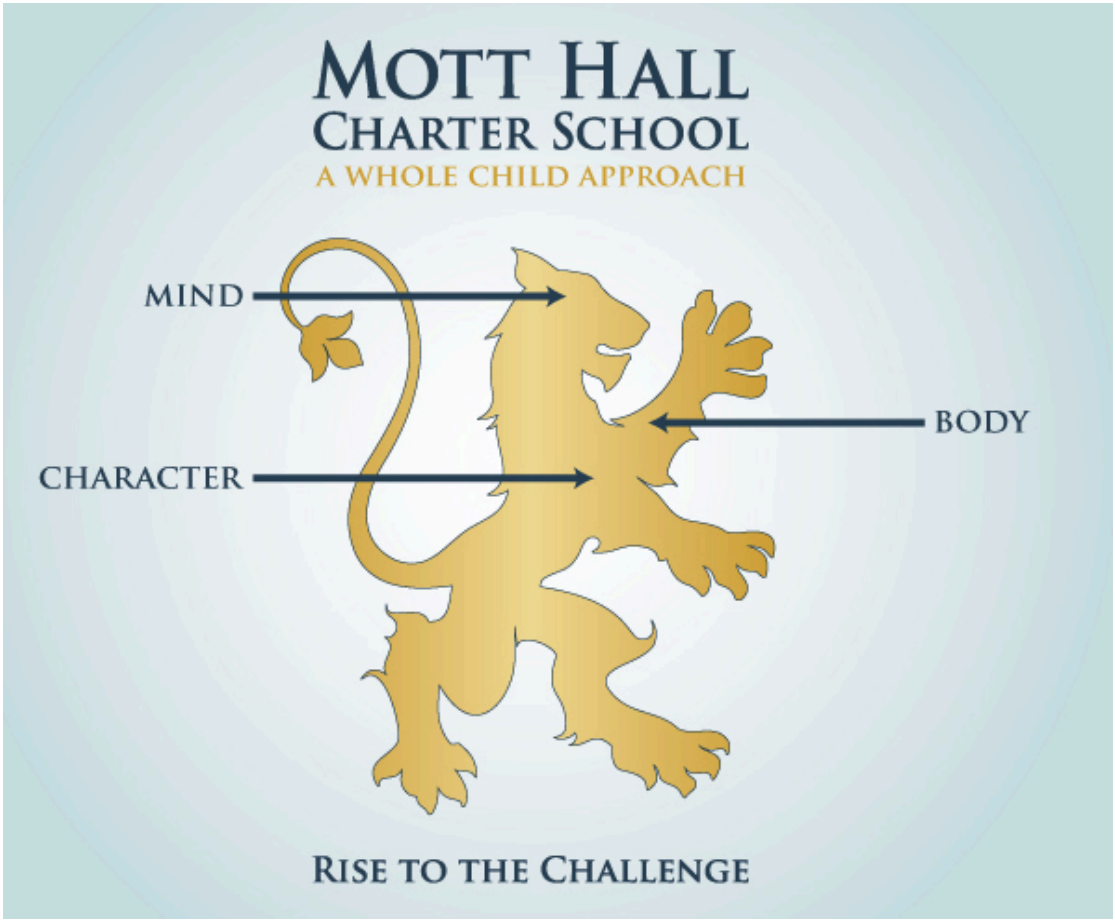
MOTT HALL CHARTER SCHOOL est.2012

Parent-Scholar Handbook 2026-2027

1260 Franklin Avenue
Annex Building and 5th Floor
Bronx, NY 10456

R I S E



The Mott Hall Charter School Affirmation

I RISE to the challenge
To be my best self each day.
I RISE
To take ownership of my choices
I RISE
To do the right thing, even when no one is looking
I RISE
To perform at my personal best academically
I RISE
To give my all in everything I do

We RISE
To become LIONS
In Mind, Body, and Character
We RISE *because we are* ***MOTT HALL!***

School Mission and Core Values

The mission of Mott Hall Charter School (MHCS) is to prepare our scholars in mind, body, and character to succeed in top high schools, colleges, and careers by becoming inquisitive, open-minded, and compassionate citizens of the world. We accomplish this through an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based liberal arts curriculum guided by the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program, employing a longer instructional day and year, technology infusion, an enriched arts program, and service learning.

Our school's core values are (R)esponsibility, (I)ntegrity, (S)cholarship, and (E)xcellence.

Responsibility: Taking ownership of one's choices

At MHCS our Scholars are responsible for their behavior and choices. This includes:

- Coming to school on-time every day
- Always exercising self-control
- Coming prepared with all materials for class
- Completing 100% of assigned homework
- Getting a good night's sleep every night
- Eating healthy food which provides energy for learning.
- Taking ownership of missing work

Integrity: Doing the right thing when no one is watching

At MHCS our Scholars strive to always do what is right including:

- Standing up for someone else
- Exhibiting exemplary behavior inside and outside the classroom
- Always telling an adult when someone is doing something wrong
- Never plagiarizing another's work

Scholarship: Doing one's personal best academically

At MHCS our Scholars perform at their best academically including:

- Striving for an 85% or higher on all exams
- Earning class grades of B- to A+ at least 80% of the time
- Putting in extra time on assignments and when studying
- Reading for pleasure over breaks

Excellence: Giving one's all in everything one does

At MHCS we go the extra mile including:

- Raising GPA each quarter
- Developing skills in areas of interest through our Enrichment program
- Engaging in meaningful Summer enrichment programming
- Doing whatever is required to be successful in a top high school, college, and career
- Asking for help and helping others
- By cultivating these values in our Scholars we will ensure they are prepared to RISE to the challenge of high school, college, and their future careers.

Responsibility

Visiting Procedures for Parents and Guardians

All visitors must enter the school through the main entrance at 1260 Franklin Avenue. Visitors will not be allowed to enter the building without proper photo identification. All visitors must check in at the Main Office located in Room 102 of P.S. 63, and must wear a name tag for the duration of their visit.

If you would like to meet with a staff member, you must arrange for an appointment before visiting the school. We cannot guarantee availability without an appointment.

Morning Arrival Procedures

Scholars must enter the school from the schoolyard located on Boston Rd. if arriving by 8:00 A.M. The gate will be locked at 8:00 A.M. each day; Scholars who arrive after 8:10 A.M. must enter via the main entrance of the P.S. 63 building on Franklin Avenue.

Scholars entering before 7:50 AM can proceed to the cafeteria for breakfast beginning at 7:30 A.M. School officially begins at 8:00 A.M. and scholars must be in the homeroom by 8:00 A.M.

Dismissal Procedures

Scholars will be dismissed at 3:00 P.M Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Fridays, scholars will be dismissed at 1:30 P.M. Scholars will be dismissed through the schoolyard located on Boston Road. Once the gate is locked, Scholars who have not been picked up will wait in the main office. Parents/Guardians picking up their child after the gate is locked must enter through the P.S. 63 main entrance on Franklin Avenue.

Parents/guardians will receive information from the school regarding designated half-days. During half days Scholars will be released at 12:25 pm.

The MHCS After-School Sports Program will be offered throughout the week after school during each athletic season. More information regarding team offerings, practice schedules, tryout dates, and eligibility requirements will be shared with students and families as the start of each season approaches.

Attendance Policy

Absences

New York State Education Law requires that all pupils be in school during all days and hours that school is in session. The following attendance procedures should be observed:

1. All **absences** must be **verified** by a parent or guardian by **email**. On the day that a Scholar is absent, a parent must email **mainoffice@motthallcs.org** by 8:00 A.M. with their child's name and reason for absence.
2. If the absence is due to a medical appointment, parents must send in a note from the physician's office to excuse the absence. All excuse notes are subject to approval.
3. If a Scholar is absent during the school day, for any reason, they will not be permitted to participate in any after school activity or function scheduled on the same day.

Parents must make every effort to avoid absences for their child by scheduling appointments during breaks and early dismissal days (Friday's), as often as possible. Additionally, if Scholars are not feeling well and they are NOT contagious, it should be strongly considered that they attend school and attempt to make it through the day. This prevents their attendance record from being negatively impacted and allows them to continue learning. If a Scholar attends school and later feels they cannot make it through the day, they will be sent to the nurse and arrangements may be made to pick the Scholar up. **Legal restrictions dictate that no middle school Scholar is permitted to leave school and travel home without adult supervision if leaving during school hours.**

Tardiness

Scholars arriving after 8:00 am are considered late and must report to the Attendance Officer seated outside the main office in Room 102 or as directed. Parents of late Scholars will receive communication by 10:00 am informing them of their Scholar's tardiness. Scholars arriving late to any class during the school day must have a pass. Scholars who are continually late for class are subject to an intervention action.

Requests for Early Dismissal

Scholars may not leave the school at any time unless they are signed out and accompanied by a parent or approved guardian.

Scholar Pick-Up

Anyone coming to Mott Hall Charter School to pick up a Scholar must be authorized by the parent/guardian and and **MUST** show **ID – No Exceptions**. Notification of early pick up must be sent to **mainoffice@motthallcs.org** by 11:00 AM, and pick-ups must be before 1:00 PM.

Non-Excusable Absences

According to New York State law, unexcused absences include removing a Scholar from school for vacation, employment, babysitting, or other non-emergency activities.

Truancy

Truancy at MHCS is defined as "any absence from school without prior knowledge or consent of the Scholar's parent or guardian". Truancy will result in disciplinary action. Scholars will be mandated to make up exams, presentations, or assignments scheduled on the day of the truancy, but will not receive full credit for the work.

Excessive Absence/Lateness and Non-Readiness to Learn

Scholars must be present, on time and ready to learn. If a pattern of excessive absences and tardiness occurs, a parent conference with a dean will be required to support a resolution. If there is no resolution, a meeting with an intervention team will be scheduled. This team consists of a dean, a member of the Social-Emotional Health team, and the Principal or Assistant Principal. If attendance concerns continue, the school may contact outside authorities to assist in supporting a resolution.

Schoolwork Policy for Excused Absences

When Scholars are absent, parents and Scholars are expected to reach out to teachers regarding missing homework and classwork via email.

- Scholars are responsible for all homework and assignments assigned while the scholar is absent. Scholars must make sure to reach out to the teacher(s) to get all assignments.

- All quizzes and tests will be made up. If a Scholar misses a quiz or test day, it will be made-up when the Scholar returns to school.

- In the case of extenuating circumstances, major assignments/tests will have due dates extended. Parents should reach out to the school in the event of extenuating circumstances. This will help teachers create the best plan for the benefit of the Scholar's academic success.

- Scholars receive laptops that allow them to join or download classroom assignments and participate in online classes. All classwork and homework assignments can be accessed through the various platforms and resources available. Work is expected to be completed and submitted in a timely manner.

Travel within the School Building

Scholars may not travel within the school building without a pass. Teachers will issue passes to Scholars for use of the bathroom, to drink water, or when a Scholar has been called to the office.

A scholar who receives a pass is to have it visible and show it to any staff member who makes a request to see it. A scholar who is late to class as a result of a conference with school personnel will be required to present a late pass signed by the staff member.

Mandatory School Uniform

Mott Hall Charter School is a mandatory uniform school. Our uniform represents our core value of Scholarship and is intended to build community and prepare students for professional attire in the workplace. Scholars are expected to be in proper uniform each day.

Mott Hall Charter School has a zero-tolerance policy for uniform compliance. All scholars are expected to arrive in full MHCS-approved uniform each day. If a scholar arrives out of uniform, parents or guardians will be required to bring the appropriate uniform to school. Additionally, any non-MHCS approved outerwear will need to be removed and will be held until the end of the school day. Scholars who are out of uniform will be changed into a loaner uniform and will be required to stay after school to serve Reflection as a consequence. Multiple uniform infractions will result in a family meeting and may lead to a loss of privileges. We appreciate your continued support in maintaining the high standards of our school culture.

Mott Hall Charter School Uniform Guidelines

At Mott Hall Charter School, our uniform policy is designed to promote a **unified** and professional learning environment. The uniform reflects our commitment to structure, community, and academic focus.

- Uniforms should give scholars a **unified and polished** appearance that reflects school pride and supports a focused learning environment.

- Uniforms must fit **appropriately**—clothing should not be excessively tight or baggy.
- Scholars have the option to wear a **Mott Hall-branded t-shirt or polo shirt**, which may be worn daily.
- Scholars are **not permitted** to wear the gym uniform on days they do not have gym class.

Mott Hall Charter School Uniform
Top: Mott Hall Charter School Branded (Polo shirts, Sweatshirt, Fleece)
Bottoms: Black Slacks
Feet: Students will be allowed to wear any sneaker.

Uniform Link to Cookies

If there are any circumstances preventing you from purchasing the uniform, please contact our Family Engagement Coordinator in order to assist you.

Outerwear: Scholars may wear the Mott Hall Charter School sweater or the Mott Hall Charter School sweatshirt ***without the hood.***

- If a student arrives at MHCS without proper uniform the student will serve after school reflection for that infraction.

Reflection is an after-school intervention in which students remain for one hour to reflect on their choices, complete a guided reflection packet, and develop strategies for making better decisions in the future. Families will be notified any time a student is assigned Reflection.

Uniform Restrictions:

- Scholars may not alter uniform pieces in any way.
- Necklaces must be tucked into shirts.
- Sunglasses and hats may **not** be worn in the school building.
- Scarves or head gear may **not** be worn except for religious reasons.
- No hoodies allowed.
- CROC, Foam Runners, Ugg Slippers may **not** be worn in the school building.

Dress up and dress down days:
There will be select occasions where Scholars may be given permission to dress up or down for a day. On these occasions the following rules apply:

- Scholars may **not** wear revealing garments such as short shorts or skirts, tube tops, tank tops, net tops, halter tops, crop tops, plunging necklines (front and/or back), bare midriffs and sheer garments.
- No items containing words or insignia that are vulgar, obscene, or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability.
- No items that promote and/or endorse violence, the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
- Scholars are **not** permitted to wear pajama pants/sleepwear, flip flops, slippers, slides, crocs or croc like foot wear to school.

Repeated failure to comply with the Mott Hall uniform policy will constitute a parent meeting.

What to Bring to School & What to Leave at Home

Scholars must come to class prepared with needed materials for each class. Each year a supply list is distributed to parents over the summer with required and optional supplies. Once the school year starts, individual teachers may assign further materials and supplies that are required for their class. Parents are responsible for ensuring that Scholars have all required supplies.

Teachers will provide students and families with a classroom-specific supply list based on the materials and resources needed for their subject area.

The following items are **NOT** allowed in school or on school trips (unless indicated by a staff member **IN WRITING**):

- Personal digital cameras or video recorders
- Toys, games, electronic video games (e.g. PlayStation devices, Nintendo devices).
- Sports equipment: Students must have proper written permission before bringing in any sports equipment including (Scooters, skateboards, any balls)

These items will be confiscated by school staff.

Cell Phones

Mott Hall Charter School is a Distraction Free School.. Cellphone usage by scholars is prohibited anywhere on school grounds.

Procedure:
Cell phones are collected at the start of each school day. All cell phones are stored in phone lockers located in the Office of Student Wellness. Cell phones will be returned to scholars during PM Homeroom.
*Exceptions: Scholars with specific healthcare management needs, as identified by a 504 plan, maybe eligible for cellphone usage exceptions.

- Should a scholar be found with a cell phone that was not submitted, the cell phone will be confiscated immediately.
- Parents will be required to come to school to claim a cellphone that has been confiscated.
- In the event of an emergency, parents should contact the school at:
    - Main Office: (718) 991-9139

Scholar Records

Parents have the right to access their child's records by submitting a written request to the main office. Please provide 3 school days for the records to be made available.



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Academic Honesty Policy

Mott Hall Charter School is committed to academic honesty. We strive to develop open-minded and principled inquirers who can think independently and express their own perspectives and viewpoints. Cheating and academic dishonesty go against our core value of integrity.

Definition
The Academic Honesty Policy is designed to define and clarify the expectations associated with the submission of authentic student work. It provides staff, scholars, parents, administrators and other school personnel with a common understanding of malpractice.

Academic Honesty is acknowledging responsibility for the production of a scholar's own work, recognition of the work of others, and maintaining honor and trust in the learning environment.

In order to understand appropriate academic honesty practice, it is important to clarify behavior that can lead to academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes:

1. **Plagiarism -** using the ideas or work of another person as your own, such as copying language from a book or website and not citing where it came from.

Examples: any representation of others work as your own, non-original work that is not cited and appropriately referenced in submitted work , copying information from a book or website.

2. Cheating - getting unauthorized help in an assignment, quiz or exam and/or any action that gives a student an unfair advantage.

3. Misconduct during testing- refusing to follow directions, talking or using notes or other resources without permission during tests or quizzes, taking test materials from a classroom or using prohibited electronic devices.

Roles and Responsibilities in Supporting Academic Honesty

Administrators:

- Support academic honesty policy by ensuring all staff, scholars and parents are trained in understanding definitions, responsibilities and consequences for Academic Dishonesty.
- Ensure academic honesty is applied consistently throughout the school.
- Provide staff development and materials to guide students in maintaining academic honesty.

Faculty:

- To confirm to the best of his or her knowledge that all work submitted for assessment is the authentic work of the scholar.
- Support and implement the academic policy and provide scholars with advice whenever necessary.

Scholars:

- Ensure that all work submitted is authentically theirs.
- Listen carefully to and understand teachers' guidelines for group and individual work.
- Understand and use technology and library resources properly.
- Take care in constructing thorough and appropriately cited bibliographies.
- Seek guidance from teachers when unsure how to follow rules of academic honesty.

Parents / Guardians:

- Confirm understanding of definitions, responsibilities and consequences for Academic Dishonesty by signing and returning to the school the form on the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Encourage your scholar to practice academic honesty.
- Address concerns of academic misconduct with your scholar and school staff if necessary.

Reporting: If a Scholar engages in behavior determined by the teacher to be out of integrity with our academic honesty policy, the following steps will occur:

1. The teacher reports suspicion to the dean and administration. A conference with the dean will be scheduled to determine next steps.
2. The dean informs parents. A conference with the parents will be scheduled.
3. If it is decided that a scholar has engaged in academic dishonesty, the scholar will be provided the opportunity to redo the work in addition to participating in a restorative practice.

Fire Drills

At least twelve fire/emergency drills are held each year. Directions for exiting the building are posted near each classroom door and will be explained by each classroom teacher. It is vital that Scholars adhere to the following regulations during all drills:

1. Talking is not permitted after leaving the classroom.
2. Scholars must move in lines through the hallway and away from the building as directed.
3. Scholars must remain with their class throughout the drill.
4. No Scholar may re-enter the building until the all-clear signal is received.

Assemblies

Assemblies are presentations that enhance Scholar learning and school life. Scholar behavior during assemblies needs to be consistent with classroom behavior expectations. Scholars are expected to comply with directives and requests made by any faculty or staff member.

During school assemblies, scholars are expected to dress professionally and demonstrate pride in their appearance. Students will be provided with a necktie that must be worn during assemblies as part of the professional dress expectation.

Lunch and Recess Rules and Procedures

Lunch and Recess are extensions of the school day at Mott Hall and Scholars are expected to maintain high standards of behavior. When Scholars are in the Cafeteria they will:

1. Use level 1 voices
2. Refrain from banging on tables
3. Never throw food
4. Clean up after themselves
5. Keep their hands and feet to themselves
6. Not use electronic devices

Weather permitting; Scholars will have recess in the schoolyard. When Scholars are in the yard they will:

1. Use all equipment safely and appropriately
2. Refrain from play-fighting
3. Line up quickly and quietly at the end of the recess period
4. Not eat or chew gum
5. Not use electronic devices

Scholars who do not comply with these rules will not be allowed to use recess equipment. All electronic devices will be confiscated.

Harassment and Hazing Zero-Tolerance Policy

Harassment is the act of treating any Scholar or employee in a derogatory manner based upon their race, ethnic background, religion, gender, or sexual preference. Harassment is not tolerated in the MHCS community.

Such behavior includes, but is not limited, to:

- physical violence
- threats, taunts, teasing
- aggressive or menacing gestures
- exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate
- using derogatory language
- making derogatory jokes or name calling or slurs including racial name-calling or ethnic slurs
- written or graphic material, including graffiti, photographs, drawings, or videos, containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically circulated or are written or printed.

Sexual harassment is not tolerated in the MHCS community and includes but is not limited to:

- sexual flirtations, advances or propositions
- verbal remarks about an individual's body
- sexually degrading words used towards an individual
- the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Any Scholar, who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual or racial harassment on school grounds or at school activities, should immediately report the alleged misconduct to school administration.

In the absence of a victim's complaint, the school, upon learning of, or having reason to suspect the occurrence of any harassment, will promptly begin an investigation and take action as deemed appropriate upon the results of the investigation.

"Hazing" means any intentional, knowing or reckless act directed against a Scholar for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club or athletic team whose members are, or include, other Scholars. Soliciting, encouraging, aiding or engaging in hazing is prohibited.

Scholars found to be engaging in harassing or hazing behavior will be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions but not limited to:

Consequences for hazing or harassment will be determined in accordance with the school's Tiered Behavior System. The level of consequence will depend on the severity, frequency, and circumstances of the incident, as outlined in the school's behavior matrix.

- Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- School suspension
- Dignity for All Students Acts

Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) & Anti-Bullying Policy

Mott Hall Charter School

Mott Hall Charter School is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where all Scholars are treated with dignity and respect. In alignment with New York State's **Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)**, MHCS prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and hazing on school property, on school transportation, during school-sponsored activities, and through electronic communication that impacts the school community.

The purpose of DASA is to ensure that every Scholar has access to an educational environment free from discrimination and harassment, including behaviors that interfere with a Scholar's ability to learn, feel safe, or participate fully in school.

Under DASA, no Scholar shall be subjected to harassment or discrimination by employees or other Scholars based on a person's actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Weight
- National origin
- Ethnic group
- Religion
- Religious practice
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Gender (including gender identity and expression)
- Sex
- Any other protected characteristic under applicable law

Mott Hall Charter School has designated a **DASA Coordinator** and trained staff members responsible for responding to concerns involving harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Scholars and families are encouraged to report any concerns to a trusted adult, teacher, dean, administrator, or the designated DASA Coordinator.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mott Hall Charter School has a zero-tolerance approach toward bullying and harassment. Bullying is defined as intentional behavior, including physical, verbal, social, or cyber actions, that causes harm, intimidation, humiliation, or creates an unsafe environment for another Scholar. Bullying may involve repeated behaviors or a single severe incident that significantly impacts a Scholar's safety or well-being.

This policy applies to behavior that occurs:

- On school property
- During school-sponsored events or activities
- On school transportation

- Through electronic communication, including social media and digital platforms, when the behavior impacts the MHCS community

Types of Bullying

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying involves the use of physical force or actions intended to harm, intimidate, or threaten another person. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Hitting, punching, kicking, or shoving
- Tripping or blocking someone's movement
- Spitting
- Throwing objects at another person
- Pulling hair or inappropriate physical contact
- Damaging or taking another person's belongings

Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying involves harmful words, statements, or communication intended to hurt, embarrass, threaten, or intimidate another person. Examples include:

- Name-calling or insults
- Threats
- Spreading rumors or false information
- Racial slurs or discriminatory comments
- Teasing intended to harm or humiliate
- Comments targeting a person's identity, appearance, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves using technology or digital platforms to harm, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. Examples include:

- Posting harmful or threatening messages online
- Sharing private photos, videos, or information without permission
- Creating fake accounts or impersonating another person
- Spreading rumors through text messages or social media
- Posting humiliating content about another person
- Sending harassing or threatening electronic messages

Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination is the unfair or unequal treatment of individuals based on personal characteristics or identities.

Harassment includes behaviors directed toward a Scholar based on actual or perceived characteristics protected under DASA, including race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex, or other protected characteristics.

Reporting Bullying, Harassment, or Discrimination

Any person who believes that a Scholar has experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment, hazing, or discrimination is encouraged to immediately report the concern to a staff member.

Reports may be made to any trusted adult, teacher, dean, administrator, or the DASA Coordinator. Scholars or families who request confidentiality will have their identity protected to the extent permitted by law.

When a report is received, Mott Hall Charter School will conduct an appropriate investigation and take action consistent with school policy, procedures, and the MHCS Tiered Behavior System.

Families are encouraged to partner with the school in addressing concerns and supporting a safe school environment.

Scholar Technology, Internet Safety, and Social Media Acceptable Use Policy

Technology is an important learning tool that allows Scholars to collaborate, create, and access information. However, technology must be used safely, responsibly, and respectfully.

For the purposes of this policy, technology includes, but is not limited to:

- Computers and laptops
- Tablets
- Cell phones and mobile devices
- Smartwatches and wearable technology
- The internet
- Social media platforms
- Email and messaging applications
- Educational websites and applications

This policy applies to both school-owned and personal technology when usage impacts the safety, learning environment, or rights of members of the MHCS community.

Be Safe

Scholars should:

- Protect personal information and avoid sharing private details with strangers online.
- Never agree to meet someone in person that they only know through the internet.

- Immediately report uncomfortable, inappropriate, or threatening online interactions to a trusted adult.

Be Respectful and Appropriate

Scholars are expected to:

- Communicate online with kindness and respect.
- Avoid bullying, harassment, discrimination, inappropriate language, or harmful content.
- Avoid posting or sharing anything that could harm another person or negatively impact the school community.
- Remember that online posts can have long-term consequences and may be viewed by families, educators, colleges, or future employers.
- Maintain professional boundaries with staff members. Scholars should not communicate privately with staff through personal social media accounts. School communication should occur through approved platforms.

Be Responsible

Scholars are responsible for their online actions and must:

- Respect the privacy and property of others.
- Never access accounts, devices, or websites without permission.
- Never impersonate another person online.
- Complete their own work and avoid plagiarism or academic dishonesty.
- Follow copyright laws and avoid illegally downloading or sharing content.
- Avoid participating in illegal activities online.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Expectations

Artificial intelligence tools may be used as learning supports when approved by a teacher. Scholars are expected to use AI responsibly and honestly.

Scholars must:

- Use AI tools only when permitted by a teacher.
- Ensure assignments represent their own thinking and understanding.
- Properly acknowledge when AI tools are used.
- Understand that using AI to complete assignments without permission may be considered academic dishonesty.

Keeping Our School Community Safe

To promote safe and responsible technology use, Mott Hall Charter School will:

- Provide instruction on digital citizenship, internet safety, and appropriate online behavior.
- Teach Scholars how to recognize and respond to cyberbullying.
- Monitor school technology use.
- Use filtering and security systems designed to protect Scholars from inappropriate content.

Violations of this policy may result in loss of technology privileges and/or additional consequences aligned with the MHCS Tiered Behavior System.

Positive Behavior Incentive System

At Mott Hall Charter School, we have a positive behavior incentive system (PBIS), which aims to motivate our scholars by focusing on positive behaviors. Scholars are able to earn points daily by displaying behaviors that reflect our school's values of responsibility, integrity, scholarship, and excellence. By earning these points, scholars will be able to choose rewards provided by the school.

Discipline Measures

Mott Hall Charter School (MHCS) has adopted a Code of Conduct that provides positive guidance to our scholars and that lists behaviors that are encouraged in the school setting. Our Code of Conduct also describes behaviors that do **not** meet MHCS standards. A list of infractions that will have disciplinary consequences has been adapted from the Citywide Standards of Intervention and Discipline Measures of the New York City Department of Education. The Code of Behavioral Expectations and the Infractions that will have disciplinary consequences are included as an Attachment to this document.

Infractions that are subject to disciplinary consequences are divided into five levels. Level 1 infractions include conduct that is disruptive in a school setting. Level 2 infractions include behaviors that are more disruptive and that involve risk of harm to others. Level 3 infractions include unruly behavior that can involve violations of the law. Level 4 infractions include aggressive or harmful behavior that can cause serious injury to others. Level 5 infractions include conduct that is seriously dangerous or violent.

Infractions may be subject to disciplinary consequences even if they occur outside of the school setting. This can occur if the behavior occurs while traveling back and forth between school and home, at all school-sponsored events, and whenever the behavior can be shown to negatively affect the educational process or endanger the health, safety, morals or welfare of other students or teachers in the school. When misbehavior involves speech, such misbehavior will be subject to disciplinary consequences whether it is face to face or involves electronic communications such as texting, emailing, Facebook, or other social media or apps.

In order to promote an environment in which Mott Hall scholars learn to make appropriate decisions, MHCS has a Discipline Committee that meets to discuss scholar behaviors. The Committee will discuss responses and interventions when there are Level 1, 2, and 3 infractions and will recommend interventions to help the scholar move forward.

In the event that a scholar's conduct is so disruptive that the education of other scholars is affected, MHCS will take disciplinary actions which include removal from class, suspension from school, and expulsion. Procedures for each of these disciplinary actions are described.

Removal

A scholar can be removed from class by a Dean if the scholar engages in consistent Level 1 behaviors within the classroom, engages in other behaviors that are substantially disruptive of classroom procedures, or interferes with the teacher's authority within the classroom.

The Dean will advise the scholar of the teacher's objections to his/her behavior and provide the scholar with an opportunity to respond. After such review, the Dean may decide to remove the scholar from one class or all classes for the balance of the school day. The Dean will notify the scholar's parent of this decision and invite the parent to come to school to discuss the scholar's conduct and the removal decision.

Students who are removed from class for disciplinary reasons will be provided with the classwork, assignments, and instructional materials associated with the lesson they missed. Students are expected to complete all assigned work within the timeframe established by the teacher or school administration. Removal from class does not excuse students from their academic responsibilities.

Short-term Suspension – Up to Ten Days

If a scholar is reported to have engaged in Level 2 or Level 3 conduct, the Dean will investigate the report and will notify the scholar of the reported violations of the Code of Conduct and provide an opportunity to the scholar to respond. The Dean may direct that the scholar be removed from class and placed in an alternative instructional setting for one to four days or may decide that the violation warrants suspension from school for from one to ten days. A formal meeting will take place with the Dean to notify the parent of this decision and to provide evidence and details of the incident. A letter describing the conduct that led to the suspension and setting a date for return to school that is within ten days of the first day of suspension. The Dean will request that the Parent come to school to pick up the scholar.

Immediately following the suspension, the Dean will determine how alternative instruction during the period of suspension will be provided, remote log in to the classroom, at the school in a separate location, or at an off-school site. There is to be a re-entry meeting prior to the scholar returning to school after a suspension. This is to ensure that all constituencies have a clear understanding of expectations and the supports that are in place to aid the scholar.

The Discipline Committee will take steps to help scholars change patterns of conduct that lead to a series of short-term suspensions. If a scholar has an Individualized Education Program or has been referred to the Committee on Special Education for evaluation and the Dean has recommended a date for return to school that would bring the total number of days of suspension to more than ten, some special rules will apply:

1. The Discipline Committee will determine whether suspension of the scholar until the proposed return date would be equivalent to a "disciplinary change of placement." A "disciplinary change of placement" is created by a suspension of more than ten consecutive days or a series of short-term suspensions that exceeds ten days and constitutes "a pattern of removal." To determine whether a proposed short-term suspension will constitute a "disciplinary change of placement" the Discipline Committee will consider whether the current misconduct was substantially similar to previous misconduct that led to disciplinary actions and whether the infractions were close together in time.

2. If the Discipline Committee determines that there is no "pattern of removal," the scholar will remain out of school until the return date set by the Dean.

3. If the Discipline Committee concludes that the current misconduct is part of an ongoing pattern, the scholar will return to school on the tenth suspension day and the Dean will immediately refer the scholar to the Committee on Special Education for a prompt Manifestation Determination Review.

4. The Committee on Special Education will meet with the scholar and the scholar's parent and representatives of MHCS to determine if the behavior which was the subject of the disciplinary procedure was a manifestation of the scholar's disability.

5. If the conduct was a manifestation of disability, the scholar will return to school and steps will be taken to continue the evaluation process, develop or modify a behavior intervention plan or review placement options. If the conduct was not a manifestation of disability, the proposed suspension may be implemented.

Long term Suspension – More than Ten Days

Mott Hall Charter School follows the **NYSED Part 201** - Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities Subject to Discipline. A long-term suspension of more than ten school days may be imposed if a scholar has been charged with an infraction listed in Level 4 or Level 5 of the MHCS Code of Conduct.

If a report of a Level 4 or Level 5 infraction is made to the Dean, he/she will investigate the report and will notify the scholar of the reported violation and its seriousness and provide the scholar with an opportunity to respond. If the Dean determines that it is reasonably likely that the scholar engaged in Level 4 or Level 5 conduct, he/she will telephone the parent and advise both parent and scholar that the scholar is suspended immediately and that a hearing before the Executive Director of the School (or his designee) will be conducted within the next five to ten days. The Dean will prepare a letter explaining the charges and notifying the parent about the proposed date and time of the hearing and about the scholar's right to be represented at the hearing. The letter will also provide notice that the consequences of the hearing may be long-term suspension or expulsion.

If the scholar has an Individualized Education Program the letter will describe the scholar's rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the scholar will be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for a Manifestation Determination Review. The Special Education Coordinator will advise the CSE of the proposed hearing date and will urge that the Manifestation Determination Review be scheduled as soon as possible after the hearing date and within ten days of the first day of suspension.

During the suspension period the Scholar will receive alternative instruction. At the discretion of the Dean, instruction may be provided remotely, at the school or at an offsite location, depending on the seriousness of the charge and the risk to the safety and well being of others in the school community. Alternative instruction may be provided for from two to five hours per day. It will not include specials or extracurricular activities.

The Principal (or designee) will be the Hearing Officer who conducts the hearing. The Dean of MHCS will present the evidence that led to the recommendation for long-term suspension. The scholar and parent will have an opportunity to question witnesses presented by MHCS and to present the scholar's side of the story.

If the Hearing Officer finds that the evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the scholar was guilty of a Level 4 or Level 5 violation of the Code of Conduct, the Hearing Officer will notify the Discipline Committee of his/her findings and continue the scholar's suspension pending Discipline Committee review of the scholar's disciplinary record. The Special Education Coordinator will also notify the CSE of the results of the hearing.

The Hearing Officer will reconvene the Suspension Hearing within five school days of the fact-finding portion of the hearing for review of the disciplinary consequences. A representative of the Discipline Committee and parent and/or scholar may address the issue of length of suspension or other disposition. The Hearing Officer will also consider the Manifestation Determination Review report from the CSE.

The Hearing Officer will prepare a written decision following the dispositional portion of the hearing.

If the CSE advises the School that the conduct which was the subject of the hearing was a manifestation of the scholar's disability the scholar may return to school pending further review of his/her placement by the Committee on Special Education. If, however, the conduct which was the subject of the hearing involved possession or use of a weapon, the infliction upon another person of serious bodily harm, or use or possession of drugs in the school setting, the scholar will remain in an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five days, whether or not the conduct was a manifestation of his/her disability.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent removal of a scholar from the Mott Hall Charter School.

Upon a finding of guilt in a Level 4 or Level 5 long-term suspension hearing, a recommendation for expulsion from MHCS may be made if the scholar appears to present a threat to the safety or well being of the community or if the conduct which was the subject of the disciplinary hearing included any of the Level 5 violations listed below. The Level 5 violations which may lead to a recommendation for expulsion are the following:

B51 Threatening to use or using force to take or attempt to take property belonging to another

B52 Using force against, or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury against school personnel or school safety agents

B53 Using extreme force against or inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury upon scholars or others

B54 Planning, instigating, or participating with another or others, in an incident of group violence

B55 Engaging in threatening, dangerous or violent behavior that is gang-related

B56 Engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity or share sexual "selfie" photos

B57 Selling or distributing illegal drugs or controlled substances and/or alcohol

B58 Possessing or selling any weapon, other than a firearm, bomb or other explosive,

as defined in Category I (See Addendum for Categories of weapons)

B59 Using any weapon as defined in Category II to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

B60 Using any weapon, other than a firearm, bomb or other explosive, as defined in Category I, to threaten or to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

B61 Using any weapon, other than a firearm, bomb or other explosive, as defined in Category I or II, to inflict injury upon school personnel, students, or others

B62 Using any weapon, other than a firearm, as defined in Category I or II, to inflict injury upon school personnel, scholars, or others

B63 Possessing or using a firearm

In reviewing a recommendation for expulsion MHCS will consider the following:

Whether all appropriate options offered by the school's Code of Conduct have been applied and recorded;

Whether all support personnel (internal & external) have been informed of the case and have provided input;

Whether discussion has taken place or attempted to take place with the scholar and parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding the specific misbehavior or accumulation of misbehaviors which have led to the proposed recommendation for expulsion;

Whether formal verbal and written warning was issued to the parent and scholar followed by instruction on the behavior which was expected in future.

A determination about expulsion will be made when the Hearing Officer reconvenes the hearing within 5 days of the fact-finding hearing to consider the recommendation of the Discipline Committee and to hear any response from scholar and parent.

The Hearing Officer will also consider any report from the Committee on Special Education.

The Hearing Officer will prepare a written decision concerning the finding of facts and the consequences. This decision will take into account the recommendation of the Committee on Special Education with respect to its Manifestation Determination Review, as set forth above.

Any suspension or expulsion determination may be appealed through the school's Family Concern Process to the Board of Trustees. A parent who is not satisfied with the outcome of the review by the Board of Trustees, may file a complaint with the New York State Board of Regents, by writing to the Office of Charter Schools at the State Education Department at the following address:

Charter School Office
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

All appeals must be made in writing and must clearly state on what grounds the appeal is being made. Appeals to the Charter School Office should be made within 30 days of the determination of the Board of Trustees to uphold the suspension or expulsion recommendation.

Restraint Policy
For purposes of this policy, physical restraint is defined as any personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the free movement of a child's arms, legs or head. It does not include: (1) briefly holding a child in order to calm or comfort the child; (2) safely escorting a child from one area to another using the minimum contact necessary to move the child.

At MHCS we understand that some of our Scholars have great difficulty regulating themselves and their behaviors. Accordingly, we have put in place social and emotional supports which include enhanced counseling, relaxation techniques, and other interventions to help scholars self-regulate. In certain circumstances, when scholars are not able to self regulate on their own, progressive measures are needed to ensure the safety of all community members. We have put in place the following procedures that will be employed by staff members when crisis intervention is needed to protect the safety, health or welfare of all students and staff in the school setting.

The scholar will first be asked to use one or more of the self-regulation techniques he or she has learned previously. If it appears that these techniques will not be effective, the classroom teacher will notify the Dean who will determine if restraint is appropriate and if so will intervene or will arrange for assistance of another staff member who has been trained in physical restraint techniques. The use of physical restraint on any scholar shall be limited to emergency situations when there appears to be imminent risk of injury to the scholar or others. Restraint will continue only until the scholar is able to resume participation in counseling or de-escalation techniques.

Restraint Notification
In instances of emergency physical restraint notification to parents will be made on the day of the intervention by phone, e-mail, or in person. An incident report will also be prepared which includes a description of the actions which led to the need for physical restraint, the de-escalation techniques which were tried, the names of the individuals who conducted the restraint, the location of the restraint, the length of time of the restraint, whether any injuries were reported in connection with the restraint, and whether the Principal and parent had been notified. Regardless of whether the parent has received this initial notice, the school must send him or her copy of the incident report no later than two business days after the emergency use of restraint.

Academic Policies

Homework Policy

Homework is a key high school and college going skill. It is important that Scholars complete all assigned homework and that parents provide homework support. If your child is struggling with homework, communication with the teacher is needed.

It is not acceptable for Scholars to return to school with partial or no homework complete with the excuse of not understanding the work. Parents must facilitate continued learning and practice in the home and may contact teachers for advice and strategies.

Full credit for homework completion will be given when scholars 1) put forth their full effort, 2) demonstrate a majority understanding of what was taught in school and 3) follow all directions given by their teachers.

Scholars should also read every night for 30 minutes!

Monitoring Your Child's Progress

It is important that parents monitor their children's academic progress. There are many ways for you to stay on top of your child's academic performance, support them in completing assignments on-time and getting good grades (MHCS considers good to be a B (3.0 GPA) or better):

Parents and guardians are provided with access to PowerSchool to monitor their child's academic progress, including grades, attendance, assignments, and other important school information. Families are encouraged to check PowerSchool regularly to stay informed. If you do not have a PowerSchool account or need assistance accessing your account, please notify the school as soon as possible so we can provide support.
The following policies are in place to support Scholars and parents in adhering to MHCS' culture of rigorous academics.

- Log in to PowerSchool to view your child's assignments, grades, and notifications via email and/or text message. Check PowerSchool daily after 4 P.M. to see homework assignments for each day on class websites. Check that your child completed the work as described online.
- Contact teachers to schedule an appointment. Appointments can be face-to-face or by phone. After-school appointments may be arranged pending teacher availability.

Report Cards and Teacher Conferences

Report cards will be distributed four times a year. School-wide progress reports will be distributed midway through each quarter.

Three school-wide Parent Teacher Conferences will be held for all classes. Parent attendance is expected at each Parent Teacher Conference.

Grading Policy

Grades at MHCS are combined to give your child an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) for the class. A passing GPA at MHCS is 70 or better (level 3-4). A level 2 is "Approaching Standards" and a level 1 is "Below Grade Level Standards".

Honor Roll

Scholars are recognized each quarter through the MHCS Honor Roll for demonstrating excellence in both academics and behavior. To qualify, a scholar must earn an Excellent or Satisfactory conduct rating in every class and achieve a minimum grade of 80% (Level 3) in all subjects.

Honor Roll Levels:

- 3.7 to 4.0 GPA SUMMA CUM LAUDE (with highest honor)
- 3.3 to 3.6 GPA MAGNA CUM LAUDE (with great honor)
- 3.0 to 3.2 GPA CUM LAUDE (with honor)

Academic and Behavioral Honorable Mention

The honorable mention designation recognizes Scholars that meet the honor roll GPA expectation, 3.0, but may have fallen short academically and/or behaviorally in ONE class. We want to encourage those Scholars to stay focused and support them in finding solutions to meet the full honor roll criteria.

Promotional Criteria

Scholars are expected to demonstrate proficiency at their grade level in multiple ways at Mott Hall Charter School. This includes classwork, projects, homework, interim assessments, tests and quizzes.

It is our expectation that with home/school collaboration and effective Scholar effort, Scholars will be able to demonstrate the necessary learning to be promoted to the next grade. Scholars with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) will also have their modified promotional criteria reviewed during the promotional decision process.

Promotional Criteria
1. Scholars must earn a performance level of 70 or higher in all of their classes to be deemed proficient.
2. Scholars must maintain acceptable attendance and lateness. No more than 3 unexcused absences per quarter.
Graduation Requirements
1. In addition to the above promotional criteria, Scholars must earn a 2, 3, or 4 on the New York State 8th Grade Science Exam

Scholars who are considered to be in danger of not meeting promotion requirements will be notified following the second marking period. Families will receive communication regarding their scholar's academic progress, areas of concern, and the support available to help ensure successful promotion.

1. A letter will be distributed to Scholars and mailed to families explaining the areas of concern.
2. The Principal will review the details of Scholars' performance and identify next steps.

3. A conference will be held with families to explain next steps and ensure alignment of home/school effort. Academic intervention and support will be provided to the student.
4. Scholars' remaining progress reports and report cards will be closely monitored for evidence of improvement.
5. At the end of the school year, all criteria will be reviewed along with Scholar performance during the year in all classes. A final decision letter will be mailed to families and followed up with a conference.



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R.I.S.E to Become LIONS PBIS Program

The R.I.S.E. to Become LIONS program celebrates scholars who consistently demonstrate Mott Hall Charter School's core values through their academic achievement, character, and commitment to our school community:

- Attending school regularly and arriving to school on time
- Wearing the proper MHCS uniform
- Completing homework assignments
- Demonstrating Scholarship
- Behavior and Discipline

Scholars who meet the specified requirements for each quarter will earn incentives, including RISE trips. Scholars who meet the requirements for all 4 quarters will earn the distinction of R.I.S.E Scholars of the Year, and will receive special recognition for their exemplary demonstration of the MHCS Core Values.

Enrichment Activities and Academic Academies

We recognize the need to support and accelerate the learning of our Scholars and provide enrichment opportunities. These opportunities are oriented around high school and college readiness.

After school activities and academies are opportunities offered only to Scholars who demonstrate appropriate behavior during the regular school day. Other criteria such as Scholar academic standing and interest are also considered. In the event that a Scholar disrupts the learning environment during after school activities or special academies, he/she will be removed from the program.

In addition to behavioral expectations, Scholars and families must follow the guidelines for program attendance and pick-up. Please review these guidelines carefully in the event that your child is invited to participate. If these guidelines are not followed, scholars may be removed from the program. If your scholar is removed from a program, it will be at the discretion of the School as to when and if the Scholar may return.

After school activities for Scholars generally begin at 3:05 P.M. and end at 4:15 P.M. Attendance will be taken for Scholars who have enrolled in activities during this time. Children will not be allowed to leave the building

to go out to purchase snacks and return for the after school activities. A snack for after school activities will be provided.

School Trips

School trips are a privilege for those scholars who consistently demonstrate our core values of responsibility, integrity, scholarship, and excellence.

Notification of school trips and permission slips will be sent home in advance of any school trip. The receipt of a permission slip does not guarantee that a Scholar will be given permission by the school to attend. Please return permission slips by the due date or your child will not be permitted to attend.

All students must maintain at least a 70 (2.5) grade point average in all classes to attend non academic based trips.

Family Concern Process

Mott Hall Charter School is committed to maintaining a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between its teachers, staff, our scholars, and their families. If you have a concern about a school policy, academic grade, discipline decision, or anything else, we welcome your input and ask that you follow the below protocol if you feel your concerns are not being reasonably met. Further, we ask that you model our core values of Responsibility, Integrity, Scholarship, and Excellence in this process and always communicate in a respectful manner.

Parents of Students with Disabilities

Parents of students with disabilities are also encouraged to use the school's resolution process. Alternatively, if a parent, individual or organization believes that the school or the district has violated federal or State law and regulation related to the education of students with disabilities, they may submit a written, signed State concern directly to the New York State Education Department (NYSED). For more information, please go to the following website:

http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/sample concern.htm

Resolution Process

Step 1: Contact Staff Member Involved: If a parent has an issue or concern, the first step towards resolving the issue will be to contact the staff member involved by phone or email. The parent should call the school's front desk to obtain contact information. The staff member and the parent will discuss the issue either on the phone or in-person and work to reach a resolution that satisfies both parties.

Step 2: Written concern sent to Principal: If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent's next step is to write a letter to the principal or use the "parent concern process form" to explain the issue. The parent may fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter. The parent should contact the school's front desk to obtain contact information for the principal. The principal will reply within 3 business days, at least acknowledging the concern has been received, and the principal may take up to 10 business days to investigate

and reach a decision. The principal will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of the school receiving the concern letter or form. The parent should copy the Director of Operations on the concern form. (Please note that the principal will not respond to concerns that have not gone through steps 1-2.)

Step 3: Written Concern sent to Principal's Supervisor: If the parent is dissatisfied with the principal's decision, the parent may write a letter to the Executive Director or use the "parent concern process form" to explain the issue. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter. To get the contact information for the school's Executive Director, the parent can contact the front desk of the school. The Executive Director will reply within 3 business days and may take up to ten business days to investigate and reach a decision. The Executive Director will send a written decision to the parent within 10 business days of receiving the letter or form. (Please note that the Executive Director will not respond to concerns that have not gone through steps 1-3.)

Step 4: Written Concern sent to full Board of Trustees (via chair): If parent is still concerned the parent should write a letter to the board chair requesting time at the next board meeting and providing a detailed statement of the concern and the specific action or relief you are seeking. The parent can fax, email, mail, or hand-deliver (to the school's front desk) the letter. The board chair / chair designee has 48 hours to reply to confirm that the board will hear the parent's issue. The parent will be given 3 minutes for comments during the open session of the board meeting. If additional time is necessary, up to an extra 30 minutes may be allotted at the end of the board meeting to hear additional comments to explain any issue or concerns he/she has. The board's decision will be final. (Please note that the board will not respond to concerns that have not gone through steps 1-4.)

Step 5: Written Concern to the State Education Department. If the parent is not satisfied with the response of the School's Board of Trustees, the parent may present their concern to the New York State Board of Regents or Commissioner of Education at the New York State Education Department, which shall investigate and respond. The New York State Education Department has the power and the duty to take remedial action as appropriate. Your concern should be addressed to the Charter School Office, NYS Education Department, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.

A Family Concern Form may be obtained from the Main Office.

PLEASE READ AND SIGN PAGE THE FOLLOWING PAGE AND HAVE YOUR SCHOLAR BRING THE SIGNED SIGNATURE PAGE TO SCHOOL TOMORROW.

MOTT HALL CHARTER SCHOOL

STUDENT PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

After reading the Student/Parent Handbook, please sign the appropriate lines below and return the form to Mott Hall.

PARENT SIGNATURE

I have read and reviewed the Student/Parent Handbook with my scholar _____
(name of student)

and I agree to follow the policies outlined in the Parent Student Handbook for the current school year.

I recognize the responsibility to discuss the rules and policies with my scholar.

_____ _____ _____
(Parent's name printed) (Parent's name signature) (Date)

STUDENT SIGNATURE

I have read and reviewed the Student/Parent Handbook with my parent/guardian and I agree to follow the policies outlined in the Parent Student Handbook for the current school year. I recognize the responsibility to discuss the rules and policies with my parent/guardian.

_____ _____ _____ _____
(Student name printed) (Student name signature) (Date) (class)