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## **Middle School Mission Statement**

Middle School is an important and special season of life for adolescents as they find their way from childhood to adulthood. By “educating minds and nurturing hearts” from a Godly perspective, we hope to help them transition with grace and excellence. The Middle School staff places equal importance on both aspects of the MCDS school slogan, with every effort being made to meet the individual needs of each student, both academically, emotionally, and spiritually.

With that in mind, it is important to set guidelines and expectations that will guide our life together during the Middle School years. It is vital to establish a common understanding of how we can live and work together in a way that honors God and encourages each other. The purpose of this handbook is to communicate the overall standards and expectations of the MCDS Middle School so we can develop a community of mutual respect and positive growth. MCDS Middle School staff members are committed to integrating God and His Word into all areas of academic life. We desire to partner with each student’s family and church to nurture students and to foster personal growth in each of the following areas:

### **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Developing and maintaining a personal walk with God
- Understanding God’s Word and applying it to real-life situations
- Becoming more like Christ in attitudes and actions

### **INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Developing necessary organizational and study skills to foster independence
- Using higher-level thinking skills, such as application, analysis, and evaluation
- Drawing wise conclusions which align with God’s Word

### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Standing firm on Biblical truth in the midst of secular society
- Living selflessly as a result of recognizing the God-given gifts and potential in others
- Treating others with respect at all times

### **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Experiencing a relationship with God as the foundation for all things
- Recognizing and accepting their unique worth and value
- Learning to make decisions based on truth and not emotions

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Treating their bodies as a temple of God
- Understanding the maturation process and caring for their physical bodies
- Choosing a healthy lifestyle in both diet and activity

## **Academics**

We believe that the Middle School years are an important time to help students develop good study habits and positive attitudes toward their schoolwork. Our job is to prepare them to be Godly young men and women who will impact their workplace and the world by modeling Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." With that in mind, the following criteria will be enforced to help students develop maturity, responsibility, and independence in their schoolwork.

### **Absentee Assignments**

When students are absent, all assignments will be collected and recorded for their convenience. These assignments will be sent home with a sibling, when possible, or arrangements can be made for parents to pick them up at the office after 2:30 p.m. It is a student's responsibility to make sure that make-up work is completed and turned in on time. In general, a student is given an additional day to complete their homework for each day of school they have missed.

### **Class Preparation**

Middle School students are expected to bring pens, pencils, notebooks, textbooks, calculators, planners, flash drives, SSR books, homework, and any extra materials that a teacher has requested, to class. Students have three minutes between classes to gather the necessary items for the next period. Failure to bring these materials to class will result in disciplinary action as determined by the teacher. Students are also expected to prepare for P. E. class by changing into and out of their gym clothing in a timely fashion. Failure to do so will result in a reduced class participation grade.

### **Eligibility for Athletics**

Students must maintain passing grades in all major subject areas in order to participate in after-school athletics. The athletic director will work closely with the Middle School teachers to monitor the grades of those students who are actively enrolled in MCDS interscholastic sports. If a student is failing in a particular subject, he or she will be required to meet with the teacher to improve the grade. Students will not be allowed to participate in team sports for a week and until the grade is brought to passing status.

### **Electives**

Electives are academic courses offered for students' enrichment and exploration. These electives allow students to expand beyond the required curriculum to pursue personal interests and provide opportunity for new areas of learning. The electives are graded, with grades recorded on student report cards each marking period. It is our hope that these electives will become a highly anticipated benefit of attaining Middle School status.

## Grading Scale

The Middle School grading scale is as follows:

99-100	A+
94-98	A
93	A-
92	B+
87-91	B
86	B-
85	C+
77-84	C
76	C-
75	D+
71-74	D
70	D-
0-69	F

## Homework and Tests

Teachers will assign homework that is reasonable and instructional. Time will be given in class to begin or complete most assignments. In most instances, work to be completed at home should not take more than 10 minutes multiplied by their grade level. Additional time may be needed for reports, projects, and studying for exams. Teachers will also give a reasonable amount of time for students to complete tests and reserve the right to collect an unfinished test from a student if they discern that ample time has already been given.

## Honor Roll

Each trimester, Middle School students have the opportunity to earn honors for exemplary grades. If a student carries a GPA of 4.0 – 3.75, they will earn Distinguished Honors for that trimester. If he or she has a GPA of 3.74 – 3.0, they will earn Honors. GPA is calculated by averaging all grades during that trimester using the following scale

A+, A, A-	= 4
B+, B, B-	= 3
C+, C, C-	= 2
D+, D, D-	= 1
F	= 0

## Internet Policy

Students must read and sign the MCDS Internet Policy, which is then placed on file. Students are expected to respect the guidelines as stated within the Internet policy.

## Late Work

Homework is due on the date the teacher has announced in class and at the time the teacher is collecting said homework assignment. Failure to turn in an assignment on time will result in the following:

10% reduction of the grade earned per day assignment is late (Beginning right after the teacher has collected the homework in class). After day 5 and a 50% reduction, the grade will be recorded as a "0" and a note sent home to parents.

## Schedule

The Middle School schedule consists of a half hour homeroom/devotional period, 3 (1 hour) academic blocks, 3 (45 minute) specials blocks, and a lunch/flex period. Times are as follows:

8:00 - 8:10	Homeroom/Devotions
8:13 – 8:56	Period 1
8:59 - 9:42	Period 2
9:45 - 10:28	Period 3
10:31 - 11:14	Period 4
11:17 - 12:00	Period 5
12:00 - 12:40	Lunch/Recess
12:43 - 1:26	Period 6
1:29 - 2:12	Period 7
2:15 – 2:35	S.H.O.P

## Study Hall/SHOP

All Middle School students will be given one or two study halls per week as well as 25 minutes of SHOP time at the end of each day to work on assignments. These study halls are for the students' benefit. It is a time to work on homework assignments or ask for individual teacher help, if needed. Students are expected to study quietly.

## **Attendance**

We believe that regular school attendance is crucial in order to maximize the learning experience. Repeated absences and/or tardiness detract from the learning environment, both for the absent student and for the classroom. We ask parents to reinforce the school policies regarding attendance as defined in the MCDS Handbook according to Manheim Central policies. The following is a basic summary of our attendance policies. Further guidelines can be found in the MCDS Handbook.

### **Absences (Excused/Unexcused)**

Daily attendance will be kept for each student. A written excuse must be handed in to the office for each absence, whether excused or unexcused. Students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused days of absence. These should be used with discretion. If a student accumulates more than three unexcused absences, he or she will be reported to the Manheim Central School District.

Requests for extended educational travel **MUST** be submitted at least two (2) weeks in advance. If a student fails to follow proper protocol for educational or unexcused absences, the teacher has the right to require homework to be completed by the assigned due date with no extensions.

### **Arriving Late or Leaving Early**

Students arriving after the 8:00 a.m. bell must be signed in at the office by a parent, guardian, or designated person. The student will be given a pass to ensure admittance to class. Requests for medical or dental dismissals should be written and delivered to the teacher first thing in the morning. Parents need to sign out their child/children at the office.

### **Tardiness**

Students arriving at school between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. When a student accumulates three (3) unexcused tardies within one marking period, a notice will be sent to parents and to the Manheim Central School District. If the problem persists, the administrator, teacher, and parents will meet to address the situation.

# **Conduct**

## Daily Procedures

Upon arrival, Middle School students may stop briefly at their lockers to drop off their backpacks and coats. Students should then report directly to the gym and wait on the stage with the other Middle School students. When the 7:45 a.m. bell rings, students may gather the necessary items for their morning classes and then report to their homerooms. Permission must be granted to leave the room to go to the bathroom, office, or any other destination. All students should be in their homeroom by 8:00am.

At dismissal time, students must remain seated in their homeroom until the homeroom teacher dismisses them to gather their things to go home. Students will be dismissed at the appropriate bell signal and must leave the Middle School hall immediately.

## General Rules

**HALLWAYS:** Students must walk quietly, single file to the right, through all school hallways. Middle School students are not permitted in the intermediate hallway; Students are expected to help keep the Middle School neat by keeping their lockers and hook areas clean and organized.

**LANGUAGE:** The MCDS Middle School has a “zero tolerance” of put-downs, sexually suggestive language, and foul slang. Students will be disciplined for any language the teachers feel is inappropriate. Repeated offenses will be reported to the administrator and/or parents.

**RESPECT:** Students are expected to show proper respectful attitudes toward other students and to staff. This respect should be woven into all areas of school life, such as proper conduct in the hallway, raising hands to speak in class, and a general kindness in words and actions toward others.

## **General School Conduct** (as stated in the MCDS Handbook)

1. Running in the halls or on ramps is not permitted. Students are also expected to walk outside when going to and from their buses or cars.
2. When going through the hallways, all students are to walk quietly in a single file on the right side so as not to block the hallway or disturb others.
3. Students should get teacher permission before leaving the classroom.
4. Students should raise a hand to be called upon before speaking.
5. Loitering in the restrooms is prohibited.
6. Cell phones must stay in the students backpack and turned off during the school day (7:30a – 2:45p). Failure to follow this rule will result in the cell phone being confiscated for the rest of the school day and parents will be notified. After three infractions of this rule, the student will have to store their cell phone in the office during the school day. All other electronics will follow similar guidelines including but not limited to iPods, hand held games, etc.
7. Gum chewing is prohibited.
8. Bullying, putting others down, name-calling, or purposefully excluding others is not tolerated.
9. Students shall be respectful to staff and other students at all times.
10. Weapons of any kind may not be brought to school.
11. Students shall show respect for all school property.
12. Lying, cheating, stealing, swearing, and use of vulgar language is not allowed.
13. Fighting, violence, and potentially dangerous horseplay is prohibited.
14. Sexual misconduct or possession of pornographic materials will not be tolerated.

# Discipline

Manheim Christian Day School is committed to providing a positive and safe learning environment for each child entrusted to us. Clear discipline procedures and guidelines help everyone feel a sense of security and respect in the school setting. Discipline that is respectful and loving toward others follows our mission of developing Christ-like behavior in our students.

It is our goal as educators to help our students accept responsibility for their choices and actions. Discipline is an opportunity for the students to grow in self-discipline and self-awareness. Focusing on the action rather than the person conveys a spirit of love necessary in administering a discipline policy. It is our goal to be redemptive when working with students in disciplinary issues.

The Discipline Policy is guided by the following principles known as **STAR Behavior**:

## **Safe**

**Treating Others As I Want to Be Treated**

**Allowing Learning to Occur**

**Reflecting Jesus in My Words, Attitudes, and Actions**

The MCDS Handbook outlines what we consider to be minor offenses (disobeying basic classroom and school rules), major offenses (behaviors that show blatant disrespect, that interfere with the learning environment, or that are potentially harmful physically, emotionally, or spiritually), and bullying. The handbook also clearly defines the various forms of discipline that will be enforced for such infractions. Please read the MCDS Handbook for specific guidelines regarding our discipline policy.

MCDS realizes that the Biblical principle of grace and forgiveness needs to apply in the lives of our children and staff. The Bible also teaches that our actions carry consequences. We believe that holding students accountable prepares them for life. In order to create an environment beneficial to all students, there may be times when Middle School students will, as a result of their behavior, earn detention.

As a Middle School team, we will use the STAR behavior plan. The following is a summary of the system of consequences and rewards.

Teachers will begin the year with a complete explanation of the expectations of the students. This program includes all middle school classroom teachers, as well as, specials teachers.

## **Negative Behavior**

If a student does not follow the STAR expectations, a strike will be given. Strikes will be given for things like being late to class, not having the necessary materials for class, chewing gum, talking at inappropriate times, etc. Teachers will give verbal warnings before a strike is given. Strikes will be recorded by the teacher. If a student earns 3 strikes in a 5 day period, he/she has earned a lunch detention. The five day period is linked to each student, not to a period or class and does not follow the calendar. Specials teachers will notify the homeroom teacher if a student receives a strike in his/her class.

Lunch detention will be served with the middle school teacher on detention duty for the week. The student must bring their blue detention slip with them. They will remain in the detention classroom until the end of the lunch and recess period. The teacher will record the detention in the specified notebook.

If a student earns a 3<sup>rd</sup> lunch detention within a marking period, he/she will serve the 3<sup>rd</sup> one in the principal's office and will complete a Stop-and-Think. At which point, the tally mark and lunch detention count will start over.

If a student earns 3 Stop-and-Thinks within 2 marking periods, he/she has earned an after school detention.

If there continues to be problems, we will take further action on a case by case basis.

#### Summary

3 Strikes within a 5 day period = lunch detention

3<sup>rd</sup> lunch detention within a marking period = served with principal and a Stop-and-Think

Next step=our discretion

#### Positive Reinforcement

Teachers will be handing out STAR Bucks as a reward for good behavior. Each teacher will have 5 STAR Bucks to hand in a Monday-Friday period of time. Students will write their name on it when they receive it. It will be rewarded for good behavior and, especially for behavior that goes above and beyond what is expected.

Students with no strikes during the entire month will receive 2 STAR Bucks.

Once a month, each classroom teacher will have a time that students can use their STAR Bucks to buy rewards. Rewards will be decided by each teacher along with his/her class at the beginning of the year. Rewards can include things like pizza party, extra recess, game time etc.

## Dress Code

### Dress Code

There is a wide range of convictions and opinions concerning personal appearance. It is essential to maintain respect and sensitivity to one another. We encourage students to maintain high standards of appearance that do not detract from the inner beauty of spirit, which is so important to God. To help accomplish this standard, MCDS is using the following guidelines to determine dress that is God-honoring and appropriate. Please note that the following dress guidelines are to be followed for all school functions and extra-curricular activities, including school programs and field trips, unless the teacher or administrator gives a written exception to parents.

#### Dress SMART!

- Is it Safe?
- Is it Modest?
- Is it Appropriate?
- Is it Respectful?
- Is it Tasteful?

(See the MCDS School Handbook for further explanation of the above.)

For further clarification and based on the criteria above, the following accessories and dress items are NOT permissible at MCDS:

- Waist chains, body piercing, tattoos
- Distracting jewelry, hair, clothing, and other accessories
- Skirts, slits, skorts and dresses shorter than four finger length from the knee standing.
- Shorts shorter than a 5 inch in-seam.
- Tight skirts and dresses
- Transparent or skin-tight clothing, halter tops, and clothing that exposes the midriff or cleavage
- Spaghetti straps and tank tops/dresses with less than a 3 inch strap width are not appropriate.
- Sweat suits, and pajamas
- Leggings without a longer top over them. Front and backside must be covered.
- Clothing/accessories with offensive, negative, disrespectful, violent, or sexually suggestive messages
- Caps or hoods worn over the head while indoors
- Beach shoes, shower shoes, and bedroom slippers, or heels higher than 2 inches.

## Graduation and Seasonal Programs/Banquets

MCDS is requiring that students come to special events, such as programs, graduation, and banquets, in a slightly dressed up version of the dress code. Please note that in the event a student's outfit is inappropriate and/or revealing, he/she may not be allowed to participate in the ceremony or program. If in doubt, please do not wear it. You may ask permission ahead of time if you are not sure.

- BOYS: Pants with polo or button down shirts (Ties are optional.)
- GIRLS: Modest dresses, skirts, or dress pants with blouse

In addition to the school dress code, the following are NOT permitted at graduations, sports award nights, or seasonal programs:

- Jeans
- T-shirts
- Flip-flops

## Physical Education

Middle School students are required to bring a change of gym clothes, which includes sweat pants or shorts of modest length, T-shirts with sleeves, and sneakers, or a designated sports uniform. All Middle School students will be required to change back again after gym class.

New Middle School Students will be given one school cinch bag to be used to transport PE clothes to and from school. Cinch bags are the only ones that may be hung on the hooks in the Middle School hallway. All other duffle bags for MCDS Sports participants must store them on the hooks in the gym.

If the cinch bag the school provided needs replacing in the four years as a middle school students at MCDS, parents will be responsible for the cost of the new cinch bag.

## Steps in Enforcing Dress Code Regulations

1. Questionable dress shall be referred to the Administrator or Principal for an evaluation on what is a violation of the dress code. If the inseam needs to be measured, the student will be given another pair of shorts, while the article of clothing is measured.
2. If the article of clothing is deemed to violate the dress code policy, the school will provide alternative clothing for the student to wear the rest of the day. Depending on the offense, the student may not be allowed to participate in a school sponsored event unless appropriate clothes are brought from home for them to wear. Any articles of clothing given to a student by the school is expected to be washed and return to the school within 3 days.
3. Administrator or Principal shall notify parents of student's violation by form letter and/or phone call.
4. Unwillingness of parents and students to comply with the dress code for MCDS students will be referred to the School Board for appropriate action.

## **General Policies**

### **Lockers**

Middle School students will be assigned a locker to be used to store their books and personal items. These lockers are to be kept neat and orderly at all times. Lockers are to be viewed as personal property; students should not go through another person's locker without permission. Teachers and staff do have the right to view and inspect lockers as they deem necessary. No drinks other than water are permitted at lockers.

### **Lunch Procedures/Snacks**

Students will be allowed to select an item from their lunch for a mid-morning break. Middle school students will eat their lunches in the gym, unless other classes require the gym for recess. The use of microwaves to heat up lunches is considered a Middle School privilege. If this privilege is abused in any way, the microwaves can be taken away at the discretion of the Middle School teachers. Designated "helpers" will bring lunch beverages to the homeroom.

### **Student Telephone Use**

During the school day (7:30a – 2:45p), students may only use the school's phones in the office to call home. All phone calls will be limited to before the 8:10a bell, during lunch/recess, and SHOP time. Exceptions may be made by the teacher, however, it will only be during non-instructional time.

## **Student Activities**

### **Chapel**

Chapels are a unique opportunity to promote and encourage spiritual growth among our Middle School students. Speakers are invited to share God's Word and make practical applications for the specific needs of this age. Chapels are typically held on Friday mornings during the Devotions/Homeroom period.

### **Eighth Grade Retreat**

Each fall, the eighth grade class participates in a two-day class retreat, beginning on a Thursday and ending by the completion of the school day on Friday. The retreat consists of team-building activities and spiritual input from outside speakers. It is typically planned and chaperoned by the eighth grade homeroom teacher and several parent chaperones.

### **Interscholastic Sports**

The Athletic Director organizes interscholastic sports for MCDS Middle School students. Good sportsmanship, diligence in schoolwork, acceptable conduct and attitudes, and team spirit are required of students who wish to participate. The Athletic Director will communicate practice and game dates and times with parents. Transportation home from these after-school activities is the responsibility of the parents.

Typically, the opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports is given to students in grades 5-8. A Sports Banquet is held at the end of the school year to acknowledge all students who participated in interscholastic sports throughout the year and to recognize students who showed marked improvement or skill during the season.

Students not on the sports team are allowed to stay on game days provided there is a note sent to the homeroom teacher and chaperone supervision at dismissal time, but they must report directly to their guardian immediately after school and remain with them throughout the game.

### **Yearbook**

A yearbook is produced annually by a yearbook committee, which is comprised of Middle School students and supervised by Middle School staff. It is a graded elective, which provides a meaningful experience for students to work individually and as a group as they make plans, meet deadlines, and produce something of value for the entire student body.

## Worship Team

Middle School students are given the opportunity to participate in a worship team that meets together weekly during the second half of the school year. The worship team travels to various churches to lead worship during the months of April and May. Participation in the worship team provides students with the opportunity to develop church leadership skills and to worship with various congregations that support the vision of MCDS.

Dear Middle School Parents and students,

I want to welcome you to the middle school at Manheim Christian Day School. As part of the middle school, you are given many opportunities and responsibilities that younger students do not have. Therefore, we have developed a handbook for middle school students to help them achieve success. While many of the policies and procedures are similar to the rest of our school, there are a few differences. We ask each parent and student to read the handbook and sign that they did in fact read it. You can find the handbook at [www.manheimchristian.org](http://www.manheimchristian.org). Hover your cursor over "School Forms" and the middle school handbook is at the bottom of the list. Take some time over the next week and read the handbook, sign, and return this page to the school office by Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019. If you have any questions or need a hardcopy of the Handbook, please don't hesitate to let me know.

God Bless,

Justin Sauder, Administrator  
Manheim Christian Day School

**I have read, understood, and will adhere the MCDS Middle School Policies laid out in the Middle School Handbook**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

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

**I have read, understood, and will support the MCDS Middle School Policies laid out in the Middle School Handbook.**

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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