Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence

# STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

Last revised: August 2021

MLKCSE's Code of Conduct and Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy are included.

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Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence

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Dear MLKCSE Families,

We are honored to welcome you to Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence. To our new parents, welcome to our school community, and to our returning parents, welcome back to a new school year! We know that our success as a school depends on the support of our parents, and we look forward to forming or continuing positive partnerships with each of you. We expect a lot from members of the MLKCSE community, and in turn, you can expect a lot from us.

The following pages will help you become familiar with school procedures, policies, and practices and should serve as a resource for students and parents/guardians from the first day of school through the last. While we cannot say this handbook will answer all of your questions, we do know there is a lot of valuable information in here, so please take the time to read it carefully and please store it somewhere safe to refer to throughout the school year. In this handbook, you'll learn a lot of different things about Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence. You'll learn about the structure of the school, the policies that we have in place, and our expectations of members of our school community. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to ask any teacher or staff member.

In partnership,
The Faculty and Staff
Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence

# OVERVIEW

## HISTORY

In 2002, the Board of Directors and the Executive Director of MLK Community Center started the process of applying for a charter for a school that would follow Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of academic excellence and character development for all children including those growing up in poverty. The founding group grew into a broadly representative collaboration among diverse people committed to Springfield and its children. The Board of Trustees is an outgrowth of the founding group. Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Services, Inc., (formerly MLK Community Center) in Springfield, continues to be a partner in our work.

Founded in 2006, Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE) is a tuition-free public charter school serving students in grades Kindergarten through Grade 5 in the greater Springfield area. MLKCSE opened at its State Street location in September 2006 with 180 children in kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades. Adding one grade of 60 students each year, MLKCSE reached full enrollment in September 2009. During the summer of 2010, the school moved to its permanent location at 285 Dorset Street. MLKCSE's maximum enrollment is currently 360.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence's mission is through high expectations, a structured academic environment, and positive character development, Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence ensures that every student in kindergarten through grade 5 is equipped to think critically, communicate clearly, and is empowered with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life. The school incorporates Dr. King's commitment to the highest standards in scholarship and the ideals of the beloved community. Named after Martin Luther King, Jr., both a social rights activist in the United States in the 1950s and '60s and a leader of the American civil rights movement, the School's strategy is to focus on developing both *"Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."*

## OUR MISSION

Through high expectations, a structured academic environment, and positive character development, Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence ensures that every student in kindergarten through grade 5 is equipped to think critically, communicate clearly, and is empowered with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life. The school incorporates Dr. King's commitment to the highest standards in scholarship and the ideal of the beloved community.

## OUR VISION

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence provides a structured, engaging, and nurturing learning environment to children in Springfield. We believe that all children can achieve at high levels when they have access to excellent instruction, opportunities to grow, and responsive tiered support. Our students rise to the level of high expectations that we hold for them because we foster an enthusiastic, creative community of learners

by promoting social justice, purposeful academics, and character development. We instill a love of learning and a growth mindset which will enable them to expand their potential and prepare them to thrive as productive, responsible, ethical, creative, and compassionate members of society.

## OUR CORE VALUES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **P** | **P**romoting social justice | To support or actively encourage equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities for all |
| **R** | **R**espect | Take care of yourself, other, and your environment<br><br>Use kind words and actions<br><br>Treat others how you want to be treated |
| **I** | **I**ntegrity | Do the right thing even when no one is looking<br><br>The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles |
| **D** | **D**etermination | Sticking with it, even when it gets challenging<br><br>Willpower |
| **E** | **E**xcellence | The quality of being outstanding or extremely good |

# WHO WE ARE

## GOVERNANCE

The school is governed by a Board of Trustees that brings parental, community, educational, and professional perspectives to maintaining a viable and thriving school.

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

| Role | Name | Email |
|---|---|---|
| Executive Director | Kendra Salvador | ksalvador@mlkcs.org |
| Academic Director | John Breish | jbreish@mlkcs.org |
| Dean of Culture | Tina Williams | twilliams@mlkcs.org |
| Director of Special Education and Student Services | Abby Cole | ahertz@mlkcs.org |
| Director of ESL Programming | Diana Yousfi | dyousfi@mlkcs.org |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| School Nurse | Dennise Cotto | dcotto@mlkcs.org |
| Operations Manager | Patricia Rios | prios@mlkcs.org |
| Executive Assistant | Brittany Walas | bwalas@mlkcs.org |

## WHOM TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

| Concern | Who to Contact |
|---|---|
| My student's academic progress | Your student's teacher |
| Homework | Your student's teacher |
| School activities | Your student's teacher |
| Assessments | Your student's teacher |
| Academics, instruction, teaching | John Breish |
| My student has an allergy | Dennise Cotto |
| My student needs to take medication | Dennise Cotto |
| My student is sick, should I send them to school? | Dennise Cotto |
| COVID-19 concerns or questions | Dennise Cotto |
| Contagious illness questions or concerns | Dennise Cotto |
| Transportation questions or concerns | Patricia Rios |
| My student will be late or absent | Main Office |
| My student's dismissal type needs to change | Main Office |
| I need to pick my student up early due to an emergency | Main Office |
| I need to update my address and/or contact information | Main Office |
| I need to get an emergency message to my student during the school day | Main Office |
| I would like to enter my student's sibling into the lottery for next year | Main Office |
| I need a copy of the annual or monthly calendar | Main Office |
| Uniform questions or concerns | Tina Williams |
| Discipline questions or concerns | Tina Williams |

| | |
|---|---|
| My student has a 504 plan or an IEP | Abby Cole |
| My student is an English Language Learner | Diana Yousfi |
| I need help with housing, food, or clothing | Brenda Flores<br>bflores@mlkcs.org |
| I need help with community resources | Cynthia Griffin<br>cgriffin@mlkcs.org |
| I would like to volunteer | Brenda Flores |
| I would like to join the Parent Advisory Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or the English Learner Parent Advisory Council | Brenda Flores<br>Cynthia Griffin |
| I have a complaint to file | Brittany Walas<br>Kendra Salvador |

All members of the MLKCSE staff will make every effort to respond to phone calls and e-mails during the school week within 24 -48 hours. Please never hesitate to be in touch with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

Annual Calendar

## MONTHLY CORE VALUES & THEMES

| | |
|---|---|
| September | **Monthly Core Value:** Integrity<br>**Monthly Theme:** Hispanic Heritage |
| October | **Monthly Core Value:** Respect<br>**Monthly Theme:** National Bullying |
| November | **Monthly Core Value:** Integrity<br>**Monthly Theme:** National Gratitude |
| December | **Monthly Core Value:** Promoting Social Justice<br>**Monthly Theme:** National Human Rights |
| January | **Monthly Core Value:** Promoting Social Justice<br>**Monthly Theme:** Celebrating MLK, Jr. |
| February | **Monthly Core Value:** Excellence<br>**Monthly Theme:** National Black History |
| March | **Monthly Core Value:** Determination<br>**Monthly Theme:** Women's History |

| | |
|---|---|
| April | **Monthly Core Value:** Respect<br>**Monthly Theme:** National Autism Awareness |
| May | **Monthly Core Value:** Determination<br>**Monthly Theme:** Asian Pacific American Heritage |
| June | **Monthly Core Value:** Excellence<br>**Monthly Theme:** Health and Wellness |

## SCHOOL DAY

In the pursuit of excellence, MLKCSE has an extended school day and school year. This gives our students more time for academic growth and enrichment opportunities. It also provides us the time needed to support students in making academic strides and social-emotional learning opportunities that will equip them for future successes.

The school building is closed at 5:00 pm. Voicemail will be on automated attendant before 8:00 am and after 4:30 pm and 2:45 pm on Fridays, though families should feel free to dial directly the appropriate extensions at any time.

Students can be dropped off in the morning between 8:00 am and 8:30 am. The school day runs from 8:30 am to 3:45 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The school day runs from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm on Fridays.

# FAMILY COMMUNICATION

It is vitally important that the school has methods of contacting parents or other family members at all times. This is of critical importance in case of emergency, illness, or behavior requiring immediate family contact. Parents are advised to notify the office of moves, changes of home or emergency telephone numbers, and/or places of employment.

In case of an emergency, parents/guardians should contact the Main Office either by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians contact students in their classrooms or attempt to dismiss students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members in the Main Office.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement in a child's educational life is critical to a child's success. Research shows that when schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and enjoy school more. We encourage parents to develop strong positive partnerships with the school.

## VISITING THE SCHOOL

We welcome families and community members to visit our school at any time after the first few weeks of school. During the beginning of school, it is critical for students to transition into their new setting, and parental presence in the classroom can slow this process.

After Back to School Night, we encourage parents to come into the classroom and see our amazing teachers and students at work. We encourage parental involvement. We ask that all visitors respect the learning environment while in the building. We especially welcome visitors to attend our school-wide community assemblies and Family Nights. (Please check school calendars sent home with your student every month to find out when these events are scheduled). All visitors, including parents/guardians, must report to the school office upon entering the building. All visitors must sign in, and visitor badges should be worn at all times. School tours should be arranged in advance, by contacting the school office. Although we have an open-door policy, if you wish to speak with your child's teacher or any other staff member then we will ask you to wait until the office staff can arrange an appropriate meeting time.

When visiting classrooms, we ask that you remember:

- Please do not interrupt instruction
- Please do not remove your child from the classroom, unless arranged in advance with the teacher
- Please schedule a mutually convenient time to talk with your child's teacher in advance
- Finally, please be aware that no visitors are allowed in the building during MCAS testing.

Any visitor(s) who are disruptive to the educational process will be asked to leave. Any visitor who does not report to the office or is found in the building without authorization will be asked to leave immediately.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE SCHOOL

The majority of communications from school will be done electronically or through School Messenger.

- Monthly Newsletter and calendars
- Teacher newsletters/updates
- School website (www.mlkcs.org)
- Kickboard (the new Dojo!)
- RoboCalls & SMS messages
- PowerSchool Parent Portal (https://mlkcs.powerschool.com/public/home.html)
- Emails

Please keep the school current on information regarding your child(ren).

- General information (Address Changes, phone changes, and/or email)
- Custody Documentation
- Physicals & Immunizations (Mandatory for all Kindergarten & 4th grade students)

## SETTING UP YOUR PARENT PORTAL

Parents may create an account on the PowerSchool Parent/Student Portal to view their student's grades, attendance information, and more. From this account, they may be able to view multiple children, as well as set when and how often they would like to receive updates – including receiving the daily bulletin.

*Please note, the School's Administration and/or data team determines access types and permissions. Follow their guidelines and instructions closely for best results.

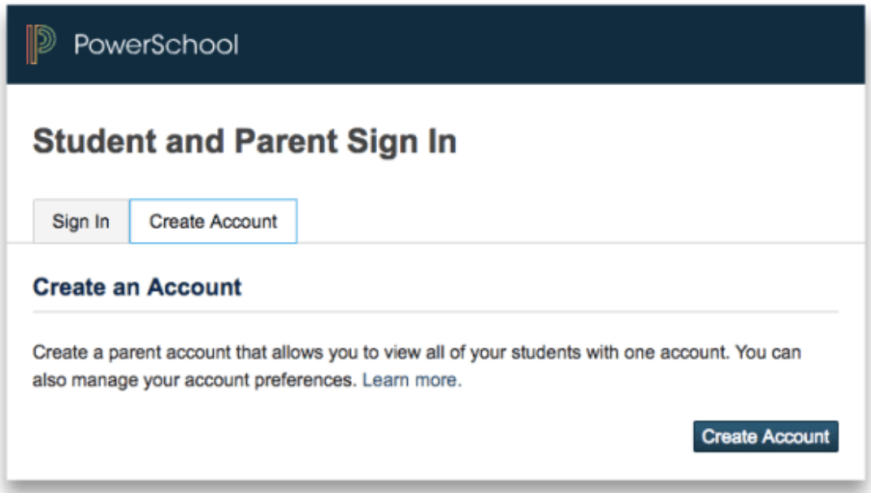
Access types include:

- **Student Accounts:** one username/password that may be utilized by both parents and students. (Typically used for younger students) .There is no need to create a separate account for this access type.
- **Parent Accounts:** parents create accounts using a unique username and password tied to their personal email accounts. Parents may link multiple students to one username and password.

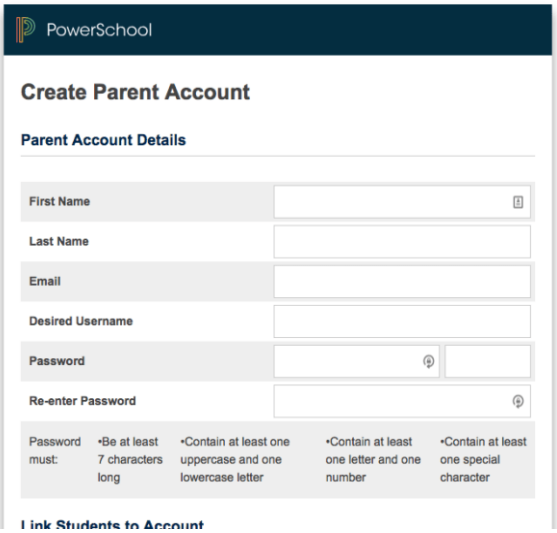
**Step 1. Refer to the Access Account information or parent letter provided by your school.**
For a parent to create a new account, they will need to have their student's username and password (sometimes called Access Key or Access ID). The school will provide parents/guardians with this access information. Note: Parents/Guardians will use this information to create their own account which is linked to their child's/children's account.

**Step 2. Navigate to the school's public login in your favorite web browser (Chrome, Firefox, etc.)**
The parent letter should contain the web address for the public PowerSchool portal. Navigate to the public login for PowerSchool found at a link similar to the following: https://mlkcs.powerschool.com/public/home.html

**Step 3. From the home screen, select the tab "Create Account."**



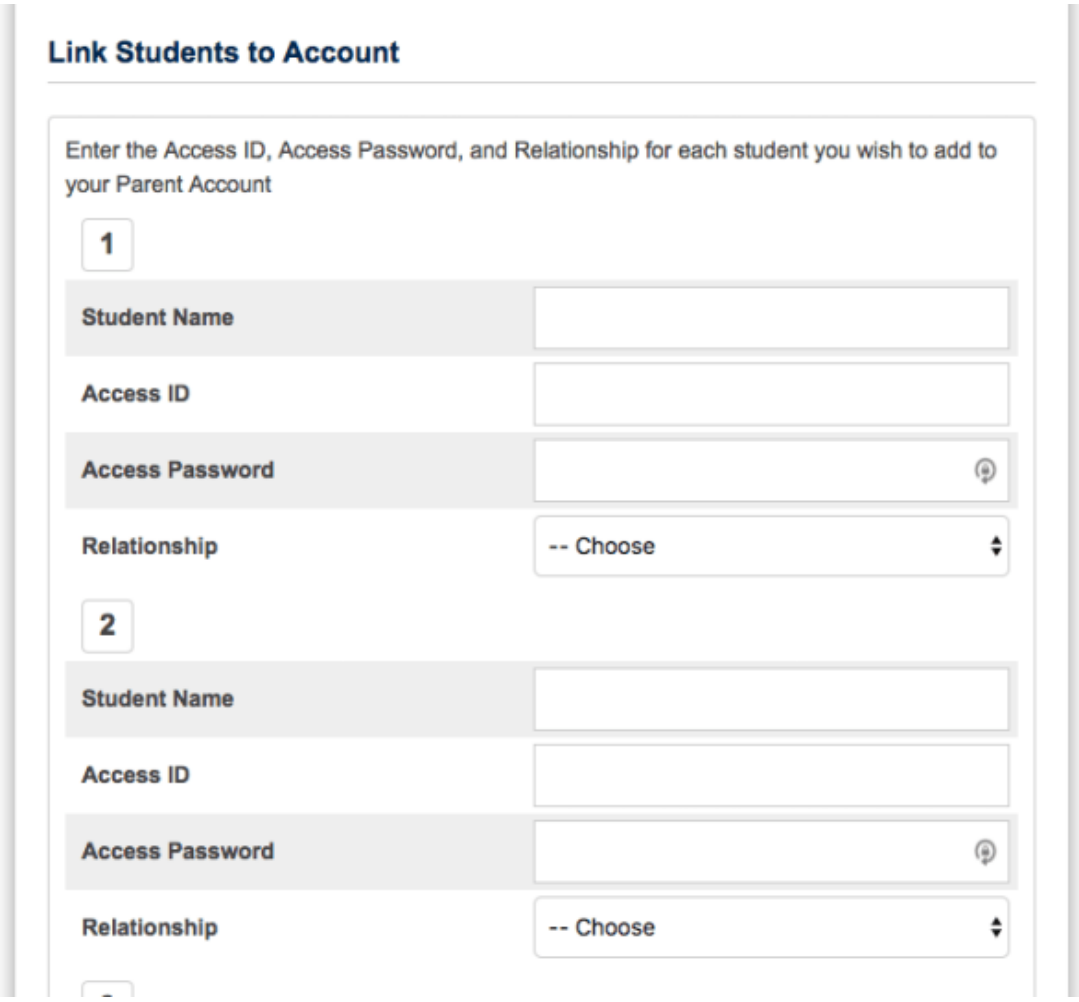
**Step 4. Create your own username and password. This will be your new permanent username and password.**




**Step 5. Connect to your student or students**

Under Link Students to Account, use the student's Access ID and Access password provided by the school. If you have multiple students, who have permission to access PowerSchool, you may link to the accounts now or once you login for the first time. (See screenshot below)

Press Submit.




**Step 6. Log in using the newly created account**
Return to the home page and use the new login to access your PowerSchool account.
**Use the login created during Step 4.

*Note: If your school has upgraded to PowerSchool 9.0 (most have PowerSchool 11),* ***you will now be able to see multiple students through one parent portal account****.*

## ROBOCALLS & SMS/TEXT MESSAGES

Families will periodically receive pre-recorded messages from the school office with important information and reminders. We ask that you listen to the full message before hanging up. Please note that if you or someone else with access to your phone opts out of the robocalls, you will not receive any more calls. To opt back in, please contact the school office.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

We invite you and your family to “get social” with MLK Charter School! We can be found on Facebook (@MLKCSE) and Instagram (@MLKCSE).

## COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS

As we believe that families and school must partner with one another to provide children with the best education possible, teachers often contact parents/guardians to share information, or to gain their perspectives on issues. Should a parent/guardian need to contact the teacher, they may send a note with the student or call the main office to leave a message for the teacher. Teachers may not be interrupted during instructional time to take phone calls.

## PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The MLK Charter School's Parent Teacher Organization supports the educational and social community of Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School of Excellence.

**Membership Information**: All parents/guardians and MLK Charter School staff are encouraged to join the MLK Charter School's PTO. Your participation is welcome at any level, whether it be simply becoming a member, attending a PTO meeting, volunteering to chair or be a member of a committee, or volunteering to work at a PTO school event.

We also have a Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) and an English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (ELPAC) for our families whose students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan and/or a student that is an English Learner.

**Benefits of Becoming a Member**: Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education, the children are more likely to have better academic success, have better social skills, and be more positive in their attitude toward school. When parents get involved early in their children's education, the results are more pronounced and long-lasting. In addition to supporting your child, becoming a member has many benefits for you:

- It's a great way to meet other families with children the same age as your own.
- You will become a greater part of your children's early learning experiences!
- You'll get to know the teachers at school and to understand their needs and ideas.
- You can create, plan, and execute fun events for the whole family!
- You'll experience feelings of self-worth through volunteering your time and seeing your efforts pay off in the smiles of your children and their friends.
- You can help raise money for a great cause–your children's education!

To sign up or get more information, please call the main office and ask for either Mrs. Flores. You can also email her at bflores@mlkcs.org

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers play an integral part in our beloved community. We encourage families, community members, and other supporters of our school to share skills and contribute to

our learning environment.  Volunteers can take on a number of roles, including tutors, classroom assistants, and chaperones. The Family Engagement Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or classroom teacher(s) will notify families when volunteers are needed for particular activities or events. If you are interested in volunteering on a regular basis, please contact the Family Engagement Coordinator for more information.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

## CURRICULUM

| | |
|---|---|
| ELA | Fundations (K-3)<br>Just Words (4-5)<br>Wit & Wisdom<br>Writing for Understanding |
| Math | Ready Math |
| Science | Amplify Science |

## ENRICHMENTS

In addition to their core academic subjects, students will also take 'enrichment' classes in physical education, technology, art, music, world languages, and fitness. They will have the same enrichment class every day for approximately a 15-day rotation. Just as with their academic subjects, all work and effort will be graded and they will receive a grade on their report card.

## SAMPLE DAILY STUDENT SCHEDULE

*Note: This is a sample schedule only.  For each student, times, schedule, and course offerings may vary.*

| **Sample Student Schedule** | |
|---|---|
| **Time** | **Subject** |
| 8:00 - 8:30am | Arrival |
| 8:30 - 8:55am | Community Meeting |
| ~30-45 minutes | Reading Foundations |
| ~45-85 minutes | Integrated Literacy |
| ~60-85 minutes | Math |
| 20 minutes | Lunch |
| 20 minutes | Recess |

| | |
|---|---|
| ~45-85 minutes | Science |
| 40 minutes | “WIN” What I Need Block (intervention) |
| 40 minutes | Enrichment |
| 40 minutes | “WIN” What I Need Block (intervention) 2 |
| | Dismissal |

## ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

We want each and every one of our students to achieve at their highest level. We will push them but also support them along the way. We are fortunate to offer extra academic support to students who need it during intervention times weekly.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

MLKCSE will supply students with necessary materials for school, including things like pencils, paper, books, binders, art supplies, tissues, hand sanitizer, and technology. However, parents and families are encouraged to supplement these supplies with preferred materials if they so choose.

## HOMEWORK

We believe homework is important to reinforcing skills and teaching organization and responsibility. Students at MLKCSE are assigned homework regularly. Each evening, students are expected to read for at least 20 minutes and to complete their Reading Log. Additionally, teachers assign homework in math and science. Should a parent/guardian have a homework question, they should reach out to the teacher directly.

## MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

We strive to prepare our students to be successful citizens in the real-world. Academic classwork and/or homework will be made available to any absent student. Students will have the number of days that they were absent to complete the make-up work and submit it to their teacher(s). For example, if a student is sick for 1 school day (Wednesday), they will have 1 day (Thursday) to complete the make-up work and should turn it in to their teacher(s) the next day (Friday).

In other situations, where a student was present in school but has incomplete classwork or homework, the student will still be responsible for completing all missed work. If the student requires academic support daily to complete the assignment, they will need to ask and the support will happen outside of regular academic time. Be advised that the teacher may also not award the student full credit for assignments that are incomplete or late.

## ASSESSMENTS

We believe that assessing our students often is necessary to monitor their progress and be data-driven in supporting them throughout the academic year. At the same time, we work to be thoughtful in the number of assessments we administer and how often

instructional time is used for assessing. We work hard to protect time for teaching and learning.

At MLKCSE we use a variety of assessment methods:

- diagnostic assessments
- growth assessments in reading and math
- Teacher-created formative and summative assessments (unit tests, quizzes, performance tasks, exit slips)
- Additional assessments, as needed, to inform learning and growth for Special Education students and English Language Learners
- MCAS, our state-mandated standardized assessment. These exams are given in the areas of English (Grades 3-5), Mathematics (Grades 3-5), and Science/Technology Engineering (Grades 5). Families will be sent score reports to update them on their child's annual progress when they are available by the state, typically in late fall or early winter.

## GRADING POLICY

Grades exist to provide students and families feedback about student learning. Students will receive a report card three times per year. This is how grades will be calculated:

| Category | Weight |
|---|---|
| Engagement<br>Participating in the lesson and giving their personal best effort | 20% |
| Work Products<br>Exit tickets, writing products | 40% |
| Assessments<br>Mid-unit, end of unit, performance tasks, quizzes, focusing question tasks, comprehension checks, interim assessments (STEP, iReady) | 30% |
| Homework<br>Reinforcement and building fluency through reading and math logs | 10% |
| | **100%** |

Student work and effort will be graded on a daily basis using the rating system below.

| Rating | Letter Grade | Percentage Range |
|---|---|---|
| Exceeds Expectations | A | 90% - 100% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Meets Expectations | B | 80% - 89% |
| Meets Average Expectations | C | 70% - 79% |
| Meets Few Expectations | D | 60% - 69% |
| Fails to Meet Expectation | F | 0% - 59% |

## PROGRESS REPORTS, REPORT CARDS, & SCHOOL-FAMILY MEETINGS

Teachers will use progress reports and report cards to communicate students' academic and behavioral performance levels and progress. Progress reports and report cards can be picked up at school on Parent-Teacher Conference Nights by the student's guardian. Progress reports and report cards that are not picked up in person will be mailed to the address the school has on file. The final progress reports and report cards are mailed home at the end of the school year. Parents/guardians are expected to meet with their child(ren)'s teachers during Teacher Conferences.

## PROMOTION & RETENTION POLICY

At MLKCSE, we take the promotion and retention of our students very seriously. We recognize that retention of a student in the same grade level for a second year is an intervention of last resort for students who are failing to meet expectations. If at any time the school is considering retention of your child, a representative from the school will reach out to you to discuss the concerns, plan for intervention, and establish what growth needs to happen in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

Students who demonstrate a substantial and sustained risk of failure in major academic subjects, and for whom teachers have already made instructional modifications and sought parent involvement, will be referred to the Student Intervention Committee (SIC). Within the context of the regular education support services available, systematic remediation in the areas of literacy, mathematics, or behavioral performance will be provided and periodically reviewed by the team. Note: Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will also be supported by their special education team.

The promotion/retention policy of the Martin Luther King Jr, Charter School of Excellence is part of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan summarizes the resources and programs available to allow all children access to the full curriculum of the district. Only after the provision of support services consistent with the district DCAP, and a determination that a student is not able to make effective progress, will the retention of a student be considered. This policy recognizes that retention is complex, involving many factors, and is never a guarantee of future success. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives have been unsuccessful.

There is a **Flow of Response** in place that must happen prior to a student being retained:

- The student is more than a grade level behind in STEP and/or on iReady

- Explicit Tier 2 and Tier 3 (as needed) interventions are identified, implemented, and evaluated for impact
- The student is referred to the Student Intervention Committee (SIC)
- Parent/guardian is notified of sustained concern regarding student progress in writing by the end of the second quarter
- School designee meeting with student and family

The best-fit candidate for retention would meet all of the following criteria:

- Off-track in ELA and Mathematics
- Progress Monitoring Assessment (STEP/Fundations): Below the 25th percentile - Reading (or Foundational Reading skills)
- Progress Monitoring Assessment (iReady): Below the 25th percentile - Mathematics
- Progress Monitoring Assessment EOY: Student does not meet SGP (prediction score)
- The student has not been retained previously

**Additional Considerations**:

- The retention policy applies to English Learners.
- Diverse Learners must meet their IEP Goals.

Parents/guardians of students who are in jeopardy of being retained will receive notice of this possibility in writing at the end of the second trimester. Promotion recommendations are made by classroom teachers, and final promotion decisions will be made by the principal. In any decision that affects retention, the school will share this policy with parents and staff and adhere to all state and local regulations as they pertain to the rights of the individuals involved.

All students who are reading below grade level at the end of the academic year may be required to attend summer session. Summer session is an intensive, targeted instructional program that aims to develop reading, writing, and math skills in a small classroom setting. Attendance at summer school will not affect promotion decisions.

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

At Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE), our goal for every student is to be learning and growing as much as possible - academically and socially-emotionally. The most basic requirement for learning is being present. For our students to reach for their personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort on a consistent, daily basis. Therefore, we strictly enforce the school's attendance policy, which requires a minimum of 96% percent attendance from each student. Our school attendance goal is 96% or higher.

At MLK, regular attendance is required, and poor attendance will not be accepted (Massachusetts State Law, Chapter 76). Our curriculum is ambitious and students who are absent frequently cannot keep up with the rest of the community in regards to academics and character. We do however recognize that there are reasons why students

will need to miss school from time to time. For that reason, we have allotted for a maximum of 15 absences per student per year, to accommodate student illness, family emergencies, etc. Any student meeting or exceeding 15 absences *may* be retained in their current grade. In individual cases where the number of absences exceeds 15, with official medical documentation, the promotion decision will be made by the Executive Director.

According to MGL c. 76 and c. 72, § 8, all students under 16 are expected to be in school. All students under the age of 16 will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow the procedures set out in M.G.L. c. 76, § 18 if the student does not comply with the law. In cases of truancy, the Executive Director (or their designee) will investigate the situation. MLKCSE operates in compliance with Department of Transitional Assistance requests and requirements, which can include mandated reporting of truancy to appropriate state agencies. MLKCSE keeps accurate records of attendance and will make the records available for inspection by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as needed. All questions regarding student attendance and attendance records should be directed to the school's main office.

## INCOMPLETE DAYS: TARDIES & EARLY DISMISSALS

Per DESE Guidelines, students are required to be present for at least half of the allotted instructional time on a given day in order to be considered present for the school day. Students arriving at school late must report to the Main Office to sign in before proceeding to their classroom. Late arrivals after 8:30 am disrupt class for all students in the class and therefore should be avoided if possible. Tardies and early dismissals due to traffic, medical appointments, family emergencies, etc. are not excused. With professional documentation, situations will be assessed on an individual and case-by-case basis.

In order to minimize disruptions to class, we ask that notification regarding early dismissals be made as far in advance as possible, but no later than 2:00 pm of the day of the early dismissal, and by 12:00 pm on Fridays. We also ask that appointments be limited to non-school hours to avoid students missing class time. Students leaving early must check in with the main office before leaving.

In order to ensure that students show up on time and do not leave early, the school has clear consequences for student tardiness and early dismissals. For every 5 tardies (internal only: after 8:45 am) and/or 5 early dismissals (before 3:20 pm) the student may be required to serve a Friday Extension to make up the work and the time missed within a 60 day period. This policy applies to all early dismissals, including but not limited to appointments and illness. In addition, if students have excessive unexcused tardies, families will be required to meet with teachers, an attendance team member, or the administration to address the issue.

## LATE PICK-UPS

We recognize that occasionally unexpected situations can occur which delay a parent/guardian. Pickups after 4:00 pm Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays or after 2:15 pm on Fridays are considered late.

Late parents/guardians should pick up their student(s) at the Main Entrance. Students will need to be signed out in the Late Pick-up log. As a courtesy to families, the school office staff attempts to contact by phone the parents/guardians of students who have not been picked up on time. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that we have updated home, cell, work, and emergency telephone numbers. After the first warning instance, parents/guardians will be charged for every 15 minutes they are late.

At 5:00 pm, if no contact has been made, a telephone call will be made to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to report any student who has not yet been picked up.

## HELPFUL ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE

- Parents/guardians are expected to call the school as early as possible but no later than 8:30 am if their child will not be attending school for any reason. Calls should be left on the school's main voicemail at 413-214-7806 or you may email attendance@mlkcs.org. In phone calls, voicemails, emails, and notes, please indicate your child's name, your relationship to the child, and the reason for and date(s) of the child's absence.

- Students will be held accountable for missed work.

- Work may not always be available in advance of absences.

- Families should take advantage of 2:00 pm dismissal on Fridays, as well as half-days and vacations, to schedule appointments, travel, and vacations. We ask that families not schedule vacations or non-emergency appointments during school time. If a student does need to attend an appointment during the school day, it is better to have them come and be dismissed or attend the appointment and arrive late than to not come to school at all that day. All student absences, including illness, suspension, appointments, vacations, excessive incomplete days, etc. count as absences.

- Please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illness (ex. fever, nausea, or anything contagious). We have a school nurse, so if your child begins the day feeling sick, comes to school, and starts to feel worse, they can report to the nurse and be sent home as necessary. Please make sure that we have the most up-to-date contact information with the Main Office so that we can reach you in these situations. This also allows your child to obtain work from their teachers so that they do not have to fall behind due to illness.

- Exceptions are made for court-mandated appearances with proper documentation and religious observances.

- The Massachusetts Department of Education defines **Chronically Absent** as missing at least 10% of days enrolled **regardless of whether the absences are considered excused, unexcused, and/or for disciplinary reasons**. Being chronically absent can have a significant impact on a student's ability to read at grade level, perform

academically, and graduate on time.

- While we encourage you to provide notes when your student is absent, please know that it does not excuse the absence, as the MA Department of Education does not recognize excused vs. unexcused in our school's reporting and accountability.

- Students are afforded rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") should their absences be related to a disabling condition. Other rare exceptions may apply.

- Students who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence unless the school has given advance permission.

- If a student is absent for the first five days of school or at least ten consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain their absences, that student may lose their seat at MLKCSE and may be considered un-enrolled from the school.

**TIMELINE GUIDANCE**

Quarter 1: August 30 - November 5
Quarter 2: November 6 - January 26
Quarter 3: January 27 - April 8
Quarter 4: April 11 - June 23

| August | September | October | November | December | January |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 absences | No more than 1 absence | No more than 2 absences | No more than 3 absences | No more than 5 absences | No more than 8 absences |
| **February** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **EOY** |
| No more than 10 absences | No more than 11 absences | No more than 12 absences | No more than 13 absences | No more than 14 absences | No more than 15 absences |

## ABSENCE LEVELS & INTERVENTIONS

In order to help ensure that students do not exceed 15 absences, MLKCSE has certain support policies in place. They are detailed below:

| Number of Absences | Follow Up |
|---|---|
| Each | Guardian will receive an automated call or text from the school |

| | |
|---|---|
| absence | |
| Each absence | If the guardian does NOT call back the school from the Robocall, we make a personal phone call back to them between 10 - 10:30 am |
| 5 | Attendance Concern Letter home (consider the time of school year) |
| 7 | In-school Meeting |
| 8 | Attendance Concern Letter home |
| 11 | School meeting to complete Re-Commitment Agreement<br><br>*If we are unable to get the parent/guardian to come into the school to meet, we move to conduct a Home Visit to complete the Re-Commitment Agreement<br><br>The Family Engagement Coordinator is the primary Home Visit person |
| 15 | Attendance Concern Letter home<br><br>Recommendation for Non-Promotion |

## ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

The goals of MLKCSE attendance incentives are to:

- recognize students who have come to school, ready to learn 96% or more of the time
- raise awareness of the importance of attendance

MLKCSE attendance incentives occur on a monthly basis:

- Attendance Award Certificate
- First Friday of each month, we celebrate all students with 96% or higher attendance from the previous month with a Dress Down Day and a Dance Party or movie
- Attendance Cup awarded to the advisory with the highest attendance (1 for K-2 and 1 for 3-5)
- Advisories with the Attendance Cup earn 100 points for their House toward the House Cup competition.

# SCHOOL CULTURE

## PHILOSOPHY

We believe that an orderly, predictable and safe learning environment enables all learning to occur. According to Fullan (2007) school culture can be defined as the guiding beliefs

and values evident in the way a school operates. 'School culture' is used to encompass all the attitudes, expected behaviors, and values that impact how we operate at MLKCSE.

We believe that to have a strong school culture, students are expected to take responsibility and leadership for the community to ensure it is a safe, supportive, and cooperative environment. Students will be most successful when academic and behavior expectations are clear and consistently held. Classroom and school rules are simple and consequences are consistent.

Building positive relationships amongst peers and staff and students is paramount. The quality of our relationships with each other, with our students, and with our families will significantly impact the level of our success as a team. We want our students to feel safe, supported, and challenged.

As part of our mission to develop positive character, a key lesson we teach our students is that “all actions have consequences” be it positive or corrective. In order to establish expectations and boundaries, we implement a student accountability system. We define accountability as understanding the effects of the infraction and repairing any harm that was caused. We want to reinforce positive behavior and also address unwanted behaviors. This helps to continually clarify for students what is and is not acceptable in our school community. We want our teachers to be “intentionally inviting” - meaning proactive, systematic, transparent, consistently positive, growth mindset oriented, purposeful, and sensitive to student needs. They take appropriate action when needed.

Ways we intervene:

- Balancing Restorative Conversations and consequences.
    - By saying “Let’s talk” and asking questions, we demonstrate that the meeting is not a punishment; **but a conversation**.
- Facilitating **mediations**
- Building **Therapeutic rapport**: Stressing the importance of relationships and resolving conflict in a positive manner
- Creating a safe place for **restorative conversations**
    - **Circles** are a powerful way to allow students to address an issue as a collective voice
- **Repairing the harm:** teaching students to take direct responsibility for their actions instead of using punitive consequences such as referrals, suspensions, or detentions
    - *To whom was the harm caused?*
    - *How are you going to repair the harm?*
    - Repairing the Harm Process:
        - **Initiate:** Identify what the harm was that the student caused and to whom
        - **Empathize:** Students take in others’ perspectives to identify how they might have affected them
        - **Analyze:** Student must create a way to repair the harm
        - **Execute:** Carry out the solution
        - **Reflect:** Students and parents can revisit the negative behavior and its impact on others, the solution, permitted, etc. Develop a plan of action

to prevent the negative behavior from happening again

- Restorative practices turn every conflict into a learning opportunity
    - Instead of just labeling a ***negative behavior*** and assigning a **consequence**, it **<u>seeks to understand</u>** the behavior
    - Students develop empathy by allowing them to hear exactly how the victim was affected by the behavior
- **<u>Individual conferencing</u>** with students to address problematic behaviors
- Making students feel valued
- Creating procedures with ***self-regulation*** in mind

**SIX PRINCIPLES OF KINGIAN NONVIOLENCE**
(As pulled from Dr. Martin Luther King's Essay "A Pilgrimage to Nonviolence")

**Principle 1: *Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.*** It is a positive way to try to change things that are unfair. It stretches people's minds, hearts, and spirits to creatively make things better. It is very brave.
**HAVE COURAGE**

**Principle 2: *The Beloved Community is the framework for the future.*** We need to give energy to what we do want for our future, not just what we don't want. The most important thing for our future is to have a community where people are kind and fair to each other.
**BE KIND**

**Principle 3: *Attack forces of evil not persons doing evil.*** Focus on problems, not people. Figure out what is at the root of the problem and work to fix it. Be forgiving towards the people who are involved in the problem
**DON'T HATE**

**Principle 4: *Accept suffering without retaliation for the sake of the cause to achieve a goal.*** Revenge only makes problems worse. Be patient and committed to nonviolence so that you can reach your goal. More people will join you when they see you doing what's right.
**STAY THE COURSE**

**Principle 5: *Avoid internal violence of the spirit as well as external physical violence.*** Be kind to yourself as well as others. Be forgiving or forgiving of yourself. Find ways to not let hate and anger take over your spirit.
**LOVE YOURSELF**

**Principle 6: *The Universe is on the side of justice.*** Truth always comes out. Sometimes it takes a very long time, but when you do what's right you are in harmony with the universe, and many people and things will be on your side.
**TRUST**

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

One goal of our mission is to empower every one of our students with a strong ethical foundation to be set on the path for success in college, career, and life.

Our expectations for our students begin with the fundamental belief that all students want to learn, can learn, and can behave well in an academic environment. In order for students to thrive, they must be taught in a safe, predictable, and structured learning environment. Teachers and staff members should strive to create classrooms in which all students feel valued and have a strong sense of belonging. Our classrooms are places where maximizing time on learning is paramount.

One of the core beliefs of MLKCSE is respect. Respectful behaviors are modeled and taught by all MLKCSE staff in order to create a safe learning environment. Students will be expected to follow modeled behaviors in order to interact with each other and adults appropriately in the learning environment.

| **High Expectations for Students** | |
|---|---|
| **During instruction** | ● Be prepared with all required materials for the class block<br>● Get organized and seated as efficiently as possible so instruction can begin<br>● Respect others by not entering others' personal space and keeping their body to themselves<br>● Sit in STAR to be ready to learn and engage<br>  ○ **S**it up straight<br>  ○ **T**rack the speaker<br>  ○ **A**sk and answer questions<br>  ○ **R**aise a silent hand to participate<br>● Track the speaker to show you are listening, on task, and value what the speaker has to say<br>  ○ watch the speaker with your eyes<br>  ○ following the speaker as they move around the room<br>● Write their full name and date on each written assignment<br>● Write neatly<br>● Complete all work given during any instructional or non-instructional period in the day<br>● Help all of their teammates participate in lessons by avoiding distractions or avoiding the temptation to create a distraction for others<br>● Follow the classroom procedures and MLK Hand Signals (non-verbal cues) throughout the class block to minimize distractions from focused time on learning<br>● Stay in your assigned seat unless given permission to get up from a staff<br>● Show classroom guests the same respect as all other staff at MLK |
| **When collaborating or speaking with others** | ● Wait for the teacher to give the signal to begin<br>● Follow the expectation for noise level<br>● Follow the expectation for time<br>● Students (and staff) will use etiquette to one another (i.e. please, thank you, excuse me, etc.). |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ● Students use appropriate, school language and correct grammar (with teacher guidance).<br>● Make eye contact with a partner when appropriate<br>● Speak clearly and succinctly<br>● Students raise a silent hand to participate<br>● Students put their hand back down when another student is called on so they can fully listen to what others are sharing<br>● Students participate in all choral response opportunities<br>● Students respond with a “yes” or “no” non-verbal when asked<br>● Students respond to other calls to attention<br>● Students answer in a complete sentence with a rephrase of the question<br>● Students take and allow others to use think time<br>● Students share air time<br>● Students share responsibility fairly |
| **Organization & Responsibility** | ● Students keep their backpacks, cubbies, and/or lockers neat and organized<br>● Students (if applicable) use their Student Planner daily<br>● Students file papers inside the correct folders without crumpling them<br>● Students keep desk materials inside the desk when not in use<br>● Students keep desk materials (such as pencils, crayons, scissors, and glue) in a pouch or box<br>● Students keep a neat and organized desk and floor area based on the classroom's desk organization expectations<br>● Students bring homework back and forth from home to school daily<br>● Students take school job responsibilities seriously<br>● Students respond respectfully if redirected (least invasive used first by staff)<br>● Students practice routines such as **WALK**, **STAR**, or any other behaviors or procedures as needed<br>● Students work towards solving problems independently and practice perseverance and conflict resolution strategies<br>● Students ask for help when they are unsure of what to complete or do next<br>● Students are honest and take responsibility for their choices and actions<br>● Students are respectful, responsible, and contributing members of our school community<br>● Students treat everyone with basic human respect and dignity |

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Education without social action is a one-sided value because it has no true power potential.

*- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

At MLKCSE, all students participate in community service learning each year. Projects and the resulting student reflections are age-appropriate and grade-specific. Community service-learning projects help students expand their sense of Dr. King's beloved community, not just within their class or grade or our school, but also locally and even globally. The projects, occasionally designed by students themselves, facilitate differentiated learning that helps all students learn the educational standards of our enhanced curriculum and participate fully in our culture of achievement.

MLKCSE students benefit from partnerships with, and resources from, academic institutions within Springfield and beyond. All students also participate in service-learning projects throughout the year. Service-learning is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students; and provides structured time for students to reflect on the service experience (according to the National and Community Service Trust Act, 1993).

## KICKBOARD

We use Kickboard to manage our expectations. Kickboard helps our team know which students need more support and it helps us keep track of how students are performing. Students can earn dollars for meeting or exceeding expectations. Students can also lose dollars for unwanted behaviors. We want to teach our students that all actions have consequences - positive or otherwise - so they learn to make the right choices for themselves.

The Family Portal is a **great way for students, parents, guardians, and/or other family members to stay in the know about a student's behavioral data on Kickboard**. It updates in real-time, so you have up to date information at your fingertips.

Kickboard Resources for MLKCSE families can be found here - click here.

## STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

**Corrective Response System (Minor Behaviors)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Least Invasive | **1st attempt -** use redirection strategies 1-3 | |
| | (1) Positive Group Correction | When one or more students are off-task, a positive group correction is a verbal whole group reminder to correct off-task students without identifying them to the class.<br>Ex.- “All students should be working on problems one through ten right now” |

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| | (2)<br>Anonymous individual Corrections | An anonymous individual correction is similar to a positive group correction, but highlights the fact that a minority of students are off-task.<br>Ex. - “We need three students to clear off their desks.” |
| | (3)<br>Non-Verbal Intervention - Proximity | Circulating through the room and standing next to or near students who are off -task is a non-verbal strategy that addresses the behavior without interrupting instruction. |
| | Non-Verbal Intervention - Signaling | Signaling incorporates non-verbal cues to redirect, correct or alter student behavior. Typically these cues are easily interpreted and simple. They are often used to address students without disrupting flow. |
| | Behavior continues - **Warning 1** | |
| | **2nd attempt -** continue redirections using strategies 4-5 | |
| Most Invasive | (4)<br>Quick Word | A Quick Word is a discrete, unidirectional communication in which the teacher approaches the off-task student, conveys what TO do, and moves on. One way to do this effectively is to use a positively framed, “If… Then…” statement. Ex. – “If you start working on your Do Now, then you will have the opportunity to earn participation points.” Note the difference between a positively framed and a negatively framed “If… Then…” statement: “If you don’t stop talking, then you will get a demerit.” The positively framed version allows students to make good choices to get back on track with an incentive instead of the threat of punishment. |
| | (5)<br>Public Correction | At times, less invasive addressing techniques may not be possible or appropriate. When a public correction is required, it is done quickly and clearly conveys what TO do rather than criticizing or commenting on corrective behaviors.<br>Ex. - “Kenny, please push in your chair.” |
| | Behavior continues - **Warning 2** | |
| | **Final attempt -** use redirection strategy 6 | |

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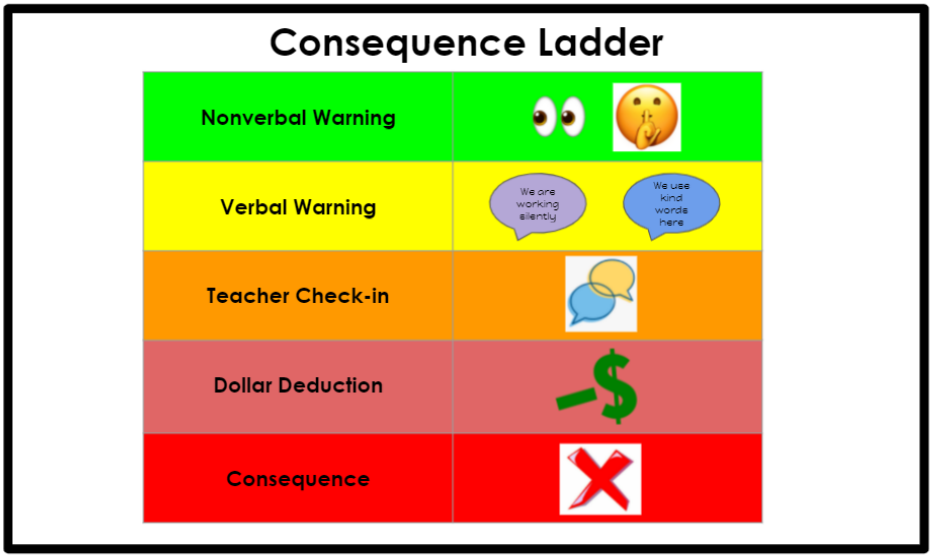
|---|---|---|
| | (6)<br>Inquiry | Teacher quickly meets with the student and starts the conversation with a sincere question inquiring about the student (affective questions). Teacher listens and appropriately responds to any student concerns through explanation/clarification, a plan to address later, or an apology. After a quick exchange the teacher reiterates the expectations, their belief in the student, and clarifies the consequence if that expectation is not met. |
| | If behavior continues - **Issue a Consequence** (always includes $ deduction) | |
| | Consequence: | When redirection and correction efforts fail, consequences must follow. Threats or warnings of consequences are always avoided as they only reinforce the allowance of misbehavior. When providing a consequence, the teacher avoids optional responses and implements the consequence in a routine fashion. Consequence procedures must be developed, rehearsed, and mastered in preparation for their implementation. |




**Assigning Consequences -**

It is expected that teachers will ensure on-task behavior by having strong procedures and routines, maintaining high behavioral expectations, and building rapport and trust with students.

When misbehaviors occur, teachers are expected to first utilize the least to most invasive strategies outlined in the redirection flow chart. When a teacher is unable to successfully redirect and correct a student's behavior it is necessary to issue a consequence.

Example consequences for corrective behavior given by teacher: MLK dollar deduction, recess reflection, message/phone call home, loss of classroom privilege, immediate re-do, re-do after class, in class break/cool down corner

Consequences are given effectively by ensuring that they are consistent, brief, depersonalized, and provides a way for students to re-establish positive connections in the classroom.

The goal of the consequence is to teach appropriate pro-social behavior. If the misbehavior continues after the consequence is given by the teacher, the teacher should complete an out of class referral using Kickboard. The Associate Dean assigned to that grade level will receive an alert and provide additional support.

The Associate Deans/Dean of Students are responsible for providing support and assistance to teachers with helping students to meet behavioral expectations in class and ensure that classrooms are safe and using the Corrective Response System.

| **Category** | **Corrective Behaviors** | **- $ Value** |
|---|---|---|
| **Level 1: Minor** | Cell phone / electronics violation | -$2 |
| | Homework incomplete | -$2 |
| | Tardy to class | -$2 |
| | Uniform violation | -$2 |
| | Unprepared for class | -$2 |
| | Out of seat without permission | -$2 |
| | Talking out of turn | -$2 |
| | Leaving MLK Line without permission | -$2 |
| | Disrupting class | -$5 |
| | Off task | -$5 |
| | Use of bad language | -$10 |
| | Non -compliance with classroom and schoolwide routines and procedures | -$10 |

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|---|---|---|
| | Subtle disrespect to staff or classmate | -$10 |
| | Roaming the hallways / no hall pass | -$10 |
| | Inappropriate use of school property | -$10 |
| | Displays of affection in violation of school policy | -$10 |
| **Level 2: Major** | Repeated Level 1 behaviors | -$20 |
| | Leaving class without permission | -$50 |
| | Damaging or destroying personal or school property or attempting to do so | -$50 |
| | Forgery of any sort, including parental signatures | -$50 |
| | Use of profanity | -$75 |
| | Stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so | -$75 |
| | Cheating/Academic dishonesty | -$75 |
| | Obscene written messages or drawing obscene pictures (handwritten or electronic) | -$100 |
| | Blatant Disrespectful to staff or classmate | -$100 |
| | Inappropriate language, gestures, actions | -$100 |
| **Level 3: Extreme** | Repeated Level 2 behavior | -$150 |
| | Physical aggression | -$150 |
| | Threats (Physical/Verbal) | -$150 |
| | Physical Fight | -$200 |
| | Bullying*** | -$200 |
| | Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation | -$200 |
| | Theft | -$200 |
| | Possession of a weapon (knives, guns,) | -$250 |
| | Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats; | -$250 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Using or possessing tobacco products, alcohol or other controlled substances | -300 |
| | Bomb threat | -$500 |
| | Terrorism | -$500 |
| | Chemical/biological threat | -$500 |

| | **Level 1 - Minor** | **Level 1 - Minor (After 2 warnings)** | **Level 2 - Major** | **Level 3 - Extreme** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *The who, what, when, where, how* | | | | |
| **Teacher Action** | Provide redirections using least invasive strategies<br><br>Follow consequence ladders in reference to classroom expectations | *Note: General default - the person leading the correction is the person that is responsible to adding or subtracting the MLK dollars*<br><br>Teacher Issues Corrective Behavior Consequence:<br><br>Automatic<br>- Subtraction of MLK dollars for a Level 1 Minor Corrective Behavior<br><br>Optional<br>- Recess Reflection<br><br>- Communication with the primary guardian (via text, phone call, email, KickBoard message)<br><br>- Reach out to AD | *Note: General default - the person leading the correction is the person that is responsible to adding or subtracting the MLK dollars*<br><br>*Teacher subtracts MLK dollars for a repeated Level 1 minor or Level 2 major*<br><br>Teacher contacts AD for immediate assistance/removal by completing an out of class referral through KickBoard<br><br>"Driver's seat" transfers from teacher to AD. Teacher partners with the AD to remedy the situation | *Note: General default - the person leading the correction is the person that is responsible to adding or subtracting the MLK dollars*<br><br>*Teacher subtracts MLK dollars for a repeated Level 2 major or Level 3 extreme*<br><br>Teacher contacts AD for immediate assistance/removal by completing an out of class referral through KickBoard<br><br>"Driver's seat" transfers from teacher to AD. Teacher partners with the AD to remedy the |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | for support for push-in services, if needed for observation or modeling | Teacher follows up with parent/guardian of student removed from class to provide detail and answer any questions, discuss next steps | situation<br><br>Teacher follows up with parent/guardian of student removed from class to provide detail and answer any questions, discuss next steps |
| **Culture Team Member Action**<br>Associate Deans<br>Counselors<br>Dean of Students<br>Principal | N/A | Proactive Culture Support<br><br>AD push-in to classrooms to monitor behaviors & redirect when necessary | *Note: General default - the person leading the correction is the person that is responsible to adding or subtracting the MLK dollars*<br><br>AD will be alerted on KickBoard once referral is completed<br><br>AD will review submitted referral<br><br>"Driver's seat" transfers from teacher to AD. Teacher partners with the AD to remedy the situation<br><br>AD immediately:<br>a. push-in to assist the student<br>b. pull out to hallway<br>c. removes the student | *Note: General default - the person leading the correction is the person that is responsible to adding or subtracting the MLK dollars*<br><br>AD will be alerted on KickBoard once referral is completed<br><br>AD will review submitted referral<br><br>"Driver's seat" transfers from teacher to AD. Teacher partners with the AD to remedy the situation<br><br>AD immediately removes the student<br><br>AD Notifies Dean of Students |

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| | | | *If a student is removed from class, start a timer to track time out of learning.*<br><br>If applicable: Completes investigation and documents efforts.<br><br>Student completes reflection form<br><br>AD calls home to inform the parent/guardian of removal of class. AD informs the guardian that the teacher will be following up with the details and will be able to answer any other questions that they have.<br><br>**Consequence determined by AD:**<br>Lunch/Recess Detention<br>After-School Detention<br>Community Service<br>Parent Conference<br>Suspension (consult with Dean of Students)<br><br>Complete | Connects with counselors for assistance<br><br>*In a physical fight, both students need to see the nurse.<br><br>*AD tracks time out of learning.*<br><br>If applicable: Completes investigation and documents efforts.<br><br>Student completes reflection form<br><br>AD or Dean of Students calls home to inform the parent/guardian of removal of class. AD informs the guardian that the teacher will be following up with the details and will be able to answer any other questions that they have.<br><br>**Consequence determined by AD and Dean of Students:**<br>Lunch/Recess Detention<br>After-School Detention |

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| | | | response to referral section on KIckBoard | Community Service<br>Parent Conference<br>Suspension<br>Expulsion (consult with ED)<br><br>Suspension paperwork generated by Dean of Students or Principal<br><br>Complete response to referral section on KIckBoard |

| **A Students Return Back to Class** |
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| • An CT member or Administrator will escort a student back to class from the Culture Suite.<br><br>• They will come into the classroom with the student for a few minutes to help you re-engage them.<br><br>• Teachers - you must acknowledge their re-entry.<br>  ○ "Welcome back _____. "We are on # ____" or "Let me get you a worksheet."<br><br>• Do not rehash the issue from the referral at this point. Move forward and take a couple minutes to make sure the student knows what to do and how to do it - or at minimum - let them know when you can help them.<br><br>• If needed, CT member will schedule a Restorative Conference between staff and student, student and student, and/or any other parties involved in regard to the referral |

## SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

In the event that a student commits certain violations of the school Code of Conduct, they may face disciplinary action. In the case of all suspensions, students and families are provided with a written document that articulates the reason for the possible disciplinary action and the right to a hearing. In all instances resulting in a suspension, when the child

returns to MLKCSE, the school will have a re-entry meeting with the student and family, and set up for a fresh start.

In rare circumstances, as outlined in the Code of Conduct, a student may be expelled. Please see the Code of Conduct for more information regarding suspensions and expulsions.

**Application of Policies to Students with Special Needs**
The discipline of a student who has been identified as having special needs, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, 603 CMR 28.00 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is subject to the requirements of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan. The IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan should indicate whether the student is expected to meet the requirements of the regular discipline code or if a modification is deemed necessary. The specific modification must be described in the student's IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan. In the event that a student with disabilities has been excluded from school for ten or more days in any school year (either through in-school or out-of-school suspension), the student's special education team must be convened for a determination as to whether the student's conduct was a manifestation of their disability or was a direct result of MLKCSE's failure to implement the student's IEP.

## TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, the use of tobacco products is prohibited within school buildings or school facilities, on school grounds, and on school buses.

# STUDENT DRESS CODE

MLKCSE strictly enforces a dress code. All students are expected to wear uniforms all year long including the first day of school. The goal of our uniform policy is to show respect for our appearance, to have cohesion as a school community, and to keep our focus on academic excellence. Uniforms instill pride in the school and give each child a feeling of being part of the school community. They also help eliminate peer pressure. Students in our community are expected to follow the school dress code at all times during school hours, except during scheduled non-uniform days or when permission is granted by the administration for extenuating circumstances.

| Shirts | Pants, Shorts, Skirts, Skorts, Jumpers & Dresses | Sweaters | Shoes /Sneakers | Socks, Tights & Leggings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Color: Burgundy or Navy Blue (with or without school logo)<br><br>Style: Must have a collar. Button polo, button dress shirt, short- or long-sleeved shirts are allowed.<br><br>Not allowed: non-school logos, printing, T-shirts, or tank tops.<br><br>Fit: Shirts must be tucked in. Shirts must cover a student's mid-section.<br><br>Visible under shirts should be solid white, burgundy, navy blue or gray | Color: Navy blue or khaki solid color.<br><br>Style: Non-jean material. Pants, shorts, skirts (flat-front or pleated), skorts and jumpers are allowed.<br><br>Fit: Must fit properly (not baggy, not too long, not too short, and not too tight). Dresses, skirts and skorts must be an appropriate length.<br><br>Absolutely NO jeans, sweat suit pants, pajamas, logos, insignias, pictures or messages. | Color: Navy blue, black, gray or burgundy solid color.<br><br>Style: V-neck pullover, front button-down, zip-up sweater or vests are allowed.<br><br>Not allowed: Non-school logos, printing, hooded, pattern designed. | Color: ANY color.<br><br>Style: No open-toe, open-back, light ups, heelys, or bluetooth. | Color: Solid navy, solid black, solid white, or solid burgundy are the only allowable colors.<br><br>Not allowed: Bright colored and pattern designed socks or tights. |
| | | | **Accessories** | **Make-up** |
| | | | Small bows and headbands can be worn.<br><br>Non-approved outerwear is not permitted to be worn in school | Make-up is NOT allowed. |
| | | | | **Belts** |
| | | | | Strongly Encouraged<br><br>When wearing belts, they must be worn and fitted at the waist on pants with belt loops. |
| | | | | **Ties/Bow Ties** |
| | | | | Optional |

Non-logo school uniform items can be purchased at local stores. Our uniform logo shirts/micro fleece jackets can be purchased through: Blake's School Uniforms Co. on 1205 Parker St, Springfield, MA 01129, School Uniforms by Tommy Hilfiger.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM SWAP

MLKCSE offers a Uniform Swap Program. Please consider donating your child's used uniform pieces when they outgrow them. When you donate gently used school uniforms that no longer fit your child, you can exchange each item for good quality uniforms your student(s) can use or you can just donate to help others. If you would like to donate or swap uniforms, please visit the Main Office or schedule a time with our Family Engagement Coordinator.

## UNIFORM ASSISTANCE

MLKCSE is committed to ensuring that the cost of uniforms is not a barrier for any student. If families feel that the cost of uniforms would pose a significant financial hardship, they may contact the Dean of Students or School Counselors to request a "starter kit" containing all uniform items that a student needs to begin school.

# SCHOOL MEALS

MLKCSE participates in the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, and Snack Program. All students are served free breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Students are served one snack per day. Menus for breakfast and lunch are available on the school's website.

Students are welcome to bring breakfast, snack, or lunch from home. They will not have access to a microwave to heat any lunches or a refrigerator. Soda and candy are never permitted at school, even in lunches brought from home.

All students attending MLKCSE are currently eligible for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 for free breakfast and lunch. CEP is a provision from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that allows schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) with high poverty rates to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. CEP eliminates the burden of collecting household applications to determine eligibility for school meals, relying instead on information from other means-tested programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

## FOOD ALLERGIES

The school will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate students with food allergies. Parents are required to inform the school of all food allergies and their severity. A parent of a child with food allergies is responsible for providing classroom snacks and lunch for his or her own child. These snacks can be kept in the classroom in a separate snack closet. Sharing or trading of food is prohibited for all students. For students who have been diagnosed with a life-threatening food allergy, once the parent has informed the school nurse they must also provide medical documentation for the diagnosis of the life-threatening food allergy. After documentation is provided, the family and school officials (including but not limited to the school nurse and the school nutrition director) will meet to develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) to accommodate the student. This plan must be developed before the student begins school or as soon as possible after the school is provided documentation of the life-threatening allergy.

MLKCSE is an "allergy aware" school. In order to ensure the safety of all of our students, DO NOT send your child to school with any foods containing or processed with nuts. This includes peanut butter. If a student is found to have a nut-containing food item at school, that item will be sealed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child. A food service lunch will then be provided for that day, and parent/guardian will be called and reminded about our policy. While we will do our best to keep nuts out of the school, MLKCSE cannot guarantee that the school will be entirely nut free. Please be aware that children with severe food allergies should continue to be vigilant about their safety. Please make sure that you have let the School Nurse know about your student's food allergies.

## HEALTHY FOODS GUIDELINES

MLKCSE's healthy food policy was inspired by those of several other schools, locally and nationally, and many of our breakfast, lunch, and snack guidelines are already in place in

many public schools. In addition to inspiring our students to achieve academic excellence, we also want to encourage them to develop healthy eating habits. If you plan to send your child to school with food from home, carefully review the information below. Free breakfast and lunch as well as a snack are provided to all students every day.

Students are not permitted to eat or drink the following items for breakfast, snack and lunch:

- Caffeinated beverages
- Soda
- Fast Food
- Candy

Students who bring any foods to school that are not allowed will be told to put the item away. Student's food from home will not be thrown away. Students need well-balanced meals each day. If a student is found to have a lunch that consists of only "snack foods," we will serve the student a school lunch.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please don't hesitate to reach out to our Operations Manager.

### CELEBRATIONS

Please contact the classroom teacher to make arrangements for any birthday celebration. We cannot allow birthday celebrations to interrupt the academic day. Parents will be informed if there is a food allergy in the class; if such an allergy exists, we ask parents to be considerate and avoid that food product in birthday snacks. The birthday treat also needs to be easily consumed at lunch. Students may not distribute invitations to parties within the school building unless every member of the class is invited. The school may require student birthday celebrations to be grouped in order to reduce the quantity of birthday celebrations (which typically contain unhealthy food options) and ensure that the school is following the Wellness Policy.

## HEALTH

MLKCSE is committed to supporting the health and well-being of all students. The school staff includes a full-time registered nurse. The Nurse is able to provide basic first aid, care for ill students, administer medication to students who require it during the school day, and provide counseling on health-related issues to students and their families. In addition, the school has a relationship with a local pediatrician who advises the school with regard to health-related matters.

### SCREENINGS

Students in all grades will undergo annual vision and hearing screenings. In addition, students in first grade will undergo body mass index, or BMI, screenings. Posture screenings will occur beginning in grade 5, as required by regulation. The school nurse will contact the family if screenings results indicate a need for follow-up. It is the parent or

guardian's responsibility to ensure that identified needs are addressed. The school will provide referrals for appropriate services at the request of a family. Families may "opt out" of any screenings by submitting a request in writing to the school nurse.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

If a student requires medication while in school, the parent/guardian must submit to the school a Medication Order Form, filled out by the student's physician, and a Parent/Guardian Consent Form, completed by the parent/guardian. In addition, students being followed by a doctor for asthma and students with prescribed EpiPens must have on file an action plan, completed by the child's medical provider.

Any medication to be given during school hours must be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent/guardian or another responsible adult. The medication must be brought to school in the original, pharmacy labeled container. Only a thirty-day supply of a medication will be accepted at any time. No student is allowed to possess medication while at school, with the exception of asthma inhalers and EpiPens in some instances (see below).

## OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Certain over-the-counter medications, including Tylenol and Advil, are available in the school health office. For students to receive these medications, signed consent is required from the parent/guardian each school year. These medications will be administered by the school nurse only and according to the recommended dose by weight. The school nurse reserves the right to refuse to dispense medication at any time based on the assessment of the situation.

If a student requires an over-the-counter medication that is not stocked in the school health office, all guidelines regarding prescription medications apply. The student must have on file the Medication Order and Parent/Guardian Consent forms, and the medication must be delivered by the parent/guardian and in its original packaging.

## ASTHMA INHALERS

If a student needs to have an asthma inhaler with them at school, the parent/guardian must provide the school nurse with the order from a doctor stating that the student needs to carry the inhaler. The order must also be signed by a parent/guardian, and the parent/guardian must provide the nurse with a second inhaler that will be kept in the nurse's office.

## EPI-PENS

If a student has a serious allergy, MLKCSE strongly encourages parents/guardians to bring an EpiPen to school on the first day of school. The EpiPen must be accompanied by an Allergy Action Plan and a Medication Order Form, both completed by the prescribing physician, as well as a Parent/Guardian Consent Form. The school nurse will work with the parent/guardian to develop an Individual Healthcare Plan for the student.

EpiPens may also be administered in case of a possible allergic reaction in accordance with best medical practices. If an EpiPen is administered, the parent will be contacted as soon as possible, and the student will be transported to a medical treatment facility via ambulance.

## FIRST AID & MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Minor accidents, cuts, scrapes, and bruises will generally be treated at the school by the school nurse or by selected teachers and administrators. The school is not equipped to provide medical services beyond basic first aid. In the event that a child requires emergency medical care, a parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible. If a parent, guardian, or other emergency contact cannot be reached, the school may need to arrange for the student to be transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital.

It is essential that we have on file each student's Health History Form, which provides up-to-date contact information for parents and guardians, and which gives the school authorization to begin medical treatment.

## MEDICAL EXCLUSIONS

In the interest of protecting the health of all students, please DO NOT send a student to school in the case of any one or more of the following:

- Vomiting two or more times in the past 24 hours
- Two or more instances of diarrhea or any stool accidents in the past 24 hours
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Certain diagnosed contagious illnesses such as strep throat or chicken pox

If a student is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please contact the school nurse immediately so that the nurse may monitor the spread of disease. Students should come to school when they have routine sore throats, aches and pains, headaches, or other minor medical concerns.

## MEDICAL RECORDS

Massachusetts state law requires all students enrolling in a new school to have a physical examination before entering the school. Before a student can enroll in the school, the school must have on file the following forms:

### MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL HEALTH RECORDS

This form contains records showing that the student has had a physical exam within the past year prior to the start of the school year, has up-to-date immunizations, and has had all required screenings.

### IMMUNIZATIONS

MLKCSE enforces the School Immunization Law. According to Massachusetts General Laws, students will not be permitted to attend school without a physician's certification of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and other such diseases as specified by the Department of Public Health unless a doctor provides written documentation that immunization would endanger the health of a student or a parent or

guardian provides written documentation that immunization conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs. Documentation will be required at the start of each school year. Students lacking immunizations may be excluded from school during disease outbreaks in order to protect their health and that of the school community at large.

### HEALTH HISTORY FORM

This form contains information about a student's allergies, health conditions, physician, dentist, and health insurance. The form also authorizes MLKCSE to act in case of a medical emergency. No student will be allowed to enter school without having this form on file.

MLKCSE expects families to update medical records throughout the school year. Parents should provide the school with a copy of each physical that the student has. In addition, parents should provide the school with documentation anytime a student visits the emergency room, undergoes surgery, or is diagnosed with a health condition.
Updated physical exam forms are required in kindergarten and 3rd grade. Updated immunization records are required in kindergarten.

## HEALTH-RELATED RECESS EXCLUSION

Our students go outside for recess only when temperatures are deemed safe by our school administrators and the Department of Public Health. When the weather is found to be appropriate for outdoor recess, all students are required to be outside with their classmates. A student may stay inside for health related reasons with parent/guardian request. For long-term exclusions, the parent/guardian must provide a doctor's note indicating a medically necessary exemption.

## HEAD INJURY & CONCUSSION POLICY

In order to effectively and consistently manage head injuries, MLKCSE has established protocols to prevent, train, manage and take appropriate return to activity decisions for all students involved in extracurricular athletic activities.

## EDUCATION SERVICES IN HOME OR HOSPITAL

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any MLKCSE student must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the Director of Student Services shall arrange for provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue their educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The Director of Student Services shall coordinate such services with the Executive Director for eligible students. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP.

# MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (MERP)

MLKCSE has developed this Medical Emergency Response Plan (Plan) in consultation with members of the school community, including the school nurse, local medical and other emergency responders, and other community partners. The purpose of this plan is two-fold:

1. To reduce the incidence of life-threatening emergencies, and
2. To promote efficient responses to such emergencies.

The complete Plan has been posted in the school's main office, the school nurse's office, and the P.E. office. It is also included in the school's broader Crisis Response Plan. Protocols that include specific actions to take in case of a medical emergency have been posted in classrooms, All-Purpose Room and Cafeteria and provided to key staff. The complete Plan will be modified as needed and updated whenever there are physical changes to the school campus, including new construction. The Plan will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education every three years.

**SAFETY ASSESSMENT**

To prevent injuries and accidents on school property, the school district follows Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance. Prior to the opening of the school each year, key school administrators and the Facilities Coordinator conduct a safety assessment using the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Safety Program Checklist for Schools. Safety guidelines are posted in all classrooms. Science, physical education, and art instructors educate students on specific safety precautions and injury prevention measures relevant to their disciplines.

**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONDERS**

School leaders and administrators have ongoing relationships with fire and police chiefs as required under the Multi-hazard Evacuation Plan, developed under Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000. Law enforcement and fire/safety personnel have connected the district administration building and the district school with local emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. EMS has assisted in establishing a rapid communication system linking all parts of the building; determining response times to all parts of the building; and providing a methodology for directing EMS personnel to an ill or injured individual(s) and to available rescue equipment when they arrive in response to an emergency call for assistance.

**911 ACCESS**

- The school has a dedicated landline that connects directly to 911.
- Key personnel, including those involved in after-school and extracurricular activities, have access to landline telephones that can access 911.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

The school maintains an updated list of key faculty and staff, with phone numbers and a call tree that indicates when each individual is to be contacted during a medical emergency and their respective roles, such as directing EMS, providing first aid, supporting students, and providing class coverage. This resource information is available in the school's main office and in the school nurse's office.

The school maintains an updated list of community-based providers that includes names and phone numbers of behavioral health professionals who can provide long- and short-term mental health services on campus following incidents and emergencies. This resource information is available in the school's main office.

The school nurse or an administrator will contact parents/guardians of students and emergency contact persons for faculty and staff if the student, faculty, or staff person has a medical emergency. The school maintains a list of names and phone numbers of parents/guardians, updated at the beginning of each school year, who should be contacted in case of a medical emergency concerning a student. The school maintains a list of names and phone numbers of individuals who should be contacted in case of a medical emergency concerning faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are directed to provide updated contact information as needed to the HR Associate.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

In case of a medical incident, school staff will immediately:

- Contact the school nurse and the main office; and
- Escort an injured person who is ambulatory to the school nurse's office or notify the school nurse if the person cannot be moved.
- Main office personnel will ensure that an administrator is notified immediately. The school nurse or an administrator will ensure designated individuals are directed to remain with the injured or ill person until medical assistance arrives.

## THE SCHOOLS MEDICAL RESPONSE WILL PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:

The nurse will assess the condition of the person(s) to determine the category of injury, illness, or condition:

- *Life-threatening or potentially disabling*: Because these medical conditions can cause death or disability within minutes, they require immediate intervention, medical care, and, usually, hospitalization. Examples of this category include airway and breathing difficulties, cardiac arrest, chest pain, and/or cyanosis.
- *Serious or potentially life-threatening or potentially disabling*: Burns, major multiple fractures, and insect bites are examples of this category. These occurrences may result in a life-threatening situation or may produce permanent damage, so they must be treated as soon as possible.
- *Non-life-threatening*: These are defined as any injury or illness that may affect the general health of a person (e.g., mild or moderate fever, stomachache, headache, seizures, fractures, cuts). The school nurse will evaluate the incident and make decisions regarding further treatment. The school nurse may notify the parent/guardian and recommend follow-up medical evaluation or treatment.

- When an injury, illness, or condition is determined to be potentially life-threatening or disabling, the school nurse will inform main office personnel to:
    - call EMS (911) and provide the location of the injured or ill person and available rescue equipment.
    - activate the medical emergency contact list to use designated school staff in their respective roles.
    - direct designated school personnel to remain stationed at the specific location on campus where the medical incident occurred and greet emergency responders upon arrival, providing updates on the situation. EMS response time to the school is estimated at 4-5 minutes and 5-6 minutes to reach playing fields, barring unforeseen delays.

The school nurse or an administrator will notify the parent/ legal guardian of the student or the emergency contact for faculty/ staff and inform him or her that the person is ill or has been injured and is being transported to a medical facility if the information is known at the time of the call.

If the school nurse is not in the building at the time of the medical incident, main office personnel will notify the administrator in charge. We have a nurse substitute. The administrator will assess the situation and direct main office personnel to place the 911 call in the event of a potentially life-threatening or potentially disabling injury, illness, or condition. Other steps will be taken as described above.

If the injury, illness, or condition is later determined by the school nurse or other trained personnel to be minor, the EMS call will be canceled or EMS units will clear the scene.

If the school nurse or other medically trained individual determines that the injury, illness, or condition is non-life-threatening, first aid and or medical services will be provided onsite. The school nurse will notify the involved student's parent or guardian.

All faculty and staff must adhere to the following during all medical incidents:

- Standard Precautions must be followed at all times (see Definitions).
- Avoid moving the ill or injured person, unless there is more danger if left there.
- Remain with the person until assistance arrives and remain calm.
- Direct other staff to manage bystanders.

Faculty and staff who are involved in school-related activities outside of regular school hours have been trained in the medical emergency response protocols and keep a copy of the protocols with them during all school-sponsored activities and events. The protocols identify who is to be contacted during activities outside of the regular school hours.

**CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) & FIRST AID TRAINING**

Our school has arranged with the local Red Cross, fire department, and emergency responders to provide training for designated school staff in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid, in accordance with the recommendations from the DPH.

The names of the individuals who have successfully completed training will be posted with the Plan.

## AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AED)

The school has one portable Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). It is located in the main academic entrance hall near the Health Room hallway. The AED is located in a site that makes it readily accessible for building-wide access during school hours, after-school activities, and public events held at the school, and the number is sufficient for the size of the school. A list of school personnel and volunteers who are trained in AED use, a map of the school's floor plan, and instructions on communicating in emergencies are in the same locations and included in the Plan. Only persons trained and certified in the use of an AED may have access to and use the AED during regular school hours and after school. The school nurse is responsible for checking and documenting the status of the AEDs in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.

DPH recommends that, as a minimum standard, at least five persons trained in first aid/CPR be available in each school at all times when students are on the school grounds, including before and after school. The actual suggested ratio is one trained staff member for every 50 students (1:50). In high-risk populations, it is recommended that there be one first aid-trained person for every medically fragile person (1:1).

## DEFINITIONS

**The following definitions are from the Massachusetts School Health Manual and other sources:**

Automated External Defibrillator (AED): An Automated External Defibrillator is a lifesaving device to treat victims of sudden cardiac arrest. The defibrillator is designed to quickly and easily provide an electric shock that restores the victim's normal heart rhythm.

First Aid: First aid is the immediate and temporary care given to an injured or ill person.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH): The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health is the federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injury and illness.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): The Occupational Safety and Health Administration sets and enforces protective workplace safety and health standards.

Standard Precautions: Standard Precautions are thorough hand-washing, gloving in the presence of body fluids, and proper disposal of contaminated wastes. The routine use of appropriate precautions by the caregiver regardless of knowledge of germs present in the individual's blood, saliva, nasal discharges, vomit, urine, or feces prevents the transmission/spread of disease and protects the caregiver. When handling the discharges from another person's body, always use these precautions. Use of Standard Precautions removes the need to know which persons are infected with which germs in the school setting.

# SAFETY & SECURITY

## WEATHER CLOSINGS

In the event of poor or severe weather conditions such as heavy snow, please listen to the local television or radio stations for relevant information regarding school cancellation. When extreme weather conditions may require us to cancel school, delay opening or dismiss early, MLKCSE will follow the decision(s) made by the Springfield Public Schools. If Springfield Public Schools are closed, so is MLKCSE. If Springfield Public Schools are delayed due to inclement weather, so is MLKCSE. The primary reason for this is our families' reliance on school buses to transport their children to and from school.

Information regarding school cancellations or delays will be broadcast on:

- Television Stations: WWLP 22, ABC 40
- Internet: www.abc40.com, www.wwlp.com
- @MLKCSE on Facebook
- Kickboard

In addition, MLKCSE uses the School Messenger telephone & SMS system to notify parents of these situations. You should expect to receive a call or SMS message at approximately 6:45 am depending on what time we receive relevant information from the Springfield Public Schools.

## VISITOR PROTOCOLS

All visitors are required to report directly to the Main Office upon entering the building and obtain a visitor badge to indicate that they have done so. Any visitor, including parents/guardians, who does not report to the Office or is found in the building without authorization will be asked to leave immediately. Visitors must wear visitor badges at all times to indicate that they have checked-in at the Main Office. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the school, but we do ask that visitors not speak with students or teachers during class time due to the potential for disruption, although they may call the teacher after school to discuss what they observed.

## STUDENT PROPERTY

Students should not bring anything to school other than a backpack, seasonal outerwear, lunch (optional), and academic materials. MLKCSE is not able to guarantee the safety or security of any items brought to school.

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

If a student is found in possession of a cell phone, electronic, toy, or other prohibited item in the classroom, the item will be confiscated by a teacher or an administrator. Examples of these objects include, but are not limited to, cell phones, tablets, e-readers, cameras, game systems, and toys. If a staff member sees or hears one of these objects, they will

confiscate it and bring it to the Dean of Students' Office for safekeeping. The parent/guardian may have to come to the school to retrieve the item.

## STUDENT SEARCHES

In order to maintain the security of all its students, MLKCSE reserves the right to conduct searches of its students and their property based on a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible. School cubbies, lockers, and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of MLKCSE and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to searches by school administrators at any time.

## LOST & FOUND

The school has a "lost and found rack" in the Student Support hallway. Parents/guardians may come in any day between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM to search the lost and found. At the end of every quarter, items left unclaimed may be donated to a local charity.

## RESTRAINING ORDERS

If there is a restraining order involving any student, parents/guardians must inform the Operations Manager immediately and must provide a copy of the Restraining Order as well as a physical description of the individual against whom the order exists. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the school has a current copy of all court documents.

If an individual against whom there is a restraining order enters the building, the student will be held in a secure location, and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

At MLKCSE, we have a Crisis Plan with emergency protocols in place to keep our school community safe and secure. We practice emergency procedures with our staff and students throughout the school year to ensure that everyone knows what to do in the case of an actual emergency. These emergency drills include but are not limited to:

- Fire
- Shelter in place
- Lockdown
- Medical Emergency
- Evacuation
- Bus Evacuation

During an actual emergency situation, though difficult, we ask that you do not try and contact the school. This allows us to keep our phone lines available for emergencies and help from local authorities. The school will communicate with families through ClassDojo, Kickboard, and or robocall in these sensitive situations.

# TRANSPORTATION

Buses to and from MLKCSE are offered through the Springfield Public Schools transportation department in collaboration with First Student Bus Company. The school advocates for families as much as possible, however, the SPS transportation department ultimately decides a child's eligibility for transportation. Students who live one and a half miles or more from the school are eligible to ride the bus. All others are not eligible to receive transportation services through the Springfield school department transportation company.

You can obtain a transportation request form from the school office. If a student moves, the parent/guardian must submit a new transportation request form with proof of residency in order for the school to request a new bus assignment. New bus assignments usually take up to 2 weeks to be returned back from the transportation department.

**SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION CONTACT INFORMATION**
Debra Duncan, Department Head
Springfield Public Schools Central Office
1550 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01103
413-787-7150

## SPS TRANSPORTATION POLICY

The mission of the Springfield Public Schools (SPS) is to provide transportation services that are in compliance with all rules and regulations set forth within the General Laws of Massachusetts, the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles and the Springfield School Committee as well as any other areas not covered by specific declaration of policy.

The SPS provides no cost transportation for students in grades K-5 who reside over one and one half miles from the school they attend. Transportation is provided to and or from the student's legal residence only as it appears in the SPS student database. No alternative addresses will be considered. The SPS does not allow unauthorized passengers aboard school vehicles. School bus routes are established under the direction of the Administrator of Transportation Services for the SPS. Designated bus stops will be established within a reasonable walking distance not to exceed one mile. Authorized bus stops are located at intervals where students may board and disembark with the utmost in safety allowed by existing road conditions. All SPS school buses are subject to video surveillance.

Students who may qualify for special transportation (door to door) due to a physical/mental impairment may request such service by submitting a letter documenting the need for transportation by their family physician to the Administrator of Transportation Services. Ultimately, the decision to either grant or deny such a request is at the sole discretion of the 504 Coordinator/Team at the school the student attends.

## SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTER SCHOOL CARE CENTER

The Springfield Public Schools under the auspices of the Transportation Department operates an after school center located at the Rebecca M. Johnson School, 55 Catherine Street, Springfield. The telephone number at the center is 413-787-6859. The center operates each school day, 3:00pm to 6:00pm and serves children who cannot safely be returned home upon the conclusion of their school day. Children are transported to the after school center by their school bus drivers where they are met by staff.

The after school center caters to kindergarten children who are not met at the bus stop by their parent/ guardian or responsible sibling/adult. The center also cares for children with special needs in grades K-5 who are not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult when brought home from school. Children in lower grades who show apprehension or are unfamiliar on how to travel home safely when not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult may also be brought to the after school center. Furthermore, the after school center will also care for students in grades 6-12 with disabilities who cannot safely be left at home alone or who cannot safely gain access to their home.

## ANTI-IDLING LAWS

Chapter 90, Section 16A of the Massachusetts General Laws states in part that “No person shall cause, suffer, allow or permit the unnecessary operation of the engine of a motor vehicle while said vehicle is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five (5) minutes. Whoever violates any provision of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred ($100) dollars for the first offense, nor more than five ($500) dollars for each succeeding offense.”

## BUS CONDUCT

1. The bus driver and monitor (if assigned) are responsible for the safety of all students aboard their bus.
2. Stand back and away from the curb until the bus is completely stopped and the door is opened prior to boarding.
3. All students should promptly take a seat when boarding and remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. The bus driver/monitor will instruct all passengers when it is safe to disembark from the vehicle.
4. Windows should not be opened without the permission of the bus driver/monitor. At no time should any part of a student’s body be extended outside of the bus.
5. Kindergarten students must wear identification tags while riding a school bus indicating the bus stop they are assigned.
6. Items that are considered a weapon are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
7. The use of tobacco products, alcohol or drugs are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
8. Do not push, fight or indulge in “horseplay” while aboard a school bus. Always respect the rights of fellow passengers.
9. Throwing objects from the bus is strictly prohibited.

10. Treat the school bus as you would an object of your own. Any act(s) of vandalism by a student will result in suspension from the school bus along with financial restitution for all damages incurred.
11. The school bus driver will determine whether or not a student may board with a small musical instrument such as a harmonica, trumpet, violin, etc., provided it can be stored within a student's belongings or under a seat. Large musical instruments such as cellos, keyboards, trombones or guitars are strictly prohibited.
12. Toys and sporting equipment (including but not limited to; baseballs, footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, hand held games and radios) are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
13. Live animals, even though they may be contained within a cage, are prohibited aboard all school buses.
14. For safety reasons, students should not cross any street until they are absolutely sure all traffic is stopped and it is safe to do so. Students should cross in front of the school bus with the monitor (if present) or while the driver is watching. Students should never walk or run alongside a moving bus.
15. Per SPS guidelines, kindergarten students must be met by a parent/guardian at their bus stop. If another individual is to meet a kindergarten student from the bus, the parent must submit to the Transportation Department a written note with the names and relationship to the child(ren). Violation of this procedure will result in the child being brought to the Johnson After School Care Center.
16. Whoever willfully throws or shoots an object at a school bus shall be punished by a fine or not more than $500 or imprisoned for not more than one year or both. A person so offending may be arrested without a warrant by a law enforcement officer authorized to serve the criminal process. If such a person commits such an offense in the presence of an officer and refuses to state their name and address at the request of such officer, this individual may be arrested without a warrant. An object is defined but not limited to a rock, snowball, ice ball or metal object that is projected at a target as defined by MGL, Chapter 159, Section 104.

## BUS INFRACTIONS

Students are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct while riding a school bus. Violations of these rules will result in the following:

- Student will receive a verbal warning and a parent will be informed of the infraction.
- Student may lose school incentive(s) and a parent meeting will be scheduled.
- Action will lead to escalated disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from the bus and a parent meeting will be scheduled.

## AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION

If a child receives transportation services through an after-school program, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange the schedule and notify the school of the child's dismissal arrangements.

## STUDENT PICK-UPS

Parents/Guardians or their designees may pick students up directly from school at dismissal time. Parents/Guardians should not go to the classroom to dismiss their students before the regular dismissal time as this is very disruptive to class.

## NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL OF CHANGES IN DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENT

Dismissal arrangements will not be made on the word of the child. A parent/guardian must send a note or call the school office to make any changes to their child's normal dismissal routine. Parents/guardians should notify the school office at least 1 hour prior to dismissal if a change is to be made to the child's regular dismissal routine.

# GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

## STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

The School recognizes the legal requirement to maintain the confidentiality of student records. Access to student records shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and its implementing regulations, 603 CMR 23.00 and M.G.L. Chapter 71.

At least once each year, the School shall, by means of an individual mailing or by inclusion in one of the School's regular publications, notify all parents and eligible students of their rights under FERPA. The notice will include a statement that the parent or eligible student has a right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. A specification of the intent of the School to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records except: a. by prior written consent of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or the eligible student; b. as directory information; or c. under certain limited circumstances, as permitted by FERPA;
3. Request that records be amended to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
4. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education alleging failure of the school to comply with FERPA and its regulations; and
5. Obtain copies of this policy and the locations where copies may be obtained.

The policy applicable to the release of student directory information, which includes the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of degrees and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student, applies equally to military recruiters, the media, colleges and universities, and prospective employers.

The school shall arrange to provide translations of this notice to non-English speaking parents in their native language.

The school does not plan to publish a directory of student information. In the event that the school plans to publish a directory in the future, FERPA permits the disclosure of certain categories of directory information, i.e., name, age, address, etc., without specific permission from the parents having been obtained. However, while permission is not required, the school must give parents/guardians the opportunity to object to the publication of some or all of this information.

## ACCESS & AMENDMENT

A parent/guardian or eligible student has a right to access student records and to seek their amendment if the parent or eligible student believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. In order to obtain access or to seek amendment to student records, please contact the Executive Director.

## ACCESS BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, §37H ("Section 37H") governs access to student records by a parent who does not have physical custody of a student. Generally, Section 37H requires a noncustodial parent seeking access to a student record to submit a written request and other documentation to the principal on an annual basis. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding access to records by non-custodial parents are requested to contact the Principal for detailed information regarding the procedures that must be followed under Section 37H.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Release of student records generally requires consent of the parent or eligible student. However, the Regulations provide certain exceptions. For example, staff employed or under contract to the school have access to records as needed to perform their duties. MLKCSE also releases a student's complete student record to authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without further notice to, or receipt of consent from, the eligible student or parent.

## DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

MLKCSE commits to maintaining student records for a specific period of time following a student's graduation or transfer to a different school, after which said records will be destroyed. Student temporary records (including student disciplinary and medical records) will be maintained for 5 years following a student's departure from MLKCSE. A parent or guardian can collect these records at any time during this period. At the end of 5 years following the student's departure, MLKCSE will destroy all temporary records. Student permanent records (including academic and attendance information) will be maintained for up to 65 years following a student's departure from MLKCSE. A parent or guardian can request a copy of these records at any time during this period. At the end of 65 years following the student's departure, MLKCSE will destroy all permanent records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO, AUDIO, RECORDED COMMENTS

For the purpose of publicizing student and school accomplishments, and/or documenting and studying teacher practice, MLKCSE has a practice of recording student life through photography, video, audio, or otherwise recorded comments. In the event a parent or eligible student objects to the release or publication of any of the above, the parent/guardian may complete the “Photo/Video Use Opt-Out Form”. Parents/guardians are given this form to complete at the time they enroll their child at MLKCSE. Absent receipt of this form, any of the above may be released without further notice or consent. Parents/guardians may change their preference at any time by requesting another form from the main office and updating their preference.

# ELECTRONICS & TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Students who choose to bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school do so at their own discretion and the school does not accept responsibility for the security of such items that are brought onto school grounds.  Furthermore, all electronic devices shall remain off and out of sight during the school day.  They either need to be turned in to the teacher during morning breakfast in the classroom or stay in the student’s locker. Failure to do so will result in the device being confiscated through the end of the school day and consequences will be issued in accordance with our Code of Conduct. Repeat offenses will require a parent or guardian to come to the school to retrieve a confiscated item and may result in high level consequences.

## STUDENT PHONE USE

The office phone is a business phone and should be used by students for emergencies only. The phones may not be used by students to arrange for delivery of any items. If parents need to leave a message for their child, they should call the Main Office to leave a message. Students will not be called from class to the office to speak with a parent except in case of an emergency.

Students may not use the telephones in classrooms or in the office unless granted permission by a teacher or staff member. Generally speaking, students will not have opportunities to call home during the school day. Students may not use cell phones during the school day. MLKCSE students cannot use cell phones or have them out while at school.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) APPROPRIATE USE POLICY

Violations of the Appropriate Use Guidelines may result in the revocation of a student's access privileges to Information Technology (including, but not limited to, digital devices and services, computer equipment and software, and School-assigned emails) for a period of time up to one School year and other disciplinary action in accordance with MLKCSE’s Code of Conduct. It is expected that all students and families signing “Acknowledgement of Access to Handbook” are also confirming having read this Appropriate Use Policy.

Any student who utilizes any technology and/or digital equipment at the School, or provided by the School, must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities. Procedures are in place for the protection of students and equipment. Students will be held accountable for any violation of the following policies in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Students are only allowed to utilize the computers, school-assigned student emails, and the information technology (IT) network to retrieve information and run specific software applications as directed by their instructor or School administrator. Students are not permitted to explore the configuration of the computer, operating system or network, run programs not on the menu, or attempt any activity not specifically authorized by their instructor or a School administrator.

Students and families are responsible for ensuring that any memory sticks, USB flash drives, or other forms of storage media that they bring in from outside the School or use on School-provided devices are virus free and do not contain any unauthorized or inappropriate files.

If appropriate for the student's grade level, the School may make Google Apps for Education available for use. Google Apps for Education is a suite of free, web-based programs that includes document creation, shared calendars, and collaboration tools. Students in using Google Apps for Education will also have access to School-assigned student email accounts.

## THE INTERNET

Internet use provides valuable opportunities for research, curriculum support, and career development. MLKCSE offers Internet access to students and staff. The primary purpose of providing access to the Internet is to support the educational mission of the school. The school expects that students and staff will use this access in a manner consistent with this purpose.

While the Internet is a tremendous resource for electronic information, it has the potential for abuse. The school makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the factual reliability of data available over the Internet. Users of the school's Internet service assume full responsibility for any costs, liabilities, or damages arising from the way they choose to use their access to the Internet.

## APPROPRIATE USE GUIDELINES

Students are required to comply with the following guidelines with respect to use of the School's technology, equipment, School-assigned emails, and digital services:

- Any on-line communication should always be at the direction and with the supervision of an instructor or School administrator.
- Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or School name online.
- Never respond to, and always report to the instructor, School administrator or parent, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
- Never send a photo of yourself or anyone else.
- Never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you met on-line.

- Never open attachments or files from unknown senders.
- Always report to a teacher any inappropriate sites that you observe being accessed by another user or that you browse to accidentally.

**Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited, to the following:**

- Accessing, sending, creating or posting materials or communications that are:
    - Damaging to another person's reputation
    - Threatening or demeaning to another person
    - Abusive
    - Obscene
    - Sexual in nature
    - Contrary to the School's policy on harassment or Code of Conduct
    - Harassing, or Bullying
    - Illegal

- Using the network for financial gain or advertising
- Posting or plagiarizing work created by another person without their consent
- Posting anonymous or forging electronic mail messages
- Attempting to read, alter, delete, or copy the electronic mail messages, documents, or files of other system users
- Giving out personal information such as phone numbers, addresses, driver's license or social security numbers, bankcard or checking account information
- Using the School's computer hardware or network for any illegal activity such as copying or downloading copyrighted software, music or images, or violation of copyright laws
- Downloading, installing, or using games, music files, public domain, shareware or any other unauthorized program on any School computer or computer system
- Purposely bringing on premises or infecting any School computer or network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy or provide access to unauthorized data or information
- Gaining access or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the data and documents of another person
- Using or attempting to use the password or account of another person or utilizing a computer while logged on under another user's account
- Using the School's computers or network while access privileges have been suspended
- Using the School's computer hardware, network, or Internet link in a manner that is inconsistent with an instructor’s or administrator’s directions and generally accepted network etiquette
- Altering or attempting to alter the configuration of a computer, network electronics, the operating system, or any of the software
- Attempting to vandalize, disconnect or disassemble any digital device, computer, network hardware, or related components
- Any student who utilizes the computer lab(s) or any digital equipment at the School, or provided by the School, must be aware of certain policies for use of the equipment and/or facilities

- Utilizing the computers and network to retrieve information or run software applications not assigned by an instructor or School administrator or inconsistent with School policy.
- Connecting to or installing any computer hardware, components, or software which is not School system property or in MLKCSE's technology resources without prior approval of MLKCSE's IT Service Provider and School administrators
- Bringing on premises any disk or storage device that contains a software application or utility that could be used to alter the configuration of the operating system or network equipment, scan or probe the network, or provide access to unauthorized areas or data
- Downloading or accessing via e-mail or file sharing, any software or programs not specifically authorized by teacher or other authorized MLKCSE staff member
- Bypassing or attempting to circumvent network security, virus protection, network filtering, or policies
- Possessing or accessing information on School property related to "Hacking", or altering, or bypassing network security or policies
- Participating on message boards without direction from an instructor or administrator
- Students may use the School computer system only for legitimate educational purposes, which include class work and independent research that is similar to the subjects and content studied in School. Students shall not access entertainment sites, such as social networking sites or gaming sites, except for legitimate educational purposes under the supervision of a teacher or other professional.
- All student use of the School network and Internet system or personal cell phones or other digital devices used by students while on campus is subject to the provisions of the School's Code of Conduct and related policies. Students may not share or post personal information about, or images of, any other student, staff member or employee without permission from that student, staff member or employee
- Students should follow the guidelines for searching that utilize safe search engines and technology.

## SAFETY USE

Use of the internet has potential dangers. Users are encouraged to read two brochures regarding Internet safety that the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office has prepared. The brochures are entitled The Internet, Your Child and You: What Every Parent Should Know and Internet Safety: Advice from Kids Who Have Faced Danger Online. Copies of these brochures are available on the Internet at www.ago.state.ma.us or can be provided by the school upon request.

The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications:

- Never reveal any identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs;
- Use the "back" key whenever you encounter a site that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable;
- Immediately tell a teacher if you receive a message that you believe is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable; and

- Never share your password or use another person's password. Internet passwords are provided for each user's personal use only. If you suspect that someone has discovered your password, you should change it immediately and notify a teacher.

### PRIVACY

Users should not have an expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in the user's directory or on a disk drive. The school reserves the right to examine all data stored on diskettes involved in the user's use of the school's Internet service.

Internet messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. Network administrators may review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.

### VIOLATIONS

Access to the school's Internet and technology services is a privilege not a right. The school reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (students), or dismissal (staff) for violations of this policy. The school will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the school's Internet service. The school also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

### PARENTAL/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION OF USE

Unless a parent/guardian of a MLKCSE student specifies otherwise to the Dean of Students of the School, the parent/guardian agrees to the following:

1. Allowing their child to have access to Information Technology (including, but not limited to, digital devices and services, computer equipment and software, and School-assigned emails) the Internet, Google Apps for Education and Internet-based services through MLKCSE,
2. Understanding that MLKCSE cannot guarantee the appropriateness of information or material that their child may encounter on the Internet.
3. Shall not hold MLKCSE responsible for materials acquired on-line by their child, for violations of copyright restrictions, any costs incurred by their child, or negligent acts by their child while using the internet.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title B of the Americans with Disabilities

Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA).

In addition, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to Martin Luther King Charter School of Excellence on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement, as-required by M.G.L.c.71, §89(1); 603 CMR 1.06(1). Finally, no person shall be discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges or access to the courses of study offered by Martin Luther King Charter School of Excellence on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation as required by M.G.L, c. 76, § 5.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at:
http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html

and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632- 9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

MLKCSE will ensure that all eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 and No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110). Parents/Guardians have the right to request a Special Education evaluation if they believe that their child has a disability and requires specialized instruction and/or related special education services. Parents should contact the Director of Special Education and Student Services if they are requesting an evaluation or would like to learn more about the process. See “Parental Rights Under Special Education Laws” in the Appendix.

## HARASSMENT POLICY

MLKCSE is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, sex, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, socio-economic status, housing status or homelessness, special need, physical appearance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. MLKCSE requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

### DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

### GENERAL HARASSMENT

Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, sex, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, socio-economic status, housing status or homelessness, special need, physical appearance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior, may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education;

2. The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student;

3. Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extracurricular activities; or

4. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

### HARASSMENT & RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school-related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by MLKCSE.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Board of Trustees, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

### WHERE TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Any student or employee who believes that the school has discriminated against or harassed them because of their race, sex, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, socio-economic status, housing status or homelessness, special need, physical appearance, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its schools, services, programs, activities, and extracurricular activities may file a complaint with the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students is the person who is alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment, the complaint may be filed with the Academic Director.

### COMPLAINTS OF HARASSMENT BY PEERS

In the event the complaint consists of a student's allegation that another student is harassing them based upon the above-referenced classifications, the student may, in the alternative, file the complaint with the school’s complaint manager (hereinafter referred to as "Building Complaint Manager"), who is the school’s Dean of Students.

### COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION BASED UPON DISABILITY

A person who alleges discrimination on the basis of disability relative to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a person, who because of a handicap need or is believed to need special instruction or related services, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Chapter 766, and/or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, must use the procedure outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Education's Parents' Rights Brochure rather than this Grievance Procedure.

A copy of the brochure is available from the following individual:

Abigail Cole
Director of Special Education and Student Services
Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence
285 Dorset Street, Springfield, MA 01108
413-214-7806

A person with a complaint involving discrimination on the basis of a disability other than that described above may either use this Grievance Procedure or file the complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at the address provided at the end of this Grievance Procedure.

## CONTENTS OF COMPLAINTS & TIMELINES FOR FILING

Complaints under this Grievance Procedure must be filed within 30 school days of the alleged discrimination. The complaint must be in writing. The Grievance Administrator or any person of the grievant's choosing, may assist the grievant with filing the complaint. The written complaint must include the following information:

1. The name and school (or address and telephone number if not a student or employee) of the grievant.
2. The name (and address and telephone number if not a student or employee) of the grievant’s representative, if any.
3. The name of the person(s) alleged to have caused the discrimination or harassment (respondent).
4. A description, in as much detail as possible, of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
5. The date(s) of the alleged discrimination or harassment.
6. The name of all persons who have knowledge about the alleged discrimination or harassment (witnesses), as can be reasonably determined.
7. A description, in as much detail as possible, of how the grievant wants the complaint to be resolved.

## INVESTIGATION & RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT

Respondents will be informed of the charges as soon as the Grievance Administrator deems appropriate based upon the nature of the allegations, the investigation required, and the action contemplated.

The Grievance Administrator will interview witnesses whom s/he deems necessary and appropriate to determine the facts relevant to the complaint, and will gather other relevant

information. Such interviews and gathering of information will be completed within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the complaint.

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the complaint, the Grievance Administrator will meet with the grievant and/or her/his representative to review the information gathered and, if applicable, to propose a resolution designed to stop the discrimination or harassment and to correct its effect. Within five (5) school days of the meeting with the grievant and/or representative, the Grievance Administrator will provide written disposition of the complaint to the grievant and/or representative and to the respondent(s).

Notwithstanding the above, it is understood that in the event a resolution contemplated by the school involves disciplinary action against an employee or a student, the complainant will not be informed of such disciplinary action, unless it directly involves the complainant (i.e., a directive to "stay away" from the complainant, as might occur as a result of a complaint of harassment).

Any disciplinary action imposed upon an employee or student is subject to applicable procedural requirements.

All the time lines specified above will be implemented as specified, unless the nature of the investigation or exigent circumstances prevent such implementation, in which case, the matter will be completed as quickly as practicable. If the timelines specified above are not met, the reason(s) for not meeting them must be clearly documented. In addition, it should be noted that in the event the respondent is subject to a collective bargaining agreement which sets forth a specific timeline for notice and/or investigation of a complaint, such time lines will be followed.

Confidentiality of grievants/respondents and witnesses will be maintained, to the extent consistent with the school's obligations relating to investigation of complaints and the due process rights of individuals affected.

Retaliation against someone because he/she has filed a complaint under this Grievance Procedure is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion/discharge.

## APPEALS

If the grievant is not satisfied with a disposition by a Grievance Administrator, the grievant may appeal the disposition to the Executive Director, Kendra Salvador.

If then, the grievant is still not satisfied with a disposition by the Executive Director, the grievant may appeal the disposition to the Board of Trustees.

Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence
285 Dorset Street, Springfield, MA 01108
413-214-7806

The Board of Trustees will issue a written response on the appeal to the grievant within ten (10) school days of receiving the appeal.

Generally, a grievant may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education through the following contact information:

U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111 Facsimile: (617) 289-0150
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

1. Within 180 calendar days of alleged discrimination of harassment, or
2. Within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of the school's final disposition on a complaint filed through the school, or
3. Within 60 calendar days of receiving a final decision by the Massachusetts Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals, or
4. Instead of filing a complaint with the school.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR BULLYING

Students who are victims of bullying, who witness bullying activity, or who are retaliated against for reporting bullying, should report the incident to the Dean of Culture or Executive Director. Students may also report to a teacher or other trusted adult in the building, who will in turn report the incident to the Dean of Culture or Executive Director.

The Dean of Culture or their designee will be responsible for conducting an investigation regarding the allegations. Parents/guardians of the alleged target and alleged aggressor will be contacted when the allegations are made, and after the investigation is complete and a determination is made in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

The same process for appeals described above applies to the grievance procedure for bullying. Students and parents/guardians may consult the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for a detailed description of the school's procedures regarding bullying.

A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action. Please note that in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, law enforcement may be contacted by the school in some bullying cases.

## HAZING - MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-HAZING LAW

**MGL c. 269, Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined.**
Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. (Amended by 1987, 665.)

**MGL c. 269, Section 18. Failure to report hazing.**
Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. (Amended by 1987, 665.)

**MGL c. 269, Section 19. Copy of secs. 17--19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report.**
Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen. and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to

each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report. (Amended by 1987, 665.)

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

MLKCSE maintains a strict Code of Conduct and clear disciplinary procedures. These procedures do not allow for corporal punishment but rather include a clear set of consequences including logical consequences, loss of privileges, suspensions, and expulsions. In accordance with M.G.L. § 37G, corporal punishment of pupils is prohibited.

## STUDENT RESTRAINT

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00 and our policy regarding the restraint of students (see Appendix), physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind: to administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; or to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. All personnel authorized to administer any forms of restraint shall be trained annually in accordance with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines.

# APPENDIX

# APPENDIX A: ANNUAL SCHOOL CALENDAR

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CHARTER SCHOOL EXCELLENCE | 2021-2022 CALENDAR

Enjoy your summer! Stay safe, read some good books, practice some math, and explore the world around you!

**JULY**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

Monthly Core Value: Promoting Social Justice
Monthly Theme: Poverty in America Awareness

**Jan 3:** School reopens
**Jan 3:** Middle of Year (MOY)\Benchmarking
**Jan 6:** Teacher PD day - School closed
**Jan 17:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -School and office closed
**Jan 26:** Quarter 2 closes
**Jan 27:** Quarter 3 opens

**JANUARY**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 31 | | | | |

**Aug 18:** New Staff PD
**Aug 19:** Aug 27: Teacher Summer PD
**Aug 25:** Family Meet & Greet Night
**Aug 30:** School begins for Grades 1-5
**Aug 30:** Quarter 1 opens

**AUGUST**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 6 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 30 | 31 | | | |

Monthly Core Value: Excellence
Monthly Theme: National Black History

**Feb 7:** Student Lottery for SY22-23
**Feb 21:** Presidents' Day - School and office closed
**Feb 22-25:** Winter break – School closed
**Feb 28:** School reopens

**FEBRUARY**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28 | | | | |

Monthly Core Value: Excellence
Monthly Theme: Hispanic Heritage

**Sept 6:** Labor Day – School and office closed
**Sept 7:** School begins for Kindergarten
**Sept 14:** Teacher PD day - School closed
**Sept 20 - Oct 1:** Beginning of Year (BOY) Benchmarking
**Sept 27 – Oct 1:** Mobile Dentist onsite

**SEPTEMBER**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |

Monthly Core Value: Determination
Monthly Theme: Women's History

**March 18:** Teacher PD day - School closed

**MARCH**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

Monthly Core Value: Integrity
Monthly Theme: National Bullying Prevention

**Oct 1:** Picture Day
**Oct 11:** Indigenous People Day – School and office closed

**OCTOBER**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

Monthly Core Value: Respect
Monthly Theme: National Autism Awareness

**April 8:** Quarter 3 closes
**April 11:** Quarter 4 opens
**Week of April** 11: Tentative ELA MCAS (Grades 3-5)
**April 15:** Good Friday - School and office closed
**April 18:** Patriots Day - School and office closed
**April 18-22:** Spring break – School closed

**APRIL**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

Monthly Core Value: Respect
Monthly Theme: National Gratitude

**Nov 2:** Election Day & Teacher PD Day - School closed
**Nov 5:** Quarter 1 closes
**Nov 8:** Quarter 2 opens
**Nov 11:** Veterans Day - School and office closed
**Nov 12:** Picture Retake Day
**Nov 24 - 28:** Thanksgiving break –School and office closed
**Nov 29:** School reopens

**NOVEMBER**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 29 | 30 | | | |

Monthly Core Value: Determination
Monthly Theme: Asian Pacific American Heritage

**Week of May** 16: Tentative Math MCAS (Grades 3-5)
**Week of May 23:** Tentative Sci MCAS (Grade 5 only)
**May 30:** Memorial's Day - School and office closed

**MAY**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 30 | 31 | | | |

Monthly Core Value: Promoting Social Justice
Monthly Theme: National Human Rights

**Week of Dec 20**: Parent/Teacher Confs.
**Dec 23:** ½ day - last day before holiday
**Dec 24-31:** Holiday Vacation – School closed

**DECEMBER**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Monthly Core Value: Integrity
Monthly Theme: Health and Wellness

**June 20:** Juneteenth - School and office closed
**June 23:** Tentative last day of school - ½ day
**June 23:** Quarter 4 closes
**June 30:** Final report cards mailed

**JUNE**

| M | Tu | W | Th | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |

*Last revised: 09/27/2021*

# APPENDIX B: CODE OF CONDUCT

## SAFE AND ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE) is unequivocally committed to providing a safe and orderly environment in which students can maximize their academic achievement. Students whose behavior does not meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others.

Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we envision for the school can happen. Students and families have a right to attend a safe and orderly school. Therefore, we cannot overemphasize the importance of providing a firm yet restorative and consistent discipline policy.

The following sections comprise Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence Code of Conduct will describe the student behaviors that the school considers inappropriate or unacceptable. The following provisions will also detail the procedures for determining the consequences students may face for violations of the Code of Conduct.

## SCHOOL-RELATED DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

The following sections describe school-related disciplinary offenses for which a student may be subject to consequences including, but not limited to, loss of privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion. The offenses identified in the sections below are not exhaustive, and MLKCSE reserves the right to determine the consequences of each violation of the Code of Conduct. A school-related disciplinary offense refers to the violation of this code occurring:

- While the student is on school grounds;
- While the student is off of school grounds, but results in substantial disruption to the learning environment or MLKCSE Community;
- During a school-sponsored activity, event, or trip;
- On the school bus and commuting to and from school;
- During events sufficiently linked to school; or
- While communicating harassing messages via cell phones or all forms of social media.

## SUSPENSION POLICY

MLKCSE complies with the policies and procedures set forth in MGL c. 71 § 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾, MGL c. 76 § 21, and 603 CMR 53.00 regarding student discipline. Pursuant to 603 CMR 53.02, the Board of Trustees has affirmed that the Dean of Students may serve as designee for the Principal for purposes of implementing provisions pertaining to 603 CMR 53.00. Hereafter, the term "Principal" shall be considered interchangeable with the term "Dean of Students" when discussing policies and procedures related to student discipline under 603 CMR 53.00.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 or the policies below shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

## DEFINITIONS

### EXPULSION

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under MGL c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

### IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

In-school suspension means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

### LONG-TERM SUSPENSION (LTS)

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in MGL c. 71, § 37H (a) or (b), or MGL c. 71, § 37H ½ no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

### SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION (STS)

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

**MGL STATUTORY OFFENSES**

In accordance with MGL c. 71, § 37H or 37H½, a student may be subject to suspension or expulsion for the following statutory offenses.

a) possession of a dangerous weapon;
b) possession of a controlled substance;
c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or
d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in MGL c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

Suspension or expulsion of a student for one of the statutory offenses listed above may be imposed for a period of time in excess of ninety (90) days.

**NON-STATUTORY OFFENSE**

In accordance with MGL c. 71, § 37H¾, a student may be subject to suspension by the Principal for any other offenses not covered by MGL c. 71, § 37H or 37H½. State law prohibits schools from suspending a student for more than 90 school days (total) in one school year for offenses under MGL c. 71, § 37H¾.

**SUSPENSIONS GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURE: GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURE**

In the case of suspensions, the student will be removed from class or school and will be sent to the Student Support Room or another designated school location, following which, the student's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the school.

All decisions by the Principal regarding the suspension of a student for any statutory offense under MGL c.71, §37H and MGL c.71, §37H ½, are subject to review by the Executive Director. Pursuant to MGL c.71 § 37H ¾, for any offense not covered by MGL c.71, §37H and MGL c.71, §37H ½, a student may be subject to suspension. However, MGL c.71 § 37H ¾ prohibits schools from suspending a student for more than 90 days (total) in one school year for non-statutory offenses. Suspension of a student for any offense under the provisions of MGL c.71 § 37H ¾ must involve both the Principal and the Executive Director.

Effective July 1, 2014, any school district that suspends a student pursuant to MGL c. 71 § 37H, 37H ½, or 37H ¾ shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension, under section MGL c. 76 § 21. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan.

**DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION**

MLKCSE adheres to state law and regulations regarding due process for disciplinary removals and services during removals. (Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 and 603 CMR 53.00).
Student disciplinary offenses resulting in suspension are subject to due process procedures, which may include notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide you with information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform MLKCSE immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and MLKCSE's attorney is not present, then MLKCSE will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. MLKCSE hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE & DUE PROCESS FOR STATUTORY OFFENSES**
This notice of student and parent/guardian rights applies to student misconduct that involves the following:

1. Weapons, drugs, or assault on school staff (MGL c. 71 § 37H).
    a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to removal from school for a period of time up to expulsion by the Principal.
    b. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to removal from school for a period of time up to expulsion by the Principal.
    c. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to removal from school for a period of time up to expulsion by the Principal.

2. Criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions (MGL c. 71 § 37H ½).
    a. Upon issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend said student for a period of time the principal deems appropriate (including indefinite suspension) if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
    b. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal may expel said student if the Principal determines

that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

**SUSPENSION: MISCONDUCT INVOLVING WEAPONS, DRUGS, OR ASSAULT**

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct pursuant to MGL c.71 § 37H has an opportunity for a hearing before the Principal. The following standards and procedures shall apply:

1. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the charges, the reasons for removal of the student, and evidence for the removal before the removal takes effect.
2. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the student's right to a hearing with the principal or designee before the removal takes effect, including the date, time and location of the hearing.
3. The student's parent or guardian will be present at the hearing.
4. At the hearing, students and parents/guardians have the right to: bring counsel (at the student's expense), present evidence, witnesses, and testimony, and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school.
5. After said hearing, the Principal may, in his or her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.
6. In serious cases of student misconduct involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights, the Principal's determination whether to expel or suspend a student may depend on whether the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

**SUSPENSION: MISCONDUCT INVOLVING CRIMINAL OR FELONY DELINQUENCY CHARGE**

In accordance with MGL c. 71 § 37H ½, any student suspended by the Principal upon issuance of a criminal complaint charging said student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against said student, has a right to appeal the suspension to the MLKCSE Executive Director. The following standards and procedures shall apply:

1. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect.
2. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the student's right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Director, and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.
3. The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of his or her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension.
4. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal.
5. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his or her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel.

6. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student.
7. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing.
8. The Executive Director's decision shall be the final decision of MLKCSE with regard to the suspension.

**EXPULSION: MISCONDUCT PURSUANT TO MGL c. 71 §37H or MGL c. 71 § 37H ½**
Pursuant to MGL c.71 § 37H, any student who is charged with any of the misconduct involving weapons, drugs, or assault on school staff may be subject to expulsion from the School by the Principal. In addition, pursuant to MGL c. 71 § 37H ½, upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the Principal may expel the student if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the School.

Please see the section of this handbook titled, **Expulsion Policy**, for details on the procedures and due process for expulsion and services during expulsion.

**CONTINUATION OF EDUCATION SERVICES**
Students who are suspended or expelled under MGL c. 71 §37H or MGL c. 71 § 37H ½ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion under MLKCSE's Education Service Plan, which is described below. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE & DUE PROCESS FOR NON-STATUTORY OFFENSES**
The following sections address violations of the Student Code of Conduct that may warrant suspension in accordance with MGL c. 71, § 37H¾.

Students in grades K-5 may receive a suspension for egregious acts of disrespect or defiance. Before the student is returned to class, the student, their parent or guardian, and Dean of Students may meet in order to address the student's behavior and plan for improvement. Infractions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Gross disrespect of a fellow student, staff member, or school property;
- Fighting, pushing, shoving, or unwanted physical contact;
- Making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise;
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so;
- Using abusive, vulgar, or profane language or treatment;
- Forgery of any sort, including parental signatures;
- Cheating or plagiarism, or copying of anyone else's work;
- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation;
- Skipping school or class;
- Intentionally leaving class (or wherever the students should be) without permission;

- Using or possessing over-the-counter medication inappropriately;
- Using or possessing tobacco products, alcohol or other controlled substances;
- Setting off false alarms or calling in groundless threats;
- Gambling;
- Departing, without permission, from class, floor, building, or school-sponsored activity; or
- Repeated and fundamental disregard of school policies and procedures

In addition to any of the preceding infractions, any breaches of Federal law, Massachusetts State law, or Ordinances of the City of Springfield, may be handled in cooperation with the Springfield Police Department and may result in suspension.

**FIELD TRIPS & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

The school may sometimes engage in outside learning experiences. During these activities, it is important for all students to be responsible for their behavior since the site of the activity is a temporary extension of the school grounds. A permission slip that allows students to attend each school field trip will be sent home prior to the trip and should be signed by a parent or guardian. Students who fail to return the signed slip – or who are not permitted to attend the particular trip as a result of a loss of privileges – will not be eligible to participate and will be required to remain either in another classroom or in the office during the field trip. If parents or other volunteers assist with field trips, students must afford these chaperones the same respect they would provide to teachers. Appropriate behavior must be maintained when attending school-sponsored events, and riding on school-provided transportation. Inappropriate behavior may result in community violations, suspension, or loss of field trip privileges. If a scholar earns eight or more community violations in a trimester, he or she will not be allowed to attend the field trip until the trimester ends and violations reset. If school staff believes the scholar to be a safety concern, a parent will be required to attend the field trip in order for the scholars to be allowed to attend the field trip.

**FORGERY**

Shared information and constant communication among teachers, students, and parents are crucial to the success of the school. Progress regarding academic and behavioral performance will be conveyed through a variety of means, including progress reports and report cards, to be brought home by students, signed by parents, and returned by students the next school day. Students who forge their parent or guardian's signature, or forge parental or guardian approval on any official or unofficial school communication, including community violations, may face an out-of-school suspension.

**NOTICE OF STUDENT & PARENT RIGHTS UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

This section governs all student offenses that may be subject to short-term, long-term, or in-school suspensions that do not involve dangerous weapons, controlled substances, assault on school staff, felony or felony delinquency charges, and/or felony delinquency findings or admissions, all of which are governed by MGL C.71 §37H and § 37H½, as detailed above.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the principal is required to exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider

ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. The following outlines student and parent rights when the principal is considering and/or decides to implement a suspension as a consequence for student misconduct.

Students who are suspended under §37H¾ are entitled to receive educational services during the period of suspension under MLKCSE's Education Service Plan, which is described below. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the period of suspension, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

**NOTICE OF SUSPENSION & HEARING UNDERMGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

Unless the principal determines that an emergency removal is required (see **Emergency Removals** section below) or decides to implement an in-school suspension of ten or fewer consecutive days (and no more than 10 cumulative days per school year) (see **In-School Suspension** section below), the principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent with verbal and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The principal is required to provide this verbal and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice must set forth the following information:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;
3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
7. if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal, the student's short and long term suspension hearing rights and the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director (see **Hearing Rights** section below).

The principal is required to make and document reasonable efforts to notify the parent verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts, and therefore may conduct a hearing without the parent present, if the principal has sent written notice (by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent) and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

If it is determined by either the principal or the parent that additional meetings are needed to address the case after the initial hearing, the school will provide additional written notice to the family for each additional meeting. Expectations for such notice will follow the same guidelines as the initial hearing notice as outlined above.

**EMERGENCY REMOVAL UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

A principal has the authority to remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the principal determines that the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal is required to notify the Executive Director immediately in writing of an emergency removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal is required to:

1. Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the Hearing Rights outlined below;
2. Provide written notice to the student and parent, as described in the preceding section;
3. Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with the rights outlined below in the Hearing Rights section, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
4. Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

The principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

**HEARING RIGHTS UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

**PRINCIPAL'S HEARING UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾: SHORT TERM SUSPENSION**

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

The purpose of the hearing with the principal is for the principal to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident; provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances of the alleged incident; and determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal is required to discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student and parent both shall have an opportunity to present and offer information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal is required to provide written notification to the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. This written notification may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

Please note that if the student is in grades pre-K through 3, the principal is required to send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**PRINCIPALS HEARING UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾: LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**
Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights during a long-term suspension hearing:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by

the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director or designee (only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension). Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
    a. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the CoDirector(s) an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
    b. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Executive Director decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S HEARING UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal has the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Executive Director.

In order to appeal the principal's decision to impose a long-term suspension, the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension (in the alternative, within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension the parent may request and receive from the Executive Director an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Executive Director may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the Executive Director shall grant the extension.

The Executive Director must make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has attempted to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Executive Director to

participate. The Executive Director shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Executive Director will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. An audio recording of the hearing will be made, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Co-Director shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made and provided to the student and parent upon request.

The student and parent shall have all the rights afforded them at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension, as detailed above in the sections entitled

**PRINCIPAL'S HEARINGS UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾: SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION & PRINCIPAL'S HEARING UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾: LONG TERM SUSPENSION**

The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing, which will include the same elements as required for the written determination following the Principal's Hearing for Long-Term Suspension (see preceding section). If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the school.

**IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H¾**

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The principal is required to inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal must inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day that the principal decides to impose an in-school suspension, the principal must make reasonable efforts to verbally notify the parent of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of verbally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

**REMOVAL FROM PRIVILEGES & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. A removal from privileges and/or extracurricular activities is not subject to the procedures set forth in preceding sections.

**SERVICES DURING REMOVALS & SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN**

In order to promote continued academic progress for students who are removed from their classroom or school, whether pursuant to MGL §37H, §37H ½, or §37H ¾, the School has the obligation to provide each student who is suspended or expelled an opportunity to make academic progress during the suspension or expulsion. Students and parents will be notified in writing of this opportunity at the time of suspension or expulsion.

Pursuant to MGL c. 76 § 21, students who are suspended from school for 10 days or less, whether in or out of school, will have the opportunity during the period of suspension to earn credits, make academic progress, and make up, make up assignments, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such a suspension is imposed.

Also pursuant to MGL c. 76 § 21, students who are expelled or suspended for more than 10 consecutive days must be provided an equitable opportunity to receive education services that are identified in a school-wide education service plan.

MLKCSE's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing changes to the overall Education Service Plan, or changes to a specific Education Service Plan for an expelled or suspended student, Principals may seek the input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, education collaboratives, and other service providers.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, the Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the School shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. The School shall document the student's enrollment in

education services. For data reporting purposes, the School shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

Students exempt from attending school under MGL c. 76 § 1 shall not be subject to this section.

## EXPULSION POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

MLKCSE complies with the policies and procedures set forth in MGL c. 71 § 37H, 37H ½, and 603 CMR 53.00 regarding student discipline. Pursuant to 603 CMR 53.02, the Board of Trustees has affirmed that the Dean of Students may serve as designee for the Principal for purposes of implementing provisions pertaining to 603 CMR 53.00. Hereafter, the terms "Principal" shall be considered interchangeable with the term "Dean of Students" when discussing policies and procedures related to student discipline under 603 CMR 53.00.

In every case of student misconduct for which expulsion may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 or the policies below shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

### DEFINITION

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under MGL. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½ for:

a. possession of a dangerous weapon;
b. possession of a controlled substance;
c. assault on a member of the educational staff; or
d. a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in MGL. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

All decisions by the Principal regarding expulsion of a student for any offense under MGL. c.71, §37H and MGL. c.71, §37H ½, are subject to review by the Executive Director.

### REMOVAL FROM CLASS OR SCHOOL

In the case of expulsion, the student will be removed from class or school and will be sent to the Main Office or another designated school location, following which, the student's parent or guardian will be notified of the incident by the school.

Please see the following section titled "**Due Process for Expulsion and Services During Expulsion**" for additional details regarding the processes and procedures pertaining to expulsions.

## DUE PROCESS FOR EXPULSION & SERVICES DURING EXPULSION

### INTRODUCTION

Student disciplinary offenses resulting in expulsions are subject to due process procedures, including notices, hearings, appeals, and educational services during removals. The following sections provide you with information about these rights.

Please note that students have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense, at any and all hearings concerning student discipline. If you wish to bring an attorney to any hearing or meeting at the school, please inform MLKCSE immediately. If you fail to inform the school prior to bringing an attorney to a hearing, and MLKCSE's attorney is not present, then MLKCSE will exercise its right to cancel and reschedule the meeting to ensure that its attorney can attend. This rescheduling may delay the hearing or meeting, and if so, your child's disciplinary removal will be extended until a decision is rendered following the rescheduled hearing or meeting. MLKCSE hereby notifies you that it may have its legal counsel present at any hearings and meetings involving student discipline.

### NOTICE OF STUDENT & PARENT'S RIGHTS UNDER MGL c. 71 § 37H and c. 71 § 37H½

The following provisions apply to student misconduct that involves the following:

1. Weapons, drugs, or assault on school staff.
    a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal.
    b. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal.
    c. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
2. Student criminal or felony delinquency charges, findings, or admissions.
    a. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student who is charged with any of the misconduct detailed above has an opportunity for a hearing before the Principal. The following standards and procedures shall apply:

1. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the charges, the reasons for the expulsion, and evidence for expulsion before the expulsion takes effect.
2. The Principal or designee shall provide written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian identifying the student's right to a hearing with the principal or designee before the expulsion takes effect, including the date, time and location of the hearing.
3. The student's parent or guardian will be present at the hearing.
4. At the hearing, students and parents/guardians have the right to: bring counsel (at the student's expense), present evidence (through the student's own testimony of witnesses and through witness evidence) and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school.
5. After said hearing, the Principal may, in his or her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have committed the misconduct detailed above.
6. In serious cases of student misconduct involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, assault, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights, the Principal's determination whether to expel or suspend a student may depend on whether the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to MGL c. 71 §37H or c. 71 §37H½ shall have the right to appeal to the MLKCSE Executive Director – hereafter, "the Executive Director." The following standards and procedures shall apply:

1. If the Principal decides to expel the student after the hearing, the Principal shall provide written notification at the hearing to the student and the student's parent/guardian of the right to appeal the decision, the process for appealing the expulsion, and the opportunity to receive educational services.
2. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the CoDirector(s).
3. The expelled student shall have ten calendar days (if expelled pursuant to c. 71 §37H) or five calendar days (if expelled pursuant to c. 71 §37H½) from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director, in writing, of his or her request for an appeal.
4. Once an appeal hearing has been requested, the Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian. For expulsions pursuant to c. 71 §37H½, the Co-Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) days of receipt of an appeal request.
5. At a hearing before the Executive Director, the student has the right to counsel (at the student's expense), the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to confront and cross examine witnesses presented by the school.
6. For expulsions pursuant to c. 71 §37H, the subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of section 37H.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AUTHORITY TO OVERTURN EXPULSION**

The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Executive Director's decision shall be the final decision of MLKCSE with regard to the expulsion.

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DURING EXPULSIONS**
Students who are expelled under c. 71 §37H and §37H½ are entitled to receive educational services during the expulsion under MLKCSE's Education Service Plan, which is described below. If the student withdraws from the charter school and/or moves to another school district during the expulsion, the new school/district/district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under the new school or district's education service plan.

Prior to expulsion, the Principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian, in writing, of the opportunity for educational services that will be made available for a student to make academic progress during the period of expulsion once it is imposed. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a specific school staff member to arrange services.

**SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN**
MLKCSE has developed a school-wide Education Service Plan for all students who are expelled from school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

MLKCSE's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning.

If MLKCSE expels a student, MLKCSE is required to provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service.

## APPENDIX C: DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below. For additional information, please contact Abigail Cole at 413-214-7806 or ahertz@mlkcs.org.

Short-term suspensions: School personnel may refer a student to an alternative placement or suspension for up to 10 total school days without services. Regarding students with

IEPs, for subsequent removals during the school year which constitute a change in placement:

1. The school must provide services to the extent necessary for progress in the general curriculum and IEP goals as determined by school personnel in consultation with at least one teacher.
2. If appropriate, the school must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral plan.

**CHANGE OF PLACEMENT**

A change of placement is defined as removal for more than ten consecutive school days or for a series of shorter removals that constitute a "pattern." A "pattern" of conduct will take into consideration the length and total time removed, as well as the proximity and similarity of behavior. On the date of a decision to make a removal constituting a change of placement, parents/guardians must be notified of the decision and the procedural safeguards.

Within ten school days of a decision resulting in a change of placement, the team must conduct a manifestation determination. The meeting must include representatives of the district, parents/guardians and any other relevant members. The team must consider all relevant information in the student's file, teacher observations, and relevant information from the parents/guardians. The team must determine whether the conduct was:

1. caused by the disability; or
2. had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability; or
3. was a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP (or 504 Plan). If any of these criteria are met, then the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability.

If the team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the disability, the student must be returned to his/her placement. The parties, however, may change the IEP and placement through the team process. Also, the team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan or, if a behavioral plan already exists, review the plan and make any necessary modifications.

A 504 Plan may be changed as well to address the behaviors at hand.

If the team determines that the conduct was not a manifestation of the disability, the school discipline can be put into effect. The student on an IEP is entitled, however, to receive educational services to enable progression in the general curriculum and IEP goals. The team must determine which services are necessary and the setting where they will be provided. A student with a 504 Plan, however, is entitled to educational services only to the extent that non-disabled peers would be provided the same educational opportunity.

**APPEAL RIGHTS**

When a parent/guardian disagrees with the Team's decision on "manifestation determination," or an alternative placement, the parents/guardians have the right to request an expedited hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Placement

pending the appeal is in the alternative setting as determined by the team for the duration of the discipline or completion of the appeal.

Exceptions for Specified Conduct: Under certain special circumstances as defined by federal law, school personnel may place the student in an interim alternative setting for 45 school days, without regard to the manifestation determination. These special circumstances include incidents where the student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs, carries or possesses a weapon, or inflicts serious bodily injury while on school premises or at a school function.

Otherwise, if the student's continuation in the current placement is substantially likely to cause injury to him/her or others the district may request an expedited hearing for an order to place a student in an alternative setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. The district also has the right to seek a court injunction.

**DISCIPLINE FOR CHILDREN WHO MAY BE DISABLED BUT DO NOT HAVE IEPS**

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to students who have not yet been found to be eligible for IEPs if the district "had knowledge" the child was a child with a disability within the meaning of the IDEA before the precipitating event. The IDEA provides that the district is "deemed to have knowledge" if:

1. the parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing to the administrator or the child's teacher that the child needed special education and related services;
2. the parent/guardian had requested an evaluation; or
3. the teacher of the child or other personnel had expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior to the Director of Special Education or other supervisory personnel in the district. However, a school district is not "deemed to have knowledge" if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services needs or the parent/guardian refused an evaluation or services.

If the school is not "deemed to have knowledge" regarding the existence of a disability prior to the precipitating event, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the district policies. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be done in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the placement determined by the school officials, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SECTION 504**

Students who are not eligible for services under the IDEA, but who have disabilities within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are entitled to certain procedural protections associated with Section 504. Additional information regarding the procedural protections for students with disabilities under Section 504 can be obtained from Abigail Cole, Director of Special Education and Student Services at 413-214-7806.

**STUDENT SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

MLKCSE shall collect and annually report data to the Department of Education regarding in-school suspensions, short-term and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department.

The principal shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the principal shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short-term and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The principal shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, or in-school or out-of-school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

## APPENDIX D: BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

### PRIORITY STATEMENT

At Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE), we strive toward creating a just and beloved community. At MLKCSE, we are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. This commitment is an integral part of our continuing efforts to build a beloved community, promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach addressing bullying and cyberbullying. MLKCSE is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community at large to prevent any issue of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, the district has established this plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

### I. LEADERSHIP

**A. Public involvement in developing the Plan.** The Plan was developed by MLKCSE staff, in consultation with members of the community served by MLKCSE, the Board of Directors and by referencing and adapting other model Bullying Prevention and Intervention plans.

**B. Assessing needs and resources.** The Plan is the school's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. MLKCSE will formally survey the students regarding school climate and school safety issues, not less than every four years. Building-specific data will be collected and analyzed in order to identify strengths, patterns of behavior, and areas of concern. This data will also inform decision making for prevention strategies including, but

not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.

**C. Planning and oversight.** The principal, and/or designee, is/are responsible for the following aspects of the plan:(1) receiving reports on bullying, (2) collecting and analyzing building-specific data, (3) creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, (4) planning for the required professional development of teachers, (5) planning supports that respond to the needs of the targets and aggressors, (6) deciding on the curricula that the school will use, (7) developing and revising policies and protocols, including an Internet Safety Plan, (8) amending student and staff handbooks, (9) leading the parent/family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials and (10) reviewing and updating the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan yearly or more frequently if needed.

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**A.** Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include mandatory State training on Bullying and Prevention, reviewing staff duties under the Plan, reviewing the process that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to also complete the mandatory State training on Bullying and Prevention and participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired

**B.** There will be ongoing professional development aimed at building the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The professional development will be informed by research and will focus on age and/or developmentally appropriate information for the students of the school.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

**C**. Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

**D.** The school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school employee handbook.

## III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

**A.** At MLKCSE, all staff members work together to support students and identify any individual student who may be in need of additional services. This process can occur through a number of ways: self-referral, parent/guardian referral, teacher referral, and/or community agency referral. The district employs the student support team consisting of the following professionals: Administrators, Adjustment Counselor, School Nurses, School Psychologists, Special Education Director, Teachers, and Paraprofessionals. These teams work together to provide resources for students and develop specific supports and interventions when needed.

**B. Counseling and other services.** Culturally and linguistically appropriate resources are available within the school. The school Adjustment Counselor and Social Work interns are available to provide direct services to all students, including both targets and aggressors of bullying. Students may be referred for counseling by a parent/guardian or by a teacher, with parental consent. Services range from 1:1 time with a counselor, social skills building groups, and other groups with students and model peers.

**C**. **Students with disabilities.** As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of their disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

**D. Referral to outside services.** Some of the outside referral services MLKCSE currently uses are: Child Guidance Clinic, Gandara, Child and Family Services, and Academic and Behavioral Clinic. As appropriate, the Release of Information is given to parents and guardians.

## IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

**A. Specific bullying prevention approaches.** Bullying prevention curricula, Safe and Caring School, which is informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

The school uses multiple modalities to reinforce a safe school culture for all students.

**B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts.** At MLKCSE, our general teaching approach supports bullying prevention efforts through the use of positivity, consistency, and regular reference to our core values and the ideals of the beloved community. The ideal of the beloved community is borrowed from Dr. Martin Luther King, who believed that a good education develops both intelligence and character.

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying prevention and intervention initiatives:

- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including students with disabilities, LGBTQA+, and homeless students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development; and
- using the Internet safely.

## V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

**A. Reporting bullying or retaliation.** Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents/guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents/guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, a mailing address, and an email address (info@mlkcs.org).

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a sample copy of the Incident Reporting Form at the beginning of the year Student Handbook for students and parents/guardians; and 2) make it available from the Principal. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, MLKCSE will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal and executive director, will be incorporated in Student and Employee handbooks, on the school website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents/guardians.

**1. Reporting by Staff.** A staff member will complete a written report immediately to the principal or designee when they witness or become aware of conduct that may be bullying

or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

**2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others.** The school expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents/guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal, principal designee, or counselor.

**B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation**

**1. Safety.** Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, recess, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

**2. Obligations to Notify Others**

a. **Notice to parents or guardians.** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents/guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

b. **Notice to Another District**. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. **Notice to Law Enforcement.** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or executive director has

a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will consult with other relevant individuals deemed appropriate.

**3. Investigation**. The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given their obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. All written records will be submitted to the principal for filing.
Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

**4. Determinations**. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school social worker, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

**Responses to Bullying**

*Please see sections III and IV above for specific strategies that MLKCSE uses to build students' skills, and other individualized interventions that MLKCSE makes to remediate or prevent bullying and retaliation.*

**1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building**

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v).

Skillbuilding approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curriculum and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and

**2. Taking Disciplinary Action**

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's Code of Conduct. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

**3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others**

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One

strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

## VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

The Plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communications with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the Plan to include provisions for informing parents/guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention used by the school including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying. Parents/guardians will also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents or guardians. School-specific approaches to collaboration will take into account age, climate, socio-economic factors, linguistic, and cultural make-up of students and their families.

**A. Parent education and resources.** MLKCSE district provides parents/guardians with educational resources to allow them to understand district policy and curricula in ways that assist them in reinforcing the program(s) at home. Some of the educational resources and outreach include:

- The Leadership Team meets annually to review the anti-bullying plan
- A Parent Advisory Committee forum is held to inform parents about bullying, cyber-bullying and online safety. The forum includes information concerning actions parents can take to complement the curriculum and keep their children safe.
- MLKCSE provides information and resources on the school website and through school newsletters.
- District administrators and counseling staff provide individualized bullying prevention to students and their parents and guardians as needed

**B**. **Notification Requirements.** Each year the school will inform parents or guardians of the enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The district will include in the Student Code of Conduct about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's Internet Safety Policy for parents and guardians. All notices and information made available to parents/guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the parent/guardians native language(s).

## VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

*The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying. It will be included in the MLKCSE*

*Family/Student Handbook and the MLKCSE Employee Handbook, and on the school website (mlkcs.org).*

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

## VIII. PROBLEM RESOLUTION SYSTEM

*Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws to include (g) (v): The Plan shall inform parents or guardians of the target about the Department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system. This information is available in both hard copy and electronic formats:*

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the MLKCSE main office.

## VIII. DEFINITIONS

**Aggressor** -Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

**Bullying** - "Bullying" for the purposes of requirements related to Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 legislation is defined as the following:

The repeated use by one or more students [aggressor(s)] of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;

(ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of requirements related to this law, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. See section 5 of the legislation for more details on the definition of cyber-bullying and more.

**Cyberbullying** - is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G. L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

**Hostile environment** - as defined in M.G. L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** - is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**Staff** - includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** - is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G. L. c. 71, § § 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

## APPENDIX E: USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

In accordance with state law, MLKCSE has determined that physical restraint on a student will only be administered when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and if non-physical interventions would not be effective. The use of physical restraint shall not be used as a

means of punishment, or as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm. When physical restraint is required, it is the goal of school personnel to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Only those staff members that have received in-depth training as described within the school's Physical Restraint Policy shall administer physical restraints. MLKCSE follows the regulations and reporting and documentation requirements of 603 CMR 46.00, which can be found in its entirety, along with the complete Physical Restraint Policy, in the Appendix.

In compliance with Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations (603 CMR 46.00), MLKCSE ensures that every student attending our schools is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

## APPENDIX F: COMPLAINT PROCESS

Both the school and the Board work in conjunction with one another to hear and resolve any complaints. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the problem directly with the staff member(s). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the appropriate faculty or staff member, the complaint should be delivered in writing to the Principal. The Principal will receive a written report from the appropriate faculty or staff member. After reviewing the written statements by the staff member and the complainant and undertaking any additional investigation deemed necessary by the situation, the Principal will present an appellate decision to the complainant. The Principal will not hear complaints that have not followed this procedure.

If the situation has still not been resolved, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Executive Director. The Executive Director can be contacted at 413-214-7806.

If the situation has still not been resolved, the Board encourages attendance at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees. Board Meeting dates are posted on the MLKCSE website at http://www.mlkcs.org or by contacting the school at 413-214-7806. The Board will not hear complaints that have not first followed these procedures. If this meeting does not resolve the relevant complaint, the complainant should follow the guidelines set by MGL c. 71, § 89(jj) and 603 CMR 1.10.

If an individual believes that the school has violated any provision of state or federal law or regulations, he or she may file a formal complaint with the Board of Trustees. After receiving the complaint, the Board must send a written response to the individual within 30 days. If the Board does not address the complaint to the individual's satisfaction, the individual may submit the complaint to the Commissioner of Education. A parent/guardian may file a complaint with DESE at any time if he or she believes that the school has violated any federal or state law or regulation.

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence

# SCHOOL-PARENT/GUARDIAN-STUDENT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence is committed to working in cooperative partnership between teachers, staff, parents/guardians, and students to prepare our students for academic excellence and engaged citizenship. In order to achieve our ambitious goals and provide the best possible educational experience for our students, we must work together.

## School Staff's Commitment

1. ***Safety*** – We will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals.
2. ***High Quality Education*** – We commit to providing a high-quality education and to going the extra mile for our students. We will work longer school hours, teach during the summer, and always offer our students the best we have.
3. ***High Standards*** - We will always have high standards for students - for their academics, behavior, and civic engagement.
4. ***Support and Respect*** – We will appreciate, support, and respect every student. We believe all students can achieve and be successful.
5. ***Communication*** – We will communicate regularly with parents/guardians about their child's progress and make ourselves available in person and by phone. We will return parent phone calls or emails within 24 hours (excluding weekends).
6. ***Homework*** – We will assign worthwhile homework to reinforce and support skills and concepts students need for academic success.
7. ***Fairness*** – We will enforce our MLK core values consistently and fairly.
8. ***Improvement and Growth*** - We always seek to improve instruction through use of data, planning, assessment, and revision.

## Parent/Guardian's Commitment

1. ***Timeliness/Attendance*** – I understand that every school day is important and that it is my responsibility to get my child to school every day on time (by **8:30am**). Doors open for student drop-off beginning at 8:00am. If my child takes the bus, I will make sure they are at the bus stop on time. If my child is picked up from school, I will make sure that myself or a responsible, approved adult is there on time each day to pick my child up. If my child needs to miss school, I will contact the school. I will not schedule family vacations during school time. Instruction ends at 3:35pm. I will avoid dismissing my child early so that they are not missing instructional minutes. Our end of school day is 3:45pm (2:00pm on Fridays).
2. ***Uniform*** – I will support my child in dressing for success by sending them to school every day in the full MLK uniform.
3. ***Communication*** – I will make myself available to my child and all of their teachers. I will return phone calls from school staff within 24 hours. If I am asked to attend a meeting regarding my child's education, I will be there or communicate if I need to reschedule. I will

read all updates and memos sent home by the school, and I will return all necessary information by the due date.

4. ***Independent Reading*** – I will insist that my child reads for at least 20 minutes a night (including all three days of the weekend). I will encourage my child to read and show an interest in what my child is reading.
5. ***Support & Homework*** – I will always help my child the best way I know how and will do whatever it takes for my child to learn. I will provide a quiet space for my child to study and do their work.
6. ***MLK Core Values and School Community Expectations*** – I understand MLKCSE's values, and I will make sure that my child learns to live up to them. I understand that my child must meet these expectations to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals. I understand that if my child should violate the community values and expectations, they may lose privileges and/or will complete some restorative consequence for the action. I will support the school in its efforts to enforce high standards for academics, behavior, and citizenship.
7. ***Attendance at Parent/Guardian Meetings***: I will attend all required parent meetings, including Back-to-School Night, Academic Night, and Report Card Nights during the school year.

## Student's Commitment

1. ***My Best Effort*** – I understand that my education is important, and I will always work, think, and behave in the best way I know how and do whatever it takes for my fellow students and me to learn.
2. ***Attendance and Timeliness*** – I will come to school on time (by 8:30am) and stay until 3:45pm (or later if I am involved in after-school activities). If I need to miss class, I will ask for and make up all missed assignments.
3. ***Uniform*** – I will wear the full MLKCSE uniform properly every day and follow the school dress code.
4. ***Homework*** – I will complete all of my homework and reading log every night. I will ask for help if I need it, so I can complete all my homework in a top-quality manner.
5. ***Communication*** – I will ask for help if I do not understand something. I will meet and talk with my teachers and parents/guardians about any concerns they might have.
6. ***Responsibility*** – If I make a mistake, I will tell the truth and accept responsibility for my actions. I will learn from it so I do better next time.
7. ***MLK Core Values and School Community Expectations*** – I understand MLKCSE's values and expectations and I will live up to them every day. I will follow our school community expectations to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals at the school. I understand that if I violate the community values and expectations, I may lose privileges and/or will complete some restorative consequence for the action. I will support the school in its efforts to enforce high standards for academics, behavior, and citizenship.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| School Staff's Name Printed | School Staff's Signature | Today's Date |
| Parent/Guardian's Name Printed | Parent/Guardian's Signature | Today's Date |
| Student's Name Printed | Student's Signature | Today's Date |

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Charter School of Excellence

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

I have received my copy of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence (MLKCSE) Student and Family Handbook. I understand that this Student and Family Handbook is available in hard copy and electronic format at the following web address http://www.mlkcs.org.

I further acknowledge that the MLKCSE Student and Family Handbook contains important information regarding the school's policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the student code of conduct, non-discrimination, anti-hazing, and bullying prevention policies, use of physical restraint, specialized instruction and special education services, attendance and schedule requirements, and family communication and parental involvement.

I understand it is my responsibility as a parent/guardian of a MLKCSE student to obtain and read a copy of the Handbook, and to understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school contained therein.

Should my child or I have any questions regarding the content of the Handbook, I can contact a member of the MLKCSE administration for further clarification

I understand that the information contained in the Student & Family Handbook represents guidelines only, and that the school may amend policies as described in this Handbook at any time at its sole and absolute discretion with or without prior notice.

_____
Student's Name (Please print)

_____
Student's Grade Level

_____
Parent/Guardian's Name (Please print)

_____
Date

_____
Parent/Guardian's Signature