asked to exit the restroom once bathroom use is complete. Students are not permitted to use the restroom for social gatherings and/or non-restroom related activities.

Identification Badges (Student IDs):

Unlike Elementary, middle school students no longer have to wear a uniform. The Academy's staff relies on students wearing their ID to quickly demonstrate they are a member of the middle school community. Because we share a building with multiple divisions, we ask that students are wearing and/or in possession of their ID each and every day. Being in possession of the ID means that the student can quickly show their ID when asked by a member of the staff (in their pocket and/or attached to their backpack).

SECONDARY DRESS CODE

The Dress Code creates opportunities for individual expression given that students follow some basic universal requirements. It creates an environment where everyone can feel

comfortable by disallowing hateful or intolerant dress and removing unnecessary and potentially harmful enforcement. Students will be prepared to enter into the broader world with an understanding and acceptance of different people.

Values -

- The dress code is implemented consistently, to ensure equal treatment for all students.
- Staff and other students allow for expression while maintaining dress code standards.
- The dress code is clear so that it is enforced consistently between various staff members or students.
- Students are able to wear clothing that they are comfortable with, as long as it meets the basic requirements.

General Guidelines - There are some pieces of clothing that are required for the student body.

- Shirts, bottoms, and shoes that meet these standards are a requirement at all times.
 - Shirts that have fabric in the front going down to at least the top of the belly button, back, and connect under the arms.
 - Buttocks must be fully covered with opaque fabric no shorter than the upper thigh.
 - Shoes of any variety. There may be cases where shoes can be removed for a specific activity, but they must be put back on as soon as the activity is done.
- Private areas of the body must be covered with opaque fabric.
 - Undergarments must be covered with exceptions of bra straps and waistbands.
 - Facial features including the eyes, nose, mouth, and surrounding area must always be visible and displayed in a way that does not make a student unidentifiable.
 - Certain classes and activities may require specific attire.

Students May Wear - We find it important that some items are specifically allowed. This list is not exhaustive and as long as students comply with the General Guidelines their attire is acceptable.

- Shirts including spaghetti straps, strapless tops, tank tops, halter tops, and muscle shirts that meet the basic requirements.
- Bottoms include holes in jeans and opaque leggings.
- Religious or cultural headwear and accessories are accepted.
- Makeup, tattoos, dyed hair.
- Earrings, nose rings, navel rings, and any other jewelry or piercings.
- Bandanas, bows, or other hair accessories.

Students Cannot Wear -

- Clothing featuring hate speech targeting race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, health conditions, or other protected groups.
- Violent images or language.
- Attire containing profanity.
- Items that clearly promote any illegal activity.
- Items that promote the use of drugs or alcohol.
- Attire that is pornographic or contains nudity.
- Hats, hoodies with hoods up, or beanies with exceptions for religious, cultural, or medical reasons.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT GUIDELINES

We believe that all community members have the right to a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment where we can do our best work. The foundation for our safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment is:

- Clear expectations
- Supportive response
- Achieve resolution

We understand and plan on choices being made that impede our ability to provide everyone a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment. We believe that each of these choices is unique and provides an opportunity to learn and grow. We believe that our response to these choices should be instructional, supportive, and predictable. We believe resolution is achieved when harm is restored and a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment is achieved. Research conducted over the past decade clearly illustrates that traditional, punitive responses to behavior have not had the intended result of improved behavior. In fact, the opposite is often true – punitive responses often result in increases in undesired behavior.

The Foundation for our Response to Behavior & Conduct:

Our values when responding to choices that are not supportive of a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment are:

1. *Clear Expectations* - Establish and communicate a clear, consistent set of expectations for behavior and conduct.
2. *Supportive Response* - We seek first to understand in an objective way and honor the developmental phase of middle school students.
3. *Achieve Resolution* -
 - a. Identify the choice that did not meet expectations
 - b. Identify how that choice impacted themselves, others, and/or the learning environment
 - c. Identify different choices that meet achieve a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment

- d. Restore any harm that was caused to self, others, or the learning environment

Clear Expectations:

As a Middle School, we commit to clearly stating expectations, teaching how to meet those expectations, and revisiting/reteaching expectations when necessary.

Supportive Response:

Our goal is to support students when a behavior or conduct issue arises in a manner defined by the following:

1. Done in a setting that does not put the interaction on display of other students
2. Asking questions and seeking to understand what happened
3. Using objective language
4. Remaining emotionally constant and/or neutral
5. Treating each response as a first response

Achieving Resolution:

When behavior/conduction situations arise, we aim to achieve resolutions and restore a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment. Resolution is achieved when student can:

1. Identify the choice that did not uphold The Academy’s core values
2. Identify and alternate choice for the future
3. Restore any harm caused by the choice
4. Fulfill any consequences assigned for their choice

Behavior Categories:

We aim to keep our response proportionate to the behavior/conduct choice made. We rely on the following table to achieve a proportionate, consistent, and predictable response:

Category 1 Behaviors	Category 2 Behaviors	Category 3 Behaviors
<p>These behaviors create an apparent and immediate unsafe learning environment. Law enforcement may be contacted to support the response. Suspensions are usually assigned while an investigation can be conducted and/or a safe environment can be established. Category 1 behaviors follow a three strike system and can result in expulsion the first time.</p>	<p>These behaviors disrupt the environment to a level that additional support is necessary. Category 2 behaviors may result in a temporary removal from the learning environment, a behavioral log entry, conferencing with a Middle School administrator, communication with parent/guardian, and restorative agreements. In addition, suspension and/or expulsion could result.</p>	<p>These behaviors can be redirected in the context of a safe, inclusive, and productive learning environment. Category 3 behaviors may result in a conversation with the responding staff member, communication with the parent/guardian, and/or logical consequences (detention, reflections, apology letter).</p>

Increasing Our Support & Response:

For each behavior and/or conduct choice made by an individual student, we will increase the level of our support and response. Support that we provide for students can include reflective activities, team-based conferencing, and the use of the MTSS system to create an individualized plan. Responses go from minor consequences (phone call home and/or lunch detention) to major (in school suspension and parents/families shadowing their student). Our goal is to teach students, collaborate with families, and replace punitive responses with restorative/collaborative solutions. Because we believe that each behavior response scenario is unique, variations in our response/support may vary.

Treatment of Others:

In our effort to provide each member of the community a safe, productive, and inclusive environment, we work hard to address reports of negative student interactions on our campus. These behaviors include teasing, harassment, bullying, peer conflict, fighting, horseplay, and offensive language. These behaviors have the potential to make members in our community feel less safe, fearful, and/or unable to engage. We will rely on the following definitions to categorize the behavior and help guide our response.

- *Teasing* - Teasing is making fun of others with the intention of being funny **and** perceived by the victim as a joke and/or causes little to no impact to the victim.
- *Harassment* - Harassment is when the behavior or conduct is intended to harm or intimidate **and** perceived by the victim to cause substantial harm or intimidation. To be considered harassment, the following must also be considered.
 - Was the action targeted at a particular person or group of people (present or not)?
 - Was the action similar to a previous action and/or a pattern of actions?
 - Was the action associated with an actual or perceived characteristic such as race or ethnicity, ancestry, color, ethnic group identification, gender expression, gender identity, gender, disability, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, age, or a person's association with a person or group?
- *Bullying* - Bullying is behavior or conduct that is harmful, unwanted and/or aggressive and behavior that is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time and is behavior that creates a real or perceived imbalance in power. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include the following.
 - *An Imbalance of Power* - A bully uses their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
 - *Repetition* - Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. This can include both a pattern of experiences to one member of the community. Repetition can also be

determined if the bully is choosing similar behaviors with multiple members in the community.

- *Peer Conflict* - Peer conflict refers to disagreement or hostility between peers or peer groups. It is characterized as conflict between people of equal or similar power (friends); it occurs occasionally; it is unplanned; and it does not involve violence or result in serious harm.
- *Peer Conflict* - Fighting is a physical altercation between two or more individuals that is done with the intention to harm another. This can also include encouraging or organizing a fight on a school campus without participation.
- *Horseplay* - Horseplay is a rough or boisterous & excessive play or prank that is not done with malicious or intention to harm.
- *Offensive Language* - The Academy Middle School defines offensive language as follows.
 - Profanity: Any language that is vulgar, obscene, or offensive.
 - Slurs: Derogatory or discriminatory language targeting individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic.
 - Hate Speech: Language that promotes violence or hatred against individuals or groups.
 - Sexually Explicit Language: Any language that is sexually suggestive or offensive.

Substance Use:

The use of substances including vaping devices, tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs is strictly prohibited on school grounds.

Prohibited Substances -

- Tobacco Products: Cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco, snuff, etc.)
- Vaping Devices: E-cigarettes, vape pens, cartridges, or any related paraphernalia
- Alcohol: All forms of alcoholic beverages
- Illegal Drugs: Any controlled substances not prescribed by a licensed medical professional
- Prescription Drugs: Misuse of prescription medication

Prohibited Actions -

- Possession, use, distribution, or sale of a prohibited substance on school property or at school sponsored events. Note: Students who possess in their hands or on their person an illegal substance or paraphernalia, regardless of who owns the item, are subject to the same consequences as the owner.
- Being under the influence of any prohibited substance while on school property or at a school sponsored event.

Suspension & Expulsion:

If the Principal or his/her designee determines that suspension is warranted, they may suspend the student for a period not to exceed five (5) days for Class Two, or Three offenses inclusive, or for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days for Class One offenses. The duration of the suspension shall, subject to The Academy Board Policies and regulations, be within the discretion of the Principal or their designee. The suspension may be for punitive purposes and/or for the purpose of further investigation or consideration. The first day of suspension time shall be the first school day following the conference.

If it is determined that a suspension is warranted, reasonable efforts shall be made immediately to notify a parent/guardian of the student involved of the circumstances surrounding the suspension. The parent, guardian, or legal custodian and the school shall confer as to the best way to transfer custody of the student to the parent/guardian. Once such determination has been made and the Principal/designee can accomplish such transfer, the suspended student shall be required to leave the school building and the school grounds immediately. The pupil shall not be readmitted to school until a meeting between the parent, guardian, or legal custodian and the Principal/designee has taken place. The Principal/designee shall make every reasonable effort to meet as indicated but, if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, or the parent/guardian repeatedly fails to appear for scheduled meetings, the Principal/designee may readmit the pupil.

The student shall have an opportunity to make up schoolwork during the period of suspension. The integrity of a test or other assessment shall not be jeopardized. In assisting students with make-up work, every effort will be made to provide a student, who seeks out the opportunity from the teacher(s), with school work equivalent to that missed with regard to instructional goals and objectives, and anticipated time on task, but with due regard to minimizing the burden on the teacher. For a suspension in a school year, for any violation of school policy, procedures, rules or regulations, a student may have the opportunity to receive full credit for work made up, if the school work is the equivalent of that missed, and is accomplished within the time provided. Reductions from credit given may be based on the quality of the work submitted and any delay beyond the acceptable time period.

Delegation of Authority - The Academy Board delegates to the Principal or designee the authority to suspend a student for additional periods of time, consistent with law and due process, as set forth below.

Initial Extension of Suspension - The Principal or designee may extend the suspension imposed by the Principal designee up to ten (10) additional school days on grounds specified in this procedure, or others which may be provided by law. Pursuant to the procedural requirements set forth below, or the designee may extend the suspension so that such combined periods of suspension by the Principal/designee do not exceed twenty-five (25) days. If it is determined that an extension of suspension is warranted, the student's parent/guardian shall be notified of the circumstances surrounding the extended suspension.

Supplemental Extension for Students with Disabilities - When the subject of a disciplinary action is a student with disabilities as referenced in federal law, and a suspension in excess of ten (10) consecutive days is contemplated, or would be a suspension in a series of suspensions, that, together, equal more than ten (10) days, the school shall institute the following procedures:

1. As soon as a suspension in excess of ten (10) days is contemplated, the Principal or designee will notify the student's parents of the issue and of all applicable procedural rights.
2. A staffing committee, the composition of which must include, but is not limited to, the minimum committee members required by federal statute or regulation or state board regulation, shall meet to determine if the behavior for which disciplinary action is contemplated is related to the student's disability(ies). The review shall be conducted and resolved in accordance with 34 C.F.R. 300.523 (Individuals With Disabilities Education Act of 1997 Regulations).
3. If the staffing committee determines that the behavior for which disciplinary action is contemplated is related to the student's disability(ies), the student shall be removed from the classroom and placed in an appropriate alternative setting for a period that, together with the initial suspension, does not exceed ten (10) school days.
 - In appropriate circumstances, as determined in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997, the placement in an appropriate alternative setting may be extended to forty-five (45) days.
 - During such period, a fully composed staffing committee shall meet to review/check the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to determine what modifications, if any, should be made in response to the student's behavior. Such staffing shall be preceded as necessary by additional evaluations of the student.
4. If the staffing committee determines that the behavior for which disciplinary action is contemplated is not related to the student's disability(ies), the Principal or designee may proceed as indicated pursuant Expulsion and Supplemental Extension of Suspension. If the staffing committee determines that the behavior is so related, the Principal or designee shall be consulted as to necessary procedures. However, any additional periods of exclusion from school that may be imposed, shall not include complete denial of services or deprivation of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for a student with disabilities staffed into special education pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997.

Expulsion & Supplemental Extension of Suspension; Denial of Admission Delegation of Authority - The Charter School Institute's Board of Education delegates to The Academy Board or its designee the authority, in accordance with C.R.S. 22-33-105, to extend suspensions, to expel for any period not extending beyond one year, and to deny admission to any child who is not qualified for admission or continued attendance at the public schools of the District, in accordance with the limitations imposed by state law. The designee shall report to The Academy Board on such actions as required by law.

Procedure for Expulsion or Supplemental Extension of Suspension - Prior to any contemplated expulsion or supplemental extension of suspension of any student, the following procedure, as well as those procedures set forth in relevant policies cited at the conclusion of this policy, shall be followed.

General Notice - The Principal or their designee shall cause written notice of such proposed action to be delivered to the student and their parent/guardian a reasonable time prior to the date of contemplated action. Such delivery may be in person or by registered U.S. mail and shall be deemed to be completed when handed to the addressee or the notice is deposited in the U.S. mail addressed to the last known address of the student or their parent or guardian.

Contents of Notice - The notice shall contain the following basic information.

- A statement of the allegations leading to the contemplated denial of admission or expulsions;
- A statement of the nature of the evidence supporting the charges;
- A statement offering the parent, guardian or legal custodian a hearing on the question of expulsion or supplemental extension of suspension;
- A statement that the student may be present at the hearing during the presentation of all information, shall have an opportunity to present relevant information, and may be accompanied and represented by the parent, guardian, legal custodian and/or an attorney; and,
- A statement that failure to participate in such hearing constitutes waiver of further rights in the matter.

Hearing - The hearing shall be conducted by The Academy's Executive Director. The hearing shall be closed except to participants and witnesses unless the student and parents request an open hearing. Testimony and information shall be presented; however, technical rules of evidence shall not be applicable, and the Executive Director may consider and give appropriate weight to such information or evidence as it deems appropriate. The student or their representative may question individuals presenting information.

A sufficient record of the proceedings shall be kept so as to enable a transcript to be prepared in the event either party so requests. Preparation of the transcript shall be at the expense of the party requesting the same. The Executive Director may retire to closed session to review and consider the evidence.

The Executive Director shall render a written opinion within five (5) days after the hearing. If the Executive Director is unable to reach a decision, then the decision that is subject to appeal will be affirmed. All decisions rendered must be submitted in writing to the appropriate personnel, student and parent or guardian.

The Executive Director shall advise The Academy Board of the circumstances, the action taken, and the reasons for the action taken, with respect to each hearing.

Waiver of Conditions - By mutual agreement between the Executive Director and the student or his/her representative, time limits and other conditions of this procedure may be waived.

Right to Appeal Suspension - Suspensions shall be served as assigned by an administrator. An appeal by a parent for the purpose of clearing a student's disciplinary record may be made in writing to the level Principal ten (10) business days after the assignment of the suspension. The appeal for a review of a suspension by a student/parent will review whether:

- The student committed the alleged infraction; and
- Did The Academy staff follow applicable procedures?

In the event the response of the Principal is not satisfactory to the student/parent, the parent may appeal in writing to the Executive Director ten (10) business days after receiving the response from the school level Principal. The Executive Director shall respond to the parent within ten (10) business days. In the event the response of the Executive Director is not satisfactory to the student/parent, the parent may appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within ten (10) business days after receiving the response of the Executive Director. The Board of Directors shall respond to the parent in a timely fashion. The decision of The Academy Board shall be final.

Right to Appeal Expulsion - An appeal may be taken from the decision of the Executive Director to The Academy Board. Such appeal may be taken by filing a notice of appeal with The Academy Board within ten (10) business days of the date of the notice of recommendation for expulsion or date of expulsion hearing, whichever is later. The Academy Board may deny the request for appeal or grant the appeal request and review the matter for clear error or abuse of discretion. An appeal may be taken from the decision of The Academy Board to the State Board of Education.

Miscellaneous - Students who are suspended or expelled are prohibited from attending any school activity, as well as from being on the school campus or property, without the express approval of school administration. Failure to abide by this restriction shall be considered defiance of authority and may also result in a referral to law enforcement. When a pupil is expelled by a school/district for the remainder of the year, the parent/guardian is responsible for seeing that the compulsory school attendance statute is complied with during the period of expulsion from The Academy. A student or the student's parent/guardian may request that The Academy provide educational services to the student who has been expelled. Appropriate educational services may be determined by The Academy.

Safe2Tell

Safe2Tell provides students in all Colorado schools with an increased ability and opportunity to prevent and report violence and other inappropriate activities by making anonymous calls to 1-877-542-SAFE (7233). The proactive and anonymous features of the program and hotline are critical. Safe2Tell provides the means for children and youth to take a stand, without fear of retribution, and empowers them to make a difference! To anonymously report a school safety concern, [click here](#) to be redirected to the Safe2Tell website. If you have a smartphone, the Safe2Tell app is available for free for Android and iOS.

THREAT MANAGEMENT

Middle school administrators follow CDE's recommendations for managing all real, perceived, and/or potential threats within the middle school community. We utilize our threat management process for addressing any threat within our community. This process always includes a threat screening process and can include a full threat assessment and/or self-harm assessment. We rely on a team approach for this process. That team may include: Principal or Assistant Principal, Counselor, School Resource Officer, Teacher, and/or Staff Members. While staff completes these assessments, students will be required to leave campus until further notice from administration.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Athletics: Marc Verikas; 303-289-8088 ext. 374

Attendance: attendance@theacademyk12.org; 303-289-8088 ext. 101

Counseling: Reonna Hatch 303-289-8088 ext. 151

Fax: 303-289-8087

Administrative Team:

Roxanne Ellsworth Principal; 303-289-8088 ext. 210

Katie Ball Assistant Principal; 303-289-8088 ext.

Brennan Duffy Assistant Principal; 303-289-8088 ext.

Teri Casewell Middle School Administrative Assistant; 303-289-8088 ext. 204

Marc Verikas Athletic and Activities Director; 303-289-8088